

King City library, seniors centre recognized with design award

By Mark PavilonsEditor

King City's library and seniors centre has been recognized for its stunning architecture. The facility was awarded Canada's top architecture award by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada, at a ceremony at Rideau Hall last week. The King City building was among 12 projects from across Canada recognized for its "exceptional, innovative and outstanding design." Mayor Steve Pellegrini was on hand for the ceremony, swelling with pride that King has yet another feather in its cap. "Receiving this prestigious award is a testament to the architectural brilliance and visionary design of the King Township Public Library's King City branch and Senior's Centre," Pellegrini said. Designed by the talented team at Kongats Architects, this building is more than just a structure; "it is a symbol of our community's commitment to innovation, inclusivity and sustainability." The mayor added that the jury's recognition of our library and senior's centre as a multigenerational hub highlights its role as a place where people of all ages can come together to share stories, knowledge and experiences. "The design of this facility, resembling an open hand, beautifully captures the essence of King's community spirit," he said. "The alternating intimate, wood-lined study rooms and light-filled reading areas offer a harmonious blend of spaces that cater to diverse needs while providing stunning views of our natural surroundings." The use of stone, wood and glass not only enhances the building's aesthetic appeal but also underscores our dedication to environmental sustainability. "I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Kongats Architects for their visionary design, the Canada Council for the Arts for their support, and the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada for recognizing our project. "I also want to thank the residents of King Township for their unwavering support and engagement throughout this journey. "As we celebrate this achievement, let us continue to cherish and utilize this incredible space, ensuring it remains a vibrant and welcoming hub for generations to come." The local facility was designed by Kongats Architects and Alar Kongats was on hand to receive the award. "The Governor General's Medal In Architecture awarded to the King City Public Library and Seniors' Centre at Rideau Hall by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon is wonderful recognition for such an impactful building that fosters community spirit, engagement and lifelong learning across multiple generations. It is a project that clearly demonstrates the social value of architecture.," Kingats said. "Kongats Architects is so proud to have been given the opportunity to work on the project and to have accepted the award together with Mayor Steve Pellegrini and King City Public Library CEO Adele Reid." The Governor General's Medals in Architecture and Landscape Architecture are presented by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects, and the Canada Council for the Arts. The biennial awards recognize and celebrate outstanding design in recently completed built projects of any size, type and geographical location by Canadian architects. The competition continues a tradition initiated by the Massey Medals in 1950, providing an important source of understanding of the nature of Canadian architecture and the regional, cultural, and historic forces expressed in the built environment. Outstanding design considers exemplary approaches to sustainability, and the support and advancement of equity, diversity, and inclusion. "The Governor General's Medals in Architecture celebrate and commemorate projects and architects that embrace and exceed the highest standards of the profession," said Jason Robbins, FRAIC, President of the RAIC. "This year's recipients continue a long-standing tradition of design excellence, making a significant impact across all aspects of our lives. The awarded projects demonstrate exceptional careful consideration of people, place and purpose, and further contribute to the growing Canadian culture of design. Each and every project shows how architecture can be a positive force that is inclusive, sustainable, and capable of change in individual lives and communities. Your dedication to design excellence creates a better world for all." Michelle Chawla, Director and CEO of the Canada Council for the Arts said: "Each of the architectural teams from across the country that is being recognized deserves our thanks and appreciation for their exciting and exceptional works, as well as for their unique contributions to the architectural landscape of Canada." The library and seniors centre opened during COVID, in November 2021. Construction of the 21,000-square-foot (1,951-square-metre) building on King Road began in 2018. The bright, modern facility is nestled in the hillside across the road from King City Secondary School. The Library Branch building includes meeting and study spaces, a reading lounge, book and out-of-the-box collections, public-use technology, children and teen areas and a Make-It Lab. The Seniors' Centre includes rental space, community space and program areas. The building also has a host of environmental features, including efficient heating and cooling; energy-saving LED lighting; exterior window glazing; electric vehicle charging station, and a storm water infiltration system. The cost of the construction was \$11.2 million. Funding sources include \$5.4 million

from development charges, \$3 million from Township debenture, \$1.6 million from parkland dedication and \$200,000 from Township funds.