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Carmel Boyce

PIA Victorian secretariat:
Eula Black, Melita Brown, Micaela Drieberg, Simone Stevenson, Stuart Worn

Audio Visual Presentation:
David Salt, Meinhardt Australia

Awards Program Design:
Emma Alsweiler, David Lock Associates

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Planning Excellence
2010 Victorian Awards

Congratulations to this year’s award and commendation recipients. The 2010 Awards for Planning Excellence provide an opportunity to recognise the fantastic depth of talent and level of skill of the industry in Victoria.

These Awards recognise work that leads practice, and changes the world so slightly for the better. If it were not for these projects planners wouldn’t be the idealists they are, working for a better, brighter, healthier and more sustainable future for all Victorians.

Typically, the Awards provide an opportunity to recognise those in a position to deliver and gain recognition from doing the very best in planning. There are many members of the profession supporting planning in the State whose work goes unrecognised due to the role they play in facilitating the day to day planning system. There are many of us out there working tirelessly for better planning, economic, social, environment and public realm outcomes. These Awards also recognise these planners and their work.

Many thanks to our judging panel of experts, who once again have provided their valuable time to select this year’s best planners and projects. A special thank you to Eula Black, Melita Brown, Micaela Drieberg, Simone Stevenson and Stuart Worn at the PIA Victorian office for their continued effort in running the most prestigious awards in the industry. Thank you to David Salt from Meinhardt for the visual presentation, Emma Alsweiler from David Lock Associates for the awards program and to Associate Professor Michael Buxton for RMIT University’s generosity in hosting the Awards.

Carmel Boyce MPIA CPP
PIA Victorian Awards Convenor
The 2010 Awards for Planning Excellence provides an exemplary opportunity to recognise the diversity of planning projects and achievements whilst celebrating the efforts of our colleagues.

2010 has been marked by floods, oil leaks, a hung parliament, breaking of 13 years of drought in Victoria, significant legislative reviews, skills shortage and staff retention issues which provide a continued challenge for the planning industry. It is crucial to appreciate the importance of professional awards and recognition. Celebrating the efforts of those in the planning industry is vital and PIA sees this as a key activity in encouraging people to stay within the profession and for the community to understand the value of the profession’s contribution to our world.

This year’s entries once again highlight the breadth of projects where planners have dedicated their efforts in the co-ordination and delivery of key outcomes for the community. The continued support of the ‘Awards for Planning Excellence’ provides us with great encouragement and optimism as we strive to achieve better planning for all.

The winner of the 2010 President’s Award provides an outstanding example of how planners are required to think beyond their specific field of expertise and engage with other parties to achieve an excellent outcome.

On behalf of the PIA Victorian Committee, I wish to thank our dedicated sponsors, and the countless judges and volunteers who have come together to make the awards a success. Finally, I would like to thank the PIA Victoria office team and Carmel Boyce as the Awards Convenor for their tireless efforts in presenting the ‘Awards for Planning Excellence’.

Thank-you and good luck to this year’s nominees and congratulations to all the award and commendation recipients.

David Vorchheimer MPIA CPP
PIA Victorian President
The Planning Institute of Australia’s Awards for Planning Excellence always showcase great examples of the importance of planning in shaping the world we live in, and 2010 is no different.

These awards recognise that good planning and urban design are vital to meeting the challenges of population growth and climate change.

The Victorian Government is committed to a strong vision for planning in Victoria’s capital through Melbourne 2030 and Melbourne @ 5 million and for our regions through Ready for Tomorrow: A Blueprint for Regional and Rural Victoria.

Planning is about creating places and spaces in our communities where people can work, live and have fun. It’s about having the ability to understand how spaces will be used by people, what they will look like and how they will adapt over time.

The Victorian Government is pleased to support the Victorian Division of PIA in presenting these awards to celebrate excellence in planning.

I would like to congratulate the commendation and award winners.

The Hon Justin Madden MLC
Minister for Planning
One of Melbourne’s greatest strengths as a city is its well-planned built form, going back to the establishment of the city. There have been many vital elements such as the Hoddle grid, wide streets and boulevards, broad mixes of uses and varying neighbourhoods, the inner city network of parks and gardens and a sustained culture of innovative design and architecture.

It is crucial that Melbourne is well-planned into the future, and I am pleased to see the high quality of projects which are nominated for awards tonight. Projects of this calibre will no doubt be well-loved communities for current and future generations of Victorians.

Congratulations on an outstanding effort.

Matthew Guy, MP
Shadow Minister for Planning
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Award to:
Lauren Bradford,
Growth Areas Authority

Lauren Bradford is a passionate young planner who is committed to contributing to the broader planning profession and has also made a valuable professional contribution to some significant projects.

Lauren’s excellence in her role as a Senior Urban Planner at the Growth Areas Authority is supported by three excellent testimonials. Lauren has had a significant involvement in Delivering Melbourne’s Newest Sustainable Communities project which resulted in Amendment VC68 and in the design, planning and management of Growth Area Framework Plans which are currently being prepared for each of Melbourne’s urban growth corridors.

Prior to joining the Growth Areas Authority, she worked as an urban and regional planner at Aurecon, on a range of projects in Tasmania and rural Victoria.

Lauren’s commitment is exemplified by her position as the PIA nominee on the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction Advisory Committee and is a PIA Victorian Committee Member, where Lauren has organised a number of social events specifically for Young Planners.

Lauren has also assisted RMIT with the marketing of their Planning course, and provided advice on course content.

The judging panel consider that Lauren has made an industrious and significant contribution to the planning profession. It is with great pleasure that we recommend Lauren Bradford be recognised for her contribution with the award of 2010 Victorian Young Planner of the Year.
Award

Award to:
Department of Planning & Community Development

Project:
The Drying Lake: Lake Boga’s Experience of Change and Uncertainty

The Drying Lake: Lake Boga’s Experience of Change and Uncertainty by Elissa Waters, Fiona McKenzie, Christabel McCarthy and Sam Pendergast, Department of Planning and Community Development, Melbourne.

This very well-presented report brings planning and community development together, drawing on a variety of academic disciplines, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. While sophisticated and nuanced, it is also accessible to all.

The four authors take a specific event, the drying out of the lake at Lake Boga south-east of Swan Hill, to investigate how government officials and local residents are responding to this manifestation of climate change. They recognise there are many views on the matter and people respond in different ways, often insensitive to others’ strongly-held views. The report records how through discussion and the building of trust, some common understandings were reached between the planner and the planned. With common understandings reached, government planners and community groups at Lake Boga have the opportunity to move forward together in tackling climate change. The beauty of this report is the model’s adaptability – it is applicable to other parts of Victoria and beyond, not least coastlines affected by sea level rises and peri-urban areas affected by bush fire.
Award to:
Dr Paul Mees,
RMIT University

Project:
Transport for Suburbia: Beyond the Automobile Age

A scholarship piece of research, *Transport for Suburbia* cogently and wittily argues that the dominant ‘compact city’ mindset amongst planners underplays the importance of planning for public transport networks in sustainable city planning, not least in Melbourne. Drawing on a multitude of local and overseas case studies, Paul Mees systematically builds his argument, admonishing politicians, traffic engineers and land use planners alike for their failure of vision, political will and plain common sense.

Mees, in effect, gives a twist to the key message of Planning 101: land use and public transport planning are inseparable. The book’s final sentence reads: “Before we can provide public transport solutions for suburbia, we must stop telling ourselves that the task is impossible.” Let us hope this message gets through to the powers that be.

Commendation to:
Dr Benno Engels,
RMIT University

Project:
Planning Module: The Urban Environment

So what is planning? To most school students it is a mystery. This teaching module has been designed for teachers keen to have teaching material that relates to their school's surrounds. The module seeks to inform Year 9 and 10 students that the environment surrounding their schools and homes have been shaped to a greater or lesser degree by planners and that it is one full of interest if you know what questions to ask and where to look.

The module has been developed with the Geography Teachers Association of Victoria. It gives hard-pressed teachers a set of exercises to choose between and guidelines to follow. The judges anticipate that once it has been used over the next few years, it will be improved upon, even extended in scope. Perhaps then more school students will be aware of what planning is and even want to become planners. In its modest way, this entry brings research and teaching together to the benefit of the planning profession.
Award to:
Lauren Lorenzo & Bea Guevara,
Aitken College

Project:
Arts Hub – Roxborough Park

This project provides a framework for the reinvigoration of Roxborough Park via an Arts Hub. The Arts Hub brings together a range of art pieces, gardens, performance areas and commercial functions to form a node of community activity that integrates heritage values. This is a very good piece of work that is a valuable contribution to thinking in this important area, and demonstrates considerable potential for future career opportunities for its authors.

The idea of drawing a range of land uses together around an arts theme in this way is both innovative and practical. The group demonstrated a good level of research via the analysis of the site and its surrounds. The work demonstrates a systematic approach, moving from the site’s context, to a design rationale, and to specific features of its realisation. This type of work is of high value to the community: projects such as this one, and students who can conceive of ideas such as this, are key to improving the qualities of urban places as citizens and as future urban planners. Overall, an attractive and interesting project that demonstrates a high level of creativity, coupled with skills in desktop publishing and spatial awareness.
Student Project (Tertiary) Borrie Prize

Award to:
Paul Bormann,
The University of Melbourne

Project:
An Investigation into the Optimisation of the Frankston City Bus Feeder Network

The project employs an innovative and grounded approach focusing on, and using links with the City of Frankston. It examines the existing bus feeder network of Frankston to consider whether running services directly to Frankston railway station is as efficient as running them as a feeder service into the SmartBus network. The project assessed whether such an approach would allow an increase in the frequency of services, within the existing resources available, while considering impacts on passenger travel times.

It was found that resource wastage, such as duplication, could be halved using a modified service, while significantly improving service frequency for passengers and improving or maintaining travel times. The project is of direct relevance to urban planning, drawing together land use and transport in an existing area undergoing urban change. It represents an excellent depth of work, demonstrating a thorough and skilled approach. The author has developed and employed an excellent methodological approach that provides considerable confidence in the results achieved. The project has direct value to the community affected, showing ways to improve on public transport delivery, while also building knowledge in this area of work and research. This is a valuable piece of work and the author is to be commended for his commitment and level of skill.

COMMENDATION

Commendation to:
Nicole Turner, Felicity Cunich, Linda Merlino, Suzie Mitchell, RMIT University

Project:
Is the past ready for a sustainable future? A Review of Victorian Heritage planning policies and the adaptation of environmental performances in heritage buildings

The project examines whether Victoria’s planning policies effectively incorporate environmental performance standards into the mechanisms of heritage control and protection relating to building adaptation. The work uses an innovative approach to deal with an important area that will continue to be relevant.

The dual goals of heritage and environmental protection are of high value to the community, and the study was undertaken in a way that demonstrated a strong understanding of urban and regional planning concepts and processes. It was found that, despite the possibility for adaptation of environmental performance into heritage buildings, current policy does not require that this occur. The work was rigorously carried out, particularly in respect to the interviews with key stakeholders in the area studied. The study is a valuable contribution to thinking in this significant area, and the authors are to be commended.
Award to: 
Department of Primary Industries 

Project: 
Strategic Planning for Adaptation to Climate Change in Regional Systems - A Case Study: South West Victoria 

This substantial body of work was undertaken by the Future Farming Systems Research Division of the Department of Primary Industries in collaboration with University of Melbourne, Monash University and CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research. The work forms part of the Victorian Climate Change Adaptation Program, an interdepartmental program of the Government of Victoria from 2006 - 2010. The program includes a range of initiatives seeking to understand the impacts of climate change and develop Victoria’s ability to respond to these challenges.

The key to the strategic planning work was this particular initiative to focus on land use impacts and the visualisation of results at a regional level. A notable achievement of the project is the development of a robust planning approach to identify regions under threat from productivity decline; find alternative agricultural systems better adapted to future climatic conditions; and design and evaluate actions that will lead to the region’s transformation into a lower carbon society and economy.

The judges were impressed with the project’s innovative focus and application of various modeling tools and visual technologies in a systematic and well planned approach to solving complex regional planning issues. This body of work makes a particularly significant contribution to land use planning, and will undoubtedly prove to be a valuable tool for decision making. Importantly, the work also provides a model approach that could be readily adapted to other regions throughout rural and regional Australia.

Commendation to: 
Planisphere 
In partnership with Regional Development Victoria 

Project: 
Regional Mapping Project 

In partnership with Regional Development Victoria, Planisphere has undertaken the first comprehensive analysis of the role and function of every settlement of 500 people or greater in rural and regional Victoria. The subsequent data collation has then lead to the development of a hierarchy of settlements based on the role and function attributes of each of these settlements. This work was seen as vital to the spatial planning of the various regions across the State.

The judging panel was unanimous in its conclusion that this work makes a significant contribution to rural and regional planning as it provides for the first time data with a level of consistency in a coherent manner which can underpin regional planning for every region of Victoria.
Award to: Department of Planning and Community Development

Project: Planning for Activity Centres

The Planning for Activity Centres project is deserving of the Urban Planning Achievement Award in that it is a well considered and integrated strategic and statutory tool designed to assist planning in, and implementation of, activity centre policy.

The project demonstrates leadership in design, presentation, content and application. It delivers on the demonstrated need to provide guidance to the preparation of activity centre structure plans.

The example provided by the Ruby Town Structure Plan will significantly guide both planning professionals, councils, developers and other stakeholders in understanding what is required to prepare a structure plan, as well as allow Councils to deliver developments and improvements in activity centres via a streamlined approach.

All judges were impressed by the depth of analysis and work undertaken into the Activity Centre tool kit particularly the suite of detailed Practice Notes, and the outlined steps identified in ‘making it happen’.
Commendation to: AECOM

Project: Southbank Structure Plan
In partnership with City of Melbourne

Comprehensive in its scope and heroic in its ambition, this structure plan establishes a framework for the re-invention of a critical area of Melbourne currently bereft of the planning controls needed to enable the delivery of an urban landscape supporting pedestrian scale activity, attractiveness and community life.

Identifying three centres for civic life, integrating Southbank with the city and Yarra River, prioritising the improvement of the public realm, including parks and streetscapes to deliver safe and enjoyable pedestrian and cycling connectivity, proposing energy and water efficiency initiatives including local gas fired trigeneration power plants and green roofs, the strategy provides for the delivery of a quality urban environment for a projected population of nearly 70,000 people along with 56,000 workers. A long-term proposal to deck the city link interchange provides the opportunity for a substantial public plaza as a focus for community interaction.

This project provides a high level of integrated strategic planning to enable the delivery of a legacy of superior built form environments within high density development.
Commendation to:  
**Banyule City Council**

**Project:**  
**The Greensborough Project**

Banyule City Council is pursuing an ambitious and innovative long-term vision for Greensborough that will fulfil its designation as the principal activity centre serving Melbourne’s north east. The vision is to transform it from a somewhat clumsy collection of strip shopping, inward-facing retail box and railway station into a cohesive multi-functional centre. The City has been progressively advancing this guiding concept through a cascading sequence of plans, strategic acquisitions and alliances with other key delivery partners.

The pivotal element of the plan is a unifying new public realm armature culminating in a Town Square, providing a common interface between retail, civic and recreational components of the activity centre.

The Greensborough Project displays a strong design-derived concept, establishing principles that are replicated as component elements, articulated and delivered with flexible time frames.

The City’s commitment of substantial capital investment to construction of the Regional Aquatic and Leisure Centre and adjacent Town Square moves the project from conceptual planning to concrete action. The Regional Aquatic and Leisure Centre will provide a catalyst for activity in the Greensborough centre to balance its present retail focus with broader functions, and provides the physical focus to secure an interface between the two.

**COMMENDATION**

Commendation to:  
**Hansen Partnership**

In partnership with Capire Consulting Group

**Project:**  
**Dandenong South Residential Area Urban Design and Social Needs Framework Plan**

The Dandenong South Residential Area Urban Design and Social Needs Framework Plan exemplifies the importance of a multidisciplinary team and the interconnection between physical and social planning. The two consultant firms, Hansen Partnership and Capire Consulting Group have demonstrated how a social outcome can be pursued through the development of a well considered urban design framework plan.

The judges appreciated the imaginative effort put into making the brief relevant for keeping the community involved in both the design process and final outcomes, and commend the project strategy and process as an innovative model of community consultation. The project did this by engaging the City of Greater Dandenong, the Dandenong Development Board, the Ethnic Community Council of the South-East and VicUrban to achieve a social outcome through an urban design process.

The judges were impressed with the degree of urban design rigour which underpinned the project and the sensitive approach taken to the social planning component. The consultant team has adopted a philosophy that the Dandenong South Project does not seek to change the world through a series of land use recommendations, its focus is in simple terms of the physical improvements that harness safety, amenity, place making and environmental awareness for the divergent groups within the precinct, including Albanian, Macedonian and Russian communities. It is the judges’ view that this is an admirable objective and one which is self evident in the study’s outcome and recommendations.
AWARD

Award to: Hansen Partnership
In partnership with Sustainable Built Environments

Project: Local Government Planning for Sustainable Buildings Guide

The Local Government Planning for Sustainable Buildings Guide is a tool for planning practitioners to facilitate the creation of more sustainable buildings through the use of local planning decisions and frameworks. It was developed by Sustainable Built Environments (SBE) and Hansen Partnership, with support from the Sustainability Accord and the State Government’s Sustainability Fund.

The Guide is an easy to navigate tool that steps the reader through the benefits of sustainable buildings, how to request better performing buildings, and how to assess them as part of a planning application. The guide also advises Council Staff on how to set up a sustainability assessment process for their municipality, and advises planning applicants on how to address these requirements in their submission.

This project demonstrates how emissions data can be used to inform the development of planning strategies and actions at the local level.

COMMENDATION

Commendation to: SGS Economics & Planning
In partnership with Kinesis

Project: Werribee Plains Energy Research Project

A study into the energy and carbon impacts of the Werribee Plains, which includes the local government areas of Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley, Moorabool, Wyndham and parts of Greater Geelong, and the creation of a holistic policy platform to address these issues.

COMMENDATION

Commendation to: Tract Consultants
In partnership with Brett Lane & Associates

Project: Eynesbury Township

Eynesbury Township is a new community located between Melton and Werribee. The township uses an innovative legal framework to create the Eynesbury Owners Association and Eynesbury Owners Corporation to protect the local Grey Box woodland and high quality native grasslands, while also providing a funding model to ensure that improvement works can be carried out in perpetuity.
Award to:
Jason Dowling and Clay Lucas
The Age

Project:
Project Melbourne

The Age newspaper’s series of articles, videos and specific website under the banner “Project Melbourne: Towards a Sustainable City” impressed the judges with the quality and breadth of its coverage of urban planning issues in Melbourne. The series covered the debate over the planning of Melbourne from a range of perspectives, and focused on the variety of factors at play in shaping Melbourne’s future development.

Many pieces in the series made an admirable attempt to communicate complex planning debates to a broad audience, and went beyond simplistic arguments: for example, through challenging stereotyped dichotomies of inner city versus fringe residents, or through outlining some of the multifaceted factors contributing to the crisis in housing affordability. The series also provided timely coverage of the issues of governance and integrity.

While The Age, as a major newspaper, inherently brings larger audiences and higher production values than many other media outlets, it was to their credit that this series also explored a wider range of presentation methods, including on-line presentations and a forum attended by expert and industry committee members.
Social and Community Based Planning

Award

Award to:
SGS Economics & Planning
Project:
Dollars and Sense: The Community Value of Victorian Public Libraries

The process described in the report demonstrates economic rigour that takes account of the typically non-quantifiable outcomes of investment in social infrastructure. The report is presented in a user-friendly way that can easily be understood by practitioners with little understanding of economic theory. The three different assessment methods applied in the process of evaluating the community benefits of public libraries are well articulated and provide a robust and innovative tool that can be applied to other aspects of social infrastructure and the practice of social planning.

The evaluation was framed within the social model of health and involved a range of stakeholders, including community members who are not currently using the library services. The report includes a set of practical recommendations and ‘next steps’ that will support effective implementation.

Award to:
Heart Foundation
In partnership with Parks Victoria, Brimbank, Frankston and Moonee Valley City Councils
Project:
Space for Active Play

The Space for Active Play project came about as a response to the need for children in Australia to become more physically active. Children aged 8 to 12 are not presently well catered for by local council policies and strategies, and their rates of everyday physical activity through travel and play in public space are rapidly declining.

The partnership has provided an excellent and easy to replicate consultation model on planning and designing play spaces that will encourage use and symbolic ownership by children. The Frankston work has led to new partnerships between design, community planning, parks maintenance and local residents, and to innovative design. Of particular note is the mature understanding of feasibility and planning for the whole community exhibited by the children, who previously felt uninterested by ‘boring’ play spaces and uninvolved in local planning decision-making.
Commendation to:
K2 Planning and Mount Alexander Shire Council

Project:
Mount Alexander Shire Council Review of Community Services and Facilities

This report demonstrates a clear application of the social model of health, recognising that access to social services and facilities is a key determinant of community health and wellbeing. The research is particularly valuable in the context of a rural shire characterised by dispersed communities, many of which have relatively poor access to social services and display specific socio-economic disadvantage.

The innovative and holistic approach to the research demonstrates an excellent understanding of the application of social evidence that is clearly replicable. The approach adopted by the consultants has developed an extra dimension to the notions of ‘accessibility’, ‘equity’ and ‘equality’ as they apply to the provision of social services and facilities at the municipal level.

It is likely that this initiative will have far-reaching positive health and wellbeing impacts on the Shire’s marginalised and isolated communities. What is particularly impressive in this study is the extent to which the community and stakeholders were involved in identifying their needs and demands with respect to access to social services and facilities, and the particular factors representing barriers to this access.
Commendation to:
Paul Bormann,
The University of Melbourne

Project:
An Investigation into the Optimisation of the Frankston City Bus Feeder Network

As part the requirements of the Masters of Urban Planning at the University of Melbourne Paul Bormann prepared a thesis entitled “An Investigation into the Optimisation of the Frankston City Bus Feeder Network”.

The study examines the public transport network in Frankston, its performance and how it might be redesigned and the resources reallocated to improve the public transport services provided to local residents. The study examines how feeder bus services that now run to Frankston Railway Station might be redirected to run as local neighbourhood loops rather than running to the Railway Station, and as a result of the shorter route distances, the resources saved could be redirected towards providing higher frequencies. The neighbourhood loop services would then act as feeder services to the high frequency SmartBus services that provide the connection through to Station and town centre.

Mr Bormann undertook a rigorous analysis of the existing travel profile of the local residents and current public transport system in Frankston, and then applied innovative solutions to achieve an outcome that has higher local bus service frequencies for the same level of resources as that currently applied to public transport in Frankston. Whilst the recommendations of the study itself may prove to be impractical to deliver, the creative thinking applied in this study will help practitioners to see how thinking ‘outside the square’ may be necessary if the overarching objective of improving public transport services is to be achieved with limited financial resources.
AWARD

Award to: City of Ballarat

Project: Preserving Ballarat's Heritage

This comprehensive project tackled one of planning’s ongoing ‘elephant in the room’ problems, which is all too often not dealt with even though it constitutes one of the issues facing many planners and managers of Victoria’s heritage.

This study was commissioned and carried out by the City of Ballarat. It utilised an evidence based approach that provides a reproducible model that could be drawn on by other planning authorities. The comprehensive research was supported by a stakeholder communication strategy that emphasised the shared responsibility of protecting and managing Ballarat’s heritage values.

This study promoted the positive economic and social benefits that well-preserved and managed heritage can provide for a community, and described the contribution that heritage can make to community identity. The recommendations provide a staged implementation program that fitted with Council’s strategic planning and budgetary cycle by identifying areas for immediate implementation and areas which required further research or documentation.

AWARD

Award to: Context and Brimbank City Council

Project: Brimbank Heritage Design Guidelines

The Brimbank Heritage Design Guidelines prepared by Context and Brimbank City Council are to be used for general application to heritage places and to a number of interesting 20th century heritage areas such as the planned housing estates of H V McKay, ICI and the Commonwealth Munitions workers.

Aesthetically pleasing and well laid-out, the Guidelines are generously illustrated with helpful diagrams and photographs. The document has been prepared with careful thought and consideration to the particular needs of residents and land owners.

The Guidelines articulate the heritage significance of these areas to property owners in simple, straightforward language.

The introduction of heritage controls in Brimbank for areas of 20th century worker housing was initially met with some scepticism and cynicism by the community. However, since their release, the Guidelines have helped to raise community awareness and an appreciation of Brimbank’s heritage.

Together with Council’s Heritage Advisory Service and Heritage Assistance Fund, the Heritage and Design Guidelines are leading to the improved presentation and conservation of Brimbank’s heritage and an increasing pride among property owners in these heritage areas.
COMMENDATION

Commendation to:
Context, Melbourne Water and Heritage Victoria

Project:
Regional Water Supply Heritage Study – Melbourne Region

A commendation is awarded to Context and Melbourne Water for the Regional Water Supply Heritage Study; an inclusive and comprehensive assessment of Melbourne’s water infrastructure. Particularly relevant in a period of uncertain water supply and increased pressures on water resources from Melbourne’s growth, Context’s heritage study will enable its client Melbourne Water to plan for upgrades and new infrastructure while retaining the heritage values of its most significant facilities.

Well laid out and easy to use, this study stands out for its integration of Indigenous and landscape values within the assessment of significant pieces of civil infrastructure. Melbourne Water in particular is to be congratulated for commissioning this work with support from Heritage Victoria.

This project demonstrates Melbourne Water’s ongoing commitment to heritage asset management and it further cements Context’s well-won reputation for delivering high quality and innovative heritage studies.

COMMENDATION

Commendation to:
Manningham City Council
In partnership with Box Hill Institute

Project:
Doncaster Hill Heritage Trail

The Doncaster Hill Heritage Trail developed by Manningham City Council is an example of a relatively small and self-contained project that will leave a lasting positive impact on the community. The project, which aimed to enhance an identified heritage sub-precinct within the Doncaster Hill Principal Activity Centre, demonstrates an integrated approach to planning with an outcome that will be evident in the community for years to come.

The project developed around a number of locations with heritage overlays and used strategic planning and community development approaches. It also incorporated skills development opportunities for students from Box Hill Institute and community groups such as the Historical Society, church parishioners and school students in the area. The relationships developed will be an ongoing support for recognition and management of heritage in Doncaster.
Local Government

Award

Award to:
Mildura Rural City Council
In partnership with Tourism Victoria

Project:
Mildura Murray: Riverfront Central Precincts Feasibility

The Rural City of Mildura is the well deserving winner of the Local Government Category this year. Often the community looks to the local council to lead the way in thinking around issues and demonstrating best practice. This year the exemplar project has been developed by the Rural City of Mildura with their many partners. Despite years of drought and challenges posed by living in an environment with a changing relationship with water, the Rural City of Mildura brings us a project which seamlessly integrates environmental, social, recreational and cultural themes, knitting back together a township and river environment severed by the railway more than a century ago. It provides for investment, consolidation and natural extension of the township, while providing an attractive environment for local and tourist recreation.

The Precinct embeds the ecological, social and cultural values of the river within central city life. Importantly, it builds on strengths already demonstrated by the fine food and dining market, providing potential for Mildura to consolidate as a destination worthy of special attention on the regional tourism map.

In planning we expect logical, accessible, comprehensive, well documented plans stepping through decision making processes from vision, investigation and feasibility stages to implementation. Mildura’s feasibility study adds value by being easy to understand and accessible to a wide range of audiences. It clearly and effortlessly communicates the benefits of revitalisation while providing a clear implementation plan for the delivery of significant integrated whole-of-government planning outcomes bringing with them considerable community benefit.
AWARD

Award to:
SGS Economics and Planning

SGS Economics and Planning has grown their practice to be a nationally and internationally recognised consultancy. This expansion has been driven by establishing a strong network of both government and private sector clients and delivering innovative and leading edge thinking in the fields of planning and economics. In the last 12 months SGS clients have included 9 Federal Government bodies, 22 State Government organisations, 46 Councils, 3 Universities, 30 private sector companies and 11 not-for-profit bodies. Some of their recent and diverse engagements include:

- Research to quantify the community value of Public Libraries
- Greenhouse emission and emission reduction solutions for the Werribee Plains
- Economic Development Strategy for the Ballarat Region
- Assisting Local Government to facilitate affordable housing
- Research to inform infrastructure prioritisation

Through their project involvement, SGS has contributed significantly to raising the profile and awareness of planning issues affecting the community, and has sought to share the lessons learnt through their weekly in house training forums, monthly staff newsletter and boardroom seminar program and participation in industry events and forums.

SGS’ long term contribution to Planning News through the monthly column, ‘Economy in Space’ has provided a suitable forum to strengthen the relationship between planning and economic thinking, whilst providing their team with new exposure to the industry.

Not only has SGS committed to participating in the public policy debate and challenging new thinking within the industry, they have a strong focus on staff development and opportunity. SGS engages their team through structured staff appraisals, surveys, in-house training seminars and staff scholarship for innovative thinking. SGS is committed to providing their team with the opportunity to grow within the practice and provide valuable contributions to the planning industry.
President’s Award

Award to:  
**Mildura Rural City Council**  
In partnership with Tourism Victoria

Project:  
**Mildura Murray: Riverfront Central Precincts Feasibility**

This plan prepared by the Mildura Rural City Council with assistance from Suters Architects in conjunction with McGregor Partners and others was partly funded by Tourism Victoria. Working with limited resources, Council has prepared an ambitious plan to generate investment, create community amenity and enhance the local and tourist appeal of their riverfront area.

The feasibility builds on previous plans and studies to deliver local and visitor outcomes. It maintains the existing qualities of the area, including both natural elements and built structures, to create a vibrant and diverse waterfront that is rich in social, economic and environmental experiences.

The project illustrates how local governments can be the catalyst for development whilst also meeting their community’s vision.
Sponsors and Acknowledgements

Sponsors

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- Russell Kennedy
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- MURC The Place To Be
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- PIA Victorian secretariat: Eula Black, Melita Brown, Micaela Drieberg, Simone Stevenson, Stuart Worn
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Audio Visual Presentation

- MEINHARDT
- RMIT UNIVERSITY
- Essential Economics
- DAVID LOCK ASSOCIATES
- TOWN PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN
The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) is the peak national body representing planning professionals. PIA was established in 1951 to serve planning professionals and promote planning as a profession. PIA boasts approximately 5,000 members and supports planners in all states and territories in Australia. It also has representation in 36 different countries around the world. PIA aims to support the Australian Planning profession and community in the creation of liveable communities, vibrant economies, sustainable places, diverse cultural expression and social cohesion.

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For more information on PIA Victoria Division events and activities, visit www.planning.org.au/vic

**Planning Institute Australia - Victoria Division**

Suite G-05 The Green Building
60 Leicester Street
Carlton VIC 3053

PO Box 675
Carlton South Victoria 3053

T: (03) 9347 1900
F: (03) 9347 2900
E: vic@planning.org.au
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