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PIA Victoria Awards Convenor:
Carmel Boyce

PIA Victoria secretariat:
Sofie Anselmi, Eula Black, Mateusz Buczko,
Simone Stevenson, Stuart Worn

Audio Visual Presentation
David Salt and Tania Quick, Meinhardt

Awards Program Design
Kathryn Cuddihy, David Lock Associates
Message from the PIA Victoria Awards Convenor

Congratulations to this year’s award and commendation recipients. In 2011 we have seen the Awards for Planning Excellence transform from excellence in skill category awards, to awards that recognise the importance of planning to place.

The awards offer a unique opportunity to display the importance of integrated practice in which respectful professionals of different skills, blended together rich palettes of knowledge in the seamless delivery of place.

In engaging in integrated practice, we provide places that engage and delight. They recognise integrated work that leads practice and demonstrates our capacity to together deliver a better healthier, happier and more sustainable world.

The awards provide an opportunity to recognise the very best in planning. They also recognise the many members of the profession supporting planning in the State whose day-to-day work which underpins the planning system. Awards based on outcome recognise place as a composition, delivered over time with a steady hand, certainty and multiple good decisions.

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 Sofie Anselmi, Eula Black, Mateusz Buczko, 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 and Tania Quick from Meinhardt for the visual presentation, Kathryn Cuddihy 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 Victoria Awards Convenor
The 2011 Awards for Planning Excellence provides a wonderful opportunity to recognise the diversity of planning projects and achievements whilst celebrating the efforts of our colleagues.

We live in an unpredictable world, with regular natural disasters and civil turmoil. In Victoria we have witnessed the election of a new government and the resulting proliferation of reviews and potential legislative and policy reforms. The profession continues to experience a skills shortage which along with the issues identified above, continue to challenge the industry. I therefore believe it is crucial to conduct professional awards to recognise excellence. 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 popularity 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 2011 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.

Steve Dunn MPIA CPP
PIA Victoria President
The Victorian Coalition Government is delighted to support this year’s PIA Awards for Excellence in Planning. Recognising the initiatives and achievements of our planners helps showcase their talent, aptitude and ingenuity to the wider community.

Our planning profession is critical to the success and prosperity of Victoria particularly as we embark on an overhaul of the planning system, the development of a new metropolitan planning strategy and regional growth plans.

The Coalition Government is committed to working with the planning profession to deliver a fair, consistent and transparent planning system that provides certainty to residents, councils and businesses.

The Victorian Government has a strong vision for planning and these awards recognise that good planning and urban design are vital to meeting the challenges of population growth and a sustainable future.

While the Victorian PIA Awards for Planning Excellence recognise innovation, achievement and excellence in urban and regional planning, they also demonstrate the profession’s contribution to planning liveable communities as well as social and environmental sustainability.

I am particularly impressed by the number of new categories this year which place greater emphasis on planning outcomes and leadership across our multi-disciplinary profession.

My sincerest congratulations to this year’s winners and those who have received commendations, I look forward to their valuable contributions and ideas coming to fruition.

The Hon Matthew Guy MLC
Minister for Planning
Once again Melbourne has been recognised as one of the most liveable cities in the world, in large part because of its built form - a legacy of the vision of planners both past and present.

Melbourne’s success is in the series of vibrant, dynamic and diverse communities from St Kilda to Brunswick Street to Eltham all surrounded by green wedges – the lungs of the city. Each community is uniquely different and yet very special to those residents who live there. The challenge for today is to preserve the look, the feel and character of each community while accommodating growth using the contributions and vision of the planners of today.

Looking at the projects nominated for the 2011 Awards, I have no doubt that the vision of today’s planners will build on that proud legacy and will protect and enhance the reputation of Melbourne as one of the best places to live.

Brian Tee MLC
Shadow Minister for Planning
Judging Panel

2 Outstanding Achievement by a Young Planner

Lyndsay Neilson
Neilson Associates

Christine Renkin
Planisphere

Gareth Hately
Municipal Association of Victoria

5a Outstanding Secondary Student Project - Staple Medal

Lyndsay Neilson
Neilson Associates

Christine Renkin
Planisphere

Gareth Hately
Municipal Association of Victoria

5b Outstanding Tertiary Student Project - Borrie Prize

6a Best Planning Ideas - Small Project

Rod Duncan
Deakin University

Margaret Baird
VCAT

Brett Davis
Davis Planning Solutions

6b Best Planning Ideas - Large Project

Rod Duncan
Deakin University

John Holland
Cardinia Shire Council

Ed Zagami
Planning Studio on Peel

7 Improving Planning Processes and Practices

Julie Hallyburton
Department of Planning and Community Development

Denise Turner
Department of Primary Industries

8 Public Engagement and Community Planning

Ruth Davies
Akin Planning

Vivian Garde
South East Water

Gavin Alford
Moorabool Shire Council

9 Promotion of Planning

James Larmour-Reid
Planisphere

Ursula Kolecki
Planning News Editor

Nicole Vickridge
Knox City Council

11a Workplace Award - Government Planner

Max Barr
Retired Life Fellow

John Bayly
Retired Life Fellow

11b Workplace Award - Consultant Planner

Stephanie Knox
Retired Life Fellow

13 President’s Award

Steve Dunn
PIA Victoria President

14 Planning Minister’s Award

The Hon Matthew Guy
Victorian Planning Minister

Awards Convenor

Carmel Boyce
Carmel Boyce & Associates
Outstanding Achievement by a Young Planner

Award to:
Robert Kretschmer,
LaTrobe University

Robert Kretschmer through his leadership of the Plan B network at Latrobe University and his involvement of the network in valuable community projects within Australia and overseas has shown how an innovative and creative young planner can generate actions that are worthy of national attention and interest.

The creation of the Zone B sustainable transport resource for the City of Bendigo is a substantial initiative that could be replicated elsewhere and brings credit to the profession, as does his work on the community orchard. His engagement with the Sri Lankan Young Planners Forum is of particular note and underpins his merit as a candidate for the Award.

Award to:
Belinda Powell,
Cardinia Shire Council

Belinda Powell is notable among the candidates for the award not only for her very successful community engagement to deliver an excellent result for the community in the Gembrook Township Strategy but also for her wider work within Cardinia Shire Council that raises the profile of the profession in very innovative ways.

Belinda’s focus on implementation of plans has meant that she has delivered funding for previously unfunded actions to implement township strategies across the Shire – her focus on results is worth emulating widely among planners. In addition she has shown substantial leadership in leading the Council’s EBA process, thus raising the profile of the profession by demonstrating strong capability beyond her direct professional role.
Commendation to:
Kate Pleban,
Planisphere

Kate Pleban’s planning and design work demonstrates a very high standard of technical and professional competence, and she has contributed to a wide variety of projects during her young planning career – something that clearly stands her in good stead in her highly regarded role as a tutor, lecturer, and conference presenter.

Commendation to:
Jessica Noonan,
Environmental Resources Management

Jessica Noonan’s deep commitment to furthering the capacity and capabilities of young planners through her mentoring work is truly impressive, and complements her strong participation as a representative of young planners in both the Victorian and National Young Planner’s Groups, including taking responsibility for initiating and organising policy contributions and events.
Outstanding Secondary Student Project - Stapley Medal

Award to:
Casey McCormick, Eltham High School
Project:
Eden Estate

This project is an outstanding example of student work. The calibre of the project exemplifies Casey’s passion for planning, but also a high degree of professionalism well beyond her years.

It articulates the problems associated with urban sprawl and then redesigns an estate that capitalises on the existing flora and fauna values and incorporates best practice environmental principles.

The use of ecological vegetation class mapping and the location of high density housing close to commercial centres and parkland illustrate that she is attuned to best practice and understands through application how it can be solved. It is clear that Casey will be a future ambassador for the planning profession in years to come.

Commendation to:
Dong Feng, Emmaus College
Project:
Syndal Square

Dong Feng’s project recognises the importance of environmental, economic and social factors when redeveloping ‘Syndal Square’ in Glen Waverley. The use of data to inform the redevelopment illustrates a great amount of thought has gone into the final design. The project is an excellent example of student work.

Commendation to:
Adam Laing, Eltham High School
Project:
Design of a Sustainable Estate

Adam Laing’s project recognises the importance of the profession being innovative. The project presented entirely in Media Flash Player illustrates a willingness to question conventional methods of project delivery. His consideration of existing characteristics in the final road and zoning map illustrates a deep understanding of the subject area and the issues that need to be addressed.
Outstanding Tertiary Student Project - Borrie Prize

Award to:
Cael James Leskovec, RMIT University

Project:
Green Building Governance: planning policy, theory and practice around environmentally sustainable office buildings in Melbourne, Victoria

The research highlights Victoria’s fragmented and ineffective formal and informal policy relating to environmentally sustainable commercial buildings. The study findings and recommendations are realistic and make an outstanding contribution to contemporary planning discourse.

Commendation to:
Andrew Bishop, Issana Burhan, Tamara Lowen, Zhu Minjie Snow
University of Melbourne

Project:
South Tarawa General Land Use Plan

The South Tarawa General Land Use Plan makes a significant contribution to the future planning of the Central Pacific Republic of Kiribati, identified by the United Nations as one of the least developed countries in the world. Responding to the challenge of rapid population growth and impacts of rising sea levels on the Island’s land resources, the Plan demonstrates competency in its appreciation of local issues and context, research and methodology, sound land use planning, and local tools and governance structure available to implement the Plan. The authors’ engagement with the government and relevant stakeholders, and the written and visual presentation of information should be commended.
Award to: Brimbank City Council
Project: Interactive Multivariate Analysis Tool

Through their Interactive Multivariate Analysis Tool (IMAT) Brimbank City Council have developed an interactive basis that the judges felt was an outstanding and innovative planning idea. The IMAT provides the Council’s strategic department with a tool to measure the level of ‘liveability, development capacity and site suitability’ of all registered land parcels within the municipality. Its contribution to planning for Brimbank in informing its Housing Strategy whilst also guiding key stakeholders such as the Department of Transport and Council’s Executive was highly regarded.

The IMAT has been developed with a clear and specific statement of objectives. It has demonstrated rigour and its implementation through council and the community has led to Brimbank making informed decisions based on planning theory and scientific evidence.

COMMENDATION

Commendation to: Tract Consultants in partnership with Department of Transport and AECOM
Project: Principal Pedestrian Network Project

Principal Pedestrian Networks provides a usable, carefully considered, clear, methodology recognising and giving priority to walking as a legitimate, viable, attractive, healthy and sustainable mode of transport.

It involves determining likely walking trips to destinations, delineating and then validating routes, and developing an implementation plan to deliver pedestrian priority. The methodology can be used now in activity centre planning and will continue to evolve and be adapted with its practical application.

Principal Pedestrian Networks has significant potential in its broader application in land use and transport planning processes. Principal Pedestrian Networks advances current planning practice and the concept of walking as a transport mode. It has the potential to make a significant contribution to planning and sustainability outcomes, and demonstrates a high quality of presentation with detailed mapping that is easy to comprehend.
Commendation to:  
The Heart Foundation  
in partnership with David Lock Associates and Victorian Eco-innovation Lab  

Project:  
Food Sensitive Planning and Urban Design  

This innovative report prepared for the Heart Foundation is described as ‘a conceptual framework for achieving a sustainable and healthy food system’. It aims to raise awareness and influence behaviour and decisions about the built environment through addressing all four phases of the food system: Production, processing and transportation, consumer access, and waste management. This is a much broader scope than the growing attention being given to the issue of food security.

The report ambitiously provides a comprehensive introduction to the importance of food production and consumption and its spatial implications – the issues, challenges and responses – within a land use planning and urban design framework. This makes a valuable contribution to establishing ‘Food’ as a new and relatively under-explored theme in land use planning. It “brings food to the table” as one of the multiple factors for consideration when creating healthy, sustainable, viable and enjoyable urban and rural environments.

This initial work establishes high level principles for establishing spaces and communities that are consistent with pursuit of food-based objectives, and helpfully provides a wide variety of case studies through a variety of examples ranging from the highly local to the exotic.
Commendation to:  
**Planisphere**  
in partnership with Melbourne City Council

**Project:**  
**Melbourne Central City**  
**Built Form Review**

The Melbourne Central City Built Form Review by Planisphere in conjunction with the City of Melbourne is the first comprehensive review of central city built form controls in 25 years. The objective of the review was to modernise, simplify and make more effective the policies and controls governing built form in the central city. Subsequently Melbourne City Council has commissioned the preparation of a planning scheme amendment to implement the findings.

The work examines the most important aspects of a building envelope that needs to be controlled consistently in order to achieve a quality public realm at ground level. It identifies some of the implementation problems and questionable built form delivered by relying only on the performance standards, so recommends mandatory maximum street frontage heights and minimum setbacks to towers, with no mandatory overall height limits except in special character areas.

The review is a substantive work. It analyses built form throughout the city, its relationship to the street, existing use and function which lead to outcome recommendations including implementation tools. It is a very useful document that will improve and enhance planning and built form outcomes for the City of Melbourne, and is the worthy recipient of a Commendation.
Awards

**Award to:**
Department of Planning and Community Development & Department of Justice

**Project:**
Practice Note 61: Licensed Premises: Assessing Cumulative Impact

The guidelines, which are the result of a collaborative partnership between the Department of Planning and Community Development and the Department of Justice, tackle a very difficult and complex topic in planning. They provide a common sense and flexible approach that can be tailored to take account local variations to ensure the guidelines can work effectively in all areas and circumstances. The guidelines target a range of stakeholders including applicants, councils and residents providing a comprehensive and easy to follow guide that is supported by an education and awareness program.

**Award to:**
City of Ballarat

**Project:**
Your Guide to Living with Koalas

The judges were impressed with the unique and innovative nature of the Your Guide to Living with Koalas project, developed by the City of Ballarat in collaboration with the Australian Koala Foundation. The guide successfully incorporates a practical environmental conservation program for the protection of koalas within the planning system, becoming the first council in Victoria to produce a Koala Plan of Management. Underpinned by comprehensive research and community consultation, the Koala Plan of Management incorporates an Environmental Significance Overlay, also known as the Koala Overlay, to protect koalas and koala habitats within the municipality, as well as the revision and extension of the city’s native vegetation protection overlays.

Supporting the implementation of the guide is an easy to read educational brochure, aimed at assisting landholders and residents affected by the Koala Overlay, complete with pictures and photos addressing the removal of barriers and their replacement with koala friendly fencing.
Improving Planning Processes and Practices

Commendation to: CPG Australia
Project: Dynamic Housing Growth Modelling
The Dynamic Housing Growth Modelling Program developed for Bayside City Council is impressive for its innovative focus and use of modelling tools to test various policy and development control scenarios at the local level. The program enables development assumptions to be modified, generating dynamic updates on development scenarios and assumptions, to inform the preparation of councils’ housing strategy. The principles and methodology applied can be easily adapted for other municipalities to assist with the preparation of housing strategies, the assessment of planning scheme amendments, and responses to State Government policies. This program has the potential to enable significant improvements in the development of responsive urban growth strategies.

Commendation to: Municipal Association of Victoria
Project: STEP Planning Processes Improvement Program
The STEP Planning Process Improvement Program, run by the Municipal Association of Victoria and formally launched in August 2010, equips councils with the tools and skills to critically examine their processes and performance, and to then take action to improve their planning services. The program which operates on a voluntary basis is the first, sector-initiated and funded program of its kind in Australia. The STEP program provides a guided methodology incorporating audit and review, shared learning, management reporting and sector-wide improvement projects. With 22 participating councils to date, the judges believe the program has the capacity to realise significant improvements in planning processes and practices across local government in Victoria.
City of Cardinia Council
Project: Gembrook Township Strategy Community Engagement Process

Cardinia demonstrated that they have learnt and grown from experience of previous processes that had resulted in community disenchantment with council. Their objective in this process was to carry out diverse participation activities that empowered community members to express their opinions. They also undertook extensive internal engagement that led to cross-council endorsement of the strategy. Council have also demonstrated on-going commitment to engagement throughout the implementation of the plan. The judges consider this entry to be an exemplar of engagement for councils with multiple small communities and restricted resources.

Award to:
Cardinia Shire Council

Project:
Gembrook Township Strategy Community Engagement Process

Boroondara are commended for their fantastic work. It is an excellent example of how to work with stakeholders and the community in planning the future of our cities.

City of Boroondara
Project:
Boroondara Activity Centre Strategy Project

Boroondara developed a comprehensive community engagement strategy, effectively involving both internal staff and a broad range of external stakeholders and community members in shaping the future of activity centres in their city.

Boroondara have delivered a robust engagement process, providing a wide range of opportunities for stakeholders and the community to get involved. The process was supported by a strong branding and communications campaign to help raise awareness of the project and support community learning. Their use of electronic media alone received approximately 2,425 text comments from the community.
Award to: David Lock Associates

Project: Plantastic and Designeriffic News

David Lock Associates’ Plantastic and Designeriffic blog is a new and welcome forum for promoting urban planning, design and sustainability news from Australia and around the world. One of the few blogs in Australia that is entirely devoted to planning and design issues, the forum has a specific objective of promoting the profession in a positive and engaging manner.

Just two years in production, the blog’s regular email distribution list has generated a loyal following of over 200 subscribers and is steadily growing. The immediacy and sustainability of this type of media is such that the authors are able to relay information about contemporary issues well ahead of traditional paper-based formats and without the heavy environmental footprint.

The judges were particularly impressed by the use of ‘new’ media, the professionalism of the production, and the quality of the images and writing. True to its objective of reaching a broader audience than planning professionals, the writing style is readily accessible and studiously avoids the use of planning jargon.
Award to:
Brooke Templeton
Bayside City Council

Brooke Templeton is the Project Manager for Bayside Our City’s Future, the largest community consultation program ever undertaken by Bayside City Council. This program acknowledged the changes to the urban environment that are being experienced in the municipality and addressed the key issues that are driving these changes in an integrated, easy to understand and accessible format. The community was invited to be involved in a series of events, forums and other activities at a range of different locations, over a three month period, covering a wide range of topics including the environment, open space, housing, employment, transport, activity centres and the planning scheme.

The judges were impressed with a number of aspects of the program including the holistic and innovative approach that could be applied to other localities and projects and the high quality, easily understood publications and materials and the extensive website that supported the community engagement program. The Bayside City Council team led by Brooke Templeton are to be congratulated for this very successful engagement program that makes a great contribution to planning practice.
Award to:
SGS Economics and Planning

This firm’s submission provided details of policies and projects clearly demonstrating compliance with defined criteria for each of the attributes to be considered for this Award.

Reference is made to commissions ranging from municipal through metropolitan to overseas clients, and from review of current land use and employment concerns in sub-municipal precincts to 20- or 25-year strategies for regional, state-wide and international clients. Commitment to staff development, especially focused on young planners, was supported by comments from beneficiaries of the program, who clearly appreciated the wide range of support they received.

The firm’s ownership model and encouragement of staff involvement in operational organisation and external professional and social networks is in the best tradition of interdisciplinary professional practice. Recent initiatives involving both staff and the firm’s consultants in personally focussed in-house and external professional and fitness training are recognised as significant contributions to “much greater efficiency in project management and financial processes”.

Better models would be hard to find.

Commendation to:
Planisphere

The judging panel concluded that Planisphere should receive the commendation in this category.

Their expertise, as confirmed by the wide range of projects in which they have been involved, is impressive. Further, Planisphere is to be commended for its recognition of the importance of its staff and its approach to team member health and well being. Also, it is not surprising that the consultancy has been the recipient of many state and national awards over the years; a credit to the group.
Award to:  
Brimbank City Council  

Project:  
Interactive Multivariate Analysis Tool  

Urban intensification through infill development is an issue which many municipalities are struggling to appropriately fit into their existing residential landscapes. The Brimbank City Council’s Interactive Multivariate Analysis Tool (IMAT) provides an appropriate method for councils to plan for new housing development.

The IMAT provides Brimbank Council with a tool to measure the level of ‘liveability’, ‘development capacity’ and ‘site suitability’, of all registered land parcels within the municipality. The IMAT provides council with a simple, transferrable, transparent, inexpensive and very effective tool to test the validity of assumptions of future development scenarios.

The IMAT is contributing to evidence based planning which is critical in modern strategic planning. The tool is enabling Brimbank City Council to make informed decisions based on planning theory and scientific evidence.
Award to:
Lend Lease
in partnership with VicUrban and Department of Planning and Community Development

Project:
Victoria Harbour Development Plan

Victoria Harbour is located within Docklands on a unique 24 hectare peninsula extending west from Collins Street and tapering to a finger wharf bounded by the Yarra River to the south and Victoria Harbour Dock to the north.

In 2007, Lend Lease, in partnership with VicUrban and the Department of Planning and Community Development identified a need to update its existing development plan to take account of the changing nature and evolution of Docklands. There was a drive also to reinforce the sustainability credentials of new development. Lend Lease produced its new Development Plan with key strategic input from VicUrban, DPCD, the City of Melbourne, Parks Victoria and the local community.

Throughout the project Lend Lease listened to and collaborated with major stakeholders and the community to achieve a quality and sustainable outcome. They were not afraid to allow this project to evolve in response to changes in the surrounding built and social environments and changing economic climates.

The Victoria Harbour Development Plan 2010 is an exemplar for master planning in Docklands and stands out from the competition across the State. It is a notable strategic document designed to shape the future of this important area of Docklands.

Lend Lease has already delivered a number of large and notable developments in the precinct including the headquarters for both ANZ and NAB. When complete, the precinct will provide accommodation for approximately 5,000 new residents, 19,500 new workers as well as community uses. In particular, it will include a new Victoria Park, childcare centre (completed), waterfront promenade, the new Dock Square Park, civic building, swimming pool, boating hub and historic boat centre.
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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.

Contact PIA

For more information on PIA policy, events, initiatives and becoming a member, visit www.planning.org.au

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

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