



American Planning Association
Iowa Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

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Iowa Chapter
C/O David R. Wilwerding, AICP
APA Iowa President Elect
6221 Merle Hay Road, Box 410
Johnston, IA 50131
www.iowa-apa.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: David R. Wilwerding, AICP
APA Iowa President Elect
515-727-7775 (Office)
515-333-7130 (Cell)
dwilwerding@ci.johnston.ia.us

SIOUX CITY, IOWA –

APA Iowa announces recipients of 2008 Iowa Planning Awards

Each year, the Iowa Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA Iowa) asks its more than 350 members to nominate plans, projects, and individuals deserving recognition by the professional organization. Award nominees can be recognized in as many as fifteen categories ranging from planning excellence to distinguished leadership. Based on an independent review by a jury of professional planners from the Minnesota Chapter of the APA, three nominees have been selected to receive Iowa APA Awards in 2008, as follows:

Outstanding Planning Award for Best Practice – City of West Des Moines and Central Iowa Architects – “A Pattern Book for West Des Moines Neighborhoods”

The City of West Des Moines identified the need to encourage homeowners to retain the integrity and character of their homes within the existing older neighborhoods of the City and asked for help from the architectural community in identifying the prevalent character and architectural styles of these neighborhoods and ideas for logical ways to expand and update these older homes. A group of three neighborhoods were identified within the City for the initiative to focus on. The product of this public planning process was a series of design guidelines or pattern book for the City and its residents to use as a guide and source of information when homeowners desire to add onto or remodel their existing older homes so that the additions and renovations are in keeping with the original architectural character. Thanks in part to a grant from a local lending institution; the printed copies pattern books are available to West Des Moines residents at no cost. The pattern book is also available for download via the News page of the City's web site (www.wdm-ia.com). Reference copies are also available at the West Des Moines City Hall, Library, the local Main Street office, neighborhood associations, branch banks, and West Des Moines building supply retail stores.

For questions or to request more information on this project, please contact Linda Schemmel, Planner, City of West Des Moines, 515-222-3620 or linda.schemmel@wdm-ia.com.

Outstanding Planning Award for a Grassroots Initiative – City of Dubuque and MSA Professional Services – “Washington Neighborhood Revitalize Visioning Project”

During the summer and fall of 2007, the City of Dubuque sponsored a participatory Visioning Process for the Washington Neighborhood in order to articulate shared values and goals among neighborhood residents and stakeholders. The Washington Neighborhood is among the most diverse neighborhoods in the State of Iowa, and is conveniently located just north of Dubuque’s vibrant downtown district. During a period of increasing neighborhood tension, this visioning process provided a consensus-based foundation for continued efforts to make positive improvements to the neighborhood. City Staff, working with the assistance of staff from MSA Professional Services and Iowa State University Extension, designed and implemented a unique “immersion-based” community engagement program. This program was specifically designed to build bridges between diverse stakeholders, to expand the civic capacities of local groups, and to achieve a single consensus vision statement that would serve as a touchstone for all future efforts within the area.

Over forty participants, representing the neighborhood association, commercial interests, faith based organizations, and key City staff and elected officials participated in a series of evening meetings during the fall of 2007 to work toward articulating a shared vision for the future of the Washington Neighborhood.

For questions or to request more information on this project, please contact Jessica Barman, MSA Professional Services, 608-242-6609 or jbarman@msa-ps.com.

Outstanding Planning Award for Best Practice – Iowa Department of Transportation and Mead & Hunt, Inc. – “Iowa Airport Land use Guidebook”

Communities depend on Iowa’s aviation infrastructure—the existing system of airports—to provide the needed services and added benefits of close accessibility. Land use compatibility and the coordination of the management of land uses on and near airports have been identified as important components of the system’s preservation. The *Iowa Airport Land Use Guidebook* was developed to create an understanding of the management of land uses on an airport and a connection to the land use regulations in adjacent communities. This comprehensive guide addresses the preservation of airport safety as well as the public health, safety and welfare of persons on the ground near airports.

The *Guidebook* was developed as a reference tool for a diverse audience of professionals who make decisions regarding airport land use compatibility including airport sponsors, planners and elected officials. It has been developed to identify and explain the distinct relationship between land use classifications and the impacts associated with compatibility concerns. Further, it provides suggested methods and strategies for implementing effective land use compatibility planning and zoning.

For questions or more information on this project, please contact Stephanie Ward, Mead & Hunt, Inc. at 517-321-8334 or Stephanie.ward@meadhunt.com.

Awards Ceremony

An awards ceremony will be held to honor the recipients Thursday, October 30, 2008, with a reception beginning at 6:00 p.m. and the ceremony beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Sioux City Convention Center, Gallery A. The ceremony is part of the APA Iowa Fall Conference being hosted by the Iowa APA Chapter. This year's conference theme is "Explore Planning in Successful, Surprising, Sioux City!" which is going to be held from Wednesday through Friday, October 29th through 31st at the Sioux City Convention Center in Sioux City. Each of the award recipients will be introduced and given an opportunity to make a short presentation about their plan or project. The media is welcome to attend this event.

About APA Iowa

The American Planning Association Iowa Chapter provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in community planning, promoting education and citizen empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change. APA Iowa members consist of planners and other professionals involved in the development and sustainability of Iowa communities.