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NEW YORK CITY

WINS LEE KUAN YEW WORLD CITY PRIZE

By Serene Tng
From new parkland and bicycle lanes, to reinvention of public spaces and derelict sites, New York City has lifted itself from the post-Sept 11 gloom to create a greener, greater city in the last decade.

For its remarkable transformation, the Mayor of New York City, Michael R. Bloomberg and the Departments of Transportation, City Planning and Parks and Recreation have been awarded the prestigious Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize 2012. In a lecture to 400 government and industry leaders on 21 March, Mayor Bloomberg highlighted that more people now want to live in New York City. “In the last 10 years, we have redone all the infrastructure downtown...We used this opportunity to dig up every street downtown...when companies did move, to convert the old office buildings into apartments...today, there is double the number of people living in lower Manhattan than before 9/11...you see baby carriages on the streets, at night and on weekends.”

Chairman of the Prize Nominating Committee, Prof Kishore Mahbubani said: “The City of New York is an inspiring story of urban rejuvenation. With bold vision, strong leadership, sheer determination, and excellent partnership between government and citizens, there is now a new sense of direction in the city. It has regained its perch as one of the most exciting cities in the world.”

Jointly organised by the Urban Redevelopment Authority and the Centre for Liveable Cities, the biennial international award honours outstanding contributions towards the creation of vibrant, liveable and sustainable urban communities around the world. New York City is the second Laureate named since the Prize was initiated in 2009. It was selected by the Nominating Committee and Prize Council from 62 nominations received worldwide after a rigorous two-tier selection process.
Central to New York City’s success is the swift and effective implementation of the PlaNYC 2007, a long-term, comprehensive plan that aligns city agencies, business groups and the community towards a common goal. One of the key strategies underlying New York’s successful transformation in the last decade is the investment in public infrastructure to increase liveability and sustainability.

Improvements have been made to encourage sustainable modes of public transport, such as the Bus Rapid Transit and bicycling. Since 2007, 450 km of bicycle lanes have been built and cycling occupies one per cent of commuter trips made, a two-fold increase from 2005. 700 acres (283 ha) of parks and open spaces have been added in the last 10 years, bringing the total parkland to 29,000 acres (11,736 ha). 84 per cent of New Yorkers live within 10 minutes walk of a park. More than 500,000 trees have been planted.

More significantly, the city has displayed a great level of experimentation and innovation with an emphasis on practical urban solutions. Instead of developing on new sites, more than 35,270 sqm of roadways and underutilised spaces have been repurposed into “instant” public plazas. Innovative zoning tools have also unlocked development potential of derelict industrial sites to create housing, office spaces, parks and waterfront promenades.

In the lecture on 21 March, Mayor Bloomberg highlighted two projects that have stood out. One is Brooklyn Bridge Park which has been created from the adaptive reuse of six piers along the East River shore. “...it’s one of the most innovative parks created in any city in recent years...Brooklyn Bridge Park does something radically different. It brings park users right to the edge of one of the greatest, busiest harbours in the world...” said Bloomberg. Another project is the High Line. From former rail line to being New York’s first aerial park, this iconic feature has revitalised the district and attracted US$2 billion worth of private investment.

As a result of the city’s transformation, New Yorkers have enjoyed a significant increase in the quality of life in the past decade. There is a significant 35 per cent drop in crime rate since 2001. Air quality has improved tremendously. New York City is an excellent example of how persistence, determination, commitment and strong partnership with the community can turn visions into reality. It serves as a model for other global, high-density megacities to rethink their cities in terms of sustainability into the future.
BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK — A CITY PARK CREATED FROM SIX ABANDONED PIERS

(MRS CHEONG KOON HEAN, PRIZE NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBER; MICHAEL BLOOMBERG, MAYOR OF NEW YORK CITY; PROF KISHORE MAHBUBANI, PRIZE NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON; LARRY NG, PRIZE SECRETARY)

MAYOR OF NEW YORK CITY, MICHAEL BLOOMBERG AT THE PUBLIC LECTURE
SIX SPECIAL MENTIONS
In addition to New York City being named the 2012 Prize Laureate, six other cities and organisations have been identified for Special Mention. These Special Mentions showcase the high quality of the nominations and is an opportunity to facilitate the sharing of best practices in cities. They are:

1. Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation
   Ahmedabad, India
2. AHT Group AG & SUN Development
   Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa
3. Brisbane City Council — Urban Renewal Brisbane
   Brisbane, Australia
4. City of Copenhagen (and Lord Mayor)
   Copenhagen, Denmark
5. City of Malmö
   Sweden
6. City of Vancouver
   British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

AWARD CEREMONY AT WORLD CITIES SUMMIT
The Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize is a major highlight of the upcoming World Cities Summit from 1 to 4 July 2012. The Laureate will receive the Prize at the Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize Award Ceremony to be held on 2 July 2012. The Prize comprises S$300,000 (about US$218,000) cash, a gold medallion and an award certificate, sponsored by Keppel Corporation.

The World Cities Summit is a premier global platform for world leaders and experts to exchange new ideas on liveable and sustainable urban solutions, explore the latest technologies and forge new business partnerships. Based on the theme of “Liveable And Sustainable Cities — Integrated Urban Solutions”, the third edition of the Summit is expected to share new insights and trends on urbanisation challenges around the world. For more information, visit www.worldcitiessummit.com.sg.
The World Cities Summit this July will be addressing the need for more holistic and integrated solutions in tackling urbanisation challenges in cities around the world. This third edition is expected to attract a bigger turn-out, share the latest insights on future sustainable cities and see more business partnerships formed.

Mr Ng Lang, URA CEO said: “The World Cities Summit has been attracting top government and industry leaders from around the world since it started in 2008. The third run this year is taking place at an exciting time when the pace of urbanisation in the region is accelerating, and cities are looking for solutions to address urbanisation challenges. Topics discussed are on the pulse of challenges cities are facing. Discourse is expected to be richer and more in-depth, with new insights on the future of sustainable cities. We also hope to facilitate meaningful dialogue between government and industry providers to find new business and collaboration opportunities in integrated solutions.”

A bigger turn-out of more than 3,500 top global leaders is expected for this year’s Summit, with a new co-location of the two other events — the 5th Singapore International Water Week (SIWW) and the inaugural Clean Enviro Summit Singapore (CESS). Some of the key speakers for the World Cities Summit 2012 include Helen Clark, Administrator of United Nations Development Programme and Kamal Nath, India’s Minister of Urban Development. Many companies in the urban solutions sector will also be attending.

Focus on Integrated Solutions

Touching on a new direction for cities of the future, the Summit’s theme is “Liveable and Sustainable Cities — Integrated Urban Solutions”. Explaining why the focus on an integrated approach, Khoo Teng Chye, Executive Director of the Centre for Liveable Cities said: “By 2050, 70 per cent of the world’s population will be living in cities. This places an enormous pressure to ensure that infrastructure, housing, services and the environment are able to meet the needs of current and future generations. To tackle these pressures head-on, it is increasingly insufficient to address fundamental challenges on water, environment, waste and other components separately. What will now set cities apart is how they can creatively address these separate components together as a whole for sustainable growth and a better quality of life.”

The co-location of the three events reflects this move towards integration, facilitating deeper discussions on new solutions and ideas in this area.

The Summit is expected to generate new perspectives, insights and direction to be set for the future of sustainable cities. There will be discussions on urbanisation opportunities and challenges over the next 20 years. Other interesting topics that will be raised are investing in cities and new smart cities solutions. There will also be a special focus on development opportunities in India.
Major topics that will be covered at the Summit are:

- **Intense Cities**: Achieving levels of urban intensity, not merely density
- **Eco-Cities**: Fad or a sustainable option for cities?
- **Biodiverse Cities**: Sustaining a model of co-existence and conservation
- **Resilient Cities**: Designing system-wide responses to external forces
- **Smart Cities**: Harnessing technology, improving efficiency
- **Mobile Cities**: In search of new urban mobility models
- **Inclusive Cities**: Supporting & integrating a productive ageing community
- **Investing in Cities**: Re-inventing and sustaining cities through public-private partnerships

**MORE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES**

One new aspect of this year’s Summit is a stronger facilitation of business collaborations. New In-Focus sessions will be offered as a platform for government leaders and industry solution providers to share opportunities and solutions on urban infrastructure and services for the emerging economies of Asia.

The World Cities Summit Expo will also showcase model cities’ best practices, innovative urban solutions and technologies for smarter cities of the future. Of the over 3,000 sqm for the Expo, 90 per cent of the space has been taken up, with 3,000 delegates expected to attend the Expo.

**HONOURING ACHIEVEMENTS, SHARING BEST PRACTICES**

The Mayors Forum is an annual international platform for Mayors, government officials and urban experts to share best practices in urban development. This year, it will focus on solutions to high-rise, high-density living in cities. The forum has gained international traction, with close to 60 Mayors attending, up from 32 Mayors in 2010. Half are new participants from ASEAN, Africa, South America, India and Russia.

Besides discussing challenges and solutions, outstanding contributions towards sustainable and liveable communities around the world will be honoured with the Lee Kuan Yew World City and Water Prizes. The Prize award ceremony and sharing of the Laureates’ success stories will be at the Summit.
SINGAPORE FIRMS GAIN INROADS as master planners overseas

By Goh Kim Chai

Singapore firms are making inroads as master planners for residential and commercial townships in places as far as Tatarstan (Russia), Qatar and Nigeria.

From extreme weather conditions to complex undulating terrain, local firms spoke about the challenges faced when venturing abroad as master planners at URA’s urban planning seminar in March 2012. The two-day seminar and an exhibition entitled, “Urban Transformations” showcased six firms’ overseas planning experiences and projects in detail for the first time.

Building on Singapore’s success in urban planning, URA has been sharing its city planning expertise with policy makers, planners and professionals from China, India, Southeast Asia, Africa and other countries. Now, it wants to widen and deepen the knowledge and expertise of the planning profession in Singapore and the Seminar and exhibition are a first in a series of initiatives in this direction.

CHALLENGES ABROAD

Speaking at the planning seminar, Liu Thai Ker, Director of RSP Architects, said a key challenge faced abroad is getting city mayors to appreciate the need for a good master plan to tie all components like transport, housing and amenities together. It is not enough to focus on iconic projects alone. But often, many may not have the time and patience to see through the master plan to realisation.

There is also the issue of size. Singapore as an island state is able to master plan each and every plot of land ahead of development.
DP Architects created a unique, world class waterfront district in Seef Lusail — one of the prime districts of Lusail City in Qatar.
But this is often not the case in bigger cities where planning is done in tandem, if not, behind real estate development. “The greatest challenge for us will be to balance the more noble long-term objectives of urban planning with the immediate financial returns of real estate development”, said Nina Yang, Executive Director from CPG Consultants.

Another issue faced by firms is the legislative and administrative framework of the country. Unlike Singapore where the URA, as the national land use planning authority, integrates planning functions and mechanisms to implement plans under one roof, other countries have multiple planning bureaus and government agencies. “We often have to devise planning solutions to help our clients deal with implementation within the constraints of their own local legislative and administrative framework”, said Yang. “Singapore’s planning system paves the way for the kind of compact urbanisation and maximisation of land-use that is sometimes unthinkable in other cities”, she added.

But there are rewards from venturing abroad — gaining satisfaction from having one’s proposal accepted and experiencing unknown and far flung places in the world, says Leow Kim Guan, Managing Director of SCP Planning Consultants and Wilfred Loo, Vice President (Planning) of Jurong Consultants.

**SINGAPORE’S BRAND**

Despite the challenges, these overseas experiences have enriched the planning professionals and taken them to new heights. The success of many overseas ventures can be attributed partly to Singapore’s strong urban planning brand. “Singapore’s success has helped to build credibility for our overseas ventures. Reliability, efficiency and a pragmatic approach that deliver results — these are positive reputation attributes that help sell Singapore firms”, said Ms Chan.

Agreeing, Mr Leow from SCP Consultants said, “Many clients appointed us mainly because of our experience in Singapore’s success in planning.” Mr Philip Tan, Deputy Managing Director from Surbana International Consultants added, “When we do projects internationally, we are actually selling the Singapore brand of planning.”

On how Singapore can grow its urban planning industry further, Director of RSP Architects, Liu Thai Ker said a key priority is to collate information on how Singapore has done it and share them with professional planners. Mr Liu, who is also Chairman for the Centre of Liveable Cities said, “It is very obvious that now, not only Asia, Africa and South America, even the advanced countries are looking at Singapore for our planning know-how.”

However, he urged Singapore planners not to be seduced by the superficial excitement of city planning, but do more serious research to ensure they are always at the top of the game.

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**SELECTION OF OVERSEAS PLANNING PROJECTS BY LOCAL FIRMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Firm</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Site Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCP Consultants</td>
<td>Master Plan for Shenzhen Guanming District</td>
<td>Guangming District, Shenzhen, China</td>
<td>100 ha</td>
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SCP Consultants was engaged to review a Master Plan drawn up by foreign consultants for the Guanming District in China to make the plan more implementable.

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**URBAN TRANSFORMATIONS**

The “Urban Transformations” Exhibition showcases the extensive overseas planning projects of six Singapore firms — CPG Consultants, DP Architects, Jurong Consultants, RSP Architects, SCP Consultants and Surbana International Consultants. From 16 March to 1 June 2012, at The URA Centre.
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MAR ⁄ APR 2012

Firm: RSP Architects
Project Title: Jining Mega City Master Plan
Location: Jining, Shandong, China
Site Area: 110,000 ha

RSP Architects was engaged to draw up a Master Plan to integrate the hometown of Confucius and the burial ground of Mencius with the city of Jining.

Firm: CPG Consultants
Project Title: Master Plan and Urban Design of Beiqijia Town
Location: Beiqijia Town, Chang Ping District, Beijing, China
Site Area: 100 ha

CPG Consultants planned a Future Science City in Beijing to attract top Chinese research and scientific talents currently based overseas back to China.

Firm: Surbana International Consultants
Project Title: Lekki New Township Master Plan
Location: Lekki, Lagos, Nigeria
Site Area: 1,560 ha

Surbana International Consultants conceived a community-centric landmark township Master Plan for Lekki to accommodate its rapid expansion.

Firm: RSP Architects
Project Title: Jining Mega City Master Plan
Location: Jining, Shandong, China
Site Area: 110,000 ha

RSP Architects was engaged to draw up a Master Plan to integrate the hometown of Confucius and the burial ground of Mencius with the city of Jining.

Firm: Jurong Consultants
Project Title: Structure and Urban Design Plan of the Greater Mohali Region
Location: Greater Mohali Region, Punjab, India
Site Area: 119,000 ha

Jurong drew up the Structure Plan of the Greater Mohali Region, six local plans and the Urban Design Plan of a key sector in the SAS Nagar.
i LIGHT THE
BAY

By Mustafa Hatwadi
The second instalment of i Light Marina Bay was a big hit with a larger turnout than the first, with a record 565,000 visitors immersing themselves in the magical glow of vividly-illuminated displays.

Familiar icons like the Merlion sported a changing suit of colours while the Float@Marina Bay — the scene of many a National Day Parade — came alive with “moving” stick figures. These were just some of the dazzling 31 light displays that lit up Marina Bay from 9 March to 1 April, and they proved a real treat — especially for the kids. Four-year-old visitor Nadine Tay for instance loved “Light of the Merlion” because she could “paint” the Merlion pink using a touch screen panel.

**BIGGER ENERGY SAVINGS**

Themed “Light Meets Asia”, this latest edition of the only sustainable light art festival in Asia was organised by the URA, with festival direction by Smart Light. This second run challenged artists to create multi-sensory art while remaining “green”. Through the use of energy-efficient lighting and alternative energy sources, the total energy usage for all displays was significantly lower than the 2010 run, at less than 7,000 kWh (kilowatt hours).

Mark Goh, Deputy Director of URA’s Place Management Department, summed up the result of the eco-friendly initiative: “Not only do these innovative light artworks collectively celebrate the unique qualities of Marina Bay’s nightscape, they also draw attention to the importance of energy-efficient technology and the efforts that can be taken to ensure a sustainable urban environment for all.”

Forty-seven properties around and beyond the Marina Bay area also lent their support to reduce energy consumption by participating in the “Switch Off, Turn Up” campaign, which saw them switching off non-essential lights and turning up air-conditioning temperatures throughout the festival period. The properties collectively achieved energy savings of over 200,000 kWh, more than four times the energy saved than the inaugural 2010 festival. This is enough to generate electricity for 762 four-room HDB flats for three weeks.

**WIDER REPERTOIRE**

Besides making a statement on a more sustainable environment, the displays also proved to be a happy distraction for many passers-by. Civil servant Michelle Ng, 29, was heading for dinner at Marina Bay Sands with friends when she stopped to look. “I had to check out where these lights and sounds were coming from. The cityscape suddenly had a new dimension,” she said.

This second run saw a much wider selection of 31 displays by artists from 17 countries and territories. The displays were selected from some 100 submitted entries, where 20 of the works were new commissions specially designed for the festival. Twenty-one artworks were created by artists and designers based in Asia.

One striking artwork was “Deck Journey” by Singaporean sound artist, Zulkifle Mahmod, known for designing
the Singtel F1 Grand Prix Night Race trophy. In his installation, eight deck chairs would light up whenever a visitor sat on any of them and they would immediately be enveloped in a specially-created soundscape. “People often visit Marina Bay and capture the view on cameras and mobile phones but they don’t truly enjoy the beautiful landscape. With “Deck Journey”, I wanted them to put those devices aside and capture those images in memories that would last forever,” said the 37-year-old.

Another memorable artwork was by Serbian artist Aleksandra Stratimirovic’s Sweet Home, a series of lampshades over vintage furniture, which brought a sense of warmth to the urban streetscape. It was first exhibited in Stratimirovic’s hometown of Belgrade, Serbia. “I was really curious to see how my homely lampshades would fit in against the bright lights in downtown Singapore. They really altered the mood. I am sure some of the visitors forgot that they were actually under a seating gallery next to a noisy, busy road,” said Stratimirovic, 44.

Her creation found a fan in marketing executive Chew Xinni, 27, who said: “I could relate to the story behind ‘Sweet Home’. Despite the chaos and the unavoidable rat-race here in Singapore, I can still go home to my family to de-stress and relax.”

The festival also featured specially-commissioned pieces such as “Gap The Mind” by 47-year-old Thai artist Be Takerng Pattanopas, an assistant professor of art and design at Chulalongkorn University and Bangkok University in Thailand. He brought a dash of Thai-style tranquility to the bay area through a row of fabric shelters inspired by the umbrellas used by Thai monks. As a visitor walks through the exhibit, body heat will trigger the chimes of the brass food bowls typically used by the monks.

MORE FRINGE ACTIVITIES
Beyond the installations, visitors were treated to the samba, rata and reggae beats of percussion band Junk Jam, LED light twirlers, LED-lit stilt walkers and the Singapore Sky Dancers’ synchronised kite-flying. The Promontory saw a drums performance, “Carnival of Drums — Beating as One” organised by Students Care Service to raise funds to support children and youths from disadvantaged backgrounds. There were also activities such as ARTy pARTy@The Bay organised by Central Singapore Community Development Council, workshops and competitions aimed at encouraging people to get more creative about living more sustainably.

Visitors were treated to a series of free movie screenings over the weekend by NESCAFE® PAssion Movie Night organised by the People’s Association (PA). Commenting on the event, Yam Ah Mee, the Chief Executive Director of PA said: “This year’s movie night gave residents the opportunity to catch a show out in the open amongst interesting light art installations under the stars and make more friends with like-minded people over popcorn and cinematic magic.”

For more information on this second edition of i Light Marina Bay, visit www.marina-bay.sg/ilightmarinabay.
**JOURNEY REFLECTIONS**

That there was a Youth Challenge at all reflects, in my view, the collaborative, convivial, “let’s-go-for-it spirit” of the Rail Corridor Consultation Group. When the Ideas Competition plans were shared with the group, suggestions were made to include a student section. Faster than one could say “Rail Corridor Ideas Competition”, the Youth Challenge was born. I was honoured to have been asked to Chair the Jury Panel for the Youth Challenge section. I was also quite scared — Would I be out of my depth? What will I do if I am asked to cast a deciding vote? What will happen when fellow Jurors find out I don’t know the slightest thing about urban planning?

My past experiences with Science Fair judging, where I am always the last to finish, did not bode well for Youth Challenge judging night, as we had forty-five presentations to evaluate. I did some rough calculations based on my work rate at science fairs and realised that I didn’t have enough money to cover the taxi midnight surcharge that would no doubt be needed. Thanks, however, to a fantastic Secretariat (Regina Koo and Esther Wong) and a wonderful Jury Panel (Dr Lubna Alsagoff, Mr Dinesh Naidu, Dr Amy Choong, and Ms Serene Tng), we managed to look at the student entries, thoroughly discuss their merits, and come up with a satisfying ranking of projects within the allocated time. The system of having a walk-through of all projects as a group, asking Jurors to then individually pick their favourite entries, and reconvening as a Jury Panel to shortlist and select the most compelling entries worked very well. The world of Science Fairs could learn a thing or two from the Rail Corridor Ideas Competition judging process.

What struck me about the student proposals were how varied they were. Some were broad and masterplan-like in their scope, while others highlighted a single idea. The themes spanned everything imaginable: nature watching, shopping, arts and culture, zip lining, green transport, tree tunnels, graffiti, stargazing, fine dining, and more. Some chose a polished, computer-designed look, while others were hand-drawn. I felt that the winning entries reflected the diversity of proposals we were asked to evaluate. Many of the features that students came up with were things that most of us might include on a Rail Corridor wish list — environmentally friendly features, green energy, lush landscaping, community spaces, healthy lifestyle flourishes, and so on. Some ideas, however, were from a part of the brain that only young people seem to be able to tap into — they were wacky, impossibly ambitious, and unimplementable. But they were also moving, inspiring, and we loved them. I don’t know if some of the ideas of our young entrants will eventually materialise as the Railway Corridor transitions from inspiring concept to an actual landscape feature, but it would be great to see if the spirit of the Youth Challenge could be incorporated into its eventual design.

I am very grateful for having had the chance to work with a very capable and kind Secretariat, and a creative, passionate, and committed Jury Panel. I haven’t had so much fun in years. I also found it very humbling to be reminded that while I know much more about the world as an adult than I did as a teenager, I would be wise to try and rekindle the youthful ideal of limitless possibilities more often.

Dr Shawn Lum, Chairperson of the Youth Challenge Jury Panel for “Journey of Possibilities”, Member of the Rail Corridor Consultation Group and President of Nature Society (Singapore)
BIO-DIVERSITY AND SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

1st Prize: "BioTrail"

Heng Cheng Sin
Lee Hui Tong; Liu Jiahui
Li Yuanyuan
Zhou Yuke
Ng Haley Harrison
Wyn Lim Jia Ying
Muhammad Huzaifah Ayub
(Singapore Polytechnic)

Jury Citation
The Jury commends the designer for the strong and environmentally friendly response to the challenge with visually attractive interventions that give visitors special attention to different perspectives of appreciating the natural world that surrounds them. The proposal scores highly for its innovative use of architecturally compatible forms that sit well in the environment. While the proposal could have been further developed to address the relationship between urban development and the rail corridor, the Jury appreciates the thorough research that justifies the variations of experiences that addresses each specific site that has been studied.

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP, PRIDE AND SENSE OF WELL BEING

Honourable Mention: "The Living Trail"

Leong Xiu Fu
(National University of Singapore)

Jury Citation
This is a simple and powerful idea of everyone owning a tree that represents sustained positive relationship with nature and the track.

THE LIVING TRAIL

“A BREATHING AND LIVING CORRIDOR MADE FROM SHAPING LIVING TREES INTO STRUCTURES”

Through the beauty of organic architecture, The Living Trail is about approaching the world of nature and development. While traversing through the passage of the corridor, one experiences a series of formed forms that are architecturally identical to the surrounding natural environment. The design approach involves a series of nature elements, adaptation to landscape conditions and subtle design approaches that may influence the activity of the natural space. In such to create a place that is synonymous during and existing in celebration of the natural form.
HERITAGE

1st Prize:
"The Longest Art Installation in the World"

Chris Crombie
Keith Brewis
Glen Moses
(Grimshaw Architects, UK)

Jury Citation
The railway artefacts recycled as art installations tell a compelling story about railway heritage. The outcome is an appropriate expression that respects both heritage and the natural landscape by suggesting different responses to different sites. While the proposal could have elaborated more on ideas for the railway stations, the Jury appreciates the open-ended and evocative concepts that help to make heritage fun and enjoyable. Through appealing graphics and effective presentation of concepts, the Jury felt that the submission was exciting, refreshing and had the most potential for further development.

EXTRAORDINARY & INNOVATIVE IDEAS FOR A GREAT PUBLIC SPACE

Honourable Mention:
"Green Corridor"

Shigeru Ijima
(Australia)

Jury Citation
The Jury recognises that the proposal is elegantly simple and yet possesses a surprising degree of complexity. It appears to be a single continuous art installation that does not prescribe specific uses and remains highly versatile for a wide range of activities. The Jury notes that opposed to some more heavy-handed proposals, this scheme is very gentle.
YOUTH CHALLENGE

Joint 1st Prize:
"Spiral Treetop Walk"

Ho Yu Ning
Jamie Lim Si Min
Jean Lim Le Hui
Jeanette Tham Mei Yu
Karina Lalchand Sheri
(Paya Lebar Methodist Girls’ School)

Jury Citation
The Jury was captivated by the youthful vibrancy of this proposal that was not only imaginative, but clearly addressed the needs of many different groups of people. The expressive graphite drawings, the level of detail, and the exuberance of the ideas captured the spirit of what the Rail Corridor could be.

INCLUSIVENESS, ACCESSIBILITY AND RESOLVING CONFLICTS

Honourable Mention:
"The BareFooter Trail"

Neo Kaixiang
(Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts)

Jury Citation
The Jury appreciates the sensual and refreshing idea which is attractive as a standalone theme.

"JOURNEY OF POSSIBILITIES" EXHIBITION

The exhibition features 80 entries comprising 18 winning ideas, 19 honourable mentions and other innovative suggestions from the ideas competition. Do visit the exhibition before 11 May 2012 at The URA Centre (1st Floor, 45 Maxwell Road). The winning entries can also be viewed at www.ura.gov.sg/railcorridor/journeyofpossibilities/index.html.
QUEEN STREET GETS A NEW LOOK

By Valerie Yeo

Plans are in the pipeline to enhance Queen Street. Wider sidewalks and a new colourful paving will make it a more distinctive walking street in future.

There will be new landscaping, benches, street lamps and more space for public activities. Selected areas with high pedestrian traffic will also be given a different surface treatment across the road to slow down the cars for a more pleasant walking experience.

Queen Street is part of the Bras Basah.Bugis area. From a derelict area with low real estate value in the 1980s, it has since been transformed into an arts and culture enclave, rich in multi-cultural heritage and architectural diversity, through URA’s rejuvenation efforts over the years. In the 1990s, Albert and Waterloo Mall streets were pedestrianised and are today vibrant thoroughfares in the district. Enhancements to Queen Street will make it even more attractive to walk around and explore the district. It will also be a boost to the arts and cultural identity of the area.

The design proposals for the improvement of Queen Street have incorporated inputs from the local residents and stakeholders in the area. It was also exhibited at the Singapore Art Museum at 8Q Plaza and Waterloo Centre in March 2012 for further public feedback. The proposed works received strong support from the residents and stakeholders. The Queen Street improvement works are expected to be completed in 2013.
Potential home-buyers can now draw detailed information about their ideal homes before making the final purchase. URA implemented the changes to the Housing Developers Rules in April 2012. Under the new rules, developers will have to provide potential home-buyers upfront, information such as the housing project’s unit specifications and floor plan. The guidelines were implemented after taking into consideration, feedback from various stakeholders, including developers, lawyers, architects and members of the public.

**Skyline summarises the key changes below:**

1. **MANDATORY INFORMATION TO POTENTIAL HOME-BUYERS**

   Developers will have to provide more information on the housing project and property to home-buyers before the issue of the Option-to-Purchase. These include a drawn-to-scale location plan and site plan of the project, unit floor plan and a breakdown of a unit’s floor area by the various spaces such as bedrooms, balconies and bay windows.

2. **TRACK RECORD OF DEVELOPERS**

   Developers will have to provide information on at least one completed project they had built before the issue of the Option-to-Purchase.

3. **HOME-BUYERS’ CONSENT FOR CHANGES TO A HOUSING UNIT**

   Developers will have to obtain the home-buyer’s consent for changes in a unit that would affect the home-buyer, e.g. changes to the layout of the unit.

4. **EXTEND CONTROLS ON ADVERTISEMENTS TO THOSE ON WEBSITES**

   The existing controls on advertisements in newspapers and sales brochures will be extended to advertisements on websites. Similar to advertisements in newspapers and sales brochures, advertisements on websites must not contain any false or misleading information.

   URA had conducted a public consultation exercise between March and April 2011 where the proposed changes received strong support from the public. URA is also finalising changes to the Housing Developers (Control & Licensing) Act, which will include setting up showflats to depict the units accurately and the publication of transacted prices on a weekly basis. URA will make the necessary legislative amendments to support the changes, which will be implemented in the second half of 2012.
Nature Walk, the latest green attraction in the north, offers urban dwellers yet another destination to enjoy the island’s varied green spaces. Unlike most roads paved with concrete, Nature Walk is covered with Laterite, which resembles red earth. This evokes a rustic setting reminiscent of Punggol’s past as a fruit district known for its kampongs and pig farms.

Nature Walk is the final segment of the Punggol Promenade developed by URA to bring people closer to the waterfront in their neighbourhood. The $16.7 million project is part of URA’s Parks & Waterbodies and Identity Plans, which aim to open up more coastal areas for recreational activities.