



January 6, 2026

Dear Public Works Partners

The Indiana Chapter of the American Public Works Association is hereby soliciting nominations for the Public Works Leader of the Year Award for 2026. Following is a description of what the nomination should include.

Purpose

The Public Works Leader of the Year award seeks to inspire excellence and dedication in public service by recognizing the outstanding career service achievements of individual public works professionals and officials, from both the public and private sectors. The primary focus of the award is on career service to the public works profession rather than on any one single event or project.

Eligibility

It is the intent of this award to recognize the career service accomplishments of public works professionals and officials. Toward that end, candidates with a minimum of 10 years qualifying experience may be nominated from any of the following categories. APWA membership is required. Members of the APWA Chapter Board of Directors are not eligible during the time they serve on the Board. Individuals are only eligible to receive the Public Works Leader of the Year Award on one occasion.

Public Sector

Public sector candidates may come from any of the three following categories having a minimum of 10 years qualifying experience:

- Any non-elected employee of a federal, state, county, or municipal government who is responsible for one or more major subdivisions of a governmental agency. Most of the candidate's time and efforts must be devoted to the administration and management of the design, construction, maintenance, and/or operation of a street or highway system, refuse collection or disposal system, public building, drainage or flood control facility, airport, harbor, utilities, or any other type of public works installation.
- Service in an appointed (non-elected) position on a board or commission charged with the oversight or policy level review of public works or infrastructure issues. Such service may have been at the federal, state, county, or municipal government level dealing with surface transportation systems, refuse, solid waste and recycling systems, public buildings, drainage or flood control, airports, harbors, or any other type of public works or infrastructure systems. Such positions may typically be represented by the following examples: City Manager, Public Works Commissioner, Roads Commissioner, Highway Commissioner, Transportation Commissioner, Airport Commissioner, Port Authority Commissioner, or other comparable position

- Elected officials who have prior qualifying experience from either category above may also be considered as candidates.

Private Sector

Private sector public works and/or civil engineering professionals having a minimum of 10 years of involvement in public sector public works activities may be eligible, if their qualifying activities have come from the following areas:

- Experience as a contract Director of Public Works/City Engineer or comparable position, which was provided by means of a contract service from a private sector firm to a governmental entity;
- or
- A combination of prior qualifying experience in the public sector and/or service as a consultant engaged in the provision of public works-related services to the public sector.

Selection

The Public Works Leader of the Year will be selected by a special committee appointed by the APWA Indiana Chapter President.

Nomination Process

Any governmental entity, group, or individual may nominate candidates. Nominations are particularly encouraged from APWA chapters and branches. Self-nominations are not accepted. APWA membership is required. Address the following areas listed below following the same sequence. Nominations are limited to 20 pages.

- Employment Record - briefly list all employment positions dates of each position and description of each position and description of responsibilities. Begin with most current and include consulting work.
- Job-Related Technical and Managerial Accomplishments - describe all major achievements and accomplishments. State specific role in each. Include innovations in technical and/or managerial fields. Describe your commitment to advancing other people in career and profession. NOTE: This section weighs most heavily in the judging process.
- Initial and Lifelong Education - include colleges and universities attended, dates of attendance, majors, and degrees received. List attendance at professional institutes and on-the-job training.
- Publications and/or Presentations - list any published articles and/or papers delivered at professional meetings.
- Community Service - list organizations, activities, offices held.
- Awards - list educational, professional, and civic awards include recognition for public service.

Additional Directions

Nominations should be limited to no more than 20 pages. The 20 pages do not include a letter of introduction from the chapter/nominator, or letters of recommendation, which should be limited to six. If submission has a letter of introduction (maximum of two pages) it should be placed in front of the nomination. Submittal should address the areas outlined above in the sequence stated. Letters of recommendation will be accepted provided each letter cites specific examples of professional involvement with the nominee. Letters should be placed at the end of the nomination and no letters will be accepted after the nomination deadline.

Include at least one high-definition color photograph (head shot) of the nominee with submittal.

The winner will be nominated for the APWA National Top Ten Public Works Leaders of the Year 2026 award.

Electronic (PDF) copies of the nominations should be emailed to shan.gunawardena@cityoffortwayne.org Hard copies will not be accepted.

Deadline

February 2, 2026, 4:00 PM EST.

Presentation

Award winner will be presented with a plaque at the Industry Awards Recognition Ceremony to occur on the morning of March 18th, 2026, during the 112th Annual Purdue Road School hosted on March 17th & 18th, 2026. Winners will also be nominated for the 2026 Annual PWX Conference.

If you have any questions regarding this nomination, please call me at the number listed below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shan R. Gunawardena", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shan R. Gunawardena
Chair, Awards Committee, Indiana Chapter



January 6, 2026

Dear Public Works Partners

The Indiana Chapter of the American Public Works Association is hereby soliciting nominations for the Project of the Year Awards for 2026. Following are the two awards and descriptions of what the nominations should include.

Purpose

The APWA Indiana Chapter Public Works Project of the Year Award was established to promote excellence in the management, administration, and implementation of public works projects by recognizing the alliance between the managing agency, the consultant/architect/engineer, and the contractors who work together to complete public works projects. Eligible projects are limited to ones located in the State of Indiana.

Awards are given in two divisions. Please use the agency's total cost – including engineering, land acquisition, construction and construction administration – when selecting your price division.

- Projects of less than \$5 million
- Projects of \$5 million or higher

Projects could include any of the following:

- Structures - includes new public structures or the preservation or rehabilitation of existing public structures including municipal buildings and parks. Other structures as defined in the Historic Restoration/Preservation and Transportation categories shall not be considered in the structures category
- Transportation - includes roads, bridges, and mass transit that serve any or all modes of travel, including bicycles and foot traffic. Other transportation projects as defined in the Historical Restoration/Preservation and Structures categories shall not be considered in the Transportation category
- Environment - includes treatment and recycling facilities, landfill reclamation projects, and sewer projects
- Historical Restoration/Preservation - includes historical restoration, preservation, and adaptive reuse of existing buildings, structures, and facilities, that are 75 years or older to qualify as historical

- Disaster or Emergency Construction Repair - includes the techniques and timing for safety, community relations, environmental protection, adverse conditions, and additional considerations.

Eligibility

Public works projects must be developed, owned, and maintained by an Indiana public agency. To be eligible for nomination, a project must have been “substantially completed” and available for public and/or agency use within two calendar years prior to nomination. If a project has multiple phases or segments, then “substantially completed” will be construed as that point when the final phase or segment is 90 percent completed and available for public and/or agency use. A project may only be nominated once for recognition as “Project of the Year”.

Selection

The Project of the Year Committee reviews the nominations and selects the award winners based on the criteria listed below.

Criteria

Criteria to be used in the selection process include:

1. Use of good construction management techniques and completion of the project on schedule
2. Safety performance and demonstrated awareness of the need for a good overall safety program for workers and the public during and after construction, where applicable
3. Community relations as evidenced by efforts to minimize public inconvenience due to construction, safety precautions to protect public lives and property, provision of observation areas, guided tours, or other means of improving relations between agency and the public
4. Demonstrated awareness for the need to protect the environment. This includes any special considerations given to particular environmental concerns raised during the course of the project, as well as climate change and/or resiliency components for long-term community benefit
5. Unusual accomplishments under adverse conditions including, but not limited to age or condition of the facility, adverse weather, soil or other site conditions over which there is no control
6. Additional conditions deemed of importance to the public works agency, such as exceptional efforts to maintain quality control and, if value engineering is used, construction innovations as evidenced by time and/or money saving techniques developed and/or successfully utilized
7. Use of alternative materials, practices, or funding, which demonstrates a commitment to sustainability, climate change resiliency, and/or use of sustainable infrastructure rating system or the equivalent, and/or creative financing techniques.

Nomination Process

Nominations of projects can be made by the managing public agency, engineering or architectural consultant or prime contractor in charge of the construction. Submissions are limited to 20 pages. Please address each of the criteria in your nomination, adhering to the sequence above. No Letters of recommendation, please.

Please note on the cover page (not included in the 20-page limit) the following:

- The award that the project is being nominated for
- Name of the Project and Date of Project Completion (must be substantially completed and available for public use as of December 31, 2025).
- Name of Indiana Municipality, Design Consultant, Contractor
- Name of the Nominating individual and their affiliation

Nominations not chosen in a specific year for the Public Works Project of the Year Award cannot be resubmitted in a subsequent year.

The winner in each category will be nominated for the APWA National Public Works Project of the Year 2026 award.

Electronic (PDF) copies of the nominations should be emailed to shan.gunawardena@cityoffortwayne.org
Hard copies will not be accepted.

Deadline

February 2, 2026, 4:00 PM EST.

Presentation

A designated representative of the public agency, contractor, and consultant are to be presented with a plaque at the *Industry Awards Recognition Ceremony* to occur on the morning of March 18th, 2026, during the 112th Annual Purdue Road School hosted on March 17th & 18th, 2026.

If you have any questions regarding this nomination, please call me at the number listed below.

Sincerely,



Shan R. Gunawardena
Chair, Awards Committee, Indiana Chapter