



2026 Sample Entry— NOVA Expansion Live

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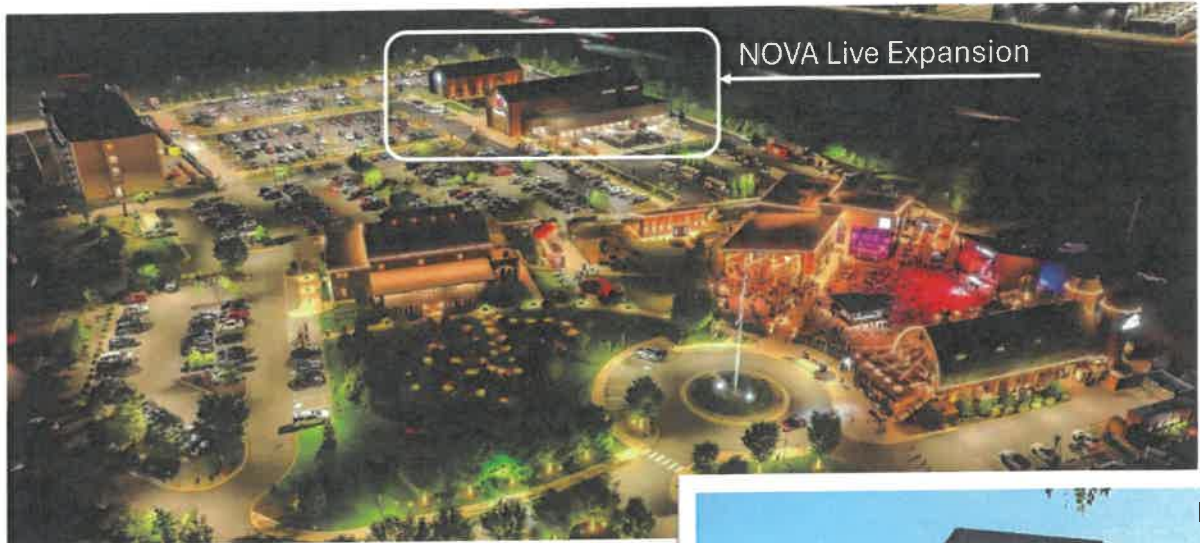
Graphics are well done. The first photo shows the section of the site that is being submitted giving judges context. Other photos are discussed in the narrative. The graphic showing the sightline study is placed appropriately with the design challenge discussed.

Sample entry has hard costs redacted. Cost is a key factor for the judges; please make sure this information is included in your submission.

Project Size: 30,000 SF

Completion: June 2025

Cost/SF: \$0/SF



Project Summary

The NOVA Live campus has been steadily growing, and this expansion firmly established it as Northern Virginia's first premier destination for hospitality, dining, and live entertainment.

The project introduced 25,000 square feet of new program space, including a distillery, full-service restaurant, and catering kitchen, alongside a 5,000 square foot Rickhouse that defines the edge of a new shared courtyard. Together, these elements create a dynamic new gathering space that is both unique and seamlessly connected to the broader campus.

The design established a strong presence along Prince William Parkway, while careful massing and material choices ensured harmony with the existing venues. The distillery, Rickhouse, and courtyard now serve as a new anchor for the campus, expanding both its physical footprint and the visitor experience.

A key driver behind the expansion was the relocation of a regional distillery to the site, supported by county funding. This marked the first state-supported grant of



Distillery



Courtyard shared with the Rickhouse



Expansion view from Parkway

its kind in Prince William County and the largest award to date for a distillery in Virginia, underscoring the project's broader regional significance.



Overall Concept & Design Objectives

- Expansion introduced three interconnected but distinct uses: a distillery, a full-service restaurant, and a catering kitchen that also supports an existing event and wedding venue.
- The Rickhouse was placed adjacent to the distillery to reinforce the direct relationship between production and barrel aging while forming an edge to the new courtyard.
- Site design established a strong Parkway presence with public spaces facing the campus and service functions located toward the rear, consistent with the orientation of existing facilities.
- Pathways and sidewalks provide new pedestrian links between the hotel, the existing campus venues, and the new buildings.



Barrel aging in the Rickhouse

- The distillery massing was designed as one of the tallest campus structures (after the hotel), creating a landmark and drawing visitors deeper into the campus.
- Large gable roof forms were used to highlight primary program areas and visually connect the new buildings to the existing architectural landscape.

Design Challenges

- The project began as a tasting room concept but evolved midstream to include a full-service restaurant. That shift required significant space planning changes, including kitchen redesign and dining layouts.
- The gable height of the distillery was raised 12 feet during design so it would align with other buildings on campus and improve visibility from the Parkway. This change altered the steel package after fabrication had already commenced.



- The structure is a pre-engineered metal building, it's complex massing, multiple roof elevations, and façade detailing are not the typical, simple metal box.
- Composite materials were substituted for Machiche wood siding to reduce long-term maintenance offering a rich, earthy contrasted look to the Corten steel and to add consistency with other campus spaces.
- Program and material changes initiated during design and construction by the owner required rapid redesigns, sightline studies, and detailing adjustments while staying on schedule.



Curtain wall with still in distillery

Innovation

- Incorporated a 46-foot glass curtain wall that reveals the 35-foot still inside the distillery, turning functional equipment into an architectural focal point.
- Leveraged a pre-engineered metal building system and panelized enclosure to streamline erection and speed enclosure while enabling budget flexibility.

- Introduced liner panels to simplify detailing, allowing investment to focus on major architectural accents like tall gables and public entrances.
- Designed with material simplicity, PBR (Purlin Bearing Rib) metal panels made from Corten steel, a weathering material that forms a protective, rust-hued patina over time to balance durability, warmth, and reduced maintenance.
- Coordinated design-build delivery enabled fast response to owner-driven program changes, from altering building height to redesigning service areas.

Achievement of Goals

- Transformed the site into a dynamic new destination integrated with surrounding breweries, restaurants, and entertainment venues on the NOVA Live campus.



- Established deliberate sightlines and pedestrian avenues that connect the hotel, courtyard, and new buildings, sparking curiosity and reinforcing flow.
- Balanced the energy of the live music and brewery spaces with a quieter, more refined hospitality experience anchored by the distillery and restaurant.
- Provided long-term adaptability with flexible spaces that can evolve for future tenants or different operational models.
- Advanced county economic development goals by supporting the relocation of a distillery through the largest state-supported grant awarded to date for this use in Prince William County.
- Created architectural harmony with existing campus buildings while elevating campus identity through landmark massing, durable materials, and iconic forms.