

2025 CELEBRATE ARCHITECTURE DESIGN COMPETITION: Single-Stair Housing

BILLINGS
ARCHITECTURE
ASSOCIATION

2025. BAA Design Competition

The Billings Architectural Association is proud to announce this year's Single-Stair Housing Design Competition, an innovative exploration of residential development for downtown Billings, MT. This challenge centers on the Single-Stair Housing model—a design that fosters urban sustainability by allowing for smaller, high-density residential developments on underutilized sites. Participants will propose solutions that align with evolving building codes and showcase sustainable, community-focused designs.

ALL SUBMISSIONS ARE DUE BY 5 PM Thursday, March 20th, 2025.

DESIGN CHALLENGE

As cities strive for increased housing density and affordability, innovative solutions are critical. The East Billings Urban Renewal District (EBURD) in Billings, Montana, provides an opportunity to explore sustainable and community-driven residential architecture through Single-Stair Housing. This design typology reduces construction costs and environmental impacts while offering flexible, efficient layouts. Inspired by forward thinking residential codes, such as those in Seattle, this competition challenges participants to design a six-story mixed-use building that harmonizes with its urban surroundings and aligns with the evolving needs of Billings.

The Design Challenge:

1. Create a mid-rise Single-Stair Housing design for a lot in EBURD or the selected site.
2. Allocate ground-floor space to commercial use, with 4–6 residential units per floor above.
3. Align with Seattle's single-stair housing regulations. Building code Section 1006.3.3 Single Exits. Briefly this code allows for the construction of buildings 5-6 stories to be constructed with only a single exit stair so long as certain building/ fire safety requirements are met.
<https://secondegress.ca/Seattle>
4. Leverage the AIA Framework: Address at least three AIA Design Excellence principles, providing measurable performance metrics.

THE COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Locate your design at the corner of N 25th St. and Montana Ave., Billings, MT (see site information). (Small site plan legend)
2. Include ground-floor commercial space. (floor plan #1)
3. Design 4–6 residential units per floor for floors 2–6. (floor plan #2)
4. Address at least three of the AIA's ten principles of Design Excellence, such as: Integration, Communities, Ecosystems, Water, Economy, Energy, Well-being, Resources, Change, Discovery, and accessibility.
5. Consider durability, maintenance, and long-term viability.
6. Provide elevations (minimum of 2) and renderings as required to showcase your design.
7. Format: One ARCH D board (24"x36"), PDF format, max file size: 15 MB.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The jury will include speakers from the AIA Meeting in the Mountains conference (to be announced). The jury will evaluate entries based on adherence to the brief's objectives, programmatic innovation, contextual relationships, and overall design quality.

SELECTION PROCESS

All proposals will be reviewed digitally to select five or more finalists. Finalists' boards will be professionally printed and displayed at the 2025 "Meeting in the Mountains" Conference at the Northern Hotel, April 3–4, 2025. Winners will be announced during the awards banquet on Friday, April 4 th, 2025.

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

This competition is open to all Architects, Intern Architects, Architecture Students, Interior Designers, and Design Professionals. Entrants may enter individually or as teams.

REGISTRATION FEES

\$50 per entry, due upon submission/registraθ on through the BAA website at www.aiabillings.org on or before the submission deadline.

Students may contact us at <https://aiabillings.org/contact-us/> for an entry fee discount coupon.

SUBMISSION MATERIALS

Entrants must submit one (1) ARCH-D size board (24in x 36in) in digital PDF format (under 15MB) through the BAA website at www.aiabillings.org using our digital submittal tool by the deadline. The board must clearly communicate concepts, solutions, and ideas through a combination of plans, sections, elevations, rendered perspectives, diagrams, and/or images of physical models. Additionally, a 200-word project narrative must appear somewhere on the board.

ANONYMITY

The anonymity of ALL entries must be carefully preserved by the entrants. There shall be no names, logos, or identifying marks on the presentation on boards. Any entry that does not maintain the entrant's anonymity will be disqualified and their entry fee will be forfeitedto the Billings Architectural Association.

AWARDS

Awards will be presented at the banquet on Friday, April 4, 2025. The following prizes will be awarded:

- High Honor Award: \$1,000
- Honor Award: \$700
- Merit Award: \$300

SITE INFORMATION

Site Location: Corner of N 25th St. and Montana Ave., or EBURD, Billings, MT

Lot size: Approximately 7,500 sq. ft. or less

Maximum height: 6 stories

Zoning: EBURD standards permit mixed-use development.

For Additional Information and Registration

Visit the competition webpage at [hypothetical link].

Disclaimer

All submissions become property of the Billings Architectural Association (BAA) and may be used for marketing purposes.

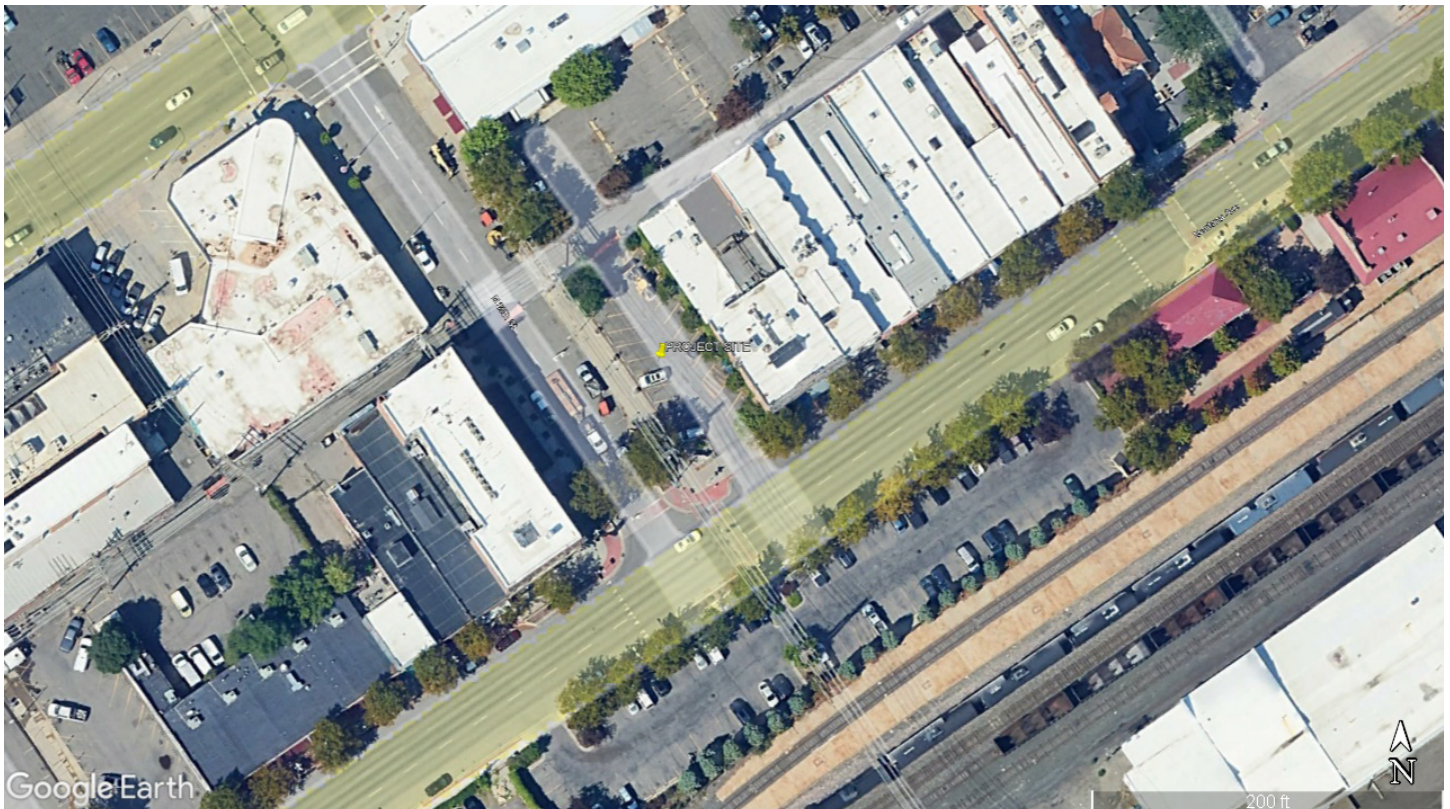
SITE INFORMATION

SITE LOCATION: Downtown Billings to EBURD District

- 45° 46' 59.95" North

- 108° 30' 04.52" West

The exact site(s) location can be adjusted, as long as the design proposal fits within the confines of EBURD.



SITE