



American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

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Erie, PA – On October 15, 2018, the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association (PA Chapter of APA) held its Annual Awards Luncheon in Erie, PA where over 300 attendees celebrated the esteemed award winners of this year’s highly competitive program.

The following awards were presented:

Award for a Plan

Alleghenies Ahead - Shared Strategies for a Stronger Region

Southern Alleghenies Regional Planning & Development Commission and the Counties of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon & Somerset

Alleghenies Ahead is an unprecedented multi-county comprehensive plan. It involves six counties ranging in population from 15,000 to 135,000. The counties realized they have common issues – broadband, housing and blight, and economic development – and by working together they could achieve more progress than if working alone. The plan emphasizes implementation. It outlines regional priorities and detailed county-level action plans. Priorities reflect input of 400 neighbors and colleagues participating in “kitchen table conversations” in each county. The plan defines principles to help align even the smallest of local decisions with regional goals and outcomes. Alleghenies Ahead changed the conversation and strengthened the region’s resolve for the future.

Award for a Plan

Uptown/West Oakland EcoInnovation District

City of Pittsburgh, Department of City Planning

The EcoInnovation District is a groundbreaking solution to disinvestment in the long-overlooked area between downtown Pittsburgh and the “eds and meds” Oakland neighborhood. The plan focuses on social equity, establishing a “Main Street”, reusing underutilized spaces, creating an open space network, and planning for the infrastructure of tomorrow. Public participation included a block party, surveys, focus groups, and engaging the big institutions. It also included meeting long-timers in their backyards and engaging organizations serving hard-to-reach populations. Results are already visible including private investment, a public art program, a slow-streets program, green infrastructure, and a new performance-based zoning code.

Award for a Project, Program or Practice

Greenways for Pittsburgh 2.0

evolveEA

City of Pittsburgh, Department of City Planning

Greenways 2.0 is an initiative to reestablish and manage a greenways system in Pittsburgh. It includes a Policy Guide that sets forth the technical basis for legal designation of greenways and provides for

community stewardship of greenways by citizens and non-profits in cooperation with the city. It also includes a Resource Guide, an easy-to-read and graphic toolkit to guide citizens on stewarding a greenway. Resources range from funding and project ideas to deer management options to website mockups. Greenways 2.0 outlines the means for Pittsburgh to have more capacity and be more effective in permanently conserving open space for the benefit of adjacent neighborhoods and the general public.

Award for a Project, Program or Practice

My Meadville

My Meadville

My Meadville is a community-based initiative that helped the City of Meadville in Crawford County devise a plan for the city's future. My Meadville used the Orton Community Heat & Soul® process grounded in storytelling, discussion of shared values, and collaboration towards positive change. Over two years, My Meadville organized potlucks, staged story-collecting booths and story circles, and did surveys and interviews, amassing 1,400 data points leading to eight community value statements with achievable actions for the city. The process also developed partnerships with community institutions and businesses. My Meadville's work helped spur a city zoning ordinance update, including urban ag provisions, a façade improvement program, entrepreneur program, and a human services "neighborhood hub."

Award for Special Achievement

Philadelphia2035 Comprehensive Plan

Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Philadelphia2035 is the official vision for the future of the city's development, the first written comprehensive plan since the 1960 plan under the directorship of Edmund Bacon. Philadelphia2035 is the culmination of research, outreach, collaboration, and planning with multiple partners and stakeholders. Over the period of nine years, the city completely overhauled its plan, rewrote the city's zoning code, added a civic design review process, institutionalized a civic engagement arm of city government, and created a process to implement plan recommendations through exchange meetings and zoning remapping. Almost every aspect of work has been done in-house by the staff of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission. The plan aims to position Philadelphia to THRIVE in the center of a competitive region, CONNECT seamlessly to the region and the world, and RENEW valuable resources to sustain a bright future.

Award for a Leader – Professional Planner

Patty Elkins, AICP, Director, Planning Division, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

Patty Elkins has a distinguished planning career spanning 30 years, leading innovative projects and inspiring others. She directs a staff of 38 at DVRPC doing long-range planning for transportation, smart growth, the environment, and economic development. Patty's innovative work includes *Return on Environment*, groundbreaking research on the economic value of open space, and several other major open space preservation initiatives; DVRPC's Healthy Communities Task Force; and *Municipal Actions to Improve Water Quality*. Patty is a planning advocate on a number of boards and committees, such as ULI's Philadelphia Chapter. And, she has been generous sharing time and knowledge with DVRPC staff and other planners.

Award for a Leader – Distinguished Service

Michael M. Stokes, AICP

Michael Stokes recently retired after nearly 34 years at the Montgomery County Planning Commission. He was often the first into the office and last to leave. His passion for planning is unmatched. His limitless

capacity for hard work, combined with his intellectual curiosity, made him the go-to, in-house expert on all types of projects, plans, and studies. Michael's greatest contribution was with Montgomery County's open space program. He guided the county through comprehensive open space planning and two programs of preservation funding over 20+ years totaling \$250 million which resulted in 41,000 acres of permanently preserved open space. Michael has been a long time PMPEI instructor, teaching countless citizen planners and elected officials. His local involvement in planning includes chairing the Limerick Township Planning Commission for 10 years, and serving on the board of the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy, 10,000 Friends of PA Policy Council, PA Trails Advisory Committee, and PA Water Plan Delaware Basin Committee.

Certificate of Merit

Downtown Upper Darby Vision Plan
Delaware County Planning Department

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For more information about the PA Chapter of APA, or to obtain contact information for local award winners, please contact Kim Gusic at 717-671-4510 or info@planningpa.org. The website address is www.planningpa.org.