

AIA NEI 2025 Design Awards Application

3. Project Information

Project Name

Is this project a resubmission or has it been submitted in the previous 5 years to another AIA program? Yes No

If yes, please indicate the year submitted and any recognition received.

What is the gross conditioned floor area (sq. ft.) of the project?

What is the primary use/category of the project?

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Commercial (Retail/Restaurant) | Healthcare |
| Institutional – Educational, K -12, Higher Education | Institutional – Civic, Municipal |
| Interior Architecture | Preservation/Renovation |
| Residential – Single Family | Residential – Multi-Family |
| Religious | Student Work |
| Unbuilt | |

Was a design charrette or sustainability workshop conducted with owner and team? Yes No

Which of the following levels of community engagement were used during the design process?
(Select all that apply.)

No community engagement practices were applied for this project.

Inform: Potential stakeholders were informed about the project.

Consult: Stakeholders were provided with opportunities to provide input at pre-designed points in the process.

Involve: Stakeholders were involved throughout most of the process.

Collaborate: A partnership is formed with stakeholders to share in the decision-making process including development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution.

Empower: Stakeholders were provided with opportunities to make decisions for the project.

Unknown

Not applicable (please explain)

AIA NEI 2025 Design Awards Application

4. Project – Ecosystem

Submissions will be reviewed and awarded based on the successful integration of the [AIA Framework for Design Excellence](#)

What percent of site area supported vegetation (landscape or green roof) pre-development?

What percent of site area supported vegetation (landscape or green roof) post-development?

What percent of site area is covered by native plants that support native or migratory species or pollinators?

Which of the following intentional design strategies were used to promote design for ecosystem? (select all that apply.)

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Biodiversity | Dark skies | Bird safety |
| Soil conservation | Habitat conservation, flora/fauna | |
| Abatement of specific regional environmental concerns | | |
| None of the above | Unknown | Not applicable |

5. Project - Water

Is potable water used for irrigation?	Yes	No	NA
Is potable water used for cooling?	Yes	No	NA
Is grey/blackwater re-used on-site?	Yes	No	NA
Is rainwater collected on-site?	Yes	No	NA

What percentage of stormwater is managed on-site?

AIA NEI 2025 Design Awards Application

6. Project - Cost

Unless otherwise noted, AIA NEI and the jury will keep financial information confidential. AIA NEI will only describe financial information in public narratives with prior consent from the submitter.

What is the cost per square foot for this project?

How does the cost to construct this project compare to similar buildings in the region?

7. Project - Energy

Using ZeroTool, what is the 2030 Commitment baseline EUI (in kBtu/sf/yr) for the project?

What was the predicted EUI (in kBtu/sf/yr) of the project, including on-site renewables? (Note: carbon offsets should not be counted.)

What was the percentage reduction from the benchmark? (To calculate, first subtract predicted EUI from baseline, then divide by baseline.)

Is the project all-electric? Yes No

8. Project – Well-being

What level of air filters are installed?

Do greater than 90% of occupied spaces have a direct view to the outdoors? Yes No

Was a 'chemicals of concern' listed used to inform material selection? Yes No

AIA NEI 2025 Design Awards Application

9. Project – Resources

Were embodied carbon emissions estimated for this project? Yes No

What is the estimated embodied carbon emissions (in kgCO₂e/m²/yr) associated with the project, including the extraction and manufacturing of materials used for construction?

10. Project – Change

What is the estimated service life of the project? (in years)?

Which of the following risk assessment and resilience services were provided? (select all that apply.)

Hazard identification Climate Change Risk Building vulnerability assessment
Hazard mitigation strategies above code None of the above
Unknown Not applicable

11. Project – Discovery

Has a post-occupancy evaluation been conducted? Yes No

Which of the following building performance transparency steps have been taken?
(select all that apply.)

Present the design, outcomes, and/or lessons learned in the office
Present the design, outcomes, and/or lessons learned to the profession
Present the design, outcomes, and/or lessons learned to the public
Publish post-occupancy data from the project
Publish lessons learned from the design, construction, and/or occupancy
None of the above
Unknown
Not applicable (please explain)



AIA NEI 2025 Design Awards Application

Please describe your project emphasizing elements of design achievement including project intentions, programming requirements, cost data and the distinguishing aspects of your resolution (limit 500 words).

Please provide a timeline and summary on how the project came to be including the client's perspective from the start and what impact the project has made on the client and community (limit 500 words).

ICivic104 - N Aurora Fire Protection Dist. (NAFPD) Station 1 – page 6

Please describe your project emphasizing elements of design achievement including project intentions, programming requirements, cost data and the distinguishing aspects of your resolution (limit 500 words).

North Aurora Fire Protection District has created a new headquarters appropriate to the modern age. Designed to accommodate current equipment in size and support, the apparatus bay contains five double-deep pull-through bays and an adjoining hose and training tower and mezzanine. With systems for in-bay water overhead filling, exhaust filtration and scrubbing, and a best practices approach to cross-contamination mitigation with identified dirty, transitional, and clean zones supported by handwashing and decontamination spaces, this station is primed to protect the Village of North Aurora and the first responders that serve them for many years. Eight critical success factors were established by the District with the Design Team: aid emergency response time, preserve and build relationships, firefighter and staff health and wellness, good stewardship of resources, future proof technology assets, support staff family atmosphere, ability to maintain the facility and grounds, and be a good neighbor - fit the context.

Site layout was prioritized to a proven response orientation, this is supported by living quarters for ten firefighters in private bunk rooms, dual locker rooms, individual changing and shower spaces, and a combined day room, dining, and kitchen area which fronts out onto a semi-private patio with a view of the Fox River. The connection to the site is very intentional with opportunities to provide firefighter mental wellness and decompression support with physical recreation, social interaction, and private contemplation.

Administrative functions incorporate a dedicated training space which can accommodate community use with food service support and public restrooms from an elevated public lobby. Fire protection offices, meeting spaces, and work rooms, are located across from this training space with an open-glazed east facade overlooking the Fox River.

Exterior views from the project are very selective and precious to reduce the costs associated with large expanses of glass and to control the unwanted solar heat gain to interior environments. This creates the opportunity to deliberately frame views out to the urban context, the landscaped buffer yard, and the Fox River and trail system.

Considerations for the mental health impacts of first responder facilities is paramount.

Contemplative spaces have been woven into exterior site and interior use spaces alike. The concept for interior space development puts an emphasis on a residential scale and materiality. Conceived as a concrete box lined with wood and linen, the color palette is warm, natural, and calming. Highlighted by punches of accent color which celebrate fire service and nods to history and tradition, the building becomes the home for the band of kindred firefighters as a unit which is the North Aurora Fire Protection District family.

By placing the public in close contact with the watershed of the Fox River and local Park District assets, users are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles including walking, running, biking, and boating along the trail system. By utilizing the site design to clearly communicate the appropriate access and use of the site, the public is kept safely away from highly active apparatus bay aprons where large firefighting equipment often enters the roadway.

Please provide a timeline and summary on how the project came to be, including the client's perspective from the start and what impact the project has made on the client and community (limit 500 words).

Initial programming and high-level cost estimates began in 2021 with fire district staff interviews, emergency response projections, and anticipated growth. The priority for the Fire District was to elevate the level of fire service provided to the community with an insistence on emergency response times, a safe work environment for fire service professionals, and a highly functional low-maintenance facility. Village planning staff became engaged with a proposal to do a land swap to support the formation of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) on the block with a master plan for future mixed-use development. This provided the opportunity for the vehicles to enter directly onto the main N/S thoroughfare of Lincolnway and give the new fire headquarters a prominent presence on this major street corner.

The project's design kickoff was in late 2022 with initial site test fits, village PUD coordination, concept floor plans, and benchmark fire station tours. Seeing surrounding new facilities with a combined fire staff and design team group vastly improved a common understanding of contemporary facilities and features, provided a shorthand to discuss desired elements for our project, and gave everyone a hands-on interaction with materials, technology, and building systems. This helped to establish Critical Success Factors, solidify preferred elements for inclusion, and capture a baseline for approach within the anticipated PUD guidelines. This project had the unique opportunity to be the first project realized within this new PUD and establish many standards for the scale, materiality, and character of the block. Moving this fire station up the slope of the site and consolidated in the north half also freed contiguous south oriented land ideal for future residential units above retail with abundant daylight and river views.

Early 2023 brought iterative development of the floor plans and building materials with a structural and exterior solution in precast concrete panels. A local precast supplier, within a five-minute drive to the site, became a resource for the team as a hyperlocal option. This determined an efficient modular aesthetic with clean simple lines dividing three main box volumes along programmatic zones: Public/Training, Office/Living, Apparatus/Fitness. An architectural language emerged from this arrangement with an abstracted ladder element defining the slot between the public and private functions which extends as a main entry canopy, window shading device, interior ceiling treatment, shading again, then apparatus doors canopy, and finally a training/hose tower accent feature. Selections for resolved exterior and interior materials followed in the Spring with finalized village and design team collaboration into the Fall for a Winter start to site clearing and earthwork. A restrained color palette of gray, black, red, and wood tones emerged outside and within creating a unified and timeless presentation for the project. A 12-month build resulted in occupancy in early 2025.

The District has persistently been a central civic partner providing philanthropic support and professional fire service to the community for over 130 years starting with the old fire barn just across the river from this current site. This tradition continues and is expanded with greater capabilities.