



PUBLIC WORKS LEADER OF THE YEAR 2026 NOMINATION RULES

APWA Northern California Chapter is proud to recognize the efforts of those in the public and private sector who exemplify the best in public works practices. The Leader of the Year award has career-based criteria. Different from the Professional Manager of the Year Award, the primary focus of the Leader of the Year Award is on career service to the public works profession. **The 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** who are members in good standing with APWA.** The Chapter Staff Appreciation Awards Evaluation Committee will select the top nominee in this category. The recipient of this award will be advanced to APWA National (by March 1, 2026) and be considered for the highly prestigious Top 10 Public Works Leaders of the Year Award distributed on a National level at the annual PWX Conference.

Forms are due by 5pm Friday, August 7, 2026

Eligibility

Members of the APWA NorCal Board of Directors and Committee members are not eligible during the time they serve. The rules for eligibility include:

- APWA membership in good standing is required to be nominated for this award (this is an important change from previous years). This is applicable to both public and private sector nominees.
- Candidates must have a minimum of 10 years' qualifying experience.
- Candidates may be employed in either the public or private sector.
- Any governmental entity, group, or individual (public or private sector) may nominate candidates.
- Public Sector Candidates* - Nominees may come from any of these categories:
 - (a) Any non-elected employee of a federal, state, provincial, county or municipal government, who is responsible for one or more major subdivisions of a governmental agency. Most of the nominee'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.
 - (b) 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, provincial, 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.

- (c) Elected officials who have prior qualifying experience from either category “a” or “b” may also be considered as candidates.
- **Private Sector Candidates**** - Public works and/or civil engineering professionals having a minimum 10 years of involvement in public sector public works activities may be eligible, if their qualifying activities have come from the following areas:
 - (a) 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
 - (b) A combination of prior qualifying experience in the public sector (see previous bullet point) and/or service as a consultant engaged in the provision of public works-related services to the public sector.
- Individuals can only receive this award once. **Nominations made within any previous year’s competition may not be submitted again within the same award category.**
- Nominations may not be submitted to more than one category in the 2026 Staff Appreciation Awards program.
- Self-nomination is not acceptable. Must be based out of an office within the geographic footprint of the APWA NorCal Chapter (Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Lake, Sonoma, Napa, Solano, Marin, Contra Costa, Alameda, and San Francisco counties).

Criteria

The overarching criterion for this award is career service to the public works profession. Jobrelated technical and managerial accomplishments weigh most heavily in the judging process.

Please include one photograph of the nominee, as a separate file but within the same email as the nomination package. This nomination category has specific instructions regarding the type of supporting documentation to be included with the nomination package.

Scoring of the Nomination Forms

Each completed Nomination Form will be reviewed and scored by an independent review panel consisting of selected past presidents of the Chapter and the current Special Events Director who have volunteered their time to do so. Scoring will be based on each candidate’s ability to meet the eligibility and criteria as previously noted on this form, completeness of addressing each question/section noted on the nomination form, and how clearly the narrative is communicated.

Questions?

Address any questions to Nicole Witt, APWA NorCal Chapter Administrator, at chapteradmin@northernca.apwa.org , or at (510) 932-3203.

Supporting Documentation Instructions

The submittal must adhere to 20 PAGES maximum count.

What is not included in the 20-page limit:

- **Letter of Introduction:** A letter of introduction is optional and if so chosen, should be limited to two pages and be placed in front of the nomination form. The letter of introduction does not count towards the 20-page limit. The letter may come from the Chapter or nominator.
- **Nomination Form:** The nomination form (on the previous page) does not count towards the 20page limit. The nomination form must be included in the nomination package.
- **Letter(s) of Recommendation:** Submittal may also include letters of recommendation (limited to six). The letters of recommendation are optional. They do not count towards the 20-page limit. Letters must cite specific examples of professional involvement with the nominee. Letters must be included in the APWA NorCal Awards nomination package at the time of submittal for consideration of an Award. Any letters sent directly to APWA National will not be considered.

What is included in the 20-page limit:

- **Examples:** Any examples such as publication articles, newspaper clippings, photos of awards, etc., count toward the 20-page limit.
 - **Addressing the Seven Questions Below:** The nomination submittal must also address answers to these questions as noted below. The answers to these questions must be turned in with the nomination form. Responses must follow the order noted below:
1. **Employment Record:** Briefly list all employment positions, dates of each position and description of responsibilities. Begin with current employment and include consulting work.
 2. **Job-Related Technical and Managerial Accomplishments:** Describe all major achievements and accomplishments. State specific role in each. Including innovations in technical and/or managerial fields. Describe the nominee's commitment to advancing other people in career and profession. NOTE: This section weighs most heavily in the judging process.
 3. **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.
 4. **Publications and/or Presentations:** List published articles and/or papers delivered at professional meetings.
 5. **Professional Involvement:** List of organizations, activities, offices held.
 6. **Community Service:** List of organizations, activities, offices held.
 7. **Awards:** List educational, professional and civic awards. Include recognition for public service.

Instructions for submission:

1. Rename this form "2026_Top10AwardNomination_**Nominee LastName_FirstName**.doc"
2. Complete the form as thoroughly as possible.
3. Upload submission: <https://www.dropbox.com/request/hk3d114iac1uoetrbyfi>

Forms are due by 5pm, Friday, August 7, 2025



LEADER OF THE YEAR

2026 NOMINATION FORM

WHO IS COMPLETING THE FORM? NOMINEE: GROUP/INDIVIDUAL NOMINATING:

ABOUT THE NOMINEE *(must be a member in good standing of APWA)*

Name:

Title/Position:

Agency/Employer:

Population Served (if applicable):

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Category of Candidate's Agency/Organization:

Municipality

State/Federal/Military

County/Special Districts

Private Sector

Do not contact candidate if he/she does not win an award on a National level.
Please do not send letter of regrets.

APWA Membership (mandatory for National consideration):

YES: NO: APWA Member#

ABOUT THE GROUP/INDIVIDUAL SUBMITTING THE NOMINATION

Name:

Title/Position:

Agency/Employer:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

30-word (max) description of the nominee for use during the Awards presentation:



PUBLIC WORKS LEADER OF THE YEAR

Supporting Documentation – 20 pages maximum

1. **Employment Record:** Briefly list all employment positions, dates of each position and description of responsibilities. Begin with current employment and include consulting work.
-

2. 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 the nominee's commitment to advancing other people in career and profession. NOTE: This section weighs most heavily in the judging process.

3. **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.
-

4. **Publications and/or Presentations:** List published articles and/or papers delivered at professional meetings.
-

5. **Professional Involvement:** List of organizations, activities, offices held.

6. **Community Service:** List of organizations, activities, offices held.

7. **Awards:** List educational, professional and civic awards. Include recognition for public service.
