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Economic Development Division

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NEWS & VIEWS

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Brickyard Village: Sports Fields are Catalysts for a New Community Vision at Abandoned Brickyard

by John Rose, City of Kingsport, TN

Many thoughts come to mind when we hear the term “Brickyard,” some think of racing at the world renown Indianapolis Motor Speedway while others think about a location in their community where bricks are manufactured or sold. The later is why Kingsport has a project named the “Brickyard.” The first red facing brick produced in the southern United States was manufactured on this site in 1910. This was seven years before Kingsport was incorporated as a city.

General Shale Brick operated on this site until July of 2000. The plant was closed due a major drop in the housing market that lowered the demand for brick being produced. In 2013, the Kingsport Economic Development Board (KEDB) purchased the property. KEDB demolished the buildings and began the process to redevelop the site. Early on, the plan was to continue using the property for light industrial purposes. However, the site did not attract industrial clients due to its proximity to downtown businesses and homes. After more consideration, it was proposed to be used for entertainment and plans were developed to build a minor

league ballpark for the local rookie league baseball team known as the Kingsport Mets. However, in 2020 the entire minor league baseball organization was downsized and the ballpark idea was dropped.

Even with these disappointing setbacks, Kingsport and KEDB continued with plans to develop “Brickyard.” Multiple ball fields, including baseball, softball, and Miracle Field, were developed on portions of the site. Miracle Field is a place where people of all abilities can be winners on the baseball diamond.

This facility also has an adaptive playground for kids of all abilities. In addition to this, the City of Kingsport has built a new \$2 million skatepark and is currently developing plans for a pump track, walking paths, and bicycle trails for public use. This area of “Brickyard” is called Brickyard Park. Seeing the potential for this site, the Brickyard Committee was established. After additional research and input from the Brickyard Committee, the decision was made to pursue residential development as an additional feature for the site.

Request for proposals were issued by KEDB in 2021 to gauge the interest and seek input from developers for the residential development of the industrial area of the “Brickyard.” This area is now referenced as “Brickyard Village.” Brickyard Village will have 386 housing units, over one mile of walking paths, pool, community building, and outdoor sports courts. The developer is Eden’s Communities, operating out of Raleigh, North Carolina. Eden’s Communities has committed to being environmentally friendly — their plans include exceeding city landscaping and stormwater requirements, and to use

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Notes From The Chair

Change is both necessary and difficult

by Sean M. Maguire, AICP CECd
smaguire@gmail.com

“You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you.” — Walt Disney



Without pinpointing an exact date, I entered the world of planning prior to 9/11, to give you a point of reference. I was months into my first paid position as a full fledged planner — promoted from the ranks of summer intern with the boutique firm I had long wanted to work for. I wasn't a

month into this new job when the world changed for so many. We know the devastation of that day. It had cascading impacts to the work we were regularly engaged in, as governments shifted from preparedness via planning to preventing another attack. At that time, I had some hard decisions to make. One of them was to start looking for a new job while I still had one. And on the day I landed that new job — coincidentally my first entirely economic development job — I was laid off before I had the chance to give notice about my new job. I never really looked back after that. A lot had changed in my life in such a short period of time — but it was necessary and hard at the same time.

Our communities often struggle with change — both good and bad. It's in our nature to stay near to things that are familiar. They often provide us with a sense of comfort, safety, and security. I've known many people who have no desire to make changes in life. But I've never been at ease with such a feeling. There is a certain amount of anxiety that comes with change. And for being one who has struggled with anxiety that culminated in a panic attack years ago in the months leading up to becoming a father for the first time, I do relish the nervous anticipation that comes with change. But change and the associated anxiety can sometimes prevent great things from taking root.

Economic development, to me, is inherently about change. Most if not all of the contemporary definitions that describe economic development are about change — improving quality of life, economic conditions, and general well-being of a community. It's the constant desire for continuous improvement that drives us in the work we do day to day. We all have pride in where we live and work — but I challenge all of you to tell me of a place that has achieved it all! Even the most magical place on Earth is always trying to change, evolve, and improve. Walt Disney was a creator who embraced the idea of constant change. And anytime a change is proposed at a Disney property, the anxiety of change shows itself in its fan base.

As my time as Division Chair starts to wind down, it's been my pleasure to serve you for the past two years. We've instituted some important changes that I hope persist and themselves are changed and improved in years to come. One of the changes I've been most excited about was in our awards program. For the first time that we can see, our Economic Development Division recognized and awarded a number of projects and accomplishments from our members. It was a departure from the past but I believe it's a change that will inspire and engage more members in the years to come.

We are pleased to report our recent election results. Your incoming Economic Development Division leadership will be:

Chair: Emi Theriault, AICP

Chair-elect: Morgan Wortham

Secretary-Treasurer: Sharmili Reddy, AICP

Immediate Past Chair: Sean Maguire, AICP CECd

BRICKYARD VILLAGE, CONT. FROM P. 1

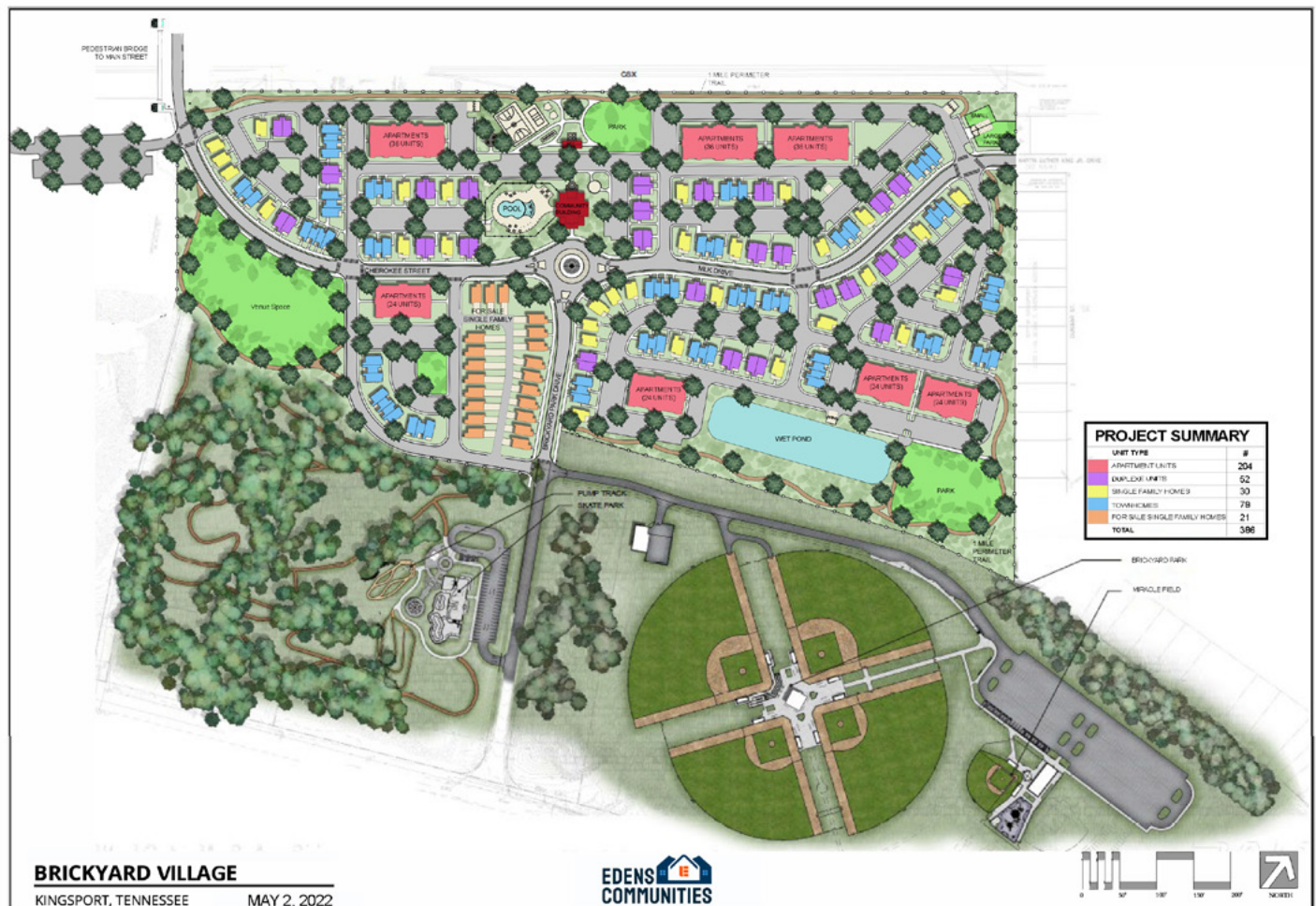
solar for a portion of their power needs. They have also committed to being community friendly. Their proposal includes reserving ten percent of all housing for senior and affordable housing with no government incentives. In addition to this, they will donate ten percent of all first-year rents to the charity of the residents' choice. This alone will provide over \$900,000 to local charities in the first eight years.

The diligence of the Brickyard Committee, and flexibility of the City of Kingsport and KEDB, has helped move this project forward in an ever-changing environment. The results showcase how a committee made up of local business owners, residents, city staff, elected officials, and a multitude of other stakeholders can work together. The committee, City of Kingsport, and KEDB worked together to envision and execute a plan that improves the quality of life for not only the city where it is located, but also the entire region.

The Brickyard Committee, City of Kingsport, KEDB, and our community as a whole were honored to win the 2022 APA Donald E. Hunter Economic Excellence award for The Brickyard project.



— John Rose is the Economic Development Director for the City of Kingsport, Tennessee and has served in this role for over two years. He serves on the Kingsport Home Builders Association Board, Kingsport Chamber Foundation Board, and works with Holston Business Development Board and Kingsport Economic Development Board. John holds a degree in Organizational Management from Tusculum University. Prior to a career in public service, John spent over 20 years in the private sector as a project manager, estimator, and small business owner. John can be reached at johnrose@kingsporttn.gov.



Downtown Master Plan, Kannapolis, NC

by Irene Sacks, CECd

Downtowns all over the United States have been impacted by interstates, suburbs, and shopping malls, as well as the effect of e-commerce more recently. In addition to these forces, downtown Kannapolis lost its largest activity hub in 2003 with the closure of the Pillowtex textile mill and sudden loss of nearly 5,000 jobs. The City sought to reinvent itself after this economic blow, with the emergence of the North Carolina Research Campus in 2008. However, without the scale of the jobs from the textile mill and without residential options within the downtown core, Kannapolis lacked the critical mass to sustain a thriving downtown. In addition, the entire downtown core was owned by a single property owner whose focus was the North Carolina Research Campus rather than downtown. Businesses eventually shut down or moved, leaving a vacant storefronts and very little foot traffic.

In 2015, the City's leaders agreed upon a bold idea: offer to purchase the entire 50 acres of downtown from

the single property owner. The City was successful in this \$10 million purchase, and yet the hardest part lay ahead: what to do with 700,000 square feet of existing, older, and somewhat obsolete buildings?

The City embarked on developing a downtown master plan by partnering with the Development Finance Initiative (DFI) from the UNC School of Government. DFI served as the City's development advisors and assisted with the solicitation of private developers and analysis of development deals. One of the primary ideas of this plan was to leverage public investment to attract private investment. Over

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KANNAPOLIS NC, CONT. FROM P. 4

the next five years, the City invested \$113 million with the expectation that it could bring \$374 million in private investment over the next ten years. Currently, about \$115 million in private investment is already underway.

The four primary projects that the City has invested in are:

- **Completely re-creating the downtown streetscape and infrastructure.** This \$30 million project was completed in 2019 and creates a linear park through the middle of our downtown core, with distinct gathering areas, activity spots, and dynamic water features designed to encourage pedestrian activity and lingering.
- **Building a new sports and entertainment venue in downtown.** The old baseball stadium was out near the interstate and in need of repair. Rather than invest in an asset that would not improve the lackluster attendance, the City made the bold decision to build a new ballpark in the heart of downtown. This \$52 million venue opened in spring of 2020 and is home to the Kannapolis Cannon Ballers minor league baseball team, with Opening Day delayed a year due to covid. In addition to 80 home games a year, the venue can also accommodate concerts and other events. The new design of the ballpark focuses on the overall fan experience beyond baseball, including a variety of seating options and gathering



locations, a splash pad and climbing structure for kids, and a 360-degree concourse that is open year-round to allow visitors to walk around.

- **Partnering on a catalyst development, “Vida Kannapolis.”** The first private development project in downtown Kannapolis is a mixed-use project for which the City solicited development partners. The City chose to work with Lansing-Melbourne Group, who agreed to build nearly 300 apartment units over 18,000 square feet of new retail, with the City providing the \$13 million funding for the 400-space publicly-owned parking garage to serve this project as well as other downtown uses. LMG’s total investment in this project is approximately \$60 million. Residents started moving in during late spring 2021, and the apartments were fully leased by the end of 2021, well ahead of projections. Phase 2 has broken ground, with an additional 78 units to be complete in mid 2023.

- **Improvements to the historic Gem Theatre.** The Gem is a beloved community institution in downtown that was built in 1936 and is one of the oldest single-screen movie theatres in continuous operation today. The City spent about \$1.5 million to add handicap-accessible restrooms, replace the HVAC system, add event space, and restore the marquee signage.

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KANNAPOLIS NC, CONT. FROM P. 5

The City issued municipal bonds to pay for these projects. The County and Convention and Visitors Bureau have agreements with the City to provide funding towards the Atrium Health Ballpark project.

The City's investments have also encouraged LMG to purchase three additional blocks of existing, older buildings in downtown Kannapolis for renovation and retrofit. About 35 new businesses opened in downtown in 2020 and 2021 (in the middle of a pandemic), including the City's first brewery. All of these businesses are locally owned. More new businesses are expected this year as soon as the developer can complete additional renovations.

In addition, the City's next \$40 million in residential developments in downtown have broken ground. Pennant Square will bring about 128 for-sale townhomes to the downtown market by the end of 2022. Stadium Lofts will include about 35 high-end apartments overlooking Atrium Health Ballpark, above a tavern restaurant and the Cannon Ballers team store. Additional development projects are in the planning and due diligence phase.

Through its strategic public investments, the City has been able to stimulate private investment and accomplish its goal of bringing new life to its downtown.

— Irene Sacks, CEcD is the Economic & Community Development Director for the City of Kannapolis, a city of about 50,000 population outside of Charlotte, NC. She has worked with private developers and local businesses as part of the City's revitalization and redevelopment of the downtown area. Irene's planning background has been important as she also works on the City's strategic plan, affordable housing efforts, and facilitating the growth of the North Carolina Research Campus, a research center adjacent to the downtown and focused on human health, nutrition, and agriculture. She can be reached at isacks@kannapolisnc.gov.

Resources

- U.S. Economic Development Administration "Success Stories" — read monthly articles on EDA projects around the country:

[Success Stories | U.S. Economic Development Administration](#)

- Economic Development stories from around the country:

Ithaca, New York: [Large renovation projects seek state grants with city help — The Ithaca Voice](#)

Huntington, West Virginia: www.richmondfed.org/press_room/our_news/2022/20220919_cc_huntingtonwv

Autonomous vehicles in Fort Worth, Texas: [Autonomous delivery vehicle innovator expands operations to Fort Worth](#)

Joe Louis Greenway in Detroit, Michigan: [City leaders, residents celebrate start of construction on second major leg of Joe Louis Greenway | City of Detroit](#)

Boulder, Colorado and dark skies grant: <https://bouldercityreview.com/news/city-awarded-1-9m-to-protect-dark-skies-71362/>

- America's Best Cities ranking of 500K population or more, which includes economic development as a factor: [America's Best Cities](#)

- Webinar: "Strengthen Your Community's Competitive Potential By Improving Quality of Life": [Golden Shovel Agency](#)



American Planning Association Economic Development Division

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Town of Colonie, NY
smaguire@gmail.com

SECRETARY-TREASURER:

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Craft Brewery Dispersion: Reconsidering the Role of Planners in Encouraging Economic Development Through Beer Tourism

by Josh Newton

Do you need a place to grab a cold beer after work or on the weekend? A craft brewery is likely coming to you! The United States craft beer industry has grown exponentially since the early 1990s. This growth has been not only in production and sales, but also in the total number of breweries. In fact, there are now more breweries in the U.S. than at any other time in history. Because of this, craft breweries are beginning to gain attention from scholars and practitioners in urban planning, geography, economics, and other related disciplines.

Particularly, researchers have focused on the positive externalities of breweries. Craft breweries have been at the forefront of planning techniques such as neighborhood revitalization, adaptive reuse, and historic preservation (Reid, 2018). The existence of breweries in a

neighborhood has also been found to correlate with rises in residential property values (Nilsson & Reid, 2019) and reductions in measures of crime (Nilsson et al., 2020).

Craft breweries economically contribute to neighborhoods through “beer tourism” (Reid, 2018) while acting as placemaking agents in a way that encourages social interaction (Nelson, 2020). As many neighborhoods or municipalities could benefit from these positive aspects, there has been a surge of interest in the locational choices of breweries. Researchers have overly focused on breweries’ tendency to concentrate in urban space, as well as the benefits that accrue to them through that concentration. Yet, the clustering of breweries is a process that occurs over time and based on context. This is problematic as planning practice and policy to increase craft brewery entrepreneurship has

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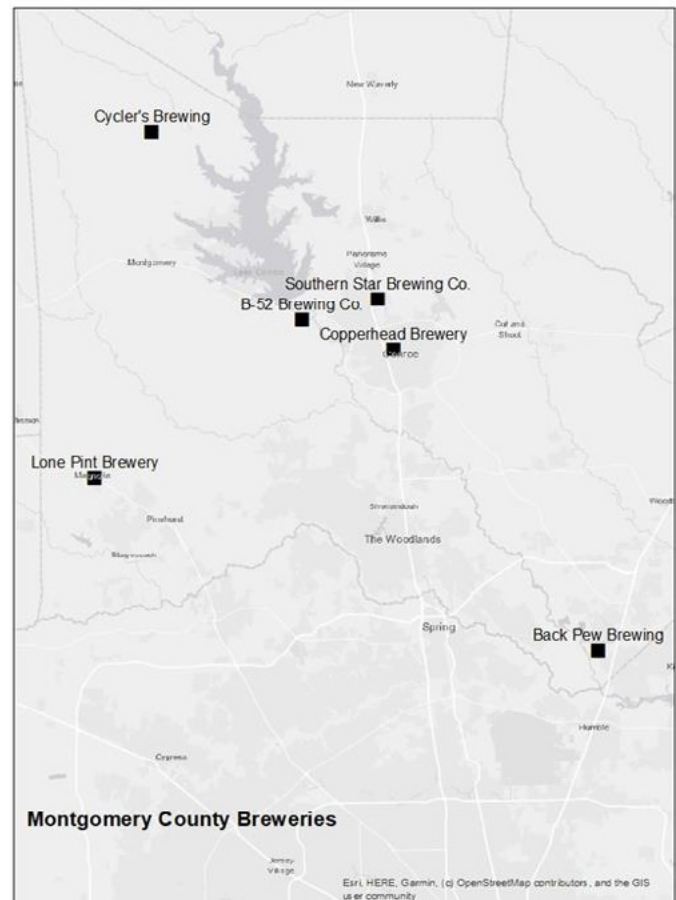
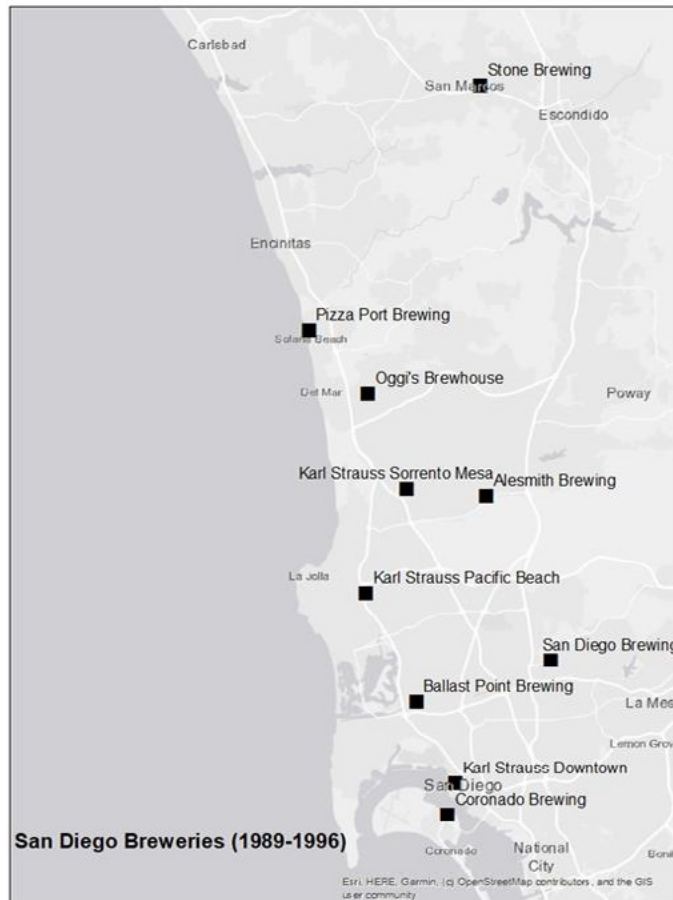
presumed that breweries always concentrate. This paper challenges that notion by asking the question: is clustering a universal strategy of all craft breweries in the United States across contexts and time periods?

To answer this question, I revisited classic economic location theory, particularly that of Harold Hotelling and August Lösch. The work of these two theorists highlights the way that clustering is a process that occurs over time. Dispersion is more likely to occur

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Outside and inside of Deschutes Brewery, Bend, OR. (Credit: Jeff Alworth, Flickr)

CRAFT BREWERY DISPERSION, CONT. FROM P. 7

Maps of San Diego, CA Breweries from 1989-1996 and Montgomery County, TX Breweries up to 2020.

early in the formation of a craft beer scene as craft breweries will be seeking to capitalize on the largest market area possible. Clustering does not automatically ensue, then, but rather occurs as the benefits outweigh the benefits of dispersing. To test this idea, I used GIS pattern analysis, which determines levels of clustering and scattering, to examine three atypical cases. While most research has been conducted on well-established, urban craft beer scenes, I examine a largely rural market (Montgomery County, Texas), an emerging urban market (Fort Worth, Texas), and the beginnings of a prominent urban market (San Diego, California from 1989 to 1996). Using GIS analysis, all three areas show dispersion of craft

breweries; although, there are lower levels in Fort Worth.

These findings suggest the need to rethink planning practice and policy when it comes to the encouragement of beer tourism and entrepreneurship. Three possibilities exist in this regard. First, academic suggestions have focused on creating new zoning classifications to facilitate clustering of breweries in key areas. This is only helpful later in the formation of a brewery scene. Instead of entirely new classifications, planners can use their influence with city councils to reform current zoning restrictions to encourage brewery entrepreneurship. Most important in this regard is allowing alcohol to be served in industrial zones where small

startup breweries tend to locate (Lehnert et al., 2020). Another easily implemented practice is providing specialized resources to brewers. For instance, the Chester County Planning Commission in Pennsylvania has a resource webpage specifically for brewers that includes information on zoning. Second, planners should focus more on breweries as community-based institutions instead of economic anchors since economic benefits only become substantial through clustering over time. Breweries can help meet the goals of community development as much as they can spur economic development. One way planners could accomplish this is by keeping a publicly available

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CRAFT BREWERY DISPERSION, CONT. FROM P. 8

inventory of possible infill sites to encourage brewing entrepreneurs to participate in neighborhood revitalization. Finally, planners can encourage brewery patronage through their typical functioning. In Arlington, Texas, planners partnered with Legal Draft Brewing Company to facilitate a charrette to update their master plan. In 2021, the American Planning Association held a virtual networking opportunity at Redemption Rock Brewing Company in Worcester, Massachusetts where the CEO discussed the ability of breweries to implement sustainability practices. More recently, the WTS Greater Dallas/Fort Worth chapter held a Lagers and Leadership event at Bitter Sisters Brewery in Addison, Texas.

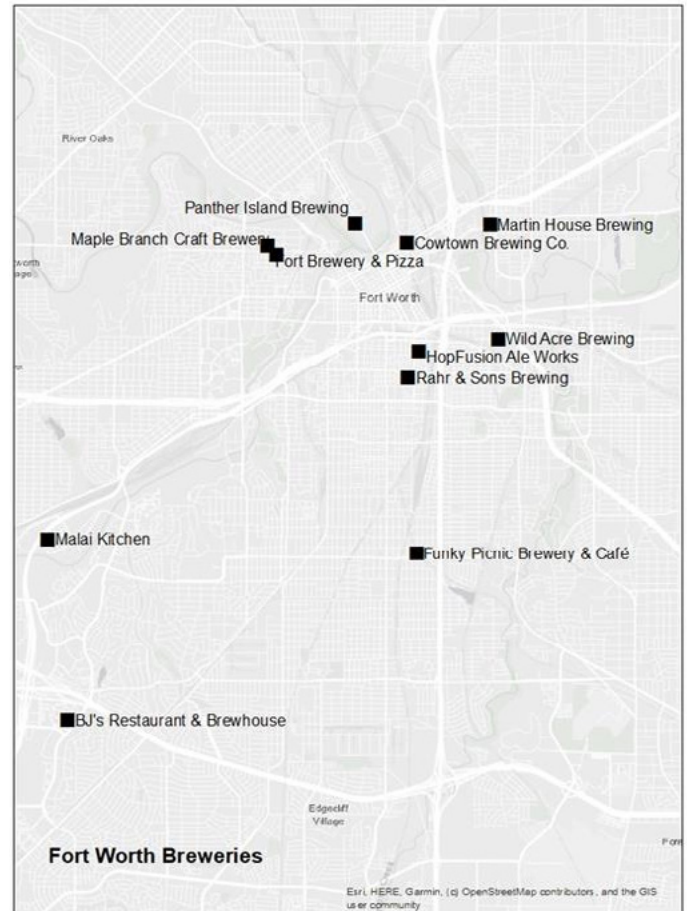
In closing, planners can creatively facilitate brewing entrepreneurship that stimulates community benefits, as well as economic development. Cheers to new possibilities!

— Josh Newton is an Urban Planning and Public Policy PhD student in the College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Arlington and a Crossing Latinidades Mellon Fellow. His research interests include philanthropic community development, informal communities in the U.S, neighborhood stability, public participation, neo-Marxist theory, and the use of community development strategies by craft breweries. Josh teaches courses on race/ethnicity, the history of U.S. urban communities, and urban planning and design theory.

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Map of Fort Worth, TX Breweries up to 2020.

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Member Spotlight

MEET: Aileen de la Torre

Interview by [Joseph Laws](#). Responses have been edited for concision.

Aileen de la Torre is a historic preservation planner with the city of [Decatur, Georgia](#). For the last 20 years, she has worked in historic preservation planning in Georgia, Mississippi, Virginia, Alabama, and Florida. Her work experience includes architectural review and compliance, HABS/HAER/HALS photography, historical research, and reporting. Aileen studied at the University of Colorado Boulder and has a Master's in Historic Preservation from University of Georgia. She is also fluent in Spanish.

Aileen joined the Economic Development Division earlier this year and her interview is part of the division's efforts to highlight and introduce new members.

Why did you join APA's Economic Development Division? What programming or opportunities would be helpful to you as a new member in the division?

I joined the Economic Development Division because my background is in planning, which, to me, is one of the foundations of economic development. I'd love to see programming about how to understand markets, retain local businesses, and create more small-scale opportunities.

What areas of economic development most interest you?

I'm interested in how the built environment affects the physical and mental health of a community, and how we can create quality of life through quality spaces for people, not just cars.

What is your background in planning?

I've always been a visually-oriented person, and I enjoy how buildings work together to create vibrant communities, so planning was just a good fit.

What role does equity play in your work? How can planners better put equity at the forefront of their work?

Equity and racial justice are the overarching themes of City of Decatur's 2030 Strategic Plan and they

inform all our goals for the next ten years. When planners understand how most of our built environment has been constructed for the comfort and convenience of only one group in our society, then we can begin to rebuild it for everyone.

As someone who identifies as Latina and is active in the Latinos and Planning Division, what advice do you have for young planners from underrepresented backgrounds?

My advice for young planners is to be proud of your background. And even if you feel like a broken record sometimes, speak up consistently to make sure the needs of your community are represented.

Can you talk about your background in historic preservation and how it informs your perspective on economic development?

Like many practicing preservationists, I came to historic preservation after experiencing the loss of buildings that were important to me, and it segued nicely into planning. The built environment is what makes a place appealing as a destination, which in turn brings in the dollars.

Based on your many years of working in historic preservation, what is most important for economic development planners to know about the field of historic preservation?

I want economic development planners to understand two things. First, the greenest buildings are the ones that are already built, and they are endlessly adaptable. Second, despite the way in which NIMBYs use historic preservation to prevent new housing, its purpose is to tell the story of a community. To quote the National Park Service, historic preservation is "an important way for us to transmit our understanding of the past to future generations."

How do you like to spend your time outside work?

I'm a huge fan of walking holidays and dancing, and I try to do both as much as possible.

