American Planning Association
Making Great Communities Happen

January/February 2014

PAS MEMO

Planners and the Digital Commons: Perspectives, Techniques, and Engagement

By John A. Shuler

The art and practice of planning within a world of instant Internet interconnectivity means planning in the full view and influence of others who may not agree with the choices a planner might make. Mass media created during the 19th and 20th centuries — newspapers, magazines, radio, television — allowed planners a limited amount of time to fashion their proposals outside the glare of publicity and broad discussion. In contrast, the mass media of the 21st century, framed by a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week undifferentiated stream of information available to anyone with a device connected to the web, makes it more likely any proposal might be made available from the moment of its inception or discussion.

The online availability of sophisticated data analysis tools, both qualitative and quantitative, allows anyone with the time and appropriate skill set to challenge the planner's professional assumptions and proposals. This open access and invitation to participate, whether asked for or not, and the rise of a global digital commons over the last decade simply means that the literacy of planning is much more accessible to the nonplanner — but it is not necessarily any more understandable.

This *PAS Memo* examines how the Internet challenges the planning profession's traditions of practice and expertise. It describes the web as a "digital commons" in which a community uses many new forms of deliberative civic engagement to make shared choices and decisions. The Internet's communicative cornucopia challenges the planner's authority through powerful data analyses, lively discussion forums, and constant opportunities to contest any point of office policy or decision. This complicated interplay among government workers, private consultants, public administrators, interest groups, and members of the public creates great uncertainty for planners. They no longer have the luxury of professional reflection, time, or space to shape their recommendations. The *Memo* will explain particular techniques and resources available on the web that will help planners incorporate the web's opportunities into their daily practice and address the challenges that such accessibility brings.

What Is a Digital Commons?

As described by economists and social scientists, a "commons" is a limited, but critical, shared community resource such as agricultural space, fisheries, or some other natural feature vital to the collective longevity. Management and planning for a commons requires careful balance of the inherent economic conflicts that often arise between public authority and nuanced individual economic self-interests that seek to exploit its capacity. A commons thrives best when there is clear public acknowledgement that it is not the exclusive property of any one individual or group.

The expertise and traditions of planning have long assisted communities in how they collectively manage these important shared resources. Tragedy and loss often occur when this open cooperation breaks down, leading to damage, overuse, or failure to protect (Hardin 1968). Whether it's overgrazing, overfishing, failure to protect a watershed, or deterioration of air or water quality, a commons created by a conflict of needs requires long-term cooperation if it is to be useful and thrive.

"Common goods" is an associated economic concept that describes these kinds of resources. Another related concept is that of the "public good." According to the economist Paul A. Samuelson, public goods are exchanged in a community in such a way that each individual uses and enjoys the resource and "each individual's consumption of such a good leads to no subtractions from any other individual's consumption of that good" (Samuelson 1954).

Speaking in broad terms, the planner's traditional art and expertise grows from long experience in knowing how to manage within the context of a commons. As a facilitator, a planner seeks to

reconcile the inevitable conflicts that happen when the general public's needs run up against the economic and social needs of self-interested individuals. A community might expect a different future for a shared resource than might individuals within that community.

Legal and economic authority gives planners a clear advantage within this struggle. The community invests its planners with the legal legitimacy to evaluate, explain, and find complicated solutions to thorny problems generated by these contested areas. Planners also help manage shared resources more easily, especially when no one can claim clear property rights or ownership. Individuals may gain the advantage against this preference for public management, but only after great effort and expense to change fundamental legal foundations of property and civil rights. Many of the current laws and regulations that govern environmental sustainability as well as water, soil, and air pollution reflect this constant shift between the dominance of public interests and private gain.

But what happens when a commons does not diminish from growing demands between competing public and private interests? What if the resource thrives through a spiral of endless increased capacity? And what happens when this shared resource, clearly still local in scope and impact, constantly reacts to shifts in technology, policy, and economic circumstances from the other side of the globe?

Just such a resource is the "digital commons" of the Internet. The unprecedented expansion over the last 10 years of the global interconnectivity of powerful personal computing devices forces planners to think, act, and talk about what they need to do differently. Web technologies place a greater value on speed and ease of access over planning's traditional values of trust, expertise, or legitimacy. The web's context of high-speed interconnected computing creates a new global "information public good." It expects shared knowledge, rapid communication, expertise, and engagement among its users.

The distinction between what is local and what is global, in the context of planning, becomes less and less framed by time or distance. It is something much more permeable and is in a constant state of flux. Planning locally without this greater global awareness, to paraphrase one popular tourist slogan, means that what happens in Vegas can no longer stay in Vegas. And since no one really owns the web (though private or public entities do control or manage it), the digital commons is disruptive to traditional planning practice in two important ways.

First, the digital commons is a "shared resource." Planners must learn to manage it through familiar tools and techniques, and it allows them to distribute their findings and decisions much more quickly throughout a community, use sophisticated digital tools and resources to deepen a community's understanding of a complex problem, and rapidly share ideas and proposals with colleagues around the globe.

Second, this dynamic reciprocity of knowledge exchange disables the planner's exclusive hold on analysis and judgment about what should be done next with any particular problem. The ubiquity of the digital commons now forces planners to perform in a much more robust transparent and open fashion because myriad individuals and organizations are able to analyze large sets of data with increasingly sophisticated tools and offer their own counter-narratives to what planners propose, often in parallel to the official drafting phase.

It's not as if this didn't happen in earlier eras of mass communication. Citizens' groups, business alliances, and individuals all used newspapers, magazines, the ballot box, or broadcast media to fight or support proposed plans. What is different with today's communication is that this conversation starts much sooner than in earlier print and paper communication cultures. The planner often has to think about responding to a public campaign long before anything official is approved. What this means is that the informal conversations held in government meetings and boardrooms that often shape the final public document are now captured online days or even hours after they take place, and as a result invite everyone in the community into the discussion.

For planners, the "tragedy" of the digital commons happens when they do not grasp quickly enough how the web transforms the set of civic relationships between a community and planning "experts." Professional assessment is now as subject to "crowd sourcing" as any other service or product available through the web. Specifically, planners must work to evolve their institutions into instruments that sharpen a community's civic values through the strategic use of these technologies. The web just happens to be where all these techniques are shared — like the great commons or village green was a shared resource within a community.

This burgeoning digital commons of planning knowledge allows for several interrelated long-term civic relationships that depend on a wide spectrum of information technologies to support these critical democratic governing functions. These relationships include:

- Publicly subsidized civic technology and expertise that links shared values and purposes within a community;

- A community's civic capacity to discuss, approve, practice, influence, and sustain shared civic purposes and goals;
- A system that creates a life-long environment to instill in citizens the concepts of civic responsibility, literacy, information retrieval, knowledge formation, and a sense of how to invest public social capital so that a community can deal effectively with the challenges and problems created through their shared daily lives;
- The development of the web's civic capacity to allow groups and institutions that planners often engage to be empowered through the use of trusted civic information sources and knowledge, and thereby improve their lives in the larger public world.

Challenges of the Digital Commons

As the web enters its third decade of global impact on how people exchange and understand information, its influence and techniques compel planners to reframe their daily practice towards three significant, and interdependent, objectives.

First, the planner needs to learn to plan and implement plans within the web's shared time and space. The digital commons requires new ways of cooperation (and therefore planning), competition, and creativity.

Second, people now expect instant communication and ready access to shared-knowledge databases. In order to keep up with the need to constantly retool their professional skills, planners must be constantly up to date on the ubiquitous web resources that sharpen professional expertise and techniques.

Third, though many planners gained a basic competency in the fundamentals of research and finding information during their graduate training, the web's vast digital data resources, along with better communication with colleagues and their like-minded professional associations around the globe, means that they will need to constantly learn new skills and tools.

Planners also need to take some direct responsibility for the public management of several powerful techniques and tools that sustain broad democratic civic engagement with communities and neighborhoods affected by public policies and private decisions. These electoral and civic conversations involve individuals, the officials they elect to serve their individual and collective goals, and their civic institutions (public and private.) All thrive (or may be destroyed) by their mutual choices.

The planner, through thoughtful public practice, can use the web as the primary means of public delivery and interaction. Traditional forms of public access to official deliberations, open meetings, public reports,along with easily accessible official proceedings recording the decisions of public organizations, are the traditional ways the public comes to understand and expect public services, security, and justice open to all. For the planner, the challenges of practicing in the digital commons include the active choice to involve the community through deliberative digital inquiry, risk taking, effective forecasting, and engaged civic communication. Finished plans or sets of recommendations are only part of the process. The web allows nonplanners to get involved in all aspects of the planning process.

The Open Government Paradigm

Since the mid-1990s, one of the primary goals of using digital technologies has been to build effective and responsive governance structures. Widespread access to public information remains a critical component in how planners can shape and lead their communities by using the digital commons as their primary place of practice. A planner can better inform a community's discussions about critical issues affecting their shared future by understanding how the digital commons supports this kind of open and transparent robust public deliberation.

Ideas about how the web could improve governing practice began to take shape in the mid-1990s, when many public authorities at all levels of government began to push their services and information out into early versions of what we would now call web pages. In the U.S., this initiative was described in ***Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector***, a 1993 book by David Osborne and Ted Gaebler. The Clinton presidency took on the book's recommendations and made the reinvention argument a cornerstone in its efforts to modernize federal government information technology deployment and acquisition. Clinton established a presidential commission chaired by Vice-President Al Gore, which published its own recommendations in the report ***From Red Tape to Results: Creating a Government That Works Better and Costs Less***.

Over the next 15 years, as the web's accessibility grew throughout the public and private sectors,

the ideas that a government can become better and more efficient through the thoughtful use of information technology became less of a radical concept and more conventional wisdom. In a May 2013 ***Government Executive*** review of these efforts, Charles S. Cain describes the "reinvention gospel" of these early efforts as an attempt to import "private sector efficiency techniques to make government more results-oriented and less costly," noting that the Clinton Administration's National Performance Review "proposed 1,200 changes to 'serve customers better,' relieve businesses of unneeded regulations, exploit technology to widen access to federal services and information, encourage plain English documents, improve coordination with state and local governments, cement community relationships, build new labor-management partnerships and empower front-line workers."

At the international level, several dozen governments in 2011 launched the global **Open Government Partnership** (the United States is a founding member), which drafted the following principles of how and when governance can take advantage of the web's technologies:

- **Increase the availability of information about governmental activities** Governments collect and hold information on behalf of people, and citizens have a right to seek information about governmental activities.
- **Support civic participation**. All people, equally and without discrimination, should participate in decision making and policy formulation. Public engagement, including the full participation of women, increases the effectiveness of governments, which benefit from people's knowledge, ideas and ability to provide oversight.
- **Increase access to new technologies for openness and accountability.** New technologies offer opportunities for information sharing, public participation, and collaboration. These technologies make more information public in ways that enable people to both understand what their governments do and to influence decisions. Equitable and affordable access to technology is a challenge; commit to seeking increased online and mobile connectivity, while also identifying and promoting the use of alternative mechanisms for civic engagement.
- **Implement the highest standards of professional integrity throughout public administrations.** Accountable government requires high ethical standards and codes of conduct for public officials. This includes adopting robust anticorruption policies, mechanisms, and practices; ensuring transparency in the management of public finances and government purchasing; and strengthening the rule of law.

Through these principles — along with new kinds of data analysis and visualization techniques and communication and information-distribution tools generated from social networking — planners must learn to manage large data sets through the use of geographic information systems, distribute statistical analyses, and build narratives that allow people to think about the social, economic, and political aspects of their community that bind their lives in provocative ways.

Opportunities of the Digital Commons: Tools and Techniques

What are the tools, sources, and strategies available on the web that support best practices in the digital commons? Specifically, how can planners expand their professional capacities in these new civic engagement opportunities within communities?

The broad availability of these online tools allows many citizens to contribute to the government planning process, and reduces the traditionally exclusive sense of technical expertise once claimed by professional planners. Citizens, as individuals or in groups, can crunch the same statistics or budgets, produce powerful visual and photo interpretations of the data, or analyze the public record in ways that can create a viable alternative to the professional's recommendations or narrative about shared problems or opportunities.

In many communities and neighborhoods, rapid responses using web-based social networking tools can help individuals work together and deal with crime, disaster, or some other disturbance to (or opportunity for) the social, economic, or political fabric of their communities. Others jump at — or create — opportunities to suggest changes to public services without waiting for a planning department or public administrator to suggest a change.

Open data and visualization efforts represent a significant approach planners can use in their engagement with public through the web. As defined by the **Open Knowledge Foundation**, an international nonprofit organization, open data exists when several critical conditions are met. The **three most important** include:

- **Availability and Access**: The data must be available as a whole and at no more than a reasonable reproduction cost, preferably by downloading over the Internet. The data must also be available in a convenient and modifiable form.

- **Reuse and Redistribution**: The data must be provided under terms that permit reuse and redistribution including the intermixing with other datasets. The data must be **machine-readable**.
- **Universal Participation**: Everyone must be able to use, reuse and redistribute the data — there should be no discrimination against fields of endeavor or against persons or groups. For example, "non-commercial" restrictions that would prevent "commercial" use, or restrictions of use for certain purposes (e.g., only in education), are not allowed.

Planning with open data and visualization requires a robust effort to make sure the information is ready to be widely shared by interested members in the community, regardless of their direct involvement in the planning process. This openness sets up a further level of advocacy among the data users that need to be understood by planners from the start. Transparency is the buzz word often used by open-data access advocates, and it is a concept driven home by a recent study from the advocacy group **U.S. PIRG**. In its report ***Transparency in City Spending: Rating the Availability of Online Government Data in America's Largest Cities***, it argues that municipal budgets, annual financial statements, contracts, grants, and other forms of income and discretionary spending ought to be readily available through the web. This would mean not only static documents or statements, but spreadsheet and other financial tools that would allow a user to consider different outcomes if other financial choices were made. By "opening up the books," so to speak, planners allow nonplanners to imagine other scenarios to consider along with the planner's professional expertise and recommendations.

There are a number of sources that advocate open government, direct citizen involvement in the process of government, and transparency in records and data. Planners can also work with smart phone apps, networked software, and online projects to enable individuals involved in government projects (and planning) to address specific problems or report trouble with a community's infrastructure; such strategic use of web technologies can help agencies improve their services.

Planners are not displaced by these technologies. The art and technique of planning in a dynamic digital world can continue to keep people connected to their governments, their communities, and their neighborhoods. Tools and resources drawn from public agencies, professional associations, and studies and analyses from universities represent broad areas of data and knowledge. Much of these resources come from government agencies, but there is a great deal more that comes from nonprofit organizations, private planning entities, and political parties, as well as university and research institutions. Increasingly this material moves beyond the traditional publication pattern of individual reports or studies, also providing examples of how the underlying data sets could be manipulated or changed by a user. These techniques represent a significant improvement in how a community can be directly involved in the public decision-making process.

Data Visualization Initiatives

A planner can inform public discussions about critical issues affecting a community's shared future with models and examples that take advantage of the web's new tools of data analysis and visualization. Many planners already demonstrate some skill in working within the digital commons through what might be called "anticipatory civic serendipity." It is anticipatory because any rapid exchange of information creates an expectation that difficult choices can (or must) be made before a plan's implementation. The web's facility to support sophisticated modeling and visualization tools allows planner and citizen alike to rapidly exchange scenarios and narratives in order to visualize certain conditions, infrastructure, and features in a community being altered by ongoing (or future) conditions.

For instance, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's **SENSEable City Lab** came up with a **geographic visualization** of the kinds of 311 calls were made in Boston for a period of several months. Boston also uses its **Boston About Results (BAR)** to describe a series of tools for residents in order "to know what city agencies are doing, how well they are doing it, and where they can improve. Collecting & sharing this data keeps city agencies responsible and accountable." Other local governments that use data visualization include the Town of Arlington, Massachusetts, through an **online community tool** exploring its financial complexities and challenges for future budgets. In Maryland, **Montgomery County** offers its residents a number of data tools through its web pages.

Another example of using this kind of visualization can be found through **"Mapping America: Every City, Every Block,"** a project led by *The New York Times* to carefully display basic demographic information drawn from U.S. Census Bureau population reports for every county in the United States. This is an excellent example of how the popular press, as opposed to the professional or academic literature, is now part of a larger trend toward sophisticated analyses available — and accessible — to the general public. Before the web and its open data tools this would not have been possible.

Open Data Initiatives

Examples of open data initiatives maye found in both large and small communities. New York's Department of City Planning offers a **Community Data Portal** where community members and planners share tools and knowledge about the city's community districts. This includes statistics, updates about ongoing projects, zoning maps, and records of public meetings. In Chicago, there is a healthy mixture of regional and local resources that support planning the metropolitan area. The city's well-managed **data portal** represents a robust approach that allows users to download data and maps in a variety of ways to produce data sets customized to their needs. In Philadelphia, the city has partnered with other local governments to work with the information technology community in the metropolitan area in order to create different, better, and more visually pleasing information sources from the open public. Through the **Open Data Philly portal** these collaborations are often picked up by the governments and used to improve their services and programs.

Along with this openness comes greater opportunity for organizations and individuals to press for advocacy. Many of these kinds of efforts use open data to champion alternative points of view. Arguing that a national set of data metrics to measure the quality of community rebuilding in rural and urban areas is key in building long-term sustainable communities, the **National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership** offers tools that combine such indicators as births, deaths, crime, health status, educational performance, public assistance, and property conditions. The Urban Institute's **MetroTrends** site offers interactive maps, commentaries, and downloadable datasets related to metropolitan economies, focusing on topics such as crime, employment growth, housing affordability and cost burdens, immigration and diversity, and the well-being of urban children to help educate practitioners, policymakers, and citizens alike about the impacts of today's financial and economic challenges on communities across the country. In Chicago, DePaul University's **Institute for Housing Studies** offers data, maps, and analysis drawn from public sources that explain the complicated nature of housing throughout the city's neighborhoods. Resources from the institute organize critical data points on Chicago's **rental housing sector** in such a way that provides one of the few clear and free analyses of this important market.

Other advocacy organizations deploy open data and visualization with the long-standing activist tradition that combines the collective voices of planners to argue for a certain agenda and outcome for a community in terms of natural, economic, social, political, or educational equality. For instance, **ParkScore** uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to provide in-depth data to guide local park improvement efforts. It is a project of the nonprofit National Trust for Public Land, which was established in the early 1970s to better preserve open lands and parks through improved conservation techniques that include not only the traditional methods of natural resource and soil management, but also helping communities sustain their conservation efforts through **financial** and **planning** tools.

The **Center for Urban Pedagogy** is another nonprofit organization that uses design and art to improve civic engagement throughout the greater New York City region. Established in the late 1990s, CUP created data visualizations and accessible research on aspects of urban life such as exploring the impacts on a community's water supply from extracting oil by **fracking**; explaining the mysteries of **affordable housing**; and allowing students to discover the **impact of laws and regulations** on their daily lives. In many ways, planners can use these community-based efforts to use open data and visualizations to supplement their own efforts.

Next Steps for Planners

If planning and the information necessary to support it remain in the public domain through this common civic purpose, planners can continue to foster and grow this new civic information commons. The web is both a tactical tool for the planner that sharpens practice and technique and a strategic communication device that distributes knowledge within a community or among communities. Often the demarcation between these purposes is unclear.

Planners use their tools of expertise — analyses, data, and visualization — to help nonplanners grasp the complexity of problems they share across time and space. Effective planning applications spread quickly through the web as spectacular successes (or failures), and are easily shared through social networking tools. By focusing on these specific areas, planners can improve their graduate education and ongoing professional education, their daily practice, and increase their effectiveness within, as well as among, the communities they serve.

First, planners need to fully embrace the opportunities of open government. Their deliberations, proposals, and final recommendations need to take advantage of web tools that allow users to track, search, download, and follow the span of any planning initiative. And to honor the transparency this kind of digital open technology offers, planners should offer very clear opportunities for public comment and participation in shaping the planning process. Perhaps a page

from the strategic planning movement might be used. Any planning process launched ought to include a very clear outline on how the public will be actively informed through the web specifying the digital tools and methods that will be used. Other aspects could include setting up trusted collaborations with individuals and groups in the community to build better public data tools. Finally, as part of this enhanced planning process, planners should include a clear plan on how the process will be preserved and archived for retrieval and linkage to future efforts.

Second, the education and technical skillset development of planners is something that should never end. Technology changes rapidly, often undergoing a significant shift every two years, which necessitates some kind of regular program of learning and skill improvement for professionals. Ongoing improvements in existing professional education as offered through current college and university programs, along with the necessity of more enhanced on-the-job certifications, will allow planners to improve their incorporation of the web's information technologies into their daily planning practices. This is the next step in any planner's lifetime of understanding their profession's purpose, theory, and practice.

Third, there needs to be a better and more robust exchange among the hundreds of planning organizations. This includes communications, research results, effective collaborations, and sharing of technical expertise and levels of community advocacy. As this *Memo* briefly demonstrates, there is no end to the amount of knowledge that planners produce in the course of their daily practice and share through their professional associations. The problem is that much of this "shared" professional expertise is hidden behind complex membership rules or necessary payment schedules that are properly there to support the deep financial investments necessary to keep up with the rapid changes in information and expertise. Clearly some of this does not need to change, but the hundreds of planning organizations around the world need to figure out a better way of making their own research and knowledge transparent and open.

The digital commons is now the community's civic operating system and planners must understand how to use it in order to sustain future roles as their communities grow in their demands for open and transparent forms of shared governance and planning. The ability of planners to structure their ongoing interactive organizations, deliberative community outreach, and civic advocacy will come only from their full engagement with the digital commons.

About the Author

John A. Shuler is an Associate Professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago University Library, where he is the Bibliographer for Urban Planning and Public Administration and the Government Information and Documents Librarian. His research (and writing) focuses on how libraries incorporate government information and services into their organizational missions and government information policies, as well as specific ways governments use information technology to foster civic engagement. Shuler serves as an editor for *Government Information Quarterly*, and served on the editorial board for *Journal of Academic Librarianship.*

References and Resources

Arlington (Massachusetts), Town of. 2014. "Town Budget, Visualized." Available at **www.arlingtonvisualbudget.org**.

Boston (Massachusetts), City of. 2014. "Boston About Results (BAR)." Available at **www.cityofboston.gov/bar/**.

Cain, Charles S. 2013. "Reinventing Government — Two Decades Later." *Government Executive,* April 26. Available at **www.govexec.com/management/2013/04/what-reinvention-wrought/62836/**.

Center for Urban Pedagogy. Available at **http://welcometocup.org/**.

Chicago (Illinois), City of. 2014. "City of Chicago Data Portal." Available at **https://data.cityofchicago.org/**.

Davis, Benjamin, Phineas Baxandall, and Ryan Pierannunzi. 2013.*Transparency in City Spending: Rating the Availability of Online Government Data in America's Largest Cities.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. PIRG Education Fund.Available at **www.uspirg.org/reports/usp/transparency-city-spending**.

DePaul University Institute for Housing Studies. Available at **www.housingstudies.org**.

Hardin, Garrett. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science*, New Series, 162(3859): 1243–48.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology. 2014. "SENSEable City Lab." Available at **http://senseable.mit.edu/**.

Montgomery (Maryland), County of. 2014. "Open Montgomery." Available at **www.montgomerycountymd.gov/open/**.

National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership. 2014. "Issue Areas." Available at **www.neighborhoodindicators.org/activities/issues**.

New York (New York), City of. 2014. "NYC Community Data Portal." Available at **www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/neigh_info/nhmap.shtml**.

New York Times. 2014. "Mapping America: Every City, Every Block." Available at **http://projects.nytimes.com/census/2010/explorer**.

Open Government Partnership. 2014. "What is the Open Government Partnership?" Available at **www.opengovpartnership.org/**.

Open Knowledge Foundation.Available at **http://okfn.org/**.

Osborne, David , and Ted Gaebler. 1992. *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.

Philadelphia Public Interest Information Network. 2014. "OpenDataPhilly." Available at **www.opendataphilly.org**.

Samuelson, Paul A. 1954. "The Pure Theory of Public Expenditure." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 36(4): 387–89.

The Trust for Public Land. 2014. "ParkScore Index." Available at **http://parkscore.tpl.org/**.

_____. 2014. "Conservation and GIS." Available at **www.tpl.org/node/85614**.

_____. 2014. "Conservation Finance." Available at **www.tpl.org/node/85613**.

The Urban Institute. 2014. "MetroTrends." Available at **www.metrotrends.org/index.cfm**.

U.S. National Performance Review. 1993. *From Red Tape to Results: Creating a Government That Works Better and Costs Less.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of the Vice President. Available at **http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/npr/library/nprrpt/annrpt/redtpe93/index.html**.

Community Organizing/Engagement Resources/ Civic Advocacy Groups

- The Center for Civic Education (**http://new.civiced.org**): a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational corporation dedicated to fostering the development of informed, responsible participation in civic life by citizens committed to values and principles fundamental to American constitutional democracy
- The Communitarian Network (**http://icps.gwu.edu**): a coalition of individuals and organizations who have come together to shore up the moral, social, and political environment
- Kettering Foundation (**http://kettering.org**): "The foundation seeks to identify and address the challenges to making democracy work as it should through interrelated program areas that focus on citizens, communities, and institutions."
- National Civic League (**www.ncl.org**): promotes civic engagement and inclusive forms of community building and problem solving
- National League of Cities (**www.nlc.org**): keeps leaders informed of critical issues that affect municipalities and warrant action by local officials
- Project for Public Spaces (**www.pps.org**): helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities

Professional/Practitioner Communities

- American Planning Association (**www.planning.org**): provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in planning, promoting education and citizen empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change
- APA's National Centers for Planning (**www.planning.org/nationalcenters/**): provides the nation's urban, suburban, regional, and rural planners with the knowledge they need to effectively guide policymakers who turn to them for advice about communities' built and natural environments
- Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (**www.acsp.org**): a consortium of university-based programs offering credentials in urban and regional planning and promoting education, research, service, and outreach in the United States and throughout the world

- Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (**www.ampo.org**): the transportation advocate for metropolitan regions committed to enhancing MPOs' abilities to improve metropolitan transportation systems
- Canadian Institute of Planners (**www.cip-icu.ca/web/la/en/default.asp**): a collaborative national federation that advances professional planning excellence through the delivery of membership and public services in Canada and abroad
- Congress for the New Urbanism (**www.cnu.org**): the leading organization promoting walkable, mixed-use neighborhood development, sustainable communities, and healthier living conditions
- Cyburbia (**www.cyburbia.org**): urban planning community established October 1994 and reported to be is the oldest "third place" on the web for planners, planning students, architects, urbanists, and others interested or involved in shaping the built environment
- Environmental Design and Research Association (**www.edra.org**): an international, interdisciplinary organization founded in 1968 by design professionals, social scientists, students, educators, and facility managers
- Global Planner Network (**www.globalplannersnetwork.org**): a collaboration of the international planning profession created to contribute to the creation and maintenance of inclusive, safe, healthy, and sustainable human settlements
- International City/County Management Association (**http://icma.org/en/icma/home**): creates excellence in local governance and builds sustainable communities that improve people's lives worldwide by assisting the professional city, town, and county managers who are appointed by elected officials to oversee the day-to-day operation of communities
- International Society of City and Regional Planners (**www.isocarp.org**): a global association of experienced professionals founded in1965 bringing together recognized and highly-qualified planners from more than 80 countries worldwide
- International Urban Planning and Environmental Association (**www.iupea.net**): aims to foster dialogue on issues of urban environmental planning and sustainable urban development, and to help develop practical solutions
- National Association of Regional Councils (**http://narc.org**): serves as the national voice for regionalism by advocating for regional cooperation as the most effective way to address a variety of community planning and development opportunities and issues
- Planetizen (**www.planetizen.com**): a public-interest information exchange for the urban planning, design, and development community
- Urban Affairs Association (**http://urbanaffairsassociation.org**): the international professional organization for urban scholars, researchers, and public service professionals
- Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (**www.urisa.org**): the premier organization for the use and integration of spatial information technology to improve the quality of life in urban and regional environments
- Urban Land Institute (**www.uli.org**): provides leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide for members representing the entire spectrum of real estate development and land use disciplines

 PAS Memo (ISSN 2169-1908) is published by the American Planning Association, 205 N. Michigan Ave., Ste. 1200, Chicago, IL 60601.