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I’m so pleased that FPD is reviving our newsletter. We’ve been out of the habit over the last year, but we have some good content here, and we’ll be looking to expand on it in future publications. If you have something you’d like to see in the newsletter, or if you have content, please send your thoughts to Derek Meyers, AICP, at derekmeyers@gmail.com.

It was great to see so many of you at the annual workshop in Seattle this past April. We had about 130 people in attendance, which exceeded our expectations. The sessions were informative, the business meeting was productive, and the networking was valuable. We’re looking to add even more value in Phoenix next year. Look for more information about that soon, if you haven’t already received it.

Every year, following the April workshop, FPD does a member survey to keep track of what our members thought of the workshop, what are the most important issues and factors guiding their membership in FPD, and what we should think about for future workshops. I’d like to go over some of the highlights from this year’s survey, conducted in May and June.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the survey. We’ll be working to incorporate these findings into our planning for Phoenix and beyond. Thanks for all you do to make FPD a strong and vibrant community.

Aaron Briggs, AICP, LEED AP BD+C, is the Chair of the Federal Planning Division and Principal with HB&A in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Reach him at: aaron.briggs@hbaa.com
FPD MEMBER SURVEY
WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE SEATTLE WORKSHOP?
It was a success.

For those who didn’t attend, Price (65%) and Scheduling Conflicts (54%) were the biggest reasons. For those who did attend, they rated it highly. A total of 86% rated it “Good” or higher. That’s higher than last year in Atlanta, where it was about 71%. Individual aspects of the workshop were generally rated highly, but there is room for improvement.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT FOR FUTURE WORKSHOPS?
Quality content. Regional connection.

When asked what’s important at the conference, respondents again rated the Quality of the Sessions as the most important factor influencing their attendance at the conference. 75% of people rated that as Very Important or Critical to their decision. Attendance of Federal Agency personnel was second by this measure with 67%. All other factors were below 40%.

Among our federal agency representatives, Government Per Diem lodging availability was important, and that factor was ranked as “critical” more often than any other factor.

Respondents would like to see more diverse topics, but also expressed a desire for more hands-on exercises, and more mobile workshops at the conference.

Just like last year, there was broad support for attending a regional forum held within 100 miles of respondents, with about 90% saying they probably or definitely would attend.

WHO RESPONDED?
A broad cross-section.

We had fewer responses this year than last year (64 vs 111), but the response was still a broad cross-section of our membership.

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Just like last year, there was broad support for attending a regional forum held within 100 miles of respondents, with about 90% saying they probably or definitely would attend.
Are you a planner, engineer, architect, project manager, realty specialist, or employed in a related position and need to gain a better understanding of how the master planning process works and how planning can be of benefit to your projects? With the publication of the Department of Defense (DoD) Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) for Installation Master Planning (UFC 2-100-01) on 15 May 2012, it is more important than ever to employ an integrated approach that includes master planning.

The Department of Defense Master Planning Institute (DODMPI) operates under the auspices of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Proponent Sponsored Engineer Corps Training (PROSPECT) program. Courses range from introductory level to advanced, and include universal planning practices as well as DOD and Army-specific information. Each of the courses references the UFC and provides key information on UFC implementation. Classes usually include employees from the other DOD service branches, including the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, as well as those from related federal agencies, such as the Department of Homeland Security (Coast Guard), and consultants who provide master planning support. This mixture of attendees offers an opportunity for interagency and private sector sharing of best practices and innovative approaches to master planning.

The key goals and objectives of the DOD MPI are to develop a world-class workforce by providing the most up-to-date, essential tools and materials to achieve sustainable, energy-efficient planning, engineering and architecture solutions. Classes and workshops are open to all interested parties, including private citizens, contractors, and all federal, state, city and county employees. All courses are fully accredited by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), American Institute of Architects (AIA), and National Society of Professional Engineers (PE) and provide continuing education units.

Instructors employ a variety of dynamic media that goes beyond lectures, and includes hands-on training, small group exercises, field trips, site visits, and other learning opportunities. While basic theory and history is a necessary part of the curriculum, students have the opportunity to develop ideas or plans that can actually be implemented at their locations. By identifying and engaging all relevant stakeholders in Area Development Plan workshops, full participation is realized and buy-ins to solutions and subsequent implementation is enhanced. Technologies include computer programs used for site design and calculations of space, materials, and personnel. Sketches, data from on-site observations, interviews with stakeholders, guest lecturers, multi-media presentations, field trips, and literature reviews are used to provide a complete learning experience. The instructional staff is composed of federal and private-sector professionals who are AIA and AICP accredited subject matter experts.

Although students are encouraged to take Course 75, Master Planning Principles, early in their training program, there are no prerequisites for any of the master planning courses, and they may be taken in any order. The instructor team is available to travel to your installation or regional location, which often results in reduced costs per student and the ability to reach an entire team(s) at once.

By Andrea Wohlfeld Kuhn

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Register at ulc.usace.army.mil or www.dodmpi.org

Andrea Wohlfeld Kuhn, FAICP, LEED Green Associate, is a Senior Planner with Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Contact her at: andrea.w.kuhn@usace.army.mil
Federal agencies use and maintain a diverse facility portfolio that includes 170,000 structures, 9.3 million acres of land, and nearly 500 million square feet of office space—not including what’s used by the Department of Defense! Managing these assets can be challenging, especially given changing missions, tight budgets, and ever-increasing maintenance backlogs.

A strategic facilities plan is a critical first step to effective asset management. It provides a roadmap to effectively align facilities to best support an agency's needs. It is forward-looking and proactive; incorporates internal and external buy-in; and positions an organization to effectively compete for funding and respond to opportunities.

Though the results are worth the effort, developing a strategic plan can be challenging. Staff can be resistant to new ideas or too focused on day-to-day issues to think strategically. Here are three suggestions to help your agency develop a strategic facilities plan:

1. Get people focused on the future. A lot can change during a building’s life cycle. Remind people how much the organization has and will continue to evolve; use inspirational examples that showcase state-of-the-art operational models and facilities.

2. Get the right people involved and working together. Interactive work sessions with key players help develop a shared understanding of problems and build consensus around solutions.

3. Provide information to help clarify decisions. Model the life cycle costs and benefits of different courses of action. When presented clearly and simply, this will help decision makers understand the financial ramifications of different approaches and ultimately build a case to fund the plan’s recommendations.

Julie Bassuk and Andy Fenstermacher are with MAKERS, a Seattle firm specializing in urban design, facility planning, architecture, community planning, and public works.
I first met Suzanne when she hired me into my first Federal planning job, as an Air Force Palace Acquire intern at Langley AFB. Her position, as Chief of Planning and Programming at Langley, was in fact her first position as a Federal Planner, though not her first job working for the Department of Defense. After majoring in Geography (with a specialization in Urban Planning and Cartography), Suzanne first served as an active-duty Air Force aircraft maintenance officer. Upon separating from active duty service, she returned to her planning roots and served in various city planning offices in Southern Virginia, with the City of Poquoson, City of Chesapeake and City of Norfolk. Although she enjoyed these positions and added many tools to her planning toolkit during this time, Suzanne missed working in the military environment. So one day, when she wandered into the Federal building in Norfolk and saw a job announcement for a community planner position at Langley Air Force Base, she applied, and thus began her career as a Federal Planner.

Suzanne’s years at Langley were fruitful; here, she served under several professional mentors, and in 1999 was selected to attend a fully funded, 1 year, full-time, in-residence Planning Master’s degree program at the University of Virginia, while still employed on the USAF’s roles. It was shortly upon her return from the program that I encountered Suzanne, who became one of my own professional mentors. She held me to high standards for quality of work, professional bearing and dress, and instructed me on all aspects of how to be a successful military base planner, lessons I still use today.

In 2003, Suzanne started looking for a new position through USAJobs and was shortly selected for a promotion as a Regional Shore Infrastructure Planner with the US Navy Mid-Atlantic Region. This position expanded her experience from a focus on just one base to a macro-level regional approach to planning. Learning a new vernacular, business process and culture was an interesting and rewarding experience. In 2005, Suzanne switched gears again, this time moving to service with the U.S. Coast Guard’s Fifth District Planning office. Here, she oversaw facilities planning efforts, focusing on facilities that ranged from trailers to historic lighthouses to major air stations. The job involved travel from New Jersey to North Carolina to visit various Coast Guard stations, and advocating for funding to improve facilities via self-help projects, major renovation, and new construction. The job was especially rewarding because it demonstrated how much an underfunded agency can accomplish with a resourceful and can-do attitude.

In 2008, Suzanne applied for another new position with the Architect of the Capitol in Washington, DC, a switch from the Executive Branch to the Legislative Branch of government. She calls the Architect of the Capitol job, “the place to be” as a planner jumping into the DC job scene. In this position, Suzanne reported directly to Congress in regards to facility issues for the U.S. Capitol building, House and Senate Office buildings, the U.S. Supreme Court, the U.S. Botanic Gardens, the Capitol complex utility plant, and the Capitol grounds. In this exciting position, Suzanne completed a new Master Plan for the Capitol Complex, what she calls “the most complex and daunting approval process I’ve been subjected to” (it involved approval through various Congressional oversight committees, and briefing staffers and members of Congress). In this position, Suzanne experienced amazing opportunities, having “free reign” to walk through the Capitol building, and meeting with the majority and minority leaders of Senate and House committee (they got along better than you’d think -- behind closed doors). The position emphasized the importance of brevity, knowing your audience and efficiently sharing...
the information you need to present so leaders can
make decisions in a fast-paced environment.

In 2010, Suzanne made the move to her most cur-
rent position and checked the box on working as
a planner with the Judicial Branch, as she became
the Chief of Long Range Planning of the U.S.
Federal Courts. This office completes long range
planning for the 94 Districts and 13 Circuits of the
U.S. Courts, from some of the Nation’s most his-
toric courthouses and iconic new construction, to
leased storefronts and generic office space. Her of-
fice develops long-range plans for the courthouses,
looking at current/projected caseload and staffing
to determine if courthouses need to grow, reduce
space, or be renovated. Her office works with the
GSA to secure funding to execute the U.S. Courts
Courthouse Priorities Plan and involves educating
and advocating on the Hill for the funds. In this
position, Suzanne has traveled all over the U.S. to
places she never imagined she’d see.

Looking back at her career thus far, Suzanne
ruminates that the most rewarding thing about
being a Federal Planner has been the numerous
opportunities for advancement, experiencing so
many aspects of planning (from local, to regional
to national levels). She’s also had the opportunity
to work for and with so many great people, all of
whom believe in the importance of what they do,
and in their agencies’ missions. Suzanne’s advice
to young planners starting off in their careers: “be
aware of the opportunities open to you; remember
the lessons learned along the way (you’ll have
successes and failures, but they are all lessons to
be learned); through it all, be true to yourself.”

Laura B. Yates, AICP, LEED AP BD+C, Program Manager,
Headquarters, Department of Defense Education Activity

FEDERAL PLANNING DIVISION
TRAINING WORKSHOP

We are pleased to announce the 2016 annual Federal Planning
Division Training Workshop:

PLANNING’S NEXT FRONTIER
31 March and 1 April, 2016
Renaissance Phoenix Downtown Hotel

Registration, program, and lodging details will be distributed this fall.

Brett James, AICP, LLA, is the Conference Chair for the 2016 FPD Training Workshop. Contact him at rbjames@gmail.com.
FEATURED JOB POSTINGS

AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVES
HQ AFRC, ROBINS AFB, GA | HOMESTEAD ARB, FL

CEMS Engineering (www.cemsengineering.com) is currently seeking one full-time on-site technical support representative for comprehensive planning and encroachment management activities at HQ AFRC Robins AFB, GA, and one full-time on-site technical representative for comprehensive installation planning activities (Base Community Planner) at Homestead ARB, FL.

The support representative at HQ will be responsible for HQ issues at AFRC installations and tenant locations as required. The onsite support at the HQ AFRC shall visit on a quarterly basis Youngstown-Warren ARS and Pittsburgh IAP ARS to support their mission requirements.

Applicants are required to perform minimal background checks or investigations to include but not limited to those required to support CAC and introduction/entry/visitor request letters. National Agency Check with Inquiries (NACI) will be conducted to support the issuance of a CAC. A favorable determination from a NACI investigation and a complete FBI finger print check is sufficient for the procurement of a CAC card to support the mission.

Positions require AICP certification, minimum 5-years GIS experience and minimum 10-years military installation experience.

If interested in applying for one of these positions, please see the position solicitation at: www.cemsengineering.com/careers.cfm

Resumes may be forwarded to Robert Milanian at rmilian@cemsengineering.com

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