Victoria’s Public Urinal
Form Meets Function
In the Downtown

A Public Spaces Submission
2010 IDA Downtown Achievement Awards

City of Victoria and
Matthew Soules Architecture Inc.

Public Urinals
Victoria’s downtown attracts a wide diversity of visitors to its shops, restaurants and bars throughout the year.

Public urination, however, is a problem that has compromised the quality of their experience and frustrated business owners.

It is a challenge to identify effective options to reduce males’ propensity to urinate wherever they find convenient.
To tackle this problem the City of Victoria pursued a three part strategy:

1. Enforcement
2. Awareness
3. Public Urinals

Males needed to know that urinating in the streets was not cool and bylaws would be enforced...
... but they also needed somewhere to go.

We deployed temporary portable urinals during weekends in entertainment areas.

This initiative successfully reduced the amount of urination in alleys and on buildings.

...but, it was relatively expensive and a permanent solution was needed.
We reviewed existing permanent urinal products and found that they were either unattractive, too costly or unavailable.

We decided that the best option would be for us to pursue the creation of a new public urinal design that met our criteria.
We wanted a urinal design that would be:

1. Visually Attractive
2. Safe
3. Clean
4. Low Maintenance
5. Good Value

...simple and elegant
Although the intent of the project was to address a problem with male urination rather than to provide a public service, we considered options for providing female access.

We concluded that it we would not be able to create a safe facility for women without compromising design criteria that we felt important in creating a facility that could operate without supervision.

Other options for women are being considered.
Matthew Soules was contracted to work with us to design the urinal.

The fifth of his five initial concepts was selected for further development.
The design was optimized to achieve beauty of form while assuring needs for safety, cleanliness and maintenance would be met.
The result is a public amenity that successfully addresses the public urination problem while adding architectural interest to the public domain.
The public and local businesses have been overwhelmingly supportive of the urinal and it receives use at all times of day and night.
We are currently exploring broader deployment throughout the downtown.

Other cities have expressed interest in employing the urinal in their city centers.