



## **President's Awards Program Judging Criteria**

### **What is the President's Awards Program?**

The program was developed by the Texas Downtown Association in 1986 to recognize outstanding projects, places and people that contribute to downtowns across the state. There are two themes, Design and Achievement, which are judged by different industry experts.

### **Who submits nominations?**

Communities, individuals, nonprofits, local governments, and professional service businesses. Anyone is welcome to submit a nomination.

### **Who are the judges?**

The Awards Committee selects judges who are experts in the downtown revitalization and accompanying industry sectors. Judges will be provided with an online link to all nominations prior to meeting with TDA staff and other judges in September to view images of projects submitted, discuss nominations, review online rankings, finalize selection of "Finalists," and select a winner in each category.

### **When are finalists announced?**

Finalists are announced immediately after the judging panels meet. TDA staff provides finalists with press releases highlighting the judging panels to share with local media outlets and notify finalists' elected officials. TDA also promote finalists and the judging panels via social media, the TDA website, and in press releases shared with the media.

### **When are winners announced?**

Winners are announced at the President's Awards Gala, held in conjunction with the annual Texas Downtown Conference. If any changes are made to the announcement process, we will notify finalists.

### **How are the awards judged?**

Entries in each category should reflect creativity, innovation, best practices, ease of replication, public/private partnership, and successful solutions to downtown revitalization issues and concerns. The judging panels seek to award entries across a variety of community sizes and project budgets. Awards are divided into two separate population categories (under 50,000 and over 50,000).

### **What is the judging process?**

Design and Achievement Awards are judged by separate panels of professional experts. Judges will be sent an access link to view entries online and rank submissions in each category on a scale of 1 to 10, with ten being the highest. Each award category's cumulative rankings will help the judges determine a pool of "Finalists" (there is no set number of finalists) which will be announced after the judges meet. Judges will then select a sole winner from that pool of finalists.

**Are there judging guidelines?**

Each award category has eligibility requirements that must be considered by judges. One winner in each category/division will be selected by the judges from the finalist pools. Selection of additional winners in any category will require a compelling written statement as justification from the judges. Budget and population categories, when referenced, must also be considered. When possible, preference should be given to projects and communities that have not received prior recognition if there is not a clear winner.

**Conflicts of Interest**

Judges who have a conflict of interest in any category must recuse themselves from ranking that category online and from the discussion pertaining to that category.

**What do winners receive?**

- Unique plaques made by a Texas vendor.
- Media recognition – TDA share information about winners with media outlets and provides a press release template that winners can share with local and regional media.
- Listing on the TDA website.
- Promotion on TDA social media channels.
- Exclusive use of the TDA Award Winners logo.
- Information on how to leverage their award status.

**People's Choice Awards**

All finalists are included in an online competition to win the People's Choice Awards. Fans and supporters vote via social media for their favorite finalist projects. Winners of the People's Choice Awards are also announced at the President's Awards Gala, held in conjunction with the annual Texas Downtown Conference.

**Need more information?**

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