Planners feted for urban development

By KEVIN OGUOKO

Kenyan urban planners doing exceptional work will be awarded every year in recognition of their effort.

This follows the launch of the annual Town Award for Excellence to recognize and appreciate individual and corporate efforts in sustainable urban planning and development.

The awards were launched last week during the World Towns Planning Day held in Nairobi. World Towns Planning Day is a day the international community recognizes and appreciates towns and cities and promotes sustainable urban planning and development.

It is managed by the Towns and Urban Planning Association of Kenya (TCPA), in collaboration with Town Planners Chapter (AAPA) and the United Nations of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP-Nairobi Liaison Office).

The event was presided over by Prof Sam Ongeri, Kenyan Ambassador to UN-Habitat, and graced by Mariam El Mauy, principal secretary in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development.

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The first category of the award went to organizations in the infrastructure sector, including the Lassettier Corridor Development Authority, which took the Town Award for Excellence in the Transport Sector.

The National Construction Authority was recognized for its efforts in the building sector, while the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, under the government’s National Housing Policy, was also honored.

The second category, governance and professional institutions, was awarded for their role in planning in Kenya cities and towns. University of Nairobi, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, which was established in 1971, was recognized as a pioneer that has trained town planners who now manage many of the towns and cities in Kenya, East and Southern Africa. The department has trained about 1,000 town planners at diploma, undergraduate, masters and PhD levels.

The Town Award of Excellence in a Professional Firm was presented to TRIAD Architects. The iconic architectural firm was hailed for its 1967 initiation and formation of the Architectural Association of Kenya, which is the umbrella association for town planners, architects, engineers and quantity surveyors.

LANDMARK BUILDINGS

It was also recognized for its designs of landmark buildings in Kenya and East Africa including the Kenya Parliament, Times Tower and Barclays Plaza in Nairobi.

The Town Award for Excellence also went to Howard Humphreys (East Africa) Ltd to its significant contribution to the development of urban infrastructure services in Kenya.

The company has excelled in major town infrastructure works, including carrying out project management, engineering design and construction, supervision of buildings, roads and transportation, water and sewerage projects in Eastern Africa since 1931.

The company has been associated with the design and development of Nairobi’s water supply and other consulting engineering works including Times Tower, Athi Bridge, the JKIA Torridge and Kismu Airport removal, Thika Dam and Blue Bells Apartments for Safaricom Investments.

COMMUNITY

The third round of category winners went out to individuals who have shown commitment in supporting sustainable city planning, development and management.

They included Mariam El Mauy, principal secretary in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Wilson Kanyoro Njor, a quantity surveyor and chairman of the Nairobi City Planning Technical Committee; Irene Cheptoo Keye, vice-chairperson of the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC); Muthoni Onyango, chairman of the Town Planners Chapter of the Architectural Association of Kenya (AAPA); and Tom Odongo, who has 33 years experience as assistant director of Planning, in the Department of City Planning.