To make Singapore a great city to live, work and play in

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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2008 Singapore Quality Award ▪ URA ▪ Application Executive Summary

SINGAPORE QUALITY AWARD *for business excellence*

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

2008 Singapore Quality Award Winner

Application Executive Summary

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FOREWORD

It is a great honour to receive the prestigious Singapore Quality Award.

This award is very special to URA as it testifies to our commitment to the journey of organisational excellence. It also celebrates URA's 34 years of contribution to Singapore's physical transformation, to become one of the world's most liveable cities, with sustained growth and a high quality of life for Singaporeans.

Planning takes a long term view and the vision takes time to realise. Over the years, we have turned many of our plans to reality with great passion, a "can do" spirit and conscientious execution. The outcomes of planning are tangible and you can see them all around us.

URA has the vital mission of inspiring Singaporeans to create a home that we are proud of. This is an enormous challenge and one that we relish. It means offering Singaporeans more choices in their living, working and recreational environments. It also means we hold out to Singaporeans, especially future generations, the hope of a better and higher quality of life in the future.

Our challenge is to continue to distinguish Singapore on the world map, offering a high quality business and living environment, setting new standards, pushing new frontiers and doing all this while fitting in all our needs within our limited land area.

We have to be visionary, we have to be quick in sensing the changes around us and adjust quickly, and we have to prepare our organisation so that we are always ready. I am happy to say that the SQA framework and process has helped put us in good stead for this.

This award is a fitting validation to everyone at URA who have worked very hard and passionately to make URA a world-class organisation. URA's success is their success.

I would also like to thank many of our service partners in both the public and private sectors, with whom we have worked closely to realise the vision of our plans.

Winning the award will spur us to do even better. From the proposals for a new exciting downtown at Marina Bay, to new growth areas like Jurong Lake District to opening up more leisure and living opportunities, URA will continue to strive to plan and facilitate the development of Singapore into a delightful and distinctive global city, a city that is endearing to Singaporeans and a city of choice for talent and businesses.

Mrs Cheong Koon Hean
CEO, Urban Redevelopment Authority

“Impressed with URA’s willingness to dare to plan a futuristic metropolis on a limited land area. Continue to dare”

President S R Nathan
2005

SHAPING SINGAPORE - THE URA STORY

Singapore today can be considered a successful city in many ways. It is a modern and vibrant international business hub. Singapore is recognised as a city-in-a-garden and regarded as one of the most liveable cities in Asia. Indeed, Singapore has become a city benchmarked by many others.

This physical transformation of Singapore is remarkable given that the metamorphosis only took place over a short period of four decades since Singapore’s independence.

All these did not happen by chance, but through URA’s visionary, innovative planning, and a deliberate process to facilitate implementation of the plans, in collaboration with key government agencies.

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Set up in 1974, the URA was only responsible for urban renewal within the Central Area. However, with rapid economic growth, the Government recognised that it was more expedient for an agency with the expertise and resources, to plan holistically for the entire city-state. Thus, in 1989, URA amalgamated with the former Planning Department, and expanded its scope to its present-day role as Singapore's national land use planning and building conservation authority. Our current mission is:

"To make Singapore a great city to live, work and play in"

We aim to achieve our mission through three key strategic thrusts:

- Plan for a more attractive, distinctive and vibrant city
- Facilitate the realisation of our plans in partnership with the community
- Build an excellent organisation that is customer-focused and people-oriented

URA's products and services

URA delivers the following core products and services under its strategic thrusts:

Thrust 1: Planning for a more attractive, distinctive and vibrant city

The Concept Plan

The Concept Plan is a long-term strategic land use plan which guides Singapore's physical development into the future. It is reviewed every ten years with inputs from key government agencies. The latest Concept Plan 2001 maps out our vision for Singapore in the next 40 to 50 years, based on a population scenario of 5.5 million.

As we strive to contribute to Singapore's economic growth and plan for a higher larger population in the next Concept Plan, the challenge is not just to provide sufficient space for the various competing uses. We also have to enhance the quality of our living environment and provide lifestyle options to attract talents, investments and businesses to Singapore.

> **"Wealthy, industrious and organised, Singapore is an urban planner's fantasy land... New entertainment districts are cropping up in former warehouses along the Singapore River. Fifteen new hotels with 6,400 rooms will be constructed by 2010."**
>
> **Boston Globe Editorial,**
> 9 Feb 2008

The Master Plan

The broad vision of the Concept Plan is translated into the Master Plan. The Master Plan is a forward-looking statutory document which provides transparency to land owners, real estate developers and business operators. It consists of local plans with detailed land use intentions and densities for every land parcel in Singapore.

A result of close collaboration with key partners such as the Housing and Development Board (HDB), Land Transport Authority (LTA), Jurong Town Corporation (JTC), National Parks Board (NParks) and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), the Master Plan addresses the housing, commercial, industrial, transportation, recreational and institutional needs for Singapore in an integrated manner. It is through this integrated planning that URA is able to achieve a world-class live, work and play environment for Singapore. Although the Master Plan has a planning horizon of 15 years, we review it every five years to ensure relevancy in our rapidly changing environment.

> Para 11. Sir, as far as I know, not a week passes by without a foreign delegation in town studying our systems, with the aim of adapting it back in their countries. They come from China to the Middle East, Russia to India and not to mention officials under training from Asean countries. They are interested in our urban planning....
>
> Para 13. When the first Jiangsu delegation visited us in November last year, one of the mayors commented to me:
>
> **In terms of individual buildings, I believe we have more outstanding architecture than you have. But when you assemble all our buildings side-by-side, your city looks so neat and beautiful. They are in harmony. So what is your secret?"**
>
> Excerpt from parliamentary speech on 9 Apr 2007 by
> **Mr Lee Yi Shyan, Minister of State (MTI)**

Urban Planning and Urban Design

Today, our proven urban planning expertise is sought after by many cities in the world. Each year, more than 200 foreign delegations visit URA to learn about our urban planning experience. URA has also received numerous requests to provide training and consultancy services to large-scale urban planning projects overseas.

Good urban design enhances the character of a place, and makes its built environment more attractive, distinctive and yet functional and pedestrian-friendly. URA draws up urban design plans for key areas in Singapore such as the Singapore River, the Orchard Road shopping corridor, and Marina Bay. With increasing globalisation, high quality urban design can become a competitive strength to promote the city and attract businesses, investments and talents.

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Conservation

The conservation of historic buildings and areas allows Singapore to preserve its rich built heritage, giving our city character and identity. Since the start of the Conservation programme in 1987, more than 6,800 buildings have been gazetted for conservation to-date, of which about 60% have been restored. Besides individual buildings, URA also conserves areas en bloc to maintain a sense of place. These areas include the historic districts of Chinatown, Little India and Kampong Glam. The perpetual challenge of conservation is in striking a good balance between conserving areas and buildings with heritage value; and ensuring enough land for economic growth and redevelopment. URA and Singapore won worldwide recognition when the Urban Land Institute conferred on us the prestigious Global Awards for Excellence in 2006 for our Conservation programme.

Thrust 2: Facilitating the realisation of our plans in partnership with the community

URA recognises that it is not enough just to make plans. It is equally important to make sure the plans are realised on the ground. Facilitating processes have to be put in place, especially for strategic areas such as Marina Bay.

Development Control

Through its development control function, URA facilitates land development and ensures that developments comply with the planning intention stipulated in the Master Plan. Each year, URA processes 10,000-12,000 development applications, most of which involve significant levels of interaction with customers. We have developed a strong service-culture and are able to understand and effectively meet our customers' requirements.

Government Land Sales (GLS)

The GLS programme is a key instrument in realising our land use plans and ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of land to support economic growth and other objectives. URA monitors the property market, projects demand and supply of residential and commercial spaces and selects sites for sale to the private sector based on various planning and economic priorities. Besides planning the GLS programme, URA is also the main land sales agent for the State. Through the half-yearly GLS programme, URA has guided the physical development of key areas in Singapore. For example, Tanjong Rhu was transformed from a shipyard area into a quality waterfront residential area, and while the Singapore River was revitalised as a high quality commercial, recreational and residential area. More recently, URA has sold strategic sites in the Marina Bay areas for the building of One Raffles Quay, Marina Bay Financial Centre and Marina View. These developments support Singapore's ambition to be a leading global financial hub.

Property Information Research

URA collates and publishes a comprehensive range of statistics on the property market covering the private residential, commercial, hotel and industrial sectors for public and government use. These statistics include prices and rentals, stock and vacancy rates as well as the supply expected to come on-stream over the next few years. In addition, URA also publishes details of individual projects, such as projects with approval for development and the sale status of private residential properties and executive condominiums. The information gathered from these property research has provided the public with a more complete and balanced view of Singapore's property market and the prevailing trends in property prices and rentals. This is especially crucial during periods when the market is buoyant.

Car Parks Management

URA helps to regulate parking demand by implementing and managing public parking lots. It oversees and manages more than 60,000 parking lots for cars, heavy vehicles and motorcycles parking lots, mostly in the city area. The orderly parking of vehicles is essential for the city to function efficiently and is also a key component of any transportation plan for maintaining a smooth flow of traffic in the city.

Architecture and Urban Design Excellence (A&UDE) Promotion Programme

URA raises public awareness on the value of good architecture and urban design through its A&UDE promotional efforts. These include organising talks and exhibitions by renowned architects, and the co-funding of innovative projects. URA has also introduced the Arts Incentive Scheme, which encourages private building owners to integrate permanent art into the design of their new developments. URA also organises design competitions for key government projects, not only to secure the best design, but also to allow room for architects to exercise their creativity and contribute to the community. In addition, together with the Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts (MICA), URA has secured the patronage of the President of Singapore for the annual President's Design Award, to recognise both local projects with excellent design

and outstanding designers.

Marina Bay Development Agency

As the appointed Development Agency for Marina Bay, URA spearheads Singapore's future development efforts at Marina Bay, taking a holistic approach to master plan and implement key infrastructure. As the place manager for Marina Bay, URA also actively promotes investment opportunities and exciting activities within Marina Bay. Working together with other government agencies and key stakeholders, we aspire to make Marina Bay a distinctive business and financial hub, a delightful home in the city and a dynamic playground brimming with round-the-clock energy and 24/7 vibrant activities for people from all walks of life. The New Year's Eve Countdown event at Marina Bay, which URA co-organises with The Esplanade, has become a signature event for the nation.

ORGANISATION GOALS AND VALUES

URA's three strategic thrusts mentioned earlier are in turn cascaded into a set of 11 strategic objectives. These strategic objectives provide direction for URA to identify our key initiatives. The URA SPIRIT defines how we work together to achieve these objectives. "SPIRIT" stands for our core values: Service, Passion, Integrity, Respect, Innovation and Teamwork. These values guide our individual behaviour to forge a strong culture of excellence. They also provide an anchor for the organisation amidst a rapidly changing external environment.

Employee profile

Customer service information systems	▪ URA Online e-Services ▪ Real Estate Information System (REALIS)
Operational information systems	▪ Electronic Development Applications (EDA) ▪ Development Application Management System (DAMS) ▪ Resource Management System (REMAS) ▪ URA's intranet (URAnium) ▪ Customer Information System (CIS) ▪ Common Policies and Procedures System (CPPS) ▪ Integrated Planning & Land Use System (iPLAN) ▪ Electronic Knowledge Repository Information System (eKRIS)
Management information system	▪ Readily Available Data for Achievement Review (RADAR) System

Regulatory environment

The URA Act and the Planning Act provide the regulatory framework for us to carry out our main business functions.

The URA Financial Regulations (which are aligned with the Government Instruction Manuals) ensure consistency in achieving operational efficiency, effective controls and financial prudence.

ORGANISATION RELATIONSHIPS

Relationship with parent organisation

URA is one of the five statutory boards under the Ministry of National Development (MND). Our mission is aligned with MND's mission of "Developing a world-class infrastructure, creating a vibrant and sustainable living environment, and building rooted and cohesive communities" while our vision too, aligns with MND's vision of "An Endearing Home, A Distinctive Global City".

Relationship with customers

URA customers can be broadly divided into two main groups according to our planning and facilitating functions.

Planning

This group of URA customers include the general public, industry professionals, developers, general businesses and government agencies that are directly affected by URA's plans and guidelines. We actively consult them as we draw up our plans (e.g. Concept Plan, Master Plan) or as we formulate our urban design and development control guidelines. This ensures that our plans and guidelines are in sync with the aspirations of our people and the needs of businesses. URA conducts a large scale Public Perception Survey every three years from this group of customers on their living, working and leisure environment.

Facilitating

This group of customers and their requirements are as follows:

a. Development Control customers are industry professionals, developers, general businesses and home owners who submit development applications to URA. They expect clear and transparent guidelines, responsive service and prompt processing.

b. Government Land Sales (GLS) customers are mainly developers and investors who are interested in tendering for sale sites. They need a set of clear planning parameters and sales conditions to put up their tender bids and to subsequently serve as a guide when they develop the land.

c. Real Estate Information customers are the general public, developers, property consultants and analysts, property business owners, home buyers and government agencies. They desire timely, comprehensive and accurate real estate information from URA to enable them to make informed decisions.

d. Architecture & Urban Design Excellence (A&UDE) customers are the professionals and general public. They expect information about A&UDE to be current, interesting, and forward-looking and delivered in a creative and interactive manner. In particular, URA is devoting much effort and resources to help the public understand A&UDE and the value it can create.

e. Marina Bay events have generated a large following and the general public have indicated they want better access to a wide variety of activities in the area. This would require URA to plan and execute the various events and programmes well.

Relationship with suppliers and partners

In formulating the Concept Plan, Master Plan, Conservation Plan and other planning guidelines, URA works closely with various government agencies to obtain their inputs on land use issues such as population growth, housing needs, business needs, transportation needs, schools and utilities.

We also seek inputs from other regulatory agencies when we evaluate development applications. Through regular dialogues and working meetings, we have established a strong working relationship with these agencies. As our valued partners, we continually celebrate key achievements with them and invite them to major important URA events and functions (e.g. the annual URA Corporate Plan Seminar).

URA's main suppliers are the IT system vendors and exhibition contractors. They are required to deliver works that are value for money, and in line with our specifications. We work with our suppliers closely to ensure projects and works are completed on schedule and within the stipulated budget.

ORGANISATIONAL CHALLENGES

The strategic challenges facing URA and our responses to these challenges are as follows:

Plan for a more attractive, distinctive and vibrant city

Sustainable growth

Being a small and land-scarce country, sustainable development and long term planning are critical to Singapore. In essence, sustainability means looking beyond the immediate to ensure that Singapore achieves economic growth whilst providing an excellent quality of life for our people without compromising the well-being of future generations. We address the sustainability issue through the comprehensive review of the Concept Plan and the Master Plan.

Competitive environment

Cities around the world today continuously remake themselves to attract investments, talents and visitors. These include established global cities like London and New York, as well as aspiring cities like Dubai and Shanghai. URA, as part of Singapore Inc, has a role to ensure that there is sufficient land to support economic growth and make Singapore an attractive global city for investment and talent.

To position Singapore as a global business hub, we will continue to develop Marina Bay as a centre for business and finance. In addition, we will also open up new areas such as the Jurong Lake District and Paya Lebar Central, to offer alternative locations for businesses which do not need to be in the Central Area.

High quality living and recreational environment

Another challenge is to further strengthen Singapore's competitive edge as one of the most liveable cities in the world. URA will implement many exciting initiatives such as enhancing the night-buzz in key areas. We will also carry out environmental improvement works to enhance the character of selected areas. This will open up more recreational opportunities and make the existing activity nodes in the areas more vibrant.

As part of the Master Plan 2008 review, we aim to make Singapore a vibrant playground, both by day and night. This includes developing a leisure master plan featuring a full range of leisure opportunities. We will also focus on enhancing Singapore's position as the premier destination in Asia for round-the-clock entertainment, shopping and dining.

To reinforce Singaporeans' sense of identity and rootedness, we will continue with our conservation programme to study post war buildings and structures. We will also enhance places with distinctive character such as Siglap Village and Balestier through environmental improvement projects.

Facilitate the realisation of our plans in partnership with the community

Maintaining stability in the property market and ensuring Singapore's properties remain affordable and competitive relative to competing cities.

Singapore's property market has seen several boom and bust cycles. The challenge is to try to minimise the extent of such cycles through appropriate supply policies. One such policy is the Government Land Sales (GLS) Programme.

URA will also continue to enhance market transparency through more timely and comprehensive release of property market information to the public. URA We also needs to monitor the prices and rentals of commercial and private residential properties closely and recommend appropriate GLS supply and other property market policies. This is to ensure that Singapore's properties remain affordable and competitive relative to competing cities.

Rising customer expectations

With better education and increasing global exposure, customers' expectations have risen over the years and will continue to rise. URA has made much progress towards being more customer-oriented. Within URA, we ensure that our rules are business-friendly by proactively reviewing them from time to time. We will continue to engage customers to better understand their changing needs and expectations, and make improvements in areas that matter most to them.

Build an excellent organisation that is Customer-focused and People-oriented

To be able to deliver our work well, we need to build up a strong organisation with excellent practices. We will leverage on Information Communications

LEADERSHIP

"Singapore is now acclaimed world-wide as a modern, vibrant and green metropolis. URA's role in judicious and effective land use coupled with planned development and redevelopment has made this possible"

President Nathan
on his visit to URA's Master Plan 2003 Exhibition
16 September 2002

LEADERSHIP

SENIOR EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

1.1a How senior executives develop the purpose, vision and values for the organisation that focus on customers and other stakeholders, learning and innovation.

Mission and values

The mission of URA has evolved over the years and grown in significance with the development of Singapore as a nation. When URA was first formed in 1974, it was guided by its main responsibility of transforming the city centre from overcrowded slums into a thriving business and financial hub. In 1989, the URA amalgamated with the former Planning Department to become the national planning and conservation authority, with an expanded mandate to guide the physical development of Singapore into the year 2000 and beyond.

In 2001, against a backdrop of increasing globalisation, rising aspirations of Singaporeans for a better quality of life and competition among cities for talents, businesses and investments, we revisited our mision to make sense of the changes.

The URA management actively engaged URA staff in the 2001 review of URA's mission and values. This was to ensure shared ownership of the mission and values. Project teams were formed to review our external environment and expectations of stakeholders.

Our mission was revised to **"To make Singapore a great city to live, work and play in".**

The new mission statement addresses the aspirations of Singaporeans for a quality live, work and play environment. It also envisions Singapore as a great city that can compete with other global cities for talents, businesses and investments.

Our core values were also subsequently revised to reflect our greater challenges. Our new set of six core values under the acronym SPIRIT (**Service, Passion, Integrity, Respect, Innovation and Teamwork**) underscored, among other things, the need for our staff to learn and innovate to achieve our challenging mission.

Management communicated the revised mission and values to all URA staff and reinforced them through a variety of channels including our Corporate Plan Seminar, meetings, emails, posters, corporate stationery and other collaterals.

In 2006, URA management comprehensively reviewed its strategic thrusts, objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) using the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) framework. The review resulted in a clear set of strategic objectives and KPIs that will guide URA's work over the next three to five years.

1.1b How senior executives communicate, demonstrate and reinforce the organisational purpose, vision and values to all stakeholders.

URA staff have a strong sense of pride in URA. They have a clear understanding of the mission and values. This is attributed to the following leadership practices:

a. Communicating the challenges, the directions for the organisation, and also the progress of key work initiatives;

b. Inducting new staff and developing them to their potential;

c. Celebrating achievements with staff; and

d. Coaching staff and exploring new ideas with them when reviewing operational or policy issues at the various meetings.

URA's external stakeholders include our customers, our service partners from the public sector and the general public. Their support for our plans and key initiatives helps us to achieve our mission. URA uses a variety of platforms to communicate with and engage them. These include regular dialogues with the professional bodies, meetings with service partners and exhibitions to communicate plans to the public and seek feedback (See Figure 1.1.1).

In recent years, URA has also participated in overseas trade shows such as MIPIM (a major real estate summit) in Cannes and Hong Kong to promote our plans and sale sites.

Engaging stakeholders at Corporate Plan Seminar 2008

URA Deputy CEO Tan Siong Leng receiving the Public Service Award from Head (Civil Service) Peter Ho

FIGURE 1.1.1 COMMUNICATING WITH AND ENGAGING EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Areas of Engagement	Platform
Key directions and achievements	▪ Press releases and feature articles ▪ Skyline newsletters ▪ Annual report ▪ Exhibitions of key plans & proposals ▪ Corporate Plan Seminar ▪ Overseas real estate trade shows e.g. MIPIM
Changes in policies and guidelines	▪ Dialogues with professional bodies e.g. Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA) and Real Estate Developers' Association of Singapore (REDAS) ▪ Circulars to professional bodies ▪ Press releases ▪ Seminars for Qualified Persons (QPs) ▪ URA Online ▪ DC.Connect
Resolution of planning issues	▪ Working meetings with service partners e.g. HDB, JTC ▪ POWER (Public Officers Working on Eliminating Red Tape) sessions, Focus groups (e.g. with architects & developers) ▪ Master Plan Committee

Sharing our vision of the draft Master Plan 2008

We also conduct overseas marketing trips to the Middle East and Europe to share our development plans for Marina Bay, Orchard Road and other strategic planning areas. As a result, many global investors have come to tender for our sale sites.

1.1c How senior executives evaluate and improve the effectiveness of their leadership and personal involvement.

The effectiveness of the leadership in URA is reflected in many areas, a few of which are:

a. URA received the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Global Award for Excellence, and the ULI Asia Pacific Award for Excellence, for our Conservation programme;

b. URA received various organisational excellence awards including the Public Service Award;

c. In 2007, CEO(URA) was invited to be a member of Urban Land Institute Board of Trustees;

d. In 2008, CEO(URA) was invited by the United Nations to share on sustainable urbanisation in the information age at the UN Headquarters in New York.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, the management systematically reviews the effectiveness of their leadership and personal involvement. The review takes into consideration a number of inputs including the Employee Opinion Survey (EOS) and 360-degree feedback. URA started conducting EOS in 1997 and 360-degree feedback on practice of values in 2002.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

1.2a How the organisation translates its values into policies, practices and behaviours.

URA has a strong culture of achieving work excellence. This culture is anchored on the URA SPIRIT - core values which define what we believe in. They guide our interactions with one another, and also with our service partners and customers.

From the day a new staff joins URA, we will instil these core values in him or her through the induction and orientation programme. These values are continually reinforced through policies, programmes and practices that URA has put in place (see Figure 1.2.1 for an example of desired behaviours and practices that support our value on Passion).

> "To remake the economy and attract talents we have also got to remake the city. This has to be a city which is full of life and energy and excitement, a place where people want to live, work and play in, where they are stimulated to be active, to be creative and to enjoy life. MND and URA briefed me recently on their plans. I wanted to know what they were doing and they gave me a full explanation, brought their whole team. Their enthusiasm and excitement was infectious. So I decided to come and share it with you"
>
> **Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong**
> **at the National Day Rally 2005**
> where he shared our common vision of Singapore as a "vibrant global city"

FIGURE 1.2.1 DESIRED BEHAVIOURS AND PRACTICES

URA Value (policy statement)	**Desired Behaviours and Practices Put in Place**
Passion We perform our duties with passion because we are creating a legacy for future generations. We persevere in the face of setbacks and take pride in our work. We do not settle for anything short of excellence.	**Desired behaviour** ▪ We are committed to our work and we want to do a good job ▪ We actively offer suggestion for improvement ▪ We constantly strive to improve our work areas (i.e. re-think work procedures, streamline processes, etc) **Practices and structure put in place** ▪ Opportunities to present our work to our Minister and other VIPs ▪ Opportunities to share our experience with foreign delegates ▪ Participation in Planners' Club discussion. Staff sign up on a voluntary basis ▪ Regular sharing of achievements at forums such as corporate plan seminars ▪ Awards to recognise staff for key achievements

Participants at U-POP having a good time

1.2b How the organisation permeates a culture consistent with its values, and which encourages and support innovation, learning and achievement of organisation's objectives.

The URA SPIRIT is strong because of the following:

a. Effective induction of new staff;
b. Leading by example;
c. Constant communication;
d. Training & development; and
e. Rewards & recognition.

Induction of staff

URA has put in place a comprehensive induction programme to introduce new staff to the culture of URA. One key feature of our induction programme is for new recruits to meet the Director (Corporate Development) within their first two weeks of joining URA for a friendly chat on URA's values.

New staff also learn about our core values and different areas of work in a fun and experiential way through our orientation programme affectionately called U-POP which stands for URA Participatory Orientation Programme.

Leading by example

Management leads by example in developing a strong URA SPIRIT. They coach the less experienced staff, challenge them to think out of the box, and share stories on how the core values are exemplified.

Communication

Our core values are constantly communicated to staff through various channels e.g. our monthly internal newsletter (URoundup), and the management's message to staff at key corporate events such as the Corporate Plan Seminar. The Innovation of the Month Award (IMA) winners and their winning ideas are also featured regularly in URoundup.

Training and development

To effectively translate the values into practices and behaviours, we provide various courses linked to the URA SPIRIT. Examples of such courses include "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People", "Think about Clients" and "From Complaint to Compliment".

Rewards and recognition

URA designs its rewards and recognition system to recognise officers who have demonstrated the core values in a strong and positive way. Some of these include the Service Excellence Awards, the Team Excellence Awards and the Innovation of the Month Award.

1.2c How the organisation overcomes any differences between the current culture and desired culture

URA uses the 360-degree feedback mechanism and EOS to assess how strong and pervasive the values are.

360-degree feedback exercise

The 360-degree feedback is a self developmental tool where staff receive feedback from their peers and subordinates on the extent to which they have lived out the core values. Our desired culture is defined as having an average score of four out of five for each of URA's six values. After each round of the 360-degree feedback exercise, we take follow-up actions to help staff further improve on those values that they are weak in.

These reviews and follow-up actions have resulted in a positive trend in the 360-degree feedback results based on a 5-point score as shown in Figure 1.2.2. This clearly indicates that our staff uphold the URA SPIRIT.

Employee Opinion Survey (EOS)

The EOS is another source of inputs for us to assess the strength of our core values. Management reviews the EOS results and identifies the strengths and areas for improvements. We then take steps to narrow the gaps between the current and desired culture.

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

1.3a Describe the organisation's policies and goals in relation to its contribution to the community and the environment in which it operates.

URA is committed to nurturing an organisation that cares for the community, the society and the environment. We see this as an extension of our mission to make Singapore a great city to live, work and play in.

Our efforts have borne fruit over the years. We have consistently won the Community Chest Platinum Award for the SHARE programme. Our Singapore City Gallery, which was opened in 1999 is among the top five most popular destinations among schools. We also achieved a yearly average reduction of 3.2% in energy usage over the last three years.

Our programmes and activities are guided by three main policies. (See Figure 1.3.1)

Targets are set for each programme and reviewed regularly to ensure we make continuous improvements.

FIGURE 1.2.2 IMPROVING TREND OF AVERAGE SCORE OF OFFICERS

Year	Feedback from Subordinates	Feedback from Peers
2003	4.17	4.10
2004	4.20	4.15
2006	4.32	4.22

Primary school learners at the Singapore City Gallery

FIGURE 1.3.1 POLICIES ON CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITY AND NATIONAL EDUCATION

Policy Statement	Approach
Caring for the Environment "We are committed to the reduction of waste, as part of our effort to protect the environment"	Our policy focuses on two main areas: ▪ Growing appreciation and awareness of environmental issues ▪ Taking action by reducing waste
Caring for the Community "We believe in caring for the less fortunate in society and contributing to the well-being of the community."	We encourage our staff to reach out to the less fortunate by engaging in: ▪ Volunteer work ▪ Fundraising activities
Public Education "We are committed to increasing student and local community awareness of Singapore's heritage and the challenges and constraints faced in planning its physical environment"	We play our part in nation building by operating the Singapore City Gallery. Our programmes reach out to two main groups: ▪ Students ▪ Local community

Singapore City Gallery welcomes its millionth visitor

1.3b How the organisation communicates its policies and goals to employees and external parties and involves them in achieving the goals.

Internal communications

We keep our staff informed of our programmes and activities through regular email updates and monthly e-newsletters.

External communications

We also reach out to external parties via our bi-monthly newsletter, Skyline and our Annual Report.

Through our yearly corporate plan seminars, attended by some 500 professionals including private sector architects and planners, we raise awareness about URA's role and policies.

We also partner our stakeholders in carrying out meaningful community projects to promote community service. For example, URA participated in the inaugural Pedal for Hope 07/08 charity project, initiated by MND Recreational Committee. The event saw 30 external organisations coming together to raise funds for the less fortunate.

1.3c How the organisation evaluates and improves its involvement and contribution to caring for the community, society and the environment in which it operates.

The Head of Public Relations chairs a Workgroup on Corporate Social Responsibility. Its roles include the reviewing of the various programmes and making recommendations for improvements.

The review takes into account the following factors:

- Contribution to URA's mission;
- Level of staff involvement;
- Impact on URA's public image; and
- Synergy between various projects.

Management also reviews and endorses the programmes, activities and policies, including the choice of our adopted charity.

Our staff running a game stall at Chao Yang School's fun fair