



## APA Board of Directors – Committee & Task Force Report

### BOARD MEETING

**DATE:** April 26, 2014

**TO:** APA Board of Directors

**FROM:** Smart Cities and Sustainability Task Force,  
Robert M. Kerns, Jr. AICP, Chair  
David Fields, AICP, Vice Chair  
Kathleen McMahon, AICP, Vice Chair

**SUBJECT:** SMART CITIES AND SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE UPDATE

ADOPTED POLICY:  
No

### TYPE OF REPORT:

☐ Action

☒ Information

### CONSENT AGENDA

☐ Yes

☒ No

### FISCAL NOTE:

All activities will be funded from the FY 2015 and future budgets.

### RELATES TO DEVELOPMENT PLAN:

The Smart Cities and Sustainability Task Force relates to the vision, strategic direction, and two goals (Goal nos. 1.5 and 3.1) of the APA Development Plan.

### RECOMMENDATION:

THAT THE BOARD ACCEPTS THIS INFORMATIONAL REPORT.

### ACTION REQUESTED OF THE BOARD:

NONE.

## Introduction

As an extension of APA's Sustaining Places Initiative launched in 2010, the Smart Cities and Sustainability Task Force continues the focus on sustainability by addressing recent advances in technology and innovation which lead to smarter, more sustainable and resilient cities.

APA recognizes that the planning movement and its professional planners are uniquely qualified to provide leadership in defining, analyzing, and debating the issues of sustainability, and in integrating place-based strategies in the broader discussion of sustainability. As such, this Task Force utilizes the talents and resources of three APA divisions – the Sustainable Communities, Technology, and Transportation Planning Divisions – to research and report on the use of information technology and its connections to more sustainable and resilient cities and regions.

## Relationship to the APA Development Plan

The Smart Cities and Sustainability Task Force relates to the following components of the APA Development Plan:

### Vision:

- Maintain APA's preeminence in planning through innovative practice and by developing solutions to address the emerging issues that our communities, our members, and the Association will face in the 21st century.

### Strategic Direction:

The planning profession has evolved over the past 100 years as societal needs have changed, and planning will continue to evolve. APA must communicate 21st century trends and emerging issues nationally and internationally, so we are effective thought leaders and creative problem solvers guiding our communities. The planning field must evolve to meet the community needs of the future, including the challenges of sustainability.

### Development Goals:

- 1.5 Generate the big ideas to advance our communities. Educate the public and community leaders through documentation of best practices and increase their use by planners, citizens, and elected officials.
- 3.1 Anticipate and prepare for trends and emerging issues and communicate their implications.

## Task Force Kick-Off

The Smart Cities and Sustainability Task Force held two conference calls to kick-off the initiative in February and March of 2014. During the first conference call, the three division chairs and APA staff preliminarily discussed the framework for this multi-year effort. Some initial questions were asked regarding the outcome of these efforts. They included:

- What are the critical technologies that planners need to stay on top of now and forward thinking over the next 20 years?

- How can the field of planning utilize the information on these critical technologies to add value to our communities – contributing to economic vibrancy, while being fiscally responsible with limited resources, and addressing issues of responsible use of data?
- What are our mechanisms of information transfer from the task force to our planners, and from our planners out to our communities so that these critical technologies can be better implemented as part of their daily work activities?
- What types of ways could this initiative go beyond just the written form to achieve a different end result (e.g., convening forums on best practices, roundtable webinars, blogs, discussions, etc.) and how could that be consolidated into the final report.

During the second conference call, the entire task force discussed the first engagement component of the initiative – collecting feedback and input at the business meetings of each division at the Atlanta conference. The questions would be organized into the following general categories.

- Supporting Infrastructure (e.g., broadband infrastructure/sensor deployment)
- Technology/Applications/Data
- Sustainability/Resiliency
- Equity/Digital Divide
- Roles/Governance of Planners
- Sustainability/Resiliency/Energy

The information collected at the three business meetings will be consolidated as part of an overall report due at the conclusion of the Task Force. In addition to collecting information at the division meetings, the Task Force also scheduled its first face-to-face meeting during the Atlanta conference.

### Plan of Action

The Smart Cities and Sustainability Task Force has developed the following plan of action to guide its efforts over the next 14 months, concluding at the National Planning Conference in Seattle.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Phase – Organizational / Recruiting Phase: Appointing more topic-specific subcommittees and work groups; recruiting additional persons with expertise (until May 2014)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase – Listening Phase: Input/listening/webinars/best practices (June-November 2014)
  - Possible chapter conferences listening sessions in Fall 2014
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Phase – Final Report / Panel:
  - Panel formation for Seattle conference (August 2014)
  - Report writing (December 2014 through February 2015)
  - Final Report (March 2015)
  - Panel in Seattle (April 2015)

In addition, the Task Force has established its standard monthly meeting time as the fourth Wednesday of every month.

**Deliverables**

The following deliverables are intended at the completion of this multi-year effort:

- Presentation at the National Planning Conference in Seattle
- Report / White Paper
- Ongoing conversations / additional work product post completion

**Smart Cities and Sustainability Task Force Roster:**

- Chair: Robert M. Kerns, Jr., AICP, APA Sustainable Communities Division
- Vice Chair: David Fields, AICP, APA Transportation Planning Division
- Vice Chair: Kathleen McMahon, AICP, APA Technology Division
- Bradley R. Barnett, PlaceMatters
- Matthew T. Bucchin, AICP, LEED GA, Kendig Keast Collaborative, APA Sustainable Communities Division
- Karen Quinn Fung, APA Technology Division
- Daniel G. Haake, AICP, CDM Smith, APA Transportation Planning Division
- David C. Rouse, AICP, American Planning Association
- John N. Tolva, PositivEnergy Practice, LLC
- Mike Walsh, Envision Sustainability Tools
- Staff Support: Jennie Gordon, AICP, American Planning Association