**Outstanding Plan**

**1st Place – Kuna Downtown Corridor Plan**

The Kuna Downtown Corridor Plan is a collaborative effort of the Ada County Highway District (ACHD), the City of Kuna, and Kittelson & Associates, Inc., and interested stakeholders and the public. Through broad and effective public involvement, the plan identified how people get to, through, and around downtown Kuna using all modes of travel. Ultimately, the public preferred a corridor plan that includes a set of transportation improvements and prioritizes several projects for a long-term vision for downtown Kuna.

The award committee selected the plan for this award because of its innovative “bottom up” approach—including interactive online surveys, hands-on workshops, and other tools. The process used to develop the plan provides an exemplary model on how to effectively collaborate between agencies, how to integrate land use and transportation, and how to engage the public in a way that provided ongoing evaluation of concepts. The result was a comprehensive, high-quality corridor plan that includes a detailed and thorough implementation plan.

Ryan Head, Supervisor of Planning & Programming with Ada County Highway District, says this about earning the award, “Receiving recognition for the good work you have done always has its benefits. For those involved in the development of the plan, it brought confidence and recognition from senior leadership and elected officials. The recognition also gave strength and confidence in the Plan when some minor public opposition arose after its adoption… The Kuna Plan was also recognized by the Idaho Transportation Department and nationally at the Transportation Research Board when it was selected for a poster session to discuss the innovative public outreach that was done.”

**Planning Excellence Award for Best Practice**

**1st Place - *We Value Post Falls* Strategic Plan 2013 - 2017**

The “*We Value Post Falls”* Strategic Plan 2013-2017 emphasizes the importance of the community’s true values. The City of Post Falls sought a plan to formalize their future vision and establish achievable priorities and a plan that would be a “living document”. City staff and officials, stakeholders and the public formed the plan with the goal of aligning city spending with the community’s priorities. The City of Post Falls also created an innovative, web-based project management and tracking tool to implement the strategic plan. The results of the process and resulting plan are a greater buy-in from the public, realistic implementation and performance schedules, and ongoing evaluation tools (e.g., “report cards” to gauge progress). Staff uses the strategic tool daily to track projects and implementation strategies, set annual goals, establish budgets, evaluate Levels of Service, and ensure that the city is meeting its citizens’ expectations.

APA Idaho gave the award for Best Practice to “*We Value Post Falls*” to honor its innovation, extensive community outreach, and focus on a strong implementation strategy.

Hilary Anderson, Planning and Economic Development Manager for the City of Post Falls said,

 “Since receiving the 2013 Planning Excellence Award for Best Practice from Idaho APA, the City of Post Falls has been recognized by the Coeur d’Alene Press for the award and received local praise from the City Council, Strategic Plan Advisory Committee, Chamber of Commerce, community members, and other planning professionals.  The most significant benefit is that the City has the opportunity to promote Post Falls as an award-winning community by referencing the award in economic development marketing materials and on the City’s website –along with Certificates of Achievement for Excellence in financial reporting and recognition for the Police Department as one of America’s finest.”

**Planning Student**

**1st Place – Jason Boal**

Jason Boal’s fascinating Master’s thesis for the University of Idaho explored the question of whether the skills that practicing planners employ are similar to the skills identified by planning theorists. Jason also examined which skills are deemed to be most important to each of those groups. To accomplish this, Jason identified a list of 54 skills and distributed a survey to practicing planners in eight western states to obtain their views on the importance, possession, use of and desire to improve each skill.  His most intriguing finding was that the planning theory skills and planning practice skills were inversely related:  skills important to theorists were the least important to practicing planners, and vice-versa.

APA Idaho awarded Jason’s project first place for its innovation, quality, comprehensiveness, and especially for its potential applicability for planning educators and organizations such as APA Idaho to determine where to focus the efforts of professional development.

Jason says that since receiving the award, he has progressed professionally. He attributes some of those opportunities directly to receiving the Idaho APA Planning Student Award.