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NEWS RELEASE

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Marin County Sustainability Program Selected For Coveted 2008 American Planning Association National Planning Award

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The American Planning Association (APA) today named the Marin County, California, Sustainability Program recipient of the 2008 National Planning Excellence Award for Implementation. The program, launched in 1999, establishes a progressive model for incorporating sustainable planning into all aspects of the community's long-term growth including habitat restoration, locally provided food supplies, green building, green business and energy, and affordable housing.

“Marin County’s contribution to sustainable living merits national attention,” said 2008 National Planning Awards Jury Chairperson Carol Rhea, AICP. “Their innovations in sustainable community planning and implementation are invaluable to planners and others seeking ways to reduce carbon emissions, protect farmland and open space, and encourage smart growth.”

Representatives from Marin County will receive their award at a luncheon ceremony April 30 during APA’s National Planning Conference. A 30-minute video about all 11 of the 2008 National Planning Excellence, Achievement, and Leadership Awardees will be shown at the luncheon. Accomplishments of the award recipients also will be highlighted in the April 2008 issue of *Planning* magazine and on the APA website (www.planning.org).

Marin’s program has an impressive list of 70 indicators and targets for measuring accomplishments and identifying next steps. Public outreach and education has been extensive, including four working groups consisting of 60 community members and 115 public meetings attended by more than 2,000 people. Elements of the program include a greenhouse gas reduction plan; an analysis of the program’s effect on reducing Marin’s carbon and ecological footprint; and a book identifying local sources of wholesomely grown food.

“Marin County jumps to the very top of the list, statewide, as a leader in both conservation and green community planning, particularly with respect to local responses to our global warming crisis,” said Planning and Conservation League Executive Director Gary Patton. For example, Marin was one of the first counties in the nation to adopt building code amendments that require the energy use of large homes not to exceed that of smaller sized homes in the county.

In keeping with the program, greenhouse gas emissions in public buildings were reduced by 100 tons during a five-year period. Marin's Energy Watch Partnership provided rebates and direct installation of energy efficiency measures that resulted in nearly 2 million kilowatt hours of energy being saved between 2006 and 2007. In 2006, energy conservation measures resulted in 1,000 tons of CO2 not being generated.

Through Marin's California Youth Energy Services project more than 5,000 compact fluorescent lamps, 300 efficient-flow showerheads, and 900 faucet aerators were installed, helping residents save more than \$40,000 annually on energy bills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 181 tons. The program also emphasizes the need for infill and affordable housing projects located near jobs, services and public transportation. Mike Moore, President, Bay Area Planning Directors Association said, “Marin County's efforts will be a lasting and positive influence as other cities and counties start to consider sustainability issues in their own general plan updates.”

For a list of all 2008 National Planning Excellence, Achievement, and Leadership Award recipients, visit www.planning.org/awards/2008winners.htm. APA's national awards program, considered the profession's highest honor, began more than 50 years ago to recognize outstanding community plans, and planning leaders.

The American Planning Association and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, are dedicated to advancing the art, science and profession of good planning -- physical, economic and social -- so as to create communities that offer better choices for where and how people work and live. Members of APA help create communities of lasting value and encourage civic leaders, business interests and citizens to play a meaningful role in creating communities that enrich people's lives. APA has offices in Washington, D.C., Chicago, Ill., and Shanghai, China. For more information, visit its website at www.planning.org