

## DESIGNING AN ICONIC GATEWAY TO JACKSONVILLE

**W**hen the City of Jacksonville, Fla., and the Jacksonville Transportation Authority sought competing designs to bring their vision of an iconic regional transportation hub to life, Michael Baker International, in partnership with Pond & Company, took on the challenge. And won.

This design partnership applied the concept of placemaking at an urban scale and designed the Jacksonville Regional Transportation Center, referred to as the JAXIS project, to reflect what the partnership describes as its civic importance as a gateway to the region, a gateway to downtown Jacksonville, and the heart of the neighborhood.

The center will be built next to the region's historic Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center, which originally was the Union Station Terminal. The convention center will connect to the new transportation hub via a pedestrian skywalk.

The JAXIS project is designed to connect the movement of people with urban form, "bonding people to places, and empowering social equity with economic viability," according to the partnership's proposal. This regional transportation center will serve as a hub for intercity bus transportation, bus rapid transit, monorail, taxi and rental/Zipcar services.

At the heart of the project is a landscaped plaza with fountains, a café, grass softscape and stepped terraces surrounded by street-level arcades to the buildings. The designers' goal: To transform a "daily travel routine" into an experience with lasting significance.

The JAXIS project is targeted for completion in 2019. ●

