

APA California Northern 2017 Awards Program: Categories, Criteria, and Policies

The purpose of the APA California Northern Awards Program is to encourage quality in planning and increase the public's awareness of the planning profession through recognizing outstanding achievement in the planning field. Each year, APA California Northern awards dozens of Planning Awards to honor the most outstanding efforts in planning in the Section. The program honors innovative plans and projects, distinguished APA members, and lay contributors to planning and achievements of the APA California Northern Section.

This document is an important companion to the nomination form. Applications are due March 20th, 2017. Below, we summarize the following:

Award Categories

Criteria for Award Categories (critical for nomination forms)

APA California Northern Awards Policies

AWARD CATEGORIES

1) Opportunity and Empowerment Award

For a plan, program, or project that improved quality of life for low-and moderate-income community residents. Emphasis is placed on how creative housing, economic development, and private investments have been used in or with a comprehensive community development plan to empower a community. This award also emphasizes tangible results and recognizes the planning discipline and its contribution as a community strategy. The strategy should have been in effect for a minimum of three years.

***Examples:** Regulatory reform; workforce development; affordable housing preservation; growth management; public-private partnerships; relevant transportation project; community participation; diverse housing planning; and sustainable, economic development.*

2) Comprehensive Plan Implementation

To a comprehensive plan of unusually high merit completed within the past 3 years for, by or within a jurisdiction. There are no limits on the size of jurisdiction.

a) Large Jurisdiction: To a comprehensive plan of unusually high merit completed within the past 3 years for, by or within a jurisdiction with a population of 100,000 or more according to the most recent available US Census data.

b) Small Jurisdiction: To a comprehensive plan of unusually high merit completed within the past 3 years for, by, or within a jurisdiction with a population of less than 100,000 according to the most recent available US Census data.

***NOTE:** To be eligible for this category at the State level, a project must have a first place win at the Northern Section level (no ties)*

in the same year.

3) Implementation -Large and Small Jurisdictions

Recognizing an effort that demonstrates a significant achievement for an area—a single community or a region—in accomplishing positive changes as a result of planning. This award emphasizes long-term, measurable results. Nominated efforts should have been in continuous effect for a minimum of three (3) years, not including the time for plan preparation and approval.

Examples: *Plans for smart growth, signage, farmland preservation, urban design, wetland mitigation, resource conservation, capital improvements, citizen participation, neighborhood improvements, transportation management, or sustained economic development.* **NOTE:** *To be eligible for this category at the State level, a project must have a first place win at the Northern Section level (no ties) in the same year.*

a) Implementation --Large Jurisdiction: For an effort that demonstrates a significant achievement for a jurisdiction with a population of 100,000 or more, according to the most recent available US Census data, in accomplishing positive change as a result of planning.

This award is for long-term, measurable results to demonstrate that sustained implementation makes a difference. Nominated efforts should have been in continuous effect for a minimum of five years. Nominations can include, but not limited to, plans for smart growth, signage, farmland preservation, urban design, wetland mitigation, resource conservation, capital improvements, citizen participation, neighborhood improvement, transportation management, and sustained economic development.

b) Implementation --Small Jurisdiction: For an effort that demonstrates a significant achievement for a jurisdiction with a population of less than 100,000, according to the most recent available US Census data, in accomplishing positive change as a result of planning. This award is for long-term, measurable results to demonstrate that sustained implementation makes a difference. Nominated efforts should have been in continuous effect for a minimum of five years. Nominations can include, but not limited to, plans for smart growth, signage, farmland preservation, urban design, wetland mitigation, resource conservation, capital improvements, citizen participation, neighborhood improvement, transportation management, and sustained economic development.

4) Innovation in Green Community Planning

This award honors efforts to create greener communities that reduce the impact of development on the natural environment and improve environmental quality.

Examples: *Climate action plans, sustainability plans, green infrastructure plans; resource conservation efforts; alternative energy programs; efforts to reduce carbon emissions; public health initiatives.*

NOTE: *To be eligible for this category at the State level, a project must have a first place win at the Northern Section level (no ties) in the same year.*

5) Economic Planning and Development

This award honors efforts to transform economies and stimulate economic development in communities of all sizes.

Examples: *Economic plans, economic recovery initiatives, urban and regional economic analyses, commercial district revitalization, corridor revitalization, downtown specific plans, town center developments, and strategic plans for economic development.*

6) Transportation Planning

This award honors efforts to increase transportation choices for all populations, reducing dependence on private automobiles and helping to ease congestion and reducing climate change impacts.

Examples: *Transportation studies; complete streets plans or projects, plans for pedestrian, streets, highways, aviation, parking, maritime, transit or rail; development and expansion of transportation systems; development and expansion of trail systems.*

7) Best Practices

This award is for a specific planning tool, practice, program, project, or process. This category emphasizes results and demonstrates how innovative and state-of-the-art planning methods and practices help to create communities of lasting value.

Examples: *Regulations and codes, tax policies or initiatives, growth management or design guidelines, transferable development rights programs, land acquisition efforts, public-private partnerships, applications of technology, handbooks, or efforts that foster greater participation in community planning.*

NOTE: *To be eligible for this category at the State level, a project must have a first place win at the Northern Section level (no ties) in the same year.*

8) Grassroots Initiative Award

Honoring an initiative that illustrates how a neighborhood, community group or other local non governmental entity utilized the planning process to address a specific need or issue within the community. Emphasis is placed on the success of planning in new or different settings, with total project budget (including staff, consultant, and direct expenses) not exceeding \$25,000.

Examples: *Community policing or drug prevention, neighborhood outreach initiatives, programs designed for special populations, public art or cultural efforts, community festivals, environmental or conservation initiatives, summer recreational initiatives for children, vacant lot management, transportation innovations, or focused tourism ventures.*

NOTE: *To be eligible for this category at the State level, a project must have a first place win at the Northern Section level (no ties) in the same year.*

9) Public Outreach

This award honors an individual, project, or program that uses information and education about the value of planning to create greater awareness among citizens or specific segments of the public. The award celebrates how planning improves a community's quality of life.

Examples: *Broad community efforts showing how planning can make a difference, curricula designed to teach children about planning, neighborhood empowerment programs, use of technology to expand public participation in planning.*

10) Urban Design

This award honors efforts to create a sense of place, whether a street, public space, neighborhood, or campus effort.

Examples: *Streetscape plans; design guidelines; downtown and neighborhood districts; public space plans; hospital, college or other campus plan.*

11) Planning Advocate

This award honors an individual or appointed or elected official who has advanced or promoted the cause of planning in the public arena.

Examples: *Engaged citizens demonstrating outstanding leadership in a community, region, or state; members of planning commissions, board of appeals, economic development boards, environmental or historic preservation boards, commissions or committees, or other appointed officials; elected officials holding office at the local, regional, or state level; citizen activists or neighborhood leaders.*

12) Planning Firm

Honors a planning firm that has produced distinguished work that continues to influence the professional practice of planning.

13) Planning Agency

This award honors the work of a public sector planning agency that has continually produced a program of exceptional work that has elevated awareness about planning.

Examples: *Metropolitan planning organizations, regional planning associations, planning department, planning board, zoning board.*

14) Emerging Planning and Design Firm

This award honors a young planning and design firm that has helped elevate the planning profession and build public support for planning, and through its current work demonstrates the potential of having a continual influence on the planning profession for years to come.

15) Advancing Diversity and Social Change in Honor of Paul Davidoff

This award honors an individual, project, group, or organization that promotes diversity and demonstrates a sustained commitment to advocacy by addressing the concerns of women and minorities through specific actions or contributions within the planning profession or through planning practice. The award honors the late APA member, Paul Davidoff, for his contributions to the planning profession.

Examples: *A general or comprehensive plan that improves the living conditions of those in an underrepresented neighborhood, an individual working to improve the lives of others, a policy that addresses a need not currently met through other efforts.*

16) Academic Award

To faculty and/or students to recognize outstanding work done in planning schools on an individual or collective basis.

17) Communications Initiative

This award honors efforts to "tell the planning story" and increase awareness and understanding about the planning profession.

Examples: *Newspaper articles; series of blog posts or a planning-focused blog; publications (books or magazines); websites; podcasts; films.*

18) Hard-Won Victories

For a planning initiative or other planning effort undertaken by a community, neighborhood, citizens group, or jurisdiction in the face of difficult or trying circumstances. This award recognizes the positive effect of hard-won victories by professional planners, citizen planners, or both working together under difficult, challenging, or adverse conditions because of natural disasters, local circumstances, financial or organization constraints, social factors, or other causes.

19) Planning Landmark and Planning Pioneer Awards

Nominations for Planning Landmark Awards may only be submitted for those projects, initiatives, or endeavors located in the Section, and nominations for Pioneer Awards may only be submitted for those individuals that are current, retired, or deceased Section members. Special criteria have been established for these two award categories.

a) Planning Landmark Award: The Planning Landmark Award is for a planning project, initiative, or endeavor that are at least 25 years old that are historically significant, initiated a new direction in planning or impacted American planning, cities or regions over a broad range of time or space.

b) Planning Pioneer Award: Presented to pioneers of the profession who have made personal and direct innovations in American planning that have significantly and positively redirected planning practices, education or theory with long-term results.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING AWARD ENTRIES

Entries shall be judged according to the following criteria:

1) Opportunity and Empowerment Award

Results. How was the need for increased and sustained employment opportunities, quality education, and access to affordable housing or housing choice and mobility among low-and moderate-income residents addressed and documented? How were these efforts cost effective? Include the beginning and end date, detailed cost and funding data, and information about when the results were implemented. Information must be included describing how the nominated effort has exceeded any minimum requirements imposed by the source or sources of grants, loans, or other funding, whether government or private, obtained and used by the program, project, or effort.

Transferability. Is your entry replicable in other neighborhood or community contexts? How does the entry serve as an example for other localities working to address challenges inherent in the neighborhood or community? How does the program provide useful prescriptive measures for other communities similarly situated? How does the submission explicitly demonstrate that the project overcame these challenges to implement a successful program?

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Planning. What was the role of planners and the planning process in achieving results? How did the submission relate to existing plans? What role did planners play in achieving the results? How was the planning process important to subsequent implementation? How involved in the plan were specific groups and individuals from private, nonprofit, and public perspectives, particularly those who may have been left out of similar efforts in the past? Was there a collaborative effort between public and private entities?

Innovation. What innovative, forward-looking approaches were used to address various communitywide needs?

2) Comprehensive Plan

Originality and innovation. How does the entry present a visionary approach or innovative concept to address needs? How did the planning process in this context broaden accepted planning principles within the context of the situation?

Implementation. What steps have been taken to build momentum and public support for following and implementing the plan?

Effectiveness. How does the entry address the need or problem that prompted its initiation? How have the results made a difference in the lives of the people affected? An entry should convey the level of effectiveness it can have over time.

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Engagement. How various public interests involved and what were was the extent of that involvement? Competitive entries demonstrate a strong effort to solicit input from those who historically have been left out of the planning process. How was public and private support obtained? *Role of planners.* What was the role, significance and participation of planners? What is the connection between the effort's success and increased awareness in the community of planners and planning?

3. Implementation Award (Large and Small Jurisdictions):

Originality and innovation. How does the entry present a visionary approach or innovative concept to address needs? How did the planning process in this context broaden accepted planning principles within the context of the situation?

Overcoming challenges. What steps have been taken to build momentum and public support? What were the funding challenges or support for this effort? What were the political changes, if any, that affected, for better or worse, the effort's long-term funding?

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Effectiveness. What is the level of consistency of this implementation effort since its start? How was the need or problem addressed that prompted its initiation? How have the results made a difference in the lives of the people affected? What is the level of effectiveness the entry can have over time?

Participation. How were various public interests involved and the extent of that involvement? How was public and private support obtained? What was the role, significance, and participation of planners?

4. Innovation in Green Community Planning

Originality and innovation. What critical green planning elements are addressed by the nominated effort in terms of lessening and mitigating adverse impacts from development and everyday living? In what ways does the plan or planning effort seek to create a community that is truly sustainable & compatible with the natural resources and environmental system upon which its existence depends?

Implementation. What steps have been taken to build momentum & public support? How does the entry apply to others? How useful are the components & methodology to further the cause of good planning?

Effectiveness and results. How does the entry address the need or problem that prompted its initiation? How have the results made a difference in the lives of the people affected? What level of effectiveness can the entry have over time?

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Integration. How is the green community planning integrated into a corresponding comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance, capital improvement program, or other related initiative? In what ways does the green planning support the broader needs of the community and surrounding region or address community-wide objectives?

Engagement. What was done to ensure the widest variety of resident and stakeholder participation in the plan and planning process?

5. Economic Planning and Development

Originality and innovation. Does the entry presents a visionary approach or innovative concept to address specific needs? How were the planning principles observed, especially in consideration of the effects on other public objectives?

Implementation. What steps have been taken to build momentum and public support? How does the entry have potential application for others and how will use of the components and methodology further the cause of good planning?

Effectiveness and results. How does the entry address the need or problem that prompted its initiation? How have the results made a difference in the lives of the people affected? What level of effectiveness can the entry have over time?

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Integration. How was the entry integrated into other planning efforts such as a corresponding comprehensive or master plan or other related initiatives? How will the entry help further the cause of good planning and support the broader needs of the community and surrounding region?

Engagement. How were various public interests involved and the extent of that involvement? How was public and private support obtained? What was the role, significance, and participation of planners and any outcomes in terms of helping gain public support of planning?

6. Transportation Planning

Planning and innovation. What are the critical transportation elements which lessen or mitigate adverse impacts from development and everyday living? What was the role of planning or planners involved in the development process?

Effectiveness and results. How does the entry address the need or problem that prompted its initiation? How have the results made a difference in the lives of the people affected? What level of effectiveness can the entry have over time?

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Compatibility. How does transportation planning integrate into community planning? How does the entry connect to both environment and the economy?

Engagement. What was the public education and participation process? How was support generated?

7. Best Practices

Originality and innovation. Does the entry presents a visionary approach or innovative concept to address specific needs? How were the planning principles observed, especially in consideration of the effects on other public objectives?

Implementation and Transferability. What steps were taken to build momentum and public support for your entry? How does the entry have potential application for others and how will use of the components and methodology further the cause of good planning?

Effectiveness and results. How does the entry address the need or problem that prompted its initiation? How have the results made a difference in the lives of the people affected? What level of effectiveness can the entry have over time?

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Participation. How were various public interests involved and the extent of that involvement, including those who

historically have been left out of the planning process? How was public and private support obtained? What was the role, significance, and participation of planners? What is the connection between the effort's success and increased awareness in the community of planners and planning.

8. Grassroots Initiative

Effectiveness and results. State how your entry addressed the need or problem in a visionary or innovative manner that prompted its initiation, within a budget not exceeding \$25,000. Be explicit about how the results have made a difference in the lives of the people affected. Convey the level of effectiveness your entry can have over time.

Collaboration. Describe the level of collaboration between leadership and competing interests. Explain how those affected were brought into the planning process for this initiative.

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Education. Establish that your entry has encouraged community leaders to revise their opinions about varied uses and broad applications of the planning process. State the influence your entry has had on public awareness beyond those immediately affected.

9. Public Outreach

Originality and transferability. How does the program use new ideas or combines tools to address a demonstrated need for planning information or education within the community? How does the entry have potential application for others and how use of the components and methodology would further the cause of good planning.

Effectiveness and results. State how your entry addressed the need or problem that prompted its initiation. Be explicit about how the results make a difference in the lives of the people affected now and in the future. Show how your entry has increased the understanding of planning principles and the planning process. Provide measurable results if possible or as appropriate.

Participation. Explain how various public interests were involved and how your entry obtained public and private support. Competitive entries demonstrate a strong effort to solicit input from those who historically have been left out of the planning process. Clarify the role, significance, and participation of planners. Demonstrate the connection between the effort's success and increased awareness in the community of planners and planning.

10. Urban Design

Originality and innovation. Document how your entry presents a visionary approach or innovative concept to address needs. Explain how the use of the planning process in this context broadened accepted planning principles within the context of the situation.

Compatibility. Demonstrate how your entry integrates and supports the overall planning goals of the neighborhood or community.

Effectiveness and results. Describe how your entry has made a difference in the lives of the people affected. Convey the level of effectiveness your entry can have over time.

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Engagement. Explain how various public interests were involved and the extent of that involvement. Describe the level of collaboration between leadership and competing interests. Explain how those affected were brought into the planning process for this initiative.

11. Planning Advocate

Support of planning and planners. Illustrate how the nominee's work has increased the understanding of the planning process. Indicate how the nominee has shown a clear understanding of, and support for, the role of planners in public life.

Effectiveness and results. Describe the extent that the nominee has been effective in formulating and implementing plans and ideas in support of good planning. Identify the level of influence and effectiveness achieved by the nominee within different segments of the community.

12. Planning Firm

Quality. Demonstrate consistent quality of the firm's work and its recognition by the general public or those who practice or sponsor planning, teach planning, or develop communities. Elements of quality include graphic design, content, evidence of implementation by clients.

Influence. Detail the firm's positive influence on the direction and professional advancement of planning, for example promoting new technologies, collaboration among other design disciplines, innovations in practice, and advances in the art and science of planning. Identify the number of planners on staff.

Outreach and Engagement. Demonstrate the firm's efforts and skills in engaging stakeholders and resolving community conflicts with positive outcomes. Demonstrate responsiveness to the client and the various elements of the community in the planning process and willingness to incorporate ideas and suggestions from the community.

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Ethical Practice. Explain how the firm consistently upholds and champions the highest standards of ethics in terms of the public trust and guiding and educating its staff on the importance of ethics.

13. Planning Agency

Quality. Demonstrate consistent quality of the agency's work. Describe how the agency's program of work has elevated awareness about planning and built community support for planning. Describe the number of staff, their various roles, and if any members have specific certifications.

Outreach and Engagement. Demonstrate the agency's efforts and skills in engaging community members, business leaders and other stakeholders, and in resolving community conflicts with positive outcomes. Describe efforts undertaken to engage community members, especially those often overlooked, in planning processes.

Innovation. Describe how the agency has addressed concerns or issues within the community in a visionary or innovative

manner. Specify how planning principles have been observed, especially in consideration of the agency's effects on other public objectives.

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Implementation. Describe the program of work that has resulted in identified and meaningful outcomes that raise the quality of life for all citizens. Demonstrate the connection between planning and implementation with tools such as capital budgets.

14. Emerging Planning and Design Firm

Quality. Demonstrate consistent quality of the firm's work and its recognition by the general public or those who practice or sponsor planning, teach planning, or develop communities. Elements of quality include graphic design, content, evidence of implementation by clients.

Influence. Detail the firm's positive influence on the direction and professional advancement of planning, for example promoting new technologies, collaboration among other design disciplines, innovations in practice, and advances in the art and science of planning. Identify the number of planners on staff and if any members hold specific certifications.

Outreach and Engagement. Demonstrate the firm's efforts and skills in engaging stakeholders and resolving community conflicts with positive outcomes. Demonstrate responsiveness to the client and the various elements of the community in the planning process and willingness to incorporate ideas and suggestions from the community.

Optional Criteria. Please note these criteria are mandatory for State Level Application. They are only optional for chapter level awards.

Ethical Practice. Explain how the firm consistently upholds and champions the highest standards of ethics in terms of the public trust and guiding and educating its staff on the importance of ethics.

15. Advancing Diversity and Social Change in Honor of Paul Davidoff

Social and Economic. Describe how the nominee addresses the needs of at-risk individuals or populations that society typically overlooks. How have the nominee's efforts advanced or sustained sound, ethical, and inclusionary planning within the planning field, within a specific community, or in society at large?

Effectiveness & Results. Specify how your nominee has had a positive impact on the lives of those he/she/it was intended to help. Indicate how these efforts have touched a wider audience, helped increase diversity and inclusiveness within the planning field, or in helping support diverse populations.

16. Academic Award

Purpose: What was the purpose of the project? What was learned or accomplished by the students? *Research and Resources:* Please detail what and how research was completed to prepare for producing the final product? What resources were available to the students to prepare the paper or document?

Challenges: Please describe the challenges the student(s) face during the project.

Results: What was the basis for the paper or the project? What was the final outcome? How was the final product used?

17. Communications Initiative

Support of planning and planners. Describe how your entry has built support for planning and increased understanding of the planning process. Describe why this effort was undertaken and the desired outcomes.

Originality and innovation. Describe how your entry engaged audiences in planning using innovative or unique communication approaches.

Effectiveness and results. State how your entry achieved its desired outcomes. Convey the level of effectiveness your entry can have over time.

18. Hard-Won Victories

Challenges or barriers. What obstacles, whether physical, natural, social, or a combination thereof, was faced and addressed by the nominated effort? What is the extent of these challenges or other adversarial conditions, and what steps were undertaken to meet the difficult circumstances?

Available resources. What resources were available and how were these resources (financial, personnel, consultants, etc.) managed, leveraged, and deployed?

Progress and positive effects. What are the lasting effects the effort has had (or is likely to have) on planning in the community? Has the effort removed or mitigated the barriers and obstacles? How has or will the effort shape the future in the community or locale? What influence has the nominated effort had on community leaders and their views about the value and effectiveness of planning?

19. Planning Landmark and Planning Pioneer

a) Historical Significance: What is the nomination's historical significance in terms of at least one of the following: being a pioneering work or a documented first; being historically significant, unique, and outstanding; having initiated a new direction in planning that had a lasting effect or other impact; or having impact on American planning, cities, or regions during a broad range of time, space, or both time and space? Nominated landmarks must be at least 25 years old as of the submittal deadline.

b) National significance: What effect or impact did the nominated landmark have on planning in the United States as a whole? What is the nominated landmark's national importance and influence in helping create communities or other places of lasting value throughout the country?

c) Persons involved: Who were the significant planners or others who were involved and responsible for the accomplishments of the nominated landmark?

APA CALIFORNIA AWARDS PROCESS RULES

1) **APA California Northern Jury Composition**

A jury shall be appointed by the Section Board to judge the entries. Jurors are chosen to represent different areas of expertise, geographic locations, and professional experiences in the private/public sector, to achieve an overall balance of the jury. The diversity in jurors will also be considered. The decision of the jury majority shall be final.

2) **Discretion of Jury**

Normally, nominations will be evaluated for the award category in which they were submitted. However, the APA California Northern jury may, upon majority vote, move a nomination to a different category as the jury deems appropriate.

3) **Awards Process**

Only one (1) first-place award may be granted per category each year. When exceptional circumstances warrant, one (1) Award of Merit may also be given per category. If the jury finds that none of the nominations in a particular category meets the desirable standards of excellence, they may grant only an Award of Merit or grant no award in that category. Because only first-place winners of Section Awards Programs are eligible for nomination for the Chapter's Outstanding Planning Awards, the Section Awards Programs are vital to the success of the Chapter's Awards Program. Nominations for Outstanding Planning Awards must be submitted to the Section where the project, plan or work occurred prior to being submitted to the Chapter (State) for consideration. All Sections are strongly encouraged by the Chapter to support and promote their local Awards Programs.

4) **Awards Ceremony**

Award recipients will be honored at the annual APA California Northern Awards Ceremony event, typically a luncheon or dinner.

5) **Other Section Awards Policies**

The APA California Northern Section may establish Awards Policies different from those of the Chapter at their own discretion. In order to participate in the Chapter's Awards Program, the APA California Northern Board shall appoint an Awards Chairperson(s) or Awards Director(s) to serve as contact with the Chapter's Vice President for Administration or Awards Coordinator, concerning Awards Program matters and to coordinate awards activities for the Section.