



Andrea Leja

Interior Designer | Author | | Regenerative Living Advocate

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NOTL Residents Association

Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario L0S 1J0 | notlra2025@gmail.com

Andrea Leja - Candidate Bio for NOTLRA Director Position

- **Leader & Innovator:**

- Founder & CEO of THRVE Lifestyle & Development Group Inc., a Niagara-based design and wellness development firm.
- Over 25 years of experience creating biophilic, wellness-oriented spaces that foster belonging, memory, and vitality.

- **Author & Storyteller:**

- Author of *Rooted in Home: Designing a Life That Heals, Holds, and Remembers*, blending soulful narrative with practical design guidance.
- Creator of **THRVE Passport**, a seasonal magazine celebrating wellness, nature, and community.
- Leveraging storytelling to inspire thoughtful engagement and connection across Niagara-on-the-Lake and globally.

- **Community & Media Engagement:**

- Member, Global Wellness Institute - Wellness Communities & Real Estate Initiative.
- Member, Niagara-on-the-Lake Senior Housing Advisory Committee, driving sustainable housing and aging-in-place solutions.
- Collaborating on a Cogeco TV series on aging with Karen Fraser

- **Vision for NOTLRA:**

- Bring strategic insight, creativity, and community networks to strengthen local planning and programming.
- Champion initiatives that enhance resident wellbeing, sustainable growth, and inclusive engagement.
- Elevate NOTLRA's visibility through media, authorship, and cross-sector partnerships, connecting local voices with national thought leadership.
- Shape a Niagara-on-the-Lake that honours its heritage while building resilient, vibrant, and wellness-focused communities.

Sincerely,

Andrea Leja

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Interior Designer | Author | Steward of Regenerative Wellbeing
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Writing at the intersection of place, memory, and soul. Designing a life of wellness, wonder, and belonging.

SUMMARY

Andrea Leja is a Canadian author, biophilic designer, and regenerative real estate developer whose work spans more than 25 years of creating spaces that nurture life, legacy, and belonging. As the founder of THRVE Lifestyle & Development Group Inc., she is a visionary in designing homes and communities that support longevity, emotional wellness, and connection to the natural world.

With a voice that weaves poetry and purpose, Andrea writes to illuminate the quiet power of place – exploring how our homes can hold us through transition, remembrance, and renewal. Her work is rooted in the belief that design is not just aesthetic, but ancestral; not just shelter, but soul. Through her writing and her spaces, she invites others into a more intentional way of living – one where beauty, meaning, and memory are inextricably entwined.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Regenerative Real Estate & Urban Placemaking
Biophilic & Wellness-Centred Design
Soulful Non-Fiction Writing & Editorial Direction
Seasonal Publishing & Conscious Lifestyle Media
Aging in Place, Emotional Architecture, and Intergenerational Design
Community Engagement & Experiential Programming
Design Communication & Visual Storytelling

SELECTED WRITING & PUBLICATIONS

Author, *Rooted in Home: Designing a Life That Heals, Holds, and Remembers*

Manuscript complete (83,000+ words); nonfiction submission in progress.

A soulful, poetic, and practical guide for designing homes that support whole-being wellness, beauty, and belonging across life stages. The book explores biophilic interiors, seasonal rhythms, aging in place, emotional architecture, and the future of regenerative living.

Audience: Midlife women, wellness and design readers, aging-in-place professionals

Comparable titles: Braiding Sweetgrass, The Beauty of What Remains, The Art of Gathering



Founder & Curator,

THRVE Passport: A Modern Almanac of Wellness, Wildness & Wonder (2025-present)

A seasonal digital print publication blending poetic essays, regenerative lifestyle practices, and design reflections inspired by place, ritual, and the cycles of nature.

Curated and authored original features on ancestral materials, seasonal wellness, biophilic interiors, and home as a site of healing.

Creator, Soulful Home (2024-present)

Monthly guide offering poetic design prompts, seasonal rituals, and reflections on nature-inspired living. Widely shared in THRVE community and used in workshops and circles.

Upcoming Projects

The Architecture of Belonging (2026): Essays and design meditations on memory, place, and healing through home.

Guest features in wellness collaborative anthologies exploring grief, ageing, and sanctuary-making.

SPEAKING, WORKSHOPS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Keynote Speaker & Panelist

Topics include biophilic living, regenerative design, soulful aging, and designing for emotional resilience.

Workshop Facilitator

Hosts intimate, place-based design workshops and wellness gatherings integrating sensory awareness, storytelling, and seasonal home rituals.

Soulful Design for Changing Times (Workshop Series, THRVE, 2023-24)

Designing for Longevity, Vitality & Flow (Keynote, 2023 Aging in Place Symposium)

Home as Medicine (Guest Panelist, Biophilic Living Forum, 2024)

Regenerative Living in Small Communities (Public Talk, Niagara Regional Series, 2025)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Founder & CEO

THRVE Lifestyle & Development Group Inc. | 2021-Present

- Lead the development of wellness-focused, age-inclusive real estate communities.
- Direct the design of sustainable urban environments and regenerative landscapes.
- Collaborate with planners, heritage consultants, and environmental engineers on large-scale site design.
- Spearheads THRVE Queenston Estates, a biophilic 55+ regenerative living community in Queenston (in progress).



Principal Designer & Project Manager

Andrea Leja Interior Design | 1996-Present

- Two decades of creating interiors that support health, joy, and sustainability
- Worked across Canada and internationally with a focus on legacy homes and soulful restorative residential, hospitality, and adaptive reuse projects
- Integrates green building strategies, sensory design, and cultural storytelling.

CEO & Communications Director

CYFO | 2018-2021

- Led storytelling, branding, and impact media for sustainable design initiatives in North America

Editor & Executive Leadership

NEWH Canada (The Hospitality Industry Network) | 2002-2006

- Edited a North American design trade magazine focused on emerging wellness and hospitality trends.
- Supported mentorship and sustainability programs within the international design community.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

- Bachelor of Interior Design, Sheridan College
- Business Certificate, Niagara College
- Bachelor of Food Science, Ryerson University
- Member: International WELL Building Institute (IWBI), Biophilic Design Network

Ethos Statement

Through soulful storytelling and intentional design, Andrea seeks to bridge the inner and outer home – inviting readers to live more rooted, more regenerative, and more whole.

References and expanded portfolio available upon request.

