



APA Virginia's 2023 Awards Program

Every year, the American Planning Association's Virginia Chapter honors and showcases the best in planning throughout the Commonwealth with its annual Awards Program. The Chapter recognizes the tireless work of individuals who spearhead great planning throughout Virginia. APA Virginia convenes a panel of peers each year for its Awards Committee representative of the profession's depth and diversity to identify, acknowledge, and promote great planning.

Under this program, the Chapter strives to accomplish the following:

- **Helping Planners Plan**, by highlighting best practices and inspiring our members;
- **Helping Virginia Plan**, by promoting sound planning and decision-making in the Commonwealth;
- **Making Planning and Planners Matter**, by promoting the value and enhancing the credibility of planners among elected and appointed officials, the public and related professions;
- **Meeting Membership Needs**, by endorsing our members and their work;
- **Getting Planners Involved**, by engaging volunteers to serve on the Awards Committee and evaluate the work of their peers; and
- **Making Great Places Happen**, by helping members and communities replicate and build on the success of others.

Instructions

The Call for Nominations for the 2023 Awards Program is open **now**, and will end on **Friday, February 24th at 5:00 PM**. We encourage you and your colleagues to submit nominations for consideration that include planning projects, initiatives, efforts, and individuals which exemplify the objectives above. Here's the information to include in the award nomination submission:

1. **Abstract:** Provide a brief abstract (no more than 1-2 pages), which should include:
 - a. A description of the project, document, or nominee;
 - b. Why this is worthy of statewide recognition; and
 - c. How it advances planning in the Commonwealth.
2. **Contact information:** Provide contact information for the nominator (name, credentials, employer, email address, & phone number) and for those who will need to be included on the award recognition if selected (name, title, email address).
3. **Supporting Material:** Provide any supporting materials as a PDF and/or links to related content for review by the Awards Committee.

Submit all award nominations using our awards submission Google Form no later than **February 24, 2023**. Award nominations will be reviewed in March, ranked, and then selected by the Chapter's Awards Committee. Award winners (and nominees which were not chosen) will be notified by the Chapter no later than March 31, 2023 to ensure availability of award winners to attend the Awards Ceremony at the in-person [2023 APA Virginia Annual Conference](#) July 16-19, 2023 in Roanoke.

Questions? Send them along to awards@apavirginia.com.



Incentives

- All planners who submit an award nomination during the Call for Nominations will receive a **FREE APA Virginia t-shirt**. Whether or not the nomination is an award winner, we want to take an extra step to acknowledge the time and effort it takes to pull together the nomination. Please indicate your preferred unisex t-shirt size in the awards submission Google Form. T-shirts will be available for pick up only at the [2023 APA Virginia Annual Conference](#).
- All award winners will be eligible to register for the full [2023 APA Virginia Annual Conference](#) at the discounted Speaker rate. For group award winners, a maximum of 3 people are eligible for the discounted rate.

Awards Categories

The Chapter's Awards Program recognizes Virginia's great planning efforts, individuals, and communities of the past year.

Individual Awards

The Individual Awards categories honor individuals who are great practitioners and advocates of planning in Virginia. Have you seen our recent Member Spotlights on our [Instagram](#) feed? There are so many more individuals that we know are doing important, cutting-edge planning work, so we want to increase the number of individuals that we recognize with our 2023 Awards Program.

The Foxhound Award: Distinguished New Professional

New Category! This award is named for the State dog of Virginia, the American Foxhound, and is awarded to an outstanding new planner (less than five years of experience). Like the Foxhound, this award recognizes a planner at the outset of their career who is good-natured, reliable, and known for their work ethic and their consideration for others.

The All-Around Incredible Champion Planner (AICP) Award: Distinguished Professional

New Category! Planners who have gone the extra mile to earn their AICP credentials are models to the profession for their experience, their breadth of knowledge, and their high ethical standards. This award recognizes exceptional skill and achievement from an individual planner who is AICP certified.

Moeser Outstanding Service Award

New in 2023! In honor of the late Dr. John V. Moeser, our esteemed colleague who was described as an 'advocate for a more just society and an urban studies trailblazer', the Chapter will recognize a planner who has contributed to the growth of the profession and the improvement of their community. This award recognizes a remarkable planner who has embodied APA's mission statement of *Creating Great Communities for All* with their individual efforts.

The Nelsonite Award – Virginia's Planning Advocate of the Year:

Named for Virginia's State Rock, this award represents the bedrock of good planning in the Commonwealth - citizen influenced, and community serving. The award recognizes a community leader or civic organization that advocates for planning on a local, regional or statewide scale.



The Dogwood Award – Virginia’s Citizen Planner(s) of the Year:

This award honors an outstanding Planning Commission and/or individual Planning Commissioner that serves as an example for all citizen planners, by being dedicated, objective, open, moral, balanced, and knowledgeable of the framework of planning in Virginia.

The Cardinal Awards – Legislator of the Year:

Named for the State bird, the Cardinal Awards recognize elected officials that can see the big picture and find solutions through the field of planning. Local and State legislators are eligible for these recognitions.

Planning Efforts

The Planning Efforts category recognizes planning documents, a program or initiatives that make great places happen in the Commonwealth.

Holzheimer Economic Development Award:

In honor of Dr. Terry Holzheimer, our esteemed former colleague who passed away in 2014 who was described as “one of the deans of the economic development profession”, the Chapter will recognize great planning efforts for improving Virginia’s economic development. The successful nominee will show how their study, initiative, program, or even site development yielded economic development results for their locality, region, or state.

Old Dominion Innovative Approaches Award:

Virginia has many unique challenges, where innovative planning solutions are critical for making great places happen. The Innovative Approaches Award recognizes pioneering planning efforts in the Commonwealth. Nominees may include innovative planning processes, plans, programs, initiatives or site developments that have or will result in real results.

Resilient Virginia Community of the Year Award:

This award recognizes a community’s effort and commitment to build resilience through responsible planning practice and innovation. Successful nominees will present real-world solutions for buffering their community from the adverse effects of critical changes related to, for example, inadequate infrastructure, climate change, natural disasters, food and water shortages, economic restructuring, or institutional/organizational capacity changes.

Commonwealth Connectors Award:

Planners diligently work, sometimes over many years, to implement new ideas to solve the Commonwealth’s transportation challenges. From distribution centers to autonomous vehicles, each community is finding creative ways to meet the diversity of today’s modern-day transportation needs. This award highlights innovative and exceptional transportation-focused planning.

Commonwealth Plan of the Year Award:

The Commonwealth Plan of the Year Award honors the best planning document of the year. A successful nominee will show that the effort included outstanding planning processes, vision, implementation strategies and innovative approaches. The planning document can be local, regional or a statewide effort.



Great Places

The great places category recognizes great places, developments, and communities in Virginia.

The Jamestown Award – Locality of the Year:

In honor of the first local government in Virginia, the Chapter will recognize a locality that has undertaken a sound and innovative planning practices, not in a single plan but through various efforts. This award recognizes a town, city or county that is dedicated to the principles of planning.

The Red Clay Award – Development of the Year:

Virginia's red clay is the Commonwealth's traditional building material, making it an appropriate name for Virginia's Development of the Year Award. This recognition honors a development that exhibits the values of great planning, helping to create a great place in Virginia. Eligible nominees include infill developments, building rehabilitation projects, brownfield redevelopments, downtown redevelopment, and other similar projects.

Open Submittals

Most of our past nominations have been for big efforts - a comprehensive plan overhaul, a multi-year zoning ordinance update, and similar expansive projects. However, big impacts can come from seemingly small improvements, such as a long-overdue zoning text amendment or a well-managed rezoning. APA Virginia is actively seeking out and encouraging nominations for more of the "little" things that have made a big difference to planning in your community.

In addition, the Awards Committee leaves room for flexibility in the awards program. If there is a great individual, effort or initiative that does not neatly fall within the defined award categories, then the Committee reserves the right to make special recognitions or awards.