2017 APA-Kansas Chapter Awards

Ad Astra
Recognizes an individual or institution that has made a significant long-term contribution to the field of planning in the state of Kansas. The impact of their work extends beyond the geographic boundaries of their place of business and has taken the profession of planning to higher levels. The 2017 Ad Astra award goes to John Keller, PhD, FAICP, Professor of Regional and Community Planning at Kansas State University for 45 years. Professor Keller is one of the planning community’s mind leaders on rural and small city planning and is able to translate scholarship deftly to the practice and has helped shaped the profession in Kansas and across the country. His impact on planning is evidenced by the hundreds of K-State graduates who are practicing planners across the nation.

New Horizon (Team)
Honors a group of students who have done work illustrating excellence in planning with attention to comprehensive planning principles and the planning process. The 2017 New Horizon (Team) award goes to LAR646 Community Planning and Design Studio at Kansas State University for their work on Delano’s Turn: Directions West of the River, which presents urban design ideas for the future of the Delano district in Wichita, Kansas. The planning process was designed to involve close collaboration with project partners and concerned stakeholders. In contrast to a singular master plan, the collection of ideas presented in Delano’s Turn provides a multitude of strategies that can be compared, evaluated, prioritized, and perhaps hybridized.

New Horizon (Individual)
Honors an individual student who has done work illustrating excellence in planning with attention to comprehensive planning principles and the planning process. The 2017 New Horizon (Individual) award goes to Nikhila Gunda, a student in the Master of Urban Planning program at the University of Kansas for her work on Addressing Community Interests to Develop a Transit Center in Lawrence, Kansas. The yearlong project analyzed the critical issue of finding a feasible location for a transit hub and included extensive data analysis, case study reviews, and interaction with stakeholders. The recommendations and insight will be valuable as the City of Lawrence continues its efforts to construct a transit hub.

Pioneer (Urban)
Recognizes an institution that has demonstrated creativity and/or innovation in using planning to meet a community need or solve a public problem. Three 2017 Pioneer (Urban) awards go to:

1. Douglas County Food Policy Council for the Douglas County Food System Plan. The first of its kind plan in the State of Kansas, the plan addresses farmer viability, market development, agricultural land preservation, urban agriculture, health concerns, and food insecurity and access challenges. The plan was developed with a robust, inclusive, and creative public participation process and includes a robust implementation framework to guide its realization in the years to come.

2. Hutchinson Planning & Development Department for Designing Our Future: Imagine Hutch 2037, 2017-2037 Hutchinson Comprehensive Plan. The in-house comprehensive plan used new and unique public engagement tools to gain input from stakeholders not
normally involved in the comprehensive planning process. The plan includes a 5-year strategic plan that contains specific projects, implementation timelines, assigned departments, and anticipated funding.

3. City of Manhattan for the *Aggieville Community Vision Plan*. The area plan was developed in-house and uses the latest in 3-D technology to showcase the community’s vision of Aggieville and gain popular support that instilled political willpower for its adoption and implementation. The plan details aspects like increased height allowances, parking garage location and design, landscaping, streetscape concepts, urban design, and strategic preservation of existing urban fabric.