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Parsons-Led Student Competition Bolsters Rise of Urban Timber

Ever since the start of the Industrial Revolution, concrete and steel—the standard in large construction projects—have dominated our city’s skylines. However, over the past decade, the design industry has been looking increasingly toward timber as a sustainable, flexible material for

the construction of high-rise buildings. In other words, say socially engaged designers, “timber is the new concrete.”

[Parsons School of Design](#) is helping to lead this shift through [Timber in the City, Urban Habitats Competition](#), an architecture student competition conceived of and juried by the world-class design school in partnership with the [Binational Softwoods Lumber Council](#) (BSLC) and [Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture](#) (ACSA).

First held during the 2012-2013 academic year, the competition is entering its second installment with a new site and program led by Parsons Assistant Professor Alan Bruton. The competition will challenge students in the United States and Canada to design a mid-rise, mixed-use complex with affordable housing units; a relocated and expanded city-sponsored market for independent food enterprises; and a museum housing the works of Andy Warhol. Winning students and their faculty sponsors will receive cash prizes totaling \$40,000. Entries being accepted now through March 2016. The announcement of the second installment of the competition will coincide with the release of a new book, “Timber In The City.” ([A launch event](#) for the book

will be held on Thursday, June 18, 6-8 p.m. at [The Center for Architecture](#), 536 LaGuardia Place.)

Edited by Andrew Bernheimer, director of the Master of Architecture program at Parsons, the book documents the student projects in the inaugural Timber in the City, Urban Habitats Competition, as well as the executed work of design professionals at the leading edge of architecture's timber movement. "As concrete and steel were to 20th century, timber will be to the 21st century," Bernheimer said. "Parsons is leading the way on urban timber – a sustainable, renewable, cost-effective and safe alternative to concrete and steel, which produce an enormous amount of waste and contain materials that are detrimental to the health of human beings and the environment."

For more information and to apply to the competition, visit [acsa-arch.org/programs-events/competitions/2015-2016-timber-in-the-city](https://www.acsa-arch.org/programs-events/competitions/2015-2016-timber-in-the-city).

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