

Diamond Schmitt builds on Passive House

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Passive House Designer/Consultant certification is on the rise at Diamond Schmitt, an internationally recognized architectural firm with a commitment to lead the nation creating a culture of environmental action. Today Diamond Schmitt announced that 14 additional architects have become Passive House-certified. They join 10 architects already certified to strengthen the firm's ability to design high performance buildings and mitigating climate change.

Diamond Schmitt architects were formally congratulated on Friday, February 5 by Passive House Canada's CEO, Chris Ballard over a private zoom call. "This is a real game changer when it comes to providing the ability to design Passive House buildings," said Ballard, "...your certification ensures that you are all expertly qualified to design high-performance, highly efficient buildings to meet Canada's national green building strategy. You are the ones driving the sustainable transformation of the building industry and pushing us forward into a future that is more resource-efficient, promotes health and wellness and represents building to resilience."

Passive House is recognized as the proven best way to build for health, comfort, affordability and energy efficiency in residential, institutional and commercial buildings, through all stages of design, construction, and livability. The Diamond Schmitt team now grows to 24 Passive House experts advocating for a high standard of sustainable building performance across its studios located in Toronto, New York, Calgary and Vancouver. The firm's latest Passive House Designer/Consultant recipients include: Cecily Eckhardt, Senior Associate; Diana Saragosa, Associate; Fernanda Rubin Joffe, Associate; Haley Zhou, Associate; Jeffrey Mitchell; John Hibbett; Judith Martin, Associate; Justin Loucks; Nazanin Sephry-Rad; Mike Taylor; Peter Kirby; Sarah Elliott; Zvonimir Cicvaric and Persis Lam, Associate.

While Passive House project development in Canada is still new, the field is growing. The firm's collective knowledge will be leveraged to design and detail better buildings to meet the challenge of the climate crisis. Diamond Schmitt is currently pursuing full Passive House certification and targeting Toronto Green Standard Tier 4 for Toronto Community Housing's Alexandra Park Passive House Pilot Project. The pioneering design focuses on 21 townhouse units in Phase Two of the Alexandra Park redevelopment. The project is designed for social cohesion, safety, accessibility and interconnectivity with adjacent neighbourhoods and green spaces. The ambitious sustainability goals this project will define a framework for future developments. The pilot project seeks to bring the requirements of high-performance building to a greater audience within the City of Toronto.

Mike Szabo, Principal and Sustainable Design leader at Diamond Schmitt confirms: "The fact that we have gone from 10 to 24 Passive House certifications in such a short span of time is testament to our commitment to Passive House as a performance metric, and our goal to reduce the energy and carbon footprint of all our projects. Our advocacy role has been deepened by these recent certifications. Sustainable design is now urgent and we will continue to be at the forefront of new technologies and advocacy for sustainable infrastructure. The successes that we have experienced are directly attributable to the dedication of these colleagues and industry partners who are passionate about sustainability. By working together, we achieve more than any one of us could achieve on our own."

Diamond Schmitt continues its commitment to improving sustainability through its pursuit of more Passive House projects as well as other low carbon innovations: harnessing photo voltaic cladding at the Red River College's Innovation Centre to achieve near net zero energy; employing net zero and low carbon design strategies such as mass timber structures (low carbon structures), optimizing solar exposure for Sifton

Properties' net zero multi-unit residential/ commercial development in London, Ontario; and working with the City of Ottawa to design the Ottawa Public Library–**Library and Archives Canada Joint Facility** (net zero carbon) in joint venture with KWC Architects. In 2020, for the fifth consecutive year the firm received recognition as Canada's Greenest Employer for its environmental initiatives, success reducing the firm's own environmental footprint, colleague involvement, and ability to attract new talent as a result of its environmental stewardship.

Diamond Schmitt is a global architecture firm that designs transformative, purpose-driven, and highly sustainable buildings across sectors. Delivering innovative architecture that empowers people, communities, and organizations to harness change for the greater public good, Diamond Schmitt employs a collaborative research process to create bold designs renowned for their exceptional performance and meticulous craftsmanship. With offices in New York, Toronto, Vancouver, and Calgary, Diamond Schmitt is currently leading the design for the net zero Ottawa Public Library–**Library and Archives Canada Joint Facility**.

Passive House Canada is the national voice for advocating the International Passive House, high performance building standard across Canada. PHC facilitates the adoption of the Passive House buildings through advocacy, education, events, member services and technical advice. It is at the foundation of how we build better. It is how we feel better.