In 1993, IPWEAQ launched Queensland Streets, a design guideline for subdivisional street works. This document served the development industry well for almost 15 years and was considered the most contemporary streetworks design guideline available for a significant portion of that time.

However, public policy and debate moved rapidly towards ecological sustainability and community building giving rise to a changing environment within the urban development industry. IPWEAQ’s own charter also moved forward in this regard to recognise the promotion of ecologically sustainable public works and services as a key element in its strategic mission.

Having regard to this and the state government’s reform agenda for planning and development as identified in the Planning for a Prosperous Queensland document, IPWEAQ launched a comprehensive review to ensure the inclusion of current Australian and international practices.

The aim in preparing a new Queensland Streets was to produce the most contemporary and innovative neighbourhood and subdivision design guidelines for the Australian market and possibly beyond our shores.

Complete Streets was subsequently launched in 2010 and not only provides guidelines for engineers but land use planners and urban designers on what makes quality liveable and/or functional and safe neighbourhoods and subdivisions.

The Review

IPWEAQ insists on an ongoing collaborative approach for all its publications and services. And this was the case also for the recent review of Complete Streets which process identified the need for additional engineering content to fill the void between the existing Complete Streets document and the old Queensland Streets manual with updated detailed designs.

Several different options were considered with conflicting and strong opinions on how best to proceed. Some users are of the view that urban street design is all about communities and neighbourhoods and they will not therefore use Queensland Streets while others required additional guidance on a range of technical issues such as the width of a residential street.

The final outcome is to update Complete Streets incorporating current practices and techniques to deliver a uniform standard of residential streetworks design for use throughout Queensland. That process is underway thanks to the leadership of one of our retired members, John Derbyshire who was involved in the early development of standards (roads, drainage and standard drawings) for LGEAQ and IMEAQ (now IPWEAQ). John has used Queensland Streets extensively and had an interest in town centre design, urban design and leading-edge residential subdivision design (one of the aims of Complete Streets).

Members will be offered an opportunity to comment on the revised document. If you have any queries in the meantime however, please do not hesitate to contact me at Ross.Guppy@ipweaq.com.