

[Urban Land Institute New York announces real estate contest](#)

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Seeking to encourage real estate projects that enhance neighborhoods and focus on environmental issues, the nonprofit Urban Land Institute New York is kicking off a design contest on Thursday called 2016 Awards in Excellence in Development.

Judges will consider public and private projects, as well as nonprofit institutions like schools, churches and hospitals, throughout the state, according to an announcement provided in advance to POLITICO New York.

The awards ceremony is scheduled for March 10, 2016. The organization will select six winners for office, residential, institutional, mixed-use, redevelopment and civic space.

"Land use is a very important issue here and in this particular case we thought it was important to try and raise our game a little bit and highlight projects that exemplify the best practices in the real estate industry," Robert Lieber, chairman of Urban Land Institute New York, said in an interview. (Lieber also served as a deputy mayor during the Bloomberg administration.)

He said judges will focus on a project's commitment to resiliency, including electrical backup plans and buffering properties from rising tides in the event of a major storm.

They also will review how well the buildings conserve energy and other sustainability considerations.

And they will take into account how developments integrate and improve existing neighborhoods by adding public space and mass transit options and constructing modern buildings.

"Our building stock is so old," Lieber added.

The nine judges include former City Council land use director Gail Benjamin; Boston Properties CEO and director Owen Thomas; Silverstein Properties CEO Marty Burger; and Center for Active Design executive director Joanna Frank.

Award submissions will be accepted through Nov. 6.