Climate action for Resilient, Livable and Equitable Communities

HUD User—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Climate change is increasing the incidence of severe weather, hastening changes such as rising sea levels and temperatures that threaten life and property, and deepening socioeconomic divides through its disproportionate negative effects on low-income households.

Lower-income households are more likely to live in vulnerable areas and have the fewest resources to evade, mitigate the risks of, or recover from natural disasters and other shocks. “[T] hose who have the least stand to lose the most when the next storm comes through,” said White House Office of Management and Budget Director Shaun Donovan, speaking on July 9 at “Building Climate Resilience for Equitable Communities: City, Federal, and Tribal Perspectives,” an event sponsored by the Center for American Progress and the National League of Cities. Donovan called climate action — the measures communities take to adapt to and mitigate threats posed by climate change — “the defining environmental challenge of our time,” and is vitally necessary on those grounds alone. But, he added, if we make equity a priority, climate action can also combat inequality by creating

Intergovernmental collaboration has been essential for consensus building as the Salt Lake City region responds to changes in snow pack melt.
Greetings from the County Planning Division Chair
Megan Nelms, AICP

Hello County Planners!

I hope this early autumn has been treating you well. No blizzards yet in wonderful Wyoming, so I am happy! I am writing to you upon my return from the Fall APA Leadership Meetings in Washington, DC. It was a great weekend spent with fellow division leaders and learning lots about APA and division initiatives and more effective ways to reach out to you, our members.

While most of the weekend was spent in “meetings”, they were fruitful and productive. We delved into training, especially on blogs, social media and outreach to our members. In this digital age, there is no substitute for having a good network to share ideas and build relationships, which is why our division exists! So far, social media has been the best way for us to reach, network and interact with our members. I wonder though, is this really the case?

Which brings me to my topic of point, our division goal, which is to survey the membership this year. I want to know, what are you looking for as a Division member? Why are you a member of the County Planning Division? How can the Division help you to become a better county planner? Be on the lookout for the forthcoming survey, where you can let us know just what you want from your division!

Thank you again for your continued membership in the division. Please let me know of ways that the division can assist you in doing your job better. And as always, we are looking for volunteers to serve on the board in various capacities, so if you are interested, please contact me at mbl08@ccgov.net at any time! I look forward to hearing from you!

Megan Nelms, AICP, County Planning Division Chair
Getting to know our members

David Boston, AICP
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPCC), Prince George’s County Planning Department

Name: David Boston, AICP

Job Title: Senior Planner

County/Employer: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPCC), Prince George’s County Planning Department

Year(s) in position: 3

Brief summary describing your county – history, size (area and population), interesting facts, etc:

Prince George’s County is a large county composed of 483 square miles and nearly 900,000 residents that borders the eastern side of Washington, DC. The county includes some urban areas within the Capital Beltway, suburban development patterns typical of a large metropolitan region, and even rural areas in the southern and eastern portions of the county. A majority of county residents are African American. The median household income is $73,623 (over $20,000 higher than the US average) and the median owner-occupied home value is $269,800 (over $90,000 higher than the US average). This relatively wealthy and suburban county is served by 15 Metro stations, which connect Prince George’s County to the larger Washington metropolitan region via public transit.

What are your position’s responsibilities?

As a Senior Planner in the Community Planning Division, I am part of a team tasked with developing comprehensive area plans across the county. We also review development cases, recommend rezonings, draft zoning standards, and work in a variety of capacities to help implement plan recommendations in our county’s communities.

Tell us about an interesting projects/work you’ve been involved with at the county.

The Planning Department is currently leading a project to rewrite the county’s zoning ordinance, which is a fascinating endeavor. I’ve enjoyed working with colleagues and the public to identify all the ways in which our current zoning ordinance can be improved, and to develop and review draft language for the new ordinance. Having worked in both our Development Review and Community Planning Divisions, I have a somewhat unique perspective on how we’re currently using our zoning ordinance, and that has made this project in particular a lot of fun.

What would you say are the biggest planning challenges facing the county?

The Planning Department recently completed a new general plan for the county that identified three “downtowns” where development activity should be focused. By creating area plans for each of these downtowns, rewriting our zoning ordinance to better facilitate the creation of transit-oriented centers, and improving our internal processes and products through the creation of a six-year work program and a streamlined plan format (a project I’m managing), the Department is dedicating itself to ensuring that the general plan is realized and the county continues to develop in a way that is smart and sustainable.

What do you like to do outside of work (hobbies/recreation, etc.)?

As long as I’m spending quality time with my wonderful wife, cat, family, and friends, what we’re doing isn’t all that important to me, but I particularly enjoy eating chocolate anything, getting drinks, and having real conversations. I’m also a Ph.D. student at the University of Maryland, specializing in economic and community development. I’ve recently finished coursework, so I enjoy spending some of my free time working on my dissertation, which is going to deal with the intricacies of the indirect relationship between gentrification and homelessness, using Washington, DC as a case study.

Interested in being telling your story?

Contact:
jacqui.kamp@clark.wa.gov
Fellow of AICP

Fellows of AICP are honored in recognition of the achievements of the planner as an individual, elevating the Fellow before the public and the profession as a model planner who has made significant contributions to planning and society. Fellowship is granted to planners who have been members of AICP and have achieved excellence in professional practice, teaching and mentoring, research, public and community service, and leadership. Those chosen become members of the College of Fellows.

The College of Fellows is concerned with mentoring and future advancement of the profession of planning. As outstanding professionals in the field of planning, Fellows of AICP will address student organizations, state APA conferences, and professional development programs.

Class of 2016 Nominations

Nominations for the next class of AICP Fellows are due **November 5, 2015**. Please review the newly revised Nomination Guidelines along with the Nomination Form and Nomination Checklist (both required for all submissions). APA Chapters and Divisions are encouraged to begin their process of candidate selection and nomination preparation as early as possible to ensure the best nominations possible for their candidates. A tutorial that provides helpful tips on creating successful nominations is provided below.

Questions regarding the AICP College of Fellows may be submitted to fellows@planning.org.

FAICP Nomination Guidelines (pdf)

FAICP Nomination Form (pdf)

FAICP Nomination Checklist (pdf)

For more information about how to put a nomination together, and common questions and answers, check out the webinar put together in 2013 by APA chapter leaders.
Suggest your great place for the people’s choice designee

October 9, 2015

APA is calling for suggestions for Great Neighborhoods, Streets, and Public Spaces that should be recognized in your community.

WASHINGTON, DC — What is your favorite street, neighborhood, or public space? Nominate it for the American Planning Association’s Great Places in America People’s Choice designation. The People’s Choice designations are nominated by the public and voted on by the public. Nominations are accepted through October 16, 2015.

Launched in 2007, Great Places in America recognizes unique and exemplary streets, neighborhoods, and public spaces — three essential components of all communities. These authentic places have been shaped by forward thinking planning that showcases diverse architectural styles, promotes community involvement and accessibility, and fosters economic opportunity.

Each October, APA announces its designation list of Great Neighborhoods, Streets, or Public Spaces as selected by a panel of APA leaders.

Last year, APA created the People’s Choice designation to enable members of the public to call attention to their favorite Great Places. College Avenue in Appleton, Wisconsin was the first People’s Choice designee in 2014.

To nominate your neighborhood, street or public space for the People’s Choice designee, comment on APA’s Facebook page, Twitter, or Instagram using hashtag #GreatPlaces. Nominations will be accepted through October 16. Voting will take place October 19–30. The People’s Choice designee will be announced on November 2.

Great Places in America is just one of the ways APA recognizes and celebrates National Community Planning Month each October. The month is designed to recognize and celebrate the many residents, leaders, officials, and professionals who contribute to making great communities. To view this year’s designees, visit www.planning.org/greatplaces.

The American Planning Association is an independent, not-for-profit educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities. APA and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, are dedicated to advancing the art, science and profession of good planning — physical, economic, and social — so as to create communities that offer better choices for where and how people work and live. APA has offices in Washington, D.C., and Chicago, with almost 40,000 members worldwide in nearly 100 countries.

Contact
Roberta Rewers, APA; 312-786-6395; rrewers@planning.org
Climate action, cont’d. from pg. 1

economic opportunities for all.

The Obama administration has focused on empowering communities to respond to climate change and enhance their ability to quickly bounce back from a disaster or economic shock. Harriet Tregoning, principal deputy assistant secretary of HUD’s Office of Community Planning and Development, said that communities desire a return to normalcy, often rebuilding their communities exactly the way they were. Increasingly, however, communities are looking forward, either building back better after a disaster or investing in resilience before a disaster. Such investments can create job opportunities, incorporate other desirable goals such as livability, and save money over the long term. Donovan announced a series of new federal actions that build on these goals:

- Resilience AmeriCorps. In partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation and Cities of Service, the Corporation for National and Community Service, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have launched a 12-site pilot program in which AmeriCorps VISTA members will help communities develop resilience plans, organize volunteer networks, and conduct outreach, making a special effort to engage low-income communities.

- National Disaster Resilience Competition technical assistance funding. The Rockefeller Foundation has pledged $3.2 million in additional support for the 40 applicants entering the second phase of the competition for a total of nearly $1 billion in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds.

- Tribal climate change adaptation and planning. The U.S. Department of the Interior has awarded $11.8 million to tribes and tribally chartered organizations for training and capacity building that addresses climate change.

Some threats and corresponding adaptations are specific to particular areas; Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Chairwoman Karen Diver spoke of the need to manage wetlands and preserve food security by protecting traditional food sources in Minnesota, and the Salt Lake City Mayor Ralph Becker said that his region focused on water quality and quantity in light of reductions in snowpack melt.

Several guiding principles, however, apply to communities across the country. Prominent among these shared principles are effective communication and collaboration across jurisdictions and levels of government. Becker said that partnerships have been critical for building consensus on decisions of generational as well as regional impact. Tregoning pointed out that federal grant programs now expect collaboration and cooperation among applicants, noting that regional entities are well positioned both to respond to disasters and to seize opportunities for resilience.

On communication, Diver said that social media has been an important tool for identifying needs and connecting people with temporary housing and other aid, and Becker added that communities can tap into existing social networks such as churches to ease postdisaster response and recovery.

Mustafa Santiago Ali, senior advisor to the administrator for environmental justice at EPA, stressed that with both collaboration and communication, policymakers must take care to ensure inclusivity and equity.

Communities nationwide are discovering that improving their resilience can also present economic opportunities, including for low-income households.

In Minnesota, Diver said that an initiative to put gutters on every home became a source of jobs, and Tregoning highlighted the “clean energy economy” as an area for job growth and opportunity. She noted that the White House had recently announced a goal of producing 300 megawatts of renewable energy for federally subsidized housing by 2020.

The U.S. Department of Education, DOE, and HUD have together launched STEM, Energy, and Economic Development (SEED), a five-site pilot program that trains public housing residents for jobs in the solar industry. Resilience investments also offer long-term fiscal benefits. Donovan cited research estimating that every dollar spent on mitigation saves $4 in future costs. “What I see us doing around climate change are exactly the same things that create livable communities,” said Becker. This synergy creates tremendous opportunity, as Tregoning put it, “to spend a dollar and get many dollars’ worth of benefit,” particularly if jurisdictions and levels of government are collaborating.

With inclusive community engagement and a concerted effort to prioritize social equity, climate action can not only improve climate and disaster resilience but also improve economic resilience, foster livability, and combat economic inequality.
**Upcoming Free Planning Webcast Series**

Here's an updated list of the webcasts provided by the Planning Webcast Series Consortium:

These webcasts are free and are accessed by going to:


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<td>Nov. 18</td>
<td><strong>Best Practices for Production of Guidelines and Plans</strong></td>
<td>Urban Design &amp; Preservation Division</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Planners and designers are often called upon to translate complex concepts into concise, accessible guidelines and planning documents. Organizing a clear, strategic process directly impacts a team’s ability to effectively communicate analysis, process and design recommendations. This session discusses how planners should capture comprehensive project analysis and metrics research and integrate it into written project documentation to narrate a compelling document. A seasoned professional with experience in research, writing, and editing will present their firm’s best practices for moving from project start up through project completion to improve a planner’s ability to convey process and solutions in a compelling manner.</td>
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<td>Nov. 6</td>
<td><strong>STAR Communities: A Case Study for Planners</strong></td>
<td>Nevada Chapter</td>
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<td>Beginning in 2008, the City of Las Vegas began a $70 million plus investment in projects and programs as a part of its Sustainable Energy Strategy. Now that much of the Strategy has been implemented and many of the goals have been met or exceeded, the City has been looking at next steps to continue its momentum of being a nationally recognized sustainable community. One way it is doing so is by joining STAR Communities – a nationwide framework and certification program for local sustainability. Over the past year, the City embarked on this program to assess goal areas that make up a sustainable community, including the Built Environment, Energy, the Economy and Jobs, Education, Equity, Health and Safety, and Natural Systems. Learn about STAR Communities as a tool and its importance for master plan or comprehensive plan efforts, and how the City of Las Vegas engaged other entities to assess important community metrics.</td>
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### 2015 Distance Education Webcasts

- [Defensible Historic Preservation Regulations](http://example.com) - 1.5 CM Law Credits (#e.29371)

- [Ethics, Equity and Social Justice: Roles and Implications of Planners](http://example.com) - 1.5 CM Ethics Credits (#e.29372)

- [Planners and Planters: What planners need to know about creating a sustainable landscape for today & tomorrow](http://example.com) - 1.5 CM Credits (#e.28841)