

## **APWA SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE PROPOSAL SEPTEMBER 2012**

The goal of the proposed committee is to inform, educate and support APWA members in implementation of sustainable design, construction, management and operation of public works.

The committee will seek to build on efforts initiated by APWA at the national level adopting goals to be a leading resource for sustainable information, with insight on the best methods, technologies and strategies specific to public ownership of sustainable projects and operations.

### **Bridge to the Center for Sustainability and Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure**

The committee will be a liaison between the national Center for Sustainability and the local chapter. The committee will mirror many of the Center's efforts, but focus on their application at the local level. This may include assistance in forming local strategic partnerships, facilitating chapter members' knowledge of the tools available from the Center, and providing a clearinghouse for the Center's education programs.

Likewise the committee will work with the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI) to provide educational opportunities on successful implementation and use of the Envision Sustainability Rating System.

### **Member Education**

The committee will seek to provide educational sessions both within conference settings and at other points that highlight projects, policies and trends that inform and inspire innovative, collaborative and whole systems thinking.

Examples of educational sessions scheduled for the Fall 2012 Conference include:

- *Albany-Millersburg Talking Water Gardens: Integrating Effective Natural Treatment with a Public Amenity*- Talking Water Gardens, a project of the Albany-Millersburg Water Reclamation Facility (WRF), is a 39-acre constructed wetland treatment system that addresses water cooling issues and provides a tertiary level of effluent treatment. In addition, the natural treatment system produces extra environmental, wildlife, aesthetic, and recreational enhancements for the community that would not otherwise be possible.
- *After Recycling, What Comes Next for Plastics?*- While plastics recycling works for clean and single stream plastics, much of the plastics go to the landfill because they are mixed, contaminated or covered in food. This plastic is difficult to recycle and is a very large part of the landfill volume. An Oregon Company – Agilyx, uses pyrolysis to recover the crude oil from this material allowing for dramatically higher recovery of energy, reduction of land-filling and significant cost recovery of managing municipal solid waste.

- *What the Electric Vehicle (EV) Revolution Will Mean for Municipal Governments and Local Infrastructure* - This presentation will cover the current state of the electric vehicle market, including available vehicles and specific opportunities and barriers that exist for adoption.
- *Addressing Threats from Increasing Development in the McKenzie Watershed*-The McKenzie River is the sole source of drinking water for over 200,000 people in Eugene, Oregon. The Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) has developed a comprehensive source water protection program to protect the excellent water quality of the McKenzie as a valuable drinking water resource for current and future generations.

## **Advocacy**

The committee will seek to provide an arena to coordinate commonalities among successful municipal codes and policies, and to pursue adoption of sustainability measures that meet triple bottom line benchmarks in economic, social, and environmental areas adopted by the greater APWA community.

Potential initial activities, topics or directions under advocacy include:

- *Membership Surveys* – Provide a basis of knowledge and interest in various sustainability topics, potentially among conference attendees or to the greater membership via outreach
- *Interaction with Other Technical Groups* – Gain understanding from other organizations with similar pursuits (geology, environmental science, landscape architecture, etc.), introduce the APWA sustainability goals externally, and relate their progress and practices back to the APWA membership.

## **Recognition**

The committee will seek to recognize projects and individuals that exemplify best practices for sustainable operations and designs within public works.

This is captured at present by the Julian Prize and its definition: “The award recognizes individuals, practices or projects that showcase the role of public works in furthering the principles of sustainability. The awards are intended to recognize systems thinking, long term design practices, and infrastructure systems that sustain society. The awards are intended to further APWA’s purpose of education and recognition of excellence. Julian Awards for Sustainability are awarded in the following categories - agency wide policies; operating practices, procedures or programs; projects or facilities; and an individual’s long term work effort to promote sustainability.”

Administration of the Julian Award would be moved from the Futures Committee to the proposed Sustainability Committee.

Potential additional activities, topics or directions under Recognition include:

- *Sustainable Projects Page* – Establish a page on the local APWA website highlighting sustainable projects and the innovative use of sustainable technologies by our members. The intent of the page is to both share/stimulate ideas for the use of sustainable technologies and also to establish a critical mass of projects to help perpetuate the use of sustainable practices.
- *National Awards* – Facilitate the submission and successful outcome of local projects for national awards.