

Top 10 Projects of 2023



Across the country, wood construction is capturing the spotlight and inspiring more architects, engineers, and developers to create and build even more innovative wood buildings.

Think Wood profiled several of these boundary-pushing structures this year—from nature-focused multifamily residences to cultural spaces rooted in traditional building practices to public spaces reimaged and elevated with wood. Whether they used light-frame, mass timber, or a combination of the two, our top 10 project profiles of 2023 showcase the best of the design and construction community’s creativity, design excellence, and commitment to sustainability through the use of natural, renewable building materials. Check them out below:



Portland, OR | Multifamily

Nesika Illahee Affordable Housing

For Nesika Illahee—or “Our Place” in the Chinook language—architects drew on the Indigenous culture and traditions of its residents to build a warm, community-centered space in this low-income housing project in Portland. This respect for tradition is reflected in the use of local timber as a building material, including repurposing a significant tree that had to be cut down in order to build the project as outdoor furniture.

[See the Project](#)



New York, NY | Civic, Community

High Line – Moynihan Connector

A timber bridge may not have been the most obvious solution to connect Skidmore, Owings & Merrill’s reimaged Moynihan Train Hall at Penn Station and the New York City’s High Line, but it turned out to be a wood decision. The bridge’s use of glulam evokes both nature and rail infrastructure—all while reducing embodied carbon by nearly 50%.

[See the Project](#)





Houston, TX | Commercial

Houston Endowment Headquarters

When a concrete structure proved too costly and cumbersome, the Houston Endowment Headquarters design team turned to a lighter, nimbler mass-timber-and-steel solution that cut structural costs by 50%—and delivered a sleek, high-tech, and thoroughly modern hybrid structure.

[See the Project](#)



Los Angeles, CA | Multifamily

SuperBungalows

Aaron van Schaik, SuperLA founder and principal, believes that affordable apartments don't have to be banal white boxes—and he's turning to one of California's quintessential housing styles and a replicable, prefab mass timber construction model to prove it.

[See the Project](#)



Woodland, MN | Single-Family Home

Feldmann Residence

Minnesota-based architect David Salmela is known for crafting residences that place a premium on outdoor living. One of his latest is this two-story house west of Minneapolis, overlooking Lake Minnetonka. This Minnesota home's dramatic second-story porch provides a sun-filled outdoor living escape.

[See the Project](#)



Winthrop, WA | Civic, Community

Winthrop Library

Winthrop Library is a modern reinterpretation of the Washington town's historic agricultural architecture. Architects found an opportunity in the town's historic Western building codes to design a light-filled, turn-of-the-century, timber-built hay barn re-envisioned as a library.

[See the Project](#)





Denver, CO | Multifamily,
Civic, Community

Globeville Affordable Housing and Library

Carefully composed with an eye toward the poetics of its materials, Chicago-based architect John Ronan's new 173-unit Globeville Affordable Housing complex in Denver looks to inspiration from the surrounding neighborhood's industrial past.

[See the Project](#)



North Salem, NY | Single-Family Home

North Salem Farm

North Salem Farm is a compelling mix of old and new, simple and complex. This contemporary ensemble—designed by New York-based Worrell Yeung—filters the archetypal wood barn through more than a century of modern minimalism to complete a thoroughly timeless dwelling.

[See the Project](#)



Arlington, VA | Commercial

Amazon HQ2

When architects at ZGF set out to design Amazon's second headquarters in Arlington, their mantra was to create a warm, versatile, biophilic space instead of a cold corporate workplace—all while supporting Amazon's goal of reaching net-zero by 2040.

[See the Project](#)



Decorah, IA | Community, Cultural

Vesterheim Commons

To design Vesterheim Commons, the National Norwegian-American Museum and Folk Art School located in Decorah, Iowa, architects at Snøhetta and BNIM used glulam to design and build the swooping wood canopy. The result calls to mind traditional Norwegian boats while revealing the stunning exposed timber structural system beneath.

[See the Project](#)



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