



2024 Awards Program

American Planning Association – Illinois Chapter

June 2024



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INTRODUCTION

Each year, the Illinois Chapter of the American Planning Association recognizes the best in planning across Illinois, celebrating those that exemplify the tremendous planning efforts and outstanding achievements in innovation. This program is periodically revised and updated to be made current with emerging best practices and to align with the American Planning Association National Awards.

RULES & REQUIREMENTS

ELIGIBILITY

- The nominator must be a member of the American Planning Association – Illinois Chapter (APA-IL) and the agency/entity that originally funded the work must support the nomination in writing. All entities that share responsibility for the completion of the plan/project and deserve recognition for the award must be listed on the nomination form.
- Nominated plans/projects must be located within the State of Illinois.
- Nominations may only be made in a single award category.
- Nominations may be submitted for a Chapter Award a maximum of two times.
- Nominations shall be for plans/projects that are recent, within the past five years.
- 2024 Awards Jury cannot submit an award. A jury member may be part of a firm or team that wins an award; however, the juror must recuse themselves from judging the applicable category.

JUDGING AND ANNOUNCEMENT

- Project Awards are judged by an Awards Jury selected by the APA-IL Awards Chair.
- Neither the Awards Jury nor the APA-IL is under any obligation to grant an award in each category. If there is only one nomination within a particular category, this will not result in an automatic win within that category. The decision of the Awards Jury is final. The Awards Jury may consider a nomination for an award in a category other than that indicated by the nominator. The awards jury has the right to award multiple winners within each category. The APA-IL Awards Chair reserves the right to inquire whether applicants agree to this category change.



- When considering nominations, the Awards Jury will consider spreading recognition across various municipalities and regions within Illinois. Multiple awards to the same firm or municipality in a single year should be avoided unless justified by exceptional circumstances. This approach is intended to encourage a more equitable distribution of recognition without strictly limiting any city to a single award. The Awards Jury is encouraged to critically assess the slate of awards as a whole to ensure diverse representation across different regions.
- The APA-IL Executive Committee will judge nominations for the Service Awards.
- Award winners will be recognized during a ceremony at the 2024 APA-IL State Conference on September 25, 2024. Award winners are invited to this event.

PLAGARISM POLICY

Nominations for APA Illinois planning awards must be for original content planning projects. Any project found to have been partially or wholly plagiarized will be automatically disqualified from consideration. Any project found to be the product of plagiarized work after receiving an award will have its award revoked.

QUESTIONS? Please email admin@ilapa.org with any questions.

TIMELINE

June 7, 2024: Nomination submission window opens.

July 3, 2024: Awards Nominations due. Submit online nomination form by 5:00 p.m. CST.

August 2024: Notification of Award Winners.

September 25, 2024: Awards Ceremony at the 2024 APA-IL State Conference in Champaign, IL.



NOMINATION PROCESS

Submit your 2024 Awards Nomination at www.ilapa.org/awards. *Submit online Nomination Form by 5:00 p.m. CST, July 3, 2024.*

Step 1: Collect Information

- Review the information found in this document.
- Check the nomination eligibility for yourself and your project.
- Collect the supporting documents for the type of awards nomination (Project or Service).
 - Supporting documents for Project Nominations
 - Narrative (not more than 2 *pages*) on why this project deserves this award. Use the Award Criteria, listed in this document, for guidance on Project Awards. (.pdf or .doc)
 - If you have not provided a link to your project in the online nomination form, please upload a copy of the project. No files larger than 10MB please. (.pdf or .doc)
 - Letter(s) of support for the nomination from the agency/entity that funded the work.
 - Optional additional letter(s) of support from other agencies, stakeholders, etc. that will bring additional perspective to the nomination.
 - Supporting documents for Service Nominations
 - Narrative (not more than 2 *pages*) on why this individual deserves this award. (.pdf or .doc)
 - Resume of nominee (optional)
 - Letter(s) of support for the nomination (optional)
 - Headshot or photograph of nominee (.png, .jpg, .tif)

Step 2: Online Nomination Form

- Links to the online nomination forms are available at www.ilapa.org/awards. *You will need a Google email address. If you do not have a Google email address, email admin@ilapa.org for special instructions.*
- Complete online nomination form *by 5:00 pm CST, July 3, 2024.*
- A link to pay the Project Nomination fee will be provided after submitting the online form. Email admin@ilapa.org to inquire about Project Nomination fee waivers.
- An email with your submission information will be sent after completing the online form.



Step 3: Fee for Project Awards

- Project Nominations require a \$75 Project Nomination fee (per nomination).
- Upon completion of the Project Nomination Form, the confirmation message will include a link to pay the \$75 Project Award Submission Fee. If you are submitting multiple Project Nominations, please wait to pay the fee after all nominations are submitted.
- The confirmation email from admin@ilapa.org will also include the link to pay the \$75 Project Award Submission Fee.
- This fee is payable via credit card or via PayPal. Instructions for each payment method will be included. No PayPal account necessary.
- *Please note submission fees must be received by July 3, 2024.*

Consideration for financial hardship: *If your organization cannot afford the nomination fee and wish to request assistance, please email admin@ilapa.org to inquire.*



NOMINATION INFORMATION

The information on this page is provided to nominators to assist in organizing submission materials before completing the online submission form. All submissions must be made through the 2024 Awards Website. No hard copies will be accepted.

NOMINATOR CONTACT INFORMATION

The nominator will be considered the primary contact to the APA-IL for all decisions made on this nomination and will work with the APA-IL to obtain additional information and materials if needed. The following information will be requested: Name, APA Member Number, Organization/Company, Address, Telephone, Email.

PRIMARY AWARD RECIPIENT

The following information will be requested: Name of Project or Individual, Award Category (select only one), Funding Agency (if applicable), Funding Agency/Entity Contact, Funding Agency/Entity, Address, Telephone, Email, Web Link to Plan (if applicable).

RECOGNITION

List other supporting individuals/organizations who contributed to what you wish to be recognized at the Awards Ceremony. Limit to a maximum of five individuals/organizations, and place in the order to be listed on the physical award. Please ensure spelling and contact information is accurate.

AWARD NARRATIVE

Please describe why the nominee deserves the award. Be sure to include specific statements speaking to the “Award Criteria” found in this document for each award. Please limit this narrative to 2 pages.



PROJECT AWARD CATEGORIES

The Illinois Chapter Award categories are generally consistent with the categories for the APA National Awards Program. Award nominations may be submitted in **one** of the following categories:

DANIEL BURNHAM AWARD FOR A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

For a comprehensive or general plan that advances the science and art of planning. The award honors America's most famous planner, Daniel Burnham, for his contributions to the planning profession and to a greater awareness of the benefits of good planning. The nominated effort helps advance communities toward a safe, stronger, and more equitable future.

STRATEGIC PLAN

This award recognizes a plan targeted for a specific area of a community. Examples include sub-area plans, neighborhood plans, downtown plans, site redevelopment plans, area-wide zoning studies, special area plans, downtown plans, corridor plans, outreach plans, brownfield redevelopment plans, etc. These plans can be both policy and/or physical planning/design focused. This award recognizes how planning is essential to addressing desires, needs, or challenges within a community, county, region, or specific geographic location. This category emphasizes outcomes and demonstrates how planning helps to create stronger, more equitable communities.

Note: This category should focus on innovation and impact of projects with an emphasis on illustrative storytelling, superior graphics, and high-quality narratives.

BEST PRACTICE

This award is intended to highlight best practice planning tools, methodologies, technologies, research, user experience or processes, including innovative public outreach and engagement methods. This category emphasizes results and demonstrates how innovative planning practices help to create communities of lasting value.

ADVANCING DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE AWARD

This award honors an individual, project, group, or organization that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion. The nominated effort demonstrates a sustained commitment to advocacy solves a design problem or challenge or creates opportunity by addressing the specific conditions women or minority groups (race, gender, ability, or other such as housing status or poverty level) through specific actions or contributions within the planning profession or through planning practice. These projects have demonstrable impact to the served population and need not be built.

Examples:

- A plan or effort 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.



- Example: A planning effort or initiative that is initiated or authored by an individual or group at the grass roots level.
- Example: A project or plan that may have a smaller budget, limited geography, or is tailored to a highly specific group or need

HEALTHY & ACTIVE COMMUNITY AWARD

Recognizes an effort to create healthier and active communities through a plan or program. Examples include active transportation plans, pedestrian plans, local food/urban farming initiatives, implementation of active transportation infrastructure, plans that link public health initiatives to good planning practices, etc.

HISTORIC EXPLORATION

This newly proposed award category provides an opportunity to recognize efforts that position historic plans, cultural events, or activities at the core of its recommendations - illustrating that they significantly help to shape the plan through historic investigation or community engagement. This award category includes recent plans, projects, or “efforts” that honor historic plans or reinvigorate ideas from past plans or past cultural events or uses.

These nominations might also include those that make a “nod” to a significant past planning effort that remains relevant, is regularly referenced, and updated and has significant evidence of implementation over decades. While the nomination may be for a traditional “master plan” – it could also be simply the “result” of a planning process in the form of a designation, a design, a place, a policy, or a program.

STUDENT PROJECT

Recognizes excellence in urban planning study and demonstrates the link between academia and practice. One plan or project by a student or team of students may be submitted per nomination.



PROJECT AWARD CRITERIA

SUMMARY OF THE ENTRY (100-250 WORDS)

Explain how the plan is a “win” for the community, or communities involved. Were there any special circumstances that the jury should be aware of? What are the key highlights or challenges that were overcome to make this effort award worthy? The summary will inform the jury and serve as the basis of the awards announcement, if awarded.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (UP TO TWO PAGES)

Use the criteria below in formulating your award narrative. Each project will be evaluated on its ability to meet these criteria. Please be sure to include specific statements speaking to the “Award Criteria” found below for each award.

1. Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan Award

- a. *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.
- b. *Quality.* Explain how your plan is state-of-the-art in terms of presentation and methodology. Identify what makes this plan different or stand out compared to other comprehensive plans.
- c. *Engagement.* Explain how various stakeholder interests were involved and 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. Show how the nominated plan obtained public and private support and helped to bring the community together over shared goals.
- d. *Promotion of Planning.* 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. Explain how the nominated effort helped to elevate the value of planning within the community.
- e. *Effectiveness and Results.* State how your entry addressed the need or problem that prompted its initiation. Be explicit about how the plan has been implemented and how the results have made a difference in the lives of the people affected. Explain what steps have been taken to build momentum and public support for development and implementation of the plan. State the positive or unintended outcomes. Convey the level of effectiveness your entry can have over time.



2. Strategic Plan Award

- a. *Originality and innovation.* Describe how your entry addresses a known community need or challenge, and better positions the community for a stronger, more equitable future for all. Identify any tools, resources, or skills that helped to advance the effort within the community. Demonstrate how this effort compliments or builds upon existing planning efforts and supports the overall planning goals of the community. Explain how this effort also helps move the planning profession forward?
- b. *Methodology and Transferability.* Explain the process, budget, and project timeline for the nominated effort. Identify how planning and/or planners were instrumental in this effort. Share how the community is kept updated and informed of progress and implementation of the effort. Demonstrate how your effort can be applied in other communities and the methodology used to help advance the value of planning.
- c. *Engagement.* Address what steps have been taken to build momentum and public support for your entry. Share how all community members were involved, including those who historically have been left out of the planning process. How did planners help facilitate bringing together competing community interests for the betterment of the whole community? Describe stakeholder involvement and how the entry brought together elected leaders, public, private, and non-profit stakeholders, and community members. Identify, if applicable, any unique strategic partnerships or funding sources that was used to help move the effort forward.
- d. *Effectiveness and Results.* Provide measurable results or how success will be tracked. Highlight key areas of implementation. What are the long-term outcomes generated or expected from the effort? Convey the level of effectiveness your entry can have over time or be a catalyst to future efforts. Be explicit about how the results have made a difference in the lives of those who live in the community. How has this entry positioned the community for a stronger, more resilient and equitable future?

3. Best Practice Award

- a. *Originality and innovation.* Document how your entry presents a visionary approach or innovative concept to address specific needs. Specify how planning principles have been observed, especially in consideration of your entry's effects on other public objectives.
- b. *Implementation and Transferability.* Address what steps have been taken to build momentum and public support for your entry. Illustrate how your entry has potential application for others and how use of your entry's components and methodology would further the cause of good planning.



- c. *Engagement.* Explain how various public interests were involved and the extent of that involvement, including those who historically have been left out of the planning process. Show how your entry obtained public and private support. 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.
- d. *Effectiveness and results.* State how your entry addressed the need or problem that prompted its initiation. Be explicit about how the plan has been implemented and how the results have met the objectives of the plan. 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.
- e. *Sustainability.* Explain how your plan addresses sustainability through environmental conservation, smart growth strategies, greenhouse gas reduction, green infrastructure, or other approaches.

5. Advancing Diversity and Social Change

- a. *Social and economic.* Describe how the nominated effort addresses the needs of at-risk individuals or populations that society typically overlooks. How does the effort advance or sustain sound, ethical, and inclusionary planning within the planning field, within a specific community, or in society at large?
- b. *Engagement.* Explain how various stakeholders and community members were engaged in the planning process. How were typically hard-to-reach populations included in the planning process? Detail any non-traditional engagement efforts used to obtain community input. Share how challenges such as limited accessibility and digital divides were addressed.
- c. *Effectiveness and results.* Specify how your entry has had a positive impact on the lives of those 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. Share how this effort has elevated the value and importance of planning within the community.

6. Healthy & Active Community Award

- a. *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 does the use of the components and methodology further the cause of good planning?

- b. *Effectiveness.* State how your entry addressed the need or problem that prompted its initiation. Be explicit about how the results have made a difference in the lives of the people affected. Highlight key recommendations that have been implemented. Convey the level of effectiveness your entry can have over time.
- c. *Collaboration & Partners.* Describe the collaborating partners on the project and their shared goals, especially any cross-sector coalitions.
- d. *Engagement.* What was done to ensure the widest variety of resident and stakeholder participation in the plan and planning process?
- e. *Sustainability.* Explain how your plan addresses sustainability through environmental conservation, smart growth strategies, greenhouse gas reduction, green infrastructure, or other approaches.

7. Historic Exploration Award

- a. *Transferability.* How does the nomination demonstrate the use of historic plans or the practice of historic investigation to better understand land uses, relationships, cultural events, or activities? How does the entry have potential application for others and how does the use of the components and methodology further the cause of good planning? How does the project honor historic plans or reinvigorate ideas from past plans or past cultural events or uses?
- b. *Effectiveness.* State how your entry addressed the need or problem that prompted its initiation. Be explicit about how the results have made a difference in the lives of the people affected. Highlight key recommendations that have been implemented. Convey the level of effectiveness your entry can have over time.
- c. *Collaboration & Partners.* Describe how the plan utilized community engagement and collaboration to better understand historic context and how it positions partnerships to implement the recommendations of the plan.

8. Student Project Award

- a. *Innovative.* Originality of concept or appreciable refinement of existing techniques or procedures
- b. *Transferable.* Potential application to other locations, projects, or areas of planning interest



- c. *Quality.* Excellence of thought, analysis, writing, graphics, and character of presentation
- d. *Implementation.* Demonstrate the effectiveness of the work (proposals have been carried out, show promise of being carried out, or demonstrate an effective implementation technique).
- e. *Comprehensive.* Planning principles have been observed, especially in considering a project's effects on other public objectives and community sustainability.



SERVICE AWARD CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA

Service awards are given to distinguished individuals within our organization. These nominations will be evaluated and judged by the APA-IL Executive Committee and not the Chapter Awards Jury.

APA-IL's elected officers are ineligible for consideration for the Chapter's service awards during their term in office. The only exception to this rule is for officers in their final year of service, who have already declined to stand for re-election or are termed out. This policy is to ensure impartiality and fairness in the recognition process.

Use the criteria below in formulating your award narrative. Each individual will be evaluated on their ability to meet these criteria. Please be sure to include specific statements speaking to the "Award Criteria" found below for each award. Please limit your nomination narrative to *2 pages*.

Planning Advocate Award

This award honors an individual or organization that 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.

Distinguished Service or Contribution Award

This award honors an APA-IL member who has made a substantial contribution to the development and objectives of APA-IL over a sustained period or contributed to the goals and objectives of the APA-IL and to its strategic plan through an extraordinary effort over a short period of time.

Emerging Planner Award

This award honors an APA-IL member between the ages of 18 and 35 who has made exceptional contributions to the planning profession and is recognized by their peers as an emerging leader.

Most Valuable Planner Award

The Most Valuable Planner (MVP) Award is given to an APA-IL member who has demonstrated exceptional expertise, contributions, and involvement within the planning profession in Illinois. MVPs have a strong track record of sharing their knowledge and expertise through efforts such as APA involvement, mentoring, speaking engagements, writing, or teaching and are recognized as leaders in the profession. The nominated planner must be a member of the Illinois Chapter.