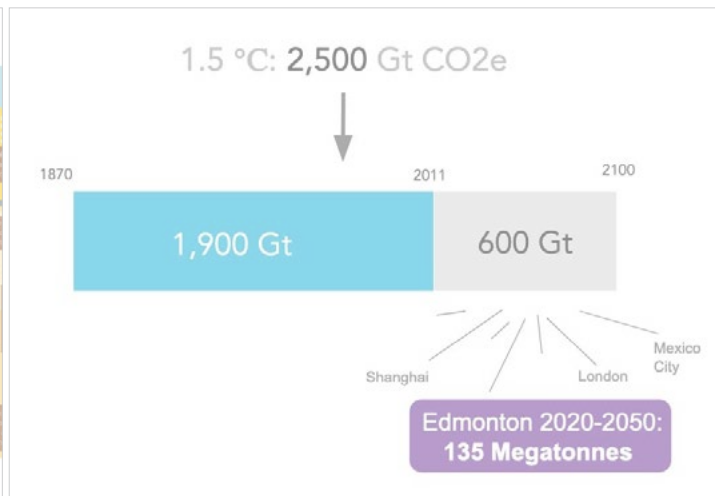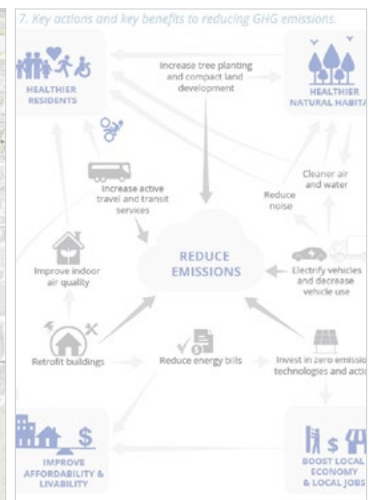# APA

American Planning Association
Sustainable Communities Division

Making Great Communities Happen

10TH ANNUAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABILITY

Honoring projects, plans, policies, individuals, and organizations whose work is dedicated to supporting and growing sustainable communities.

10th Annual Awards for Excellence in Sustainability

Information Packet

November 2022

CONTENTS

APA Sustainable Communities Division

Empowered planners creating sustainable, resilient, and equitable communities.

1 OVERVIEW OF AWARD PROGRAM AND CATEGORIES

The American Planning Association Sustainable Communities Division (SCD) provides resources, information, and best practices to support planners in creating sustainable, resilient, and equitable communities. Through its forums for dialogue, collaboration, advocacy and professional development, the SCD engages planners in innovatively addressing the evolving ecological, social, and economic factors that shape our communities.

The Awards for Excellence in Sustainability honor those projects, policies, plans, and people who show exemplary leadership and inspiration in sustainability planning and implementation.

The 2023 Award categories are:

1. **State or Regional Award**: This award honors efforts to plan for sustainability and/or resilience at a state or regional scale. Regions may be intrastate, including counties, or interstate. Plans in this category may include general long- or short-range plans or may be more focused on a specific topic.

2. **Community-wide Award**: This award honors efforts to plan for sustainability and/or resilience at a city, town, or village scale. Plans in this category may include general long- or short-range plans, such as comprehensive plans and master plans, or may be more focused on a specific topic.

3. **Sub-area Award**: This award honors efforts to plan for sustainability and/or resilience at a borough, neighborhood, corridor, multi-parcel development, or similar scale. Plans in this category may include general long- or short-range, plans such as master plans or Small Area Plans, or may be more focused on a specific topic.

4. **Environment, Climate, & Energy Award**: This award honors a plan or project, at any scale, that addresses current or future needs related to climate change mitigation or adaptation, energy or water efficiency, renewable or alternative energy, green jobs, air quality, green infrastructure, or other efforts related to environment, climate, and energy planning.

5. **Quality of Life Award**: This award honors a plan, project, or initiative, at any scale, that is focused on improving the health and well-being of a community of people.

6. **Policy, Law, or Tool Award**: This award honors a policy, law, or tool which encourages or assists in the employment of principles of sustainability in the planning, design, and/or implementation phases of various efforts.

7. **Student Award**: The Student Award recognizes an outstanding class project or paper completed by a student or group of students in an accredited university program. The jury may award up to one undergraduate project and one graduate project per year.

8. **Award for Leadership in Sustainable Planning & Design**: The Leadership Award honors those whose vision, leadership, and commitment have been fundamental to the evolution of sustainability planning, and have helped improve awareness of sustainability. The jury may award one or more individuals, initiatives, or organizations in this category.

Deadline for submission: 11:59 PM (EST) on Friday, January 13, 2023. All nominations will be submitted using a web form, found at www.surveymonkey.com/r/SCD2023.

The form and more information about the awards, including previous winners, can be found on the SCD website, apascd.com/awards. This will also be the location where we will share any FAQs or updates to the process.

2 ELIGIBILITY

Nomination Guidelines

- Except for the Leadership category, any nominated effort must have been adopted, implemented, or completed, as relevant, within three years of the deadline for submission of nominations. Published drafts are not eligible.

- Competition entries are not eligible for nomination, unless they have been fully adopted as a plan or are moving forward into implementation.

- A nominated effort may only be entered in one award category per award year.

- Projects or plans may be related to locations within the United States or internationally.

- To ensure efficient review, all pieces of the submission must be provided in English. (Exceptions made for proper nouns, including project names, organization/partner names, etc.)

- Efforts do not need to incorporate titles that explicitly label them as a "sustainability" or "resilience" focused; they need only incorporate principles of sustainability or resilience.

- Both APA members and non-members may submit nominations.

> **If you are unsure about eligibility, please contact the APA-SCD Awards Coordinator:**
> Jenny Koch, AICP
> jenniferk@rhiplaces.com

Requirements for all Award Categories

- Current members of the APA-SCD Executive Committee (elected officers currently serving in their elected role), APA staff, APA Board of Directors, and AICP Commission are not eligible to make nominations or to receive awards.

- Members of the APA-SCD Awards Jury, and their respective organizations, as relevant, are not eligible to make nominations or to receive awards.

- Any other individuals or organizations may submit nominations, subject to other eligibility requirements.

Additional Requirements for the Leadership Category

- Individuals may not nominate themselves for an Award for Leadership in Sustainable Planning & Design, but an individual employed by the municipality, agency, firm, or other organization, may nominate an entity with which they are involved.

- Nominators may not be related to any individual they wish to nominate.

- Recipients of the award are ineligible to receive the same award for 10 years following its receipt.

Additional Requirements for the Student Project Category

- Members of the APA Student Representatives Council (SRC) Executive Committee are not eligible to receive an award.

3 DEADLINE AND SUBMISSION

Entries will be accepted through 11:59 PM (EST) on Friday, January 13, 2023.

- **All entry nominations shall be submitted via web form.**

- **The form can be found at apascd.com/awards**, or **surveymonkey.com/r/SCD2023**.

- Be sure to review the eligibility and criteria requirements for the relevant award category prior to completing the form.

- We suggest you utilize the **submission template**

document (provided at apascd.com/awards) to prepare the text that you will need to provide prior to starting the form. You must fill out the web form all at once (i.e., you cannot save a partially-completed form and return to complete it).

- If you submit the form once and would like to re-submit before the end of the nomination period, please feel free to do so. The jury will review only the most recently-completed form.

- There is no entry fee.

4 REVIEW, SELECTION, AND ANNOUNCEMENT

The 2023 Excellence in Sustainability Awards Jury will consist of practitioners, leaders, and experts in the area of sustainability. The following stipulations apply to the jury review process:

- Each nomination which meets all requirements will be reviewed by at least three jurors.
- Except for the Student Award, the jury may select up to one entry in each category to receive an award. The jury may elect to provide additional nominations with Merit Awards in any category.
- Jurors may move an award nomination into a category other than the one under which it was submitted.
- Jurors may elect to not present an award in any particular category, regardless of the number of submissions in that category.
- Contact with members of the jury to discuss an award nomination will result in disqualification.
- The Awards Coordinator will notify the nominator of the status of their award submission by February 2023.

The method for announcement of the winners of the 9th Annual Awards for Excellence in Sustainability will include a video announcement as well as other activities, to be determined. The winners of the Awards for Excellence in Sustainability are traditionally announced at the annual National Planning Conference, and may be announced virtually and/or in person at the Conference.

Award recipients will:

- Receive a formal award.
- Be featured in the Sustainable Communities Division's digital media and promotional materials.
- Be given the opportunity to participate in a webinar to discuss their award-winning project.
- Be honored on the APA-SCD web page throughout the following year.

5 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following pages contain a set of evaluation criteria for each award category.

Please make sure to explicitly and directly address how your project meets each criterion. Jurors will generally award each criterion response a score between 0-5, using the guidelines below. In some cases, individual criteria are weighted more heavily, as noted on the following pages.

- Includes no information addressing this set of criteria = 0 points
- Addressed some criteria but demonstrated few accomplishments = 1 point
- Addressed most criteria and demonstrated some accomplishments = 2 points
- Clearly addressed all criteria and demonstrated average accomplishments = 3 points
- Clearly addressed all criteria and demonstrated above average accomplishments = 4 points
- Clearly addressed all criteria and demonstrated exceptional accomplishments = 5 points

Criteria for All Categories <u>except</u> the Award for Leadership

See list of categories and descriptions on page 3. <u>Unless otherwise noted</u>, each numbered criterion is measured out of 5 points, and responses are limited to 1500 characters each.

<u>Criteria</u>

1. **Project background and purpose**: Provide a summary of the entry, including a description of the intention of this effort, the issues it seeks to address, and the impacts it intends to make in the related area, as well as any frameworks or standards that were utilized in its creation (for example, APA's Comprehensive Plan Standards for Sustaining Places), if applicable. For the **Student Award**, please include a description of the student role in the project and any guidance received.

2. **Social equity & justice:** How does this effort seek to mitigate disproportionate harm faced by certain communities and ensure that all have opportunities to participate, prosper, and reach their full potential?

3. **Environmental protection:** How does this effort seek to mitigate or repair environmental harms, including (but not limited to) preparing for, and seeking to mitigate, human-induced climate change?

   a. Criterion #3 is measured out of 10 for the **Environment, Climate, & Energy Award**

4. **Health & quality of life:** How does this effort support community health & wellness, including access to activity opportunities and open space, healthy foods, affordable and safe housing, and other factors that support a high quality of life?

   a. Criterion #4 is measured out of 10 for the **Quality of Life Award**

5. **Economic resilience & opportunity:** How does this effort support the economy of the related area and community development opportunities?

6. **Creativity & innovation**: Describe any unique or innovative strategies or methods that were used to address the specific needs of this effort.

7. **Collaboration**: Describe how this effort planned for, and integrated, representative, authentic participation, and which stakeholders and interests were involved in the process.

8. **Accountability**: Describe the ways that you or the implementing party are tracking and measuring the impact and success of this effort, including high-level description of any criteria and plans for measuring and reporting progress.

   a. Criterion #8 is measured out of 10 for the **Policy, Law, or Tool Award**

Criteria for the Award for Leadership in Sustainable Planning & Design

See category description on page 3. <u>Unless otherwise noted</u>, each numbered criterion is measured out of 5 points, and responses are limited to 1500 characters each.

<u>Criteria</u>

1. **Biography**: Provide an overview or biography for the group or individual being nominated, including any highlights about why you are submitting them for this award.

2. **Sustainability Influence:** Describe the organization or individual's positive influence on the direction and professional advancement of sustainability planning. Please consider the factors below; you do not need to respond to all areas. [Criterion #2 is measured out of 15 points and has a limit of 4500 characters.]

   a. **Social equity & justice:** How does the work of this organization or individual seek to mitigate disproportionate harm faced by certain communities and ensure that all have opportunities to participate, prosper, and reach their full potential?

   b. **Environmental protection:** How does the work of this organization or individual seek to mitigate or repair environmental harms, including preparing for and seeking to mitigate human-induced climate change?

   c. **Health & quality of life:** How does the work of this organization or individual support community health & wellness, including access to activity opportunities and open space, healthy foods, affordable and safe housing, and other factors that support a high quality of life?

   d. **Economic resilience & opportunity:** How does the work of this organization or individual support economic and community development?

3. **Creativity & innovation**: Describe the nominee's innovation in the creation and implementation of plans, policies, and projects that exemplify or incorporate the principles of sustainability.

6 INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR EACH SUBMISSION:

1. Contact information for the person submitting the nomination, and for the point of contact for the submission, if different.

2. Information about the nominee (name of nominee/project, lead organization(s), contact information)

3. Category of award entry and responses to the relevant award criteria

4. Partner information (name/organization, role, contact name and email), if relevant.

5. Letters of support (one is required, up to two are allowed) - maximum two pages each

    *   Must be saved as a PDF file (max. 16 MB each) and included in the web form.

    *   Should be addressed to: Members of the 2023 APA-SCD Awards Jury. You do not need to include a physical address.

    *   May not be written by the person submitting the nomination or another individual at the same organization, by the nominated individual, or by anyone who directly worked on the project (project team, consultant team, planning department staff, client, or anyone that had daily interaction/oversight). APA staff may not provide a letter of support.

    *   Student award submissions may include a letter of support from a faculty member, but it is not required.

6. Digital images with captions:

    *   Five (5) digital images are required. They may be photos, graphics, etc. Please do not include photo collages.

    *   Images should provide context and show the nominee's positive or intended outcomes.

    *   For categories other than Leadership, please include at least one image of the project plan or a context map.

    *   For the Leadership category, include a recent picture of the individual or representative members of the organization.

    *   Submit only images which may be reproduced by SCD without a fee, charge, or copyright infringement.

    *   Each image must be in JPEG format, and each is limited to a maximum of 16 MB.

    *   Please use a standard name for all photos - *"Last Name of Submitter - Photo #"* (Example: "Smith - Photo 3")

    *   Each image must have an associated caption entered into the web form. Captions should be between 15 and 25 words each, with a maximum of 250 characters, including spaces.

7. Supplemental materials:

    *   Supplemental materials may add additional support to your nomination. If your nomination is a plan or report, be sure to include a copy of or link to the document.

    *   Other materials are optional, and may include up to five letter-sized pages of press clips, brochures, posters, design guidelines, fact sheets, etc.

    *   May be included in your online nomination via upload or link (which must remain active through at least 5/31/23).

    *   Uploaded files must be saved as a PDF file (max. 16 MB) and included in the web form.

Questions or issues related to your submission should be directed via email to the SCD Awards Coordinator: Jennifer Koch, AICP, jenniferk@rhiplaces.com.

Thank You to the 2022
Sustainable Communities Division Sponsors!