

# **MINE THE GAP**

**CHICAGO ARCHITECTURAL CLUB : 2010 CHICAGO PRIZE COMPETITION**



## INTRODUCTION

The Chicago Architectural Club is pleased to announce the 2010 Chicago Prize Competition: MINE THE GAP, a single-stage international design ideas competition dedicated to examining one of the most visible scars left after the collapse of the real estate market in Chicago: the massive hole along the Lake Michigan shore that was to have been—and may yet be—the foundation for a singular 150-story condominium tower designed by an internationally-renowned Spanish architect, a tower which was to have become a new icon for the city and region. What to do with the gap? Whether or not the project is resuscitated, what else can we do with this strategic and highly-charged site? Once the motor of real-estate speculation has stalled, what can we use to propel ourselves, and the discipline, forward?

This year's Chicago Prize competition forms part of a series of conversations held by the Chicago Architectural Club about the STATE OF THE ART, a discussion about the position of architecture at a moment when the global recession has either

slowed or frozen completely the driving forces that had propelled architecture and urbanism over the past decades. The bursting of the real-estate bubble has left many architects without work, and a number of building sites within the city sit incomplete or abandoned. Yet there is opportunity in this collapse. Despite the apparent desperation of the moment, we detect a newfound freedom for architects to speculate, to propose, to instigate and to agitate for a different city. This competition aims to exploit that new freedom and to define the role of the architect in an economy of crisis and a city full of scars.

The results of this competition will be announced in May 2010, at a public event to be held in Chicago. A jury of notable professionals and academics involved in the discussion of the future of our cities will decide a First, Second and Third Prize as well as 3 honorable mentions. All entries will be published in the forthcoming issue of the CAC Journal, alongside the results of the 2008 Burnham Prize Competition, Union Station 2020.

## BACKGROUND

The project site is located in a newly-urbanized area of Chicago that, despite its strategic location along the lakeshore and riverside, and its proximity to Michigan Avenue and the Loop, was until quite recently a zone of warehouses and surface parking lots. The new neighborhood that has developed in fits-and-starts since the 1980's is composed of renovated warehouse loft apartments, low rise townhouses, and luxury residential and mixed-use towers, many of which were completed just before the economic collapse of 2008.

The massive concrete-lined foundation hole is essentially a tower in reverse -- one that extends deep into the earth, rather than into the sky. This hole, where the 150-story tower has been proposed, is sandwiched between an elevated portion of Lake Shore Drive -- a combination of scenic boulevard and limited-access expressway running along the Lake Michigan shore for most of the length of the city -- and a residential development of town houses and residential towers. The other sides of the site are defined by

the Chicago River and the Ogden Slip, a former cargo harbor converted to recreational and retail uses in the 1980s.

The site is surrounded by a diverse range of scales, programs and elements of infrastructure that should be considered as part of the problem at hand.

## SITE DEFINITION

Competitors are limited to the area bounded by Lake Shore Drive to the east, the Ogden Slip to the north, the Chicago River to the south, and the existing line of trees to the east. Please see the attached Site Plan A for details. Per this plan, the site includes the foundation hole, piles, and all surrounding land within the parcel – competitors may propose solutions that occupy any reasonable percentage of the total site area.

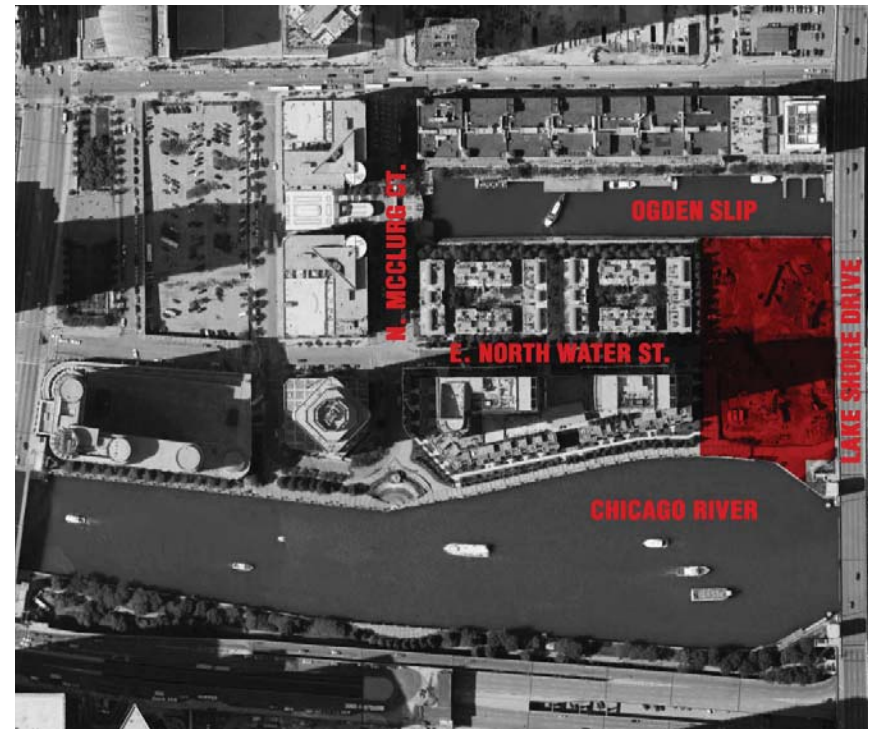
The concrete foundation wall is sufficient to support a tower of 150 stories, and has a total depth of 70'-0", with a finished concrete slab at its base. Please refer to the drawings on the competition website for exact dimensions and locations.

The hole itself may be reshaped, broadened, or otherwise manipulated in any way that furthers your proposal.

Although little work has completed on site for the past two years, the tower project is officially "on hold" and has not formally been canceled.

Competitors may thus assume either that the previous tower project is definitively canceled, or that the site is merely to be occupied until construction resumes (the date of this hypothetical resumption of work is also open to speculation by the competitors).

The nature of your proposals should, therefore, reflect your understanding of how permanent you believe your occupation of the site to be.





## PROGRAM

There is no set program for this competition; your definition of the program is part of the design problem.

There is no requirement to replace the program intended to be accommodated in the original 150-story tower proposal.

See the "Criteria for Evaluation" section for further discussion on competition objectives.

## CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

**1.** Although this project is located in a context where the tower is one of the dominant typologies, we are not necessarily looking for an investigation in this field.

We discourage solutions that merely substitute one tower for another. We instead encourage proposals that provide both a compelling architectural and urbanistic response as well as a vehicle to investigate the potential of the discipline of architecture when the real-estate market provides neither significant opportunities or constraints.

**2.** Proposals should address the overlap of the different scales and systems that intervene in the site. Our site is a privileged one, sitting at a point of overlap of public and private zones, of heavy infrastructures and amenities; here, we find the overlapping of the lakefront parks, the riverfront park, Lake Shore Drive and the heroic operable bridge over the Chicago River.

How, if at all, does the project connect with the public realm? How does the project engage the Lake Michigan path network and the Chicago River? How does the project deal with the scale of the local street and with other networks? How can this site leverage what is already present?

**3.** This competition is, in part, about looking for new ways to construct both the city and the programs within it. If real-estate speculation is no longer the driving force, what new techniques and actors can fill this space?

What does the architect do?

## COMPETITION STRUCTURE

MINE THE GAP is an open, anonymous, single-stage ideas competition open to all architects, intern architects, landscape architects, and students. Members of the Board of Directors of the Chicago Architectural Club, members of the jury or their families, or those involved in any capacity with the preparation or funding of this competition may not participate.

This competition is to be conducted solely via this website – no additional printed material is available.

English is the official language for this competition. All presentation materials and submitted questions should be written in the official language.

All drawings and architectural scales should be expressed in feet and inches.

## PRIZES/FEES

### Entry Fees:

Chicago Architectural Club Members (with 2010 Dues paid-in-full):	\$30
Students (with copy of valid ID):	\$50
All others:	\$90

### Prizes:

First Prize:	\$3,500
Second Prize:	\$1,500
Third Prize:	\$750

Up to 3 Honorable Mentions will be awarded.

Winning entries will be featured in the forthcoming issue of the CAC Journal, and in a public event to be held in May 2010.

## JURY

### Lynn Becker

Writer  
Chicago Reader, Architecturechicagoplus

### Preston Scott Cohen

Principal, Preston Scott Cohen, Inc.  
Professor and Department Chair  
Harvard University

### Martin Felsen

Partner, UrbanLab  
Professor, Illinois Institute of Technology  
Director, Archeworks

### Jeanne Gang

Partner, Studio/Gang/Architects  
Professor, Illinois Institute of Technology

### Robert Somol

Professor and Director, School of Architecture  
University of Illinois at Chicago

## SCHEDULE

### February 10, 2010:

Competition Launched  
Question and Answer Period Opens  
Online Registration Opens

### March 29, 2010:

Question and Answer Period Closes

### March 29, 2010:

Online Submission Period Opens

### May 3, 2010:

Online Registration and Submission  
Periods Close

### May 2010 (Date and Location TBA)

Winners Announced at Public Event

## ANONYMITY/OWNERSHIP

Anonymity will be maintained throughout the competition. No names of team members shall appear on graphic material or in file names.

Upon registration, all competitors will receive an identification code. This code **must appear on each presentation board** in 12-point, horizontally oriented type in the bottom right-hand corner.

All material received by the organizers becomes their property, including reproduction rights.

The intellectual property rights in each project remain the exclusive property of the author(s) of the project.

## SUBMISSIONS

### ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS ONLY:

The Following Material should be submitted via the competition web site:  
[www.chicagoarchitecturalclub.org](http://www.chicagoarchitecturalclub.org)

**1:** Two (2) horizontally oriented boards @ 24"x 36" (60.9cm x 91.4cm) in PDF format

Boards to include at minimum:

- A. Plans, sections and elevations at 1/16"=1'-0" or 1/32"=1'-0"
- B. Interior and Exterior Perspectives
- C. Diagrams as needed to explain strategy

**2:** JPEG files of all boards submitted @ 72 dpi

**3:** JPEG files of all individual images and drawings

**4:** A written statement of no more than 300 words

**5:** A .doc file titled "teamid.doc": this file will list the following information:

- A. Project title, as used in all submitted files
- B. Names and Titles of all members of competition team
- C. Team Leader, Telephone, Address, and Email Contact Information

**NOTE:** Please submit all files in a single .zip file format.

Zip file name will consist solely of a code assigned to you upon registration.

Example: 123456.zip

This code **must appear on each presentation board** in 12-point, horizontally oriented type in the bottom right-hand corner.

## MATERIAL PROVIDED

1. Reference plan and section
2. Site Photographs
3. Aerial Photographs

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The deadline for competition queries is 12:00 noon (Chicago time), March 29, 2010.

All questions and answers will be presented at the following web address:  
[www.chicagoprize2010.blogspot.com](http://www.chicagoprize2010.blogspot.com)

Please submit all questions via the above website.

## SPONSORS

The 2010 Chicago Prize Competition is made possible by the generous support of:

The Members of The Chicago Architectural Club  
The Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat



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[www.chicagoarchitecturalclub.org](http://www.chicagoarchitecturalclub.org)

The Chicago Architectural Club reserves the right to publish, exhibit, or present the work submitted to this competition in any format.

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