

PLANNING OFFICE OF THE FUTURE TASK FORCE REPORT

American Planning Association

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Making Great Communities Happen

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Planning Office of the Future??



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1. The Planning Office of the Future Task Force

In 2014, William Anderson, President-Elect of the American Planning Association, established nine task forces to evaluate critical issues for the planning profession and make recommendations as to how planners and planning agencies should respond to them. The nine task forces were:

- Smart Cities and Sustainability
- Planning for Economic Development
- Consumers of Planning/Engaged Citizens
- People and Places
- Aging Population
- Planning Office of the Future
- Retired Members
- Water
- Emerging Issues

The **Planning Office of the Future Task Force** was charged with reporting on planning management models for small and large jurisdictions, examining how technology is changing management and service provision, and preparing a final report for 2015 National Planning Conference (NPC) in Seattle. Task Force members included seasoned planning professionals from a variety of different agencies across the country, research staff from APA, and members of the Student Representatives Council (SRC). The Task Force also shared a close working with planning management consultants.

The Task Force defined the scope of the project to focus on public planning agencies (towns, cities, and counties), looking at a 5-10 year time horizon. The Task Force considered the internal (agency responsibilities, attributes) vs. external (role/relationship to municipal or county government, community) workings of the typical planning office today. The Task Force then looked at the key trends facing these agencies in order to create a grounded view of the planning office of the future.

The Task Force kept the time horizon long enough (5 years) to see results but short enough to encourage active implementation of the recommendations by planning agencies. It focused on practical and pragmatic issues and actions that planners could take to move their respective agencies towards being more effective and relevant in the future. This final report provides real life examples of agencies that are addressing the issues identified by the Task Force for application in other communities. It also touches on actions that planners can carry out in their individual careers to keep them current in a changing environment.

The Task Force presented initial concepts for the planning office of the future at the 2014 NPC in Atlanta and solicited feedback from attendees. That feedback and results from member surveys of several Divisions and a general APA member survey on MindMixer.com allowed the Task Force members to test ideas and informed the recommendations contained in this report.

2. Four Crosscutting Themes and Five Principles

Four Crosscutting Themes

The Task Force began its work by identifying major external trends that the planning office of the future will need to address to remain relevant and effectively serve its community. These “cross-cutting themes” are:

1. Demographic change
2. Technology as a disruptive force
3. 21st century problems and 20th century planning practices
4. Economics 101: the value of planning

Demographic Change

The demographic profiles of American communities have been changing significantly, and will continue to change, as a result of socioeconomic trends and migration patterns. Across the country, our communities are becoming more ethnically diverse. The Bureau of the Census has projected that the U.S. population will be “majority minority” (a better term might be 100% minority, with no majority racial or ethnic group) by 2043. Meanwhile, the Millennials (variously defined, most broadly as those born between about 1980 and 2000) have supplanted the baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) as the largest generation in the nation’s history.

People with different cultural backgrounds and experiences have diverse perspectives on planning issues. The lifestyle preferences of the Millennial generation are appreciably different from those of older generations. Moreover, the more diverse populations served by planning offices are even less inclined than their predecessors to participate in traditional planning processes. These differences will have profound implications for a wide range of planning issues. The planning office of the future must be able to anticipate demographic changes even before they manifest themselves, assess the impacts of those changes, and advise community leaders accordingly. Key considerations include:

- Planning offices should monitor demographic (racial, ethnic, socioeconomic) shifts and their implications for planning. For example, income disparities, growth in service jobs, and other related trends are important indicators of economic health.
- Planning offices should acknowledge that community values, needs, and aspirations will vary among generations, race, and cultures and, therefore, community expectations and engagement methods should be carefully managed during the planning process.
- Planning offices should recognize and embrace these changes in their internal organization, for example:
 - Multicultural and multilingual backgrounds that allow for diverse representation and understanding of changing perspectives are increasingly important for planning staff.
 - Staff recruitment should consider factors beyond just technical skills (which can be learned through on-the-job training), for example: motivation, communicative abilities, generational differences, and connection to community. Retirees are a valuable resource that can be tapped to meet peak staffing needs and train new staff.

Technology as a Disruptive Force

Rapid technological change is transforming how people interact with each other, their institutions, and their service providers – including local governments – and planning offices will need to adapt or be left behind. Smart phone usage is becoming ubiquitous across all segments of society, including underserved communities. The planning

office of the future will have access to powerful tools for collecting and analyzing data, forecasting trends, visualizing and evaluating alternative futures, and making empirically-based policy recommendations. It must be able to use these technological tools wisely and effectively. Even with the increasing influence of technology, however, planners must recognize the continuing importance of developing mutually trusting relationships with citizens and decision-makers. Key considerations include:

- Planning offices should promote equitable, easy access to digital information by positioning internet access across a variety of platforms as public infrastructure. This includes reaching the entire community (not just groups already active in governmental affairs) in planning processes and programs. The public dialogue needs to be managed to create safe means of interaction and avoid the inflammatory exchanges that can occur in online forums.
- Planning offices should promote transparency and accountability through the provision of digital information (open data). For example, mapping and other data can show where capital improvement investments are being made and how these investments overlay with stated goals, areas of unmet needs, etc.
- Planning offices should remain current on technology trends by assigning staff to research and implement new tools and connecting with technology professionals on the local, national, or international levels.

21st Century Problems and 20th Century Planning Practices

It is increasingly apparent that many 20th century planning practices are obsolete or no longer work, if they ever did. Examples include comprehensive plans with standalone elements (often mandated by state enabling legislation) and future land use maps as the primary implementation focus, or the resulting Euclidean zoning codes that emphasize separation of uses over other factors that contribute to livable communities. Planning offices often work in silos and deploy limited resources reactively rather than proactively (e.g., on project by project development reviews rather than plan-making and implementation to solve community problems). Many planning offices still rely on traditional town hall meetings for community feedback. Meanwhile, they lack the tools to anticipate and address new trends such as digital signs, the sharing economy, analytics, and (coming soon) autonomous vehicles.

As a result of technological advances, changing demographics, and changing lifestyles, citizens today tend not to receive information in the same ways as they did 20 or 30 years ago. For example, many citizens now rely more on the internet and social media, and less upon newspapers, radio, and television. Moreover, citizens tend not to participate in local government in the same ways as they once did. Public hearings, a technique that planning agencies commonly use to gauge public opinion, have become increasingly ineffective.

To address these trends, the planning office of the future must use new approaches with new techniques in dealing with both the substance and process of planning. Key considerations include:

- Planning offices should reevaluate how they develop and implement plans and programs to address complex and changing conditions in the 21st century, for example:
 - While form-based codes may be an improvement over the conventional system of future land use maps and Euclidean zoning ordinances, are they adequate to advance the “triple bottom line” of environment, economy, and equity?
 - How can planners broaden their influence beyond their traditional role as regulators to impact capital improvement planning and programming, sustainable economic development, etc.?

- o What does the increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters and the resulting need for greater community resilience mean for plan-making and implementation?
- Planning offices should use new tools and techniques beyond traditional public meetings to engage community members. This includes not only “high-tech” tools such as online community engagement and mobile (smart phone) applications, but also “low-tech” engagement of diverse segments of the community in settings they find more convenient and comfortable than the typical public meeting.

Economics 101: The Value of Planning

Measuring the outcomes of planning can be more challenging than measuring other public services such as police, fire, public works, and parks. Nevertheless, to earn credibility and marshal scarce fiscal resources, the planning office of the future must be able to make a compelling economic case for why the planning function is critically important to the community. Common outcomes of effective planning include increased property values, job retention and attraction, increased revenues from property and sales taxes, reductions in vehicle-miles of travel and related congestion and air pollution, and many others. To the extent feasible, the planning office of the future must be able to draw direct connections between planning activities and such outcomes. Key considerations for establishing the economic value of planning include:

- Planning offices should articulate economic goals and set targets across spheres of planning, from plan-making to capital investments, land use decisions, and regulations/incentives that encourage rather than frustrate desired development.
- Planning offices should assert the economic value of place-making in terms of short, mid, and long-term effects, such as increasing real estate values, generating commerce, and attracting and retaining a mobile workforce (including talented young professionals).
- Planning offices should ensure that staff understands the dollars and cents of real estate economics. This includes a working knowledge of development pro formas, construction costs and feasibility, and return on investment, as well as factors such as the fiscal/job returns per acre of different types of land uses (e.g., highway commercial vs. mixed-use downtown).

Five Principles

The Task Force believes that the planning profession, working through the planning office, needs to lead the way in helping America’s communities address the new generation of growth and change represented in the cross-cutting themes. To assist planners in this critical challenge, the Task Force developed five principles that are the framework for its recommendations. These principles are:

1. **Thinking Big:** Create, impart, and execute big ideas.
2. **Exercising Leadership:** Lead the community in addressing emerging issues and trends.
3. **Changing Culture:** Foster an innovative, collaborative, and entrepreneurial culture.
4. **Implementing Big Ideas:** Focus on implementation and outcomes.
5. **Advancing Equity:** Be the voice for equity and fairness.

Chapters 3 to 7 of the report explore these principles in more detail. For each principle, key strategic directions and action recommendations for planning offices to carry out these directions are provided. The principles, strategic directions, and action recommendations are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Principles, Strategic Directions, and Actions

Principles and Strategic Directions	Actions
Thinking Big: <i>Create, impart, and execute big ideas.</i>	
Create big ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create ideas that are visionary and broad. • Create ideas that are practical to implement.
Impart big ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use public speaking to inform, persuade, and motivate audiences. • Communicate with simple and compelling graphics.
Execute big ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategically set planning agency priorities. • Hire creative staff and consultants who can think big. • Emphasize collaboration, persuasion, and consensus-building.
Exercising Leadership: <i>Lead the community in addressing emerging issues and trends.</i>	
Get close to decision-makers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the planning agency's purpose and scope. • Develop informal networks.
Exercise different kinds of community leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate elected officials and citizens. • Build consensus with other agencies. • Communicate through various news media.
Address emerging issues and trends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and assess trends as they emerge. • Educate the community about issues and trends.
Changing Culture: <i>Foster an innovative, collaborative, and entrepreneurial culture.</i>	
Nurture entrepreneurship's creative discontent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower "intrapreneurs" and future-oriented thinking. • Engage experienced and motivated entrepreneurs.
Inspire purpose-driven work and lifelong learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with why we plan, not simply how we plan. • Offer ongoing professional development and opportunities for continuous learning.
Emphasize multi-lateral outreach and implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish collaborative relationships. • Develop creative office structures that engage the community and utilize mobile technology.

Table 1. Principles, Strategic Directions, and Actions

Principles and Strategic Directions	Actions
Implementing Big Ideas: <i>Focus on implementation and outcomes.</i>	
Set meaningful goals for big ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create measurable goals for each area you want to change. • Consider one “moon shot” goal to stretch the organization beyond its comfort zone. • Ensure that the goals come from the community and are politically supported.
Utilize the big ideas to set priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align the goals with operating and capital budgets. • Annually review implementation progress to identify barriers and adjust goals as necessary.
Report regularly on implementation of the big ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create annual progress reports for the public and elected leaders. • Engage the community in tracking progress and calling for results. • Communicate with simple and compelling graphics.
Advancing Equity: <i>Be the voice for equity and fairness.</i>	
Make equity part of values, goals, and day-to-day activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Aspirational Principles of the AICP Code of Ethics to guide planning office activities. • Hire multi-cultural/multi-lingual staff and consultants.
Engage the community in innovative and inclusive ways to define equity and fairness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach underrepresented communities through innovative and targeted outreach programs. • Track demographic changes and trends and explain their significance for the community’s future.
Do what planners do best in an equitable and fair manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate equity and fairness into plans and implementation through regulations, capital investments, etc. • Educate and engage other departments, decision-makers, and the public on equity issues.

3. Thinking Big

The planning office of the future should be relevant to the process by which public officials and business leaders make important decisions about the community's growth and development. Providing pertinent information and advice to decision-makers—helping them to understand how different issues relate to each other and how today's decisions might affect the community in the future—has always been a basic responsibility of planning agencies. Meaningfully and reliably influencing those decisions, however, requires planning agencies to exercise a high degree of leadership and political skill, and that activity invariably entails a commensurate level of risk. Consequently, too many planning agencies over time have chosen to minimize that risk by confining their efforts primarily if not exclusively to relatively safe and routine activities such as the administration of local land use regulations, the enforcement of various codes, and the management of federally-funded community development programs. Many planning agencies have thus relinquished at least some of their inherent responsibility for such critical functions as transportation and environmental planning, economic development, capital improvement programming, and truly comprehensive planning. To the extent that they have avoided dealing with larger and more consequential issues, these planning agencies have forfeited much of their informal authority and relevance.

The planning office of the future should also be effective in helping the community to achieve its goals. Peter Drucker, in his classic management book, *The Effective Executive*, draws a clear distinction between efficiency and effectiveness: the former involves doing things well whereas the latter involves getting the right things done. Both qualities are beneficial, of course, but effectiveness is much more important for planning agencies to promote. The world rarely recognizes those planning agencies that perform their work efficiently, as important as it might be for them to produce complete and accurate staff reports, to process development permits in a timely way, and to stay within their budgets. Rather, the planning agencies that we recognize and honor tend to be those that have made significant impacts upon a community's form, appearance, or vitality, or upon the ways in which people make decisions about the community's growth and development. These agencies may or may not be models of efficiency, but we celebrate them because they are successful in facilitating positive and lasting change.

To be both relevant and effective, therefore, the planning office of the future must reclaim the essential function of creating, imparting, and executing big ideas. Thinking big was a defining activity of the planning profession in its formative years, as evidenced in the nineteenth century by Frederick Law Olmstead's work on New York's Central Park, Boston's "emerald necklace" of parks and parkways, and many other city-shaping landscapes. Olmstead's friend and colleague, Daniel Burnham, captured the power of big ideas with his famous advice to the planners of his day,

Big Idea: Boston's Big Dig



During the 1970s, planners associated with the Boston Transportation Planning Review conceived the Central Artery/Tunnel Project, which became popularly known as the Big Dig. This megaproject, completed in 2007 at a cost of more than \$14 billion, converted Boston's Central Artery (I-93) from an elevated freeway through the heart of the city into a 3.5-mile tunnel. The project has produced a variety of public benefits:

- Removing an unsightly and divisive elevated highway;
- Improving traffic flow through the city;
- Improving access to Logan International Airport via a new Ted Williams Tunnel and a new Silver Line bus rapid transit tunnel;
- Creating the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway, a 1.5-mile string of parks and public spaces; and
- Reconnecting the city to its waterfront.

For more information, visit: www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/thebigdig.aspx.

“Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men’s blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work.”

Burnham created many big ideas, some of which continue to influence our thinking about cities and metropolitan areas today, and he was equally successful in marketing and implementing those ideas. Other prominent planners throughout our profession’s history – including Robert Moses, Edmund Bacon, Ed Logue, and James Rouse, to name only a few – have followed Burnham’s example. The results of their efforts have not always been universally popular or even beneficial, of course, but their big ideas have indisputably had a transformative effect upon American cities. The planning office of the future will face substantially different challenges than did its twentieth-century antecedents, but future planners will nevertheless be able to meet those challenges by thinking and acting boldly.

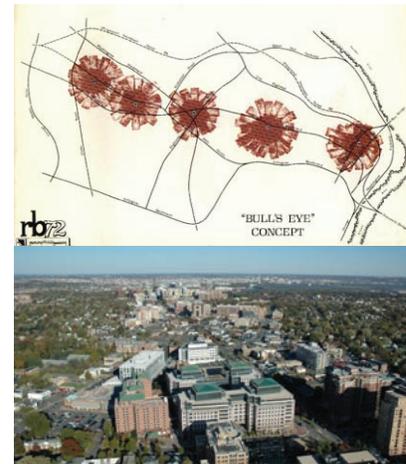
Creating Big Ideas

To bring about positive and lasting change in the community, the planning office of the future must first create big ideas -- or capture them from other sources. These ideas should be conceptually valid, appropriate for the community, and practical to implement. Equally important, they should be visionary in nature and broad in scope. In some cases, big ideas will be fairly generic in character. Many communities, for example, have chosen to orient their comprehensive plans around such broad themes as sustainable development or resilience or healthy places. These themes and their underlying ideas can be quite compelling and influential, but only to the extent that the planning agency can actually put them into practice. Other communities have more specifically used major capital investments as catalysts for economic and physical transformation. Examples are abundant, including freeway and railroad relocation projects, flood control programs, and the redevelopment of surplus property associated with abandoned airports and military installations. Still other communities have been able to create big ideas in connection with opportunities to host major public events, such as a world’s fair or the Olympic Games. Regardless of their specificity, big ideas can propel planning agencies to serve effectively as agents of change.

Imparting Big Ideas

Of course, not even the best planning ideas will make much of a difference unless the planning agency can impart those ideas to those who can use their power and influence to convert those ideas into action. Good communication skills are therefore essential for the planning agency’s leaders to possess. Planning leaders must be good writers, which may involve writing more plainly and more concisely than they might have learned to do in school. Planning leaders should also be good at public speaking, not only informing audiences about factual conditions and trends but also at

Big Idea: Transit-Oriented Development in Arlington County, Virginia



During the late 1960s and early 1970s, as the Washington region was planning the Metro rapid transit system, Arlington planners conceived a bold plan to construct an underground route with five closely spaced transit stations along the county’s Rosslyn-Ballston commercial corridor. The Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor Alternative Land Use Patterns Report, known as RB’72, recommended high-density, mixed-use development within a quarter-mile-radius “bull’s eye” of each station. Arlington planners have executed this big idea successfully. During the past forty years, the corridor has attracted 26 million square feet of transit-oriented development and 30,000 housing units while providing the transit system with 100,000 daily riders and actually reducing traffic volumes.

For more information, visit: <http://projects.arlingtonva.us/planning/smart-growth/rosslyn-ballston-corridor/>.

times persuading and motivating them to do the right things. The ability to communicate graphically through simple and compelling maps, charts, and diagrams can also be a valuable skill. Regardless of the communication medium, planning agencies should strive to understand their audiences and to convey their messages accordingly. The continuing advancement of communication technology will provide the planning office of the future with many new opportunities to reach larger and more diverse audiences.

Executing Big Ideas

Beyond creating and imparting big ideas, the planning office of the future must be able to execute those ideas through the astute management of programs and projects. Planning leaders must be able to make sound strategic decisions about the priorities by which the agency will allocate its human and financial resources, ever mindful about how those decisions might affect the implementation of big ideas. Even during the best of times, but particularly when budgets are tight, planning agencies must withstand the inevitable pressure to sacrifice creative activity in the interest of performing only routine functions. Decisions about the hiring and promotion of staff members who can think big, and about the selection of visionary consultants, can also be critical to the planning agency's success. The identification and development of creative talent will remain a major challenge for planning agencies, planning schools, and the planning profession in general for years to come.

To execute big ideas, planning agencies must become more skillful in collaboration, persuasion, and consensus-building. These skills are critical, in part, because the process of implementing transformative ideas requires participation by many different players, both inside and outside of local government. Moreover, planning departments tend to be disadvantaged by the fact that they possess much less budgetary and regulatory authority than do other departments, such as economic development or public works, whose activities can go a long way toward shaping the community for better or for worse. Planning agencies can more than compensate for this disadvantage, however, by building collaborative relationships with other agencies, using sound reasoning to secure their support for planning programs and projects, and reaching common understandings about practical ways to advance those initiatives. These efforts can undoubtedly be difficult and time-consuming but, in the end, they can enable the planning office of the future to be successful.

Big Idea: Oregon's Urban Growth Boundaries



In 1973, at the urging of Governor Tom McCall, the Oregon legislature enacted legislation to establish a statewide program of land use planning. Under this program, the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development uses urban growth boundaries to promote the development of compact cities and towns while preserving farms and forests on the fringes of the state's metropolitan areas. Portland's urban growth boundary, established in 1979, has been particularly effective in directing new development toward the city's core. Combined with other smart growth policies, Oregon's urban growth boundaries have facilitated urban revitalization and preserved more than 25 million acres of farmland and forests.

For more information, visit <http://www.oregon.gov/LCD>.

Table 2. Thinking Big: Strategic Directions and Actions

Strategic Directions	Actions
Create big ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create ideas that are visionary and broad. • Create ideas that are practical to implement.
Impart big ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use public speaking to inform, persuade, and motivate audiences. • Communicate with simple and compelling graphics.
Execute big ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategically set planning agency priorities. • Hire creative staff and consultants who can think big. • Emphasize collaboration, persuasion, and consensus-building.

4. Exercising Leadership

Effective planning agencies -- those that get the right things done to facilitate positive and lasting change in their communities -- tend to focus their attention upon influencing major policy decisions associated with the community's growth and development. The art of influencing such decisions requires planning agencies to exercise leadership not only within their formal organizations but, more importantly, within the broader communities that they serve. It requires them to nurture trusting and productive relationships with decision-makers so that those with the authority to make decisions will be receptive to planning information and advice when critical issues arise. Moreover, effective planning agencies tend not merely to react but to be proactive about assessing trends over time, identifying and assessing issues as they begin to take shape, evaluating options, and making sound recommendations.

Getting Close to Decision-Makers

Planning directors and managers with strong leadership skills can be instrumental in helping planning agencies to provide the right kind of community leadership. A first step toward understanding the planning agency's mission is recognizing that the mission is largely what the planning agency makes of it. Of course, the planning agency's role cannot be entirely self-defined. To an extent that varies from one community to the next, certain responsibilities tend to be mandated by law. For example, many planning agencies are legally responsible for maintaining a comprehensive plan with prescribed elements, administering zoning and subdivision regulations, or staffing federally funded programs for transportation and environmental planning, to cite just a few typical functions. These legal obligations will inevitably consume a substantial portion of the planning agency's time. To an even greater extent, though, the planning office -- more than most other local departments or agencies -- enjoys broad discretion in defining the purpose and scope of its work.

Planning agencies have many opportunities to do important things, but they must make a conscious effort to seek and find and seize those opportunities. Planning agencies should not expect anyone to present those opportunities to them on a silver platter. They should not expect their mayor, their city manager, or any other superior to share their understanding about the planning function in local government, regardless of how competent or supportive those officials might be. They should not expect decision-makers to come to the planning agency for advice about critical planning issues merely because the agency happens to hold some legal authority or even because the agency may have established some credibility on those issues. Instead, planning agencies must go out of their way and get close to those who will be making decisions. They must get close enough so that they might give them timely and pro-active advice about the community's planning issues, so that they might learn to recognize growth

Emerging Issue: Pittsburgh's Economic Transformation



Like many other Rust Belt cities, Pittsburgh experienced significant declines in employment and population during the second half of the twentieth century. In the face of these long-term trends, however, Pittsburgh has succeeded in transforming its economy from heavy dependence upon steel manufacturing to greater reliance upon diversified industry groups, including higher education, health care, financial services, and information technology. These major economic changes, combined with a variety of environmental and cultural improvements, have led Pittsburgh to be ranked high on most contemporary lists of the country's most livable cities.

Local planners have exercised community leadership in facilitating this transition. They have promoted more sustainable forms of development, including the redevelopment of brownfields, the promotion of transit-oriented development, and the development of greenways linking neighborhoods to parks, trails, and riverfronts.

For more information, visit <http://pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/>.

and development issues essentially as planning issues, and so that they might more instinctively turn to the planning agency for help. Getting close to your decision-makers might occasionally involve rearranging some formal organizational structures, but more often it involves working deliberately to develop informal person-to-person networks within your local government and throughout your community. Over time, these interpersonal relationships will go a long way toward helping the planning office of the future to get the right things done.

Mastering Different Kinds of Community Leadership

Another key attribute of effective planning agencies is the ability to exercise different kinds of leadership from time to time with different segments of the community. Planning directors and managers often function as educators, as consensus-builders, and as spokespersons for their agencies. These roles may not appear prominently in their job descriptions, but they can be pivotal to the planning agency's success.

One of the planning agency's most important roles involves educating elected officials and ordinary citizens about planning. Our profession may not fully appreciate this role, but a well-educated and active citizenry can truly be the planning agency's best ally in effectuating change. While we usually consider elected officials to be our most important customers -- and in many respects they are -- we should also remember that political leaders inherently tend to be more responsive to their voting constituents than to technical experts. It may seem counterintuitive, but the planning agency can often be more effective by educating citizens to influence their respective elected officials than by seeking to influence those elected officials directly.

Another important role is that of consensus-builder among local agencies with different and sometimes conflicting objectives. This can be a challenging responsibility for planning directors and managers to undertake because planning agencies usually lack the formal authority to direct or guide the activities of other agencies. Effective planning agencies must therefore establish and maintain close working relationships with the leaders of other agencies in order to foster their cooperation and to prevent any appearance that planners might be trespassing onto their turf. The planning agency's goal must be not only to find common ground among peers but, even more important, to orient their efforts around a common vision for the community's future.

A planning director will frequently play the role of agency spokesperson through various news media. We should learn to view media contacts not as disruptions or impediments to our work, but rather as valuable opportunities to broadcast our big ideas. Planning directors should assume full responsibility for media relations, usually delegating to subordinates only the provision of factual details. They should know their message and be able to condense it, if necessary, into appropriate sound bites for television and

Emerging Issue: Population Growth in Fort Worth



According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Fort Worth has been the country's fastest growing city of 500,000 or more since the 2000 census. The city's population has grown from approximately 530,000 in 2000 to nearly 800,000 today.

Local planners have sought to exercise community leadership by educating decision-makers and the general public about the implications of that growth and, in line with the city's goals, channeling a significant share of the growth toward the revitalization of central-city neighborhoods and commercial districts. The results include a rejuvenated downtown that ranks among the country's most successful as well as neighborhood commercial districts characterized by pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development.

For more information, visit <http://fortworthtexas.gov/planninganddevelopment/>.

radio. Regardless of the specific questions that reporters might ask them to address, they should be sure to convey their message and impart their big ideas.

Addressing Emerging Issues and Trends

The basic principles of planning leadership are as applicable today as they have been throughout the history of our profession. The circumstances under which we might apply those principles, however, have changed considerably over time. Today's planning agencies, to a much greater extent than did their predecessors, must deal with the profound impacts of various global issues upon the development of our cities and metropolitan areas. Technological advancements have accelerated the flow of capital and jobs around the world to such an extent that, as Richard Florida has observed in *The Rise of the Creative Class*, jobs now tend to follow the most talented workers rather than vice versa. As a result, communities now compete for these workers by striving to create places that accentuate quality of life. Planning agencies can obviously play a meaningful role in those efforts. Another impact of globalization involves large-scale migration from developing to industrialized countries, a trend that has begun to change the socio-economic profiles of many North American communities while placing new demands upon their planning agencies. An even more daunting set of challenges might be those associated with the long-term effects of global climate change, which are prompting a growing number of mayors and planning agencies to step forward with practical solutions that emphasize green building and sustainable development policies.

The planning profession and its allies have responded to the local impacts of these global issues, in part, by launching a movement known popularly as "smart growth." Various national organizations have done much to advance this movement since the 1980s but, juxtaposed against the powerful economic and cultural forces that have fostered suburban sprawl since the end of World War II, those organizations have had relatively little time to gain political traction. Consequently, the smart growth movement still tends to enjoy greater support from a few well-informed but relatively small interest groups than from the public at large.

To compound the challenge for planning agencies, the smart growth movement faces deep-seated popular prejudices against many of its big ideas about density, mixed use, public transit, and affordable housing. Ironically, the planning profession itself has done considerable harm over the years by unwittingly perpetuating many of those prejudices. Planners have used zoning regulations, for example, to promulgate misguided and arbitrary restrictions upon higher-density residential and mixed-use development while advancing a variety of automobile-oriented development standards that effectively discourage pedestrian activity and the use of transit. The smart growth movement seeks to eliminate these and other sprawl-inducing practices and to replace them with more enlightened public policy, but doing so will require planners and other proponents to educate millions of citizens -- particularly middle-income baby boomers and their offspring, who have grown up within a predominantly suburban culture. Equally important, proponents will need to retrain thousands of traffic engineers, architects, bankers, and other professionals whose past practices may also represent impediments to the implementation of smart growth policies.

These kinds of attitudinal and behavioral changes are entirely possible in the long run, but they will require the best efforts of current and future planning leaders. They will require planners to get close to decision-makers who need reliable information and advice. They will require planners to create, impart, and execute big ideas about the development of livable communities. They will certainly require planners to act as educators, consensus-builders, and agency spokespersons from time to time. In short, the complex challenges facing communities will call for the planning office of the future to exercise effective leadership and get the right things done.

Table 3. Exercising Leadership: Strategic Directions and Actions

Strategic Directions	Actions
Get close to decision-makers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the planning agency’s purpose and scope. • Develop informal networks.
Exercise different kinds of community leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate elected officials and citizens. • Build consensus with other agencies. • Communicate through various news media.
Address emerging issues and trends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and assess trends as they emerge. • Educate the community about issues and trends.

5. Changing Culture

If the planning office is to play a leadership role in the cities of the future—cities taking shape during a time of rapid technological advancement, demographic change, and shifting politics—it must foster a culture that empowers not just innovative thinking but collaborative and entrepreneurial action. We are a discipline at times preoccupied with process, yet the most effective and innovative planning offices of the future will understand that process is not an end unto itself. Process (even plans!) cannot be our final product. Instead, we must measure our success by the shared impact of on-the-ground implementation and street-level outcomes. For the planning office of the future, a plan is only as effective as its effects, whether that be increased capacity for collaboration across community institutions or the development of urban projects that equitably improve access, opportunity, and livability.

In our effort to envision planning's next wave of innovation, the Planning Office of the Future Taskforce collected a variety of feedback across multiple channels, both offline and online, including conference breakouts, focus groups, social media, and Mind Mixer. We learned that planners across the country are interested in realizing a more innovative, collaborative, and entrepreneurial culture in their own cities. What's more, it was clear that culture must take root both internally among government staff and externally across the community. To achieve this, the planning office of the future must deliver three strategic directions:

- Nurture entrepreneurship's creative discontent
- Inspire purpose-driven work and lifelong learning
- Emphasize multi-lateral outreach and implementation

It is important to note that these directions are by no means comprehensive, nor has our limited outreach to date been scientifically significant or necessarily representational. What it has been, however, is our best effort to engage a wide swath of thinkers and doers in aspirational ideation. Each strategic direction carries with it a specific set of supportive actions and informative examples. What follows below is a deeper exploration into each strategic direction and its relationship to the Planning Office of the Future.

Nurture Entrepreneurship's Creative Discontent

Innovation does not take place in a vacuum. To the contrary, it grows out of a supportive environment and catches fire, sometimes like a flash in pan, after sustained fermentation. Indeed, corporate examples have proved that [innovation is often more a mindset](#) than it is a linear process. Planning offices across the country, if they are to capture innovation's passing lighting-in-the-bottle moments, must cultivate an environment conducive to risk-taking, ideation, and feedback-responsive iteration. Namely, the leading planning departments of tomorrow will be those that nurture a [culture of creative discontent](#). In other words, planning must shake off its comfort with the status quo and nurture a way of thinking that actively considers existing shortcomings and, consequently, designs strategies for incremental, if not wholesale, improvement. A creatively discontent planning office is open to feedback, excited by new ideas, and considerate in the implementation of progress. But to achieve a culture of creative discontent, our profession must do, at the very least, two important things – empower “intrapreneurs” and engage entrepreneurs.

Empower “Intrapreneurs”

Intrapreneurs are employees who take on the mindset of an entrepreneur. In the context of a city planning department, an intrapreneur is a staff member responsible for finding and implementing new ideas, new policies, and new processes. Some agencies may find it useful to empower key staff for this role, but without a doubt it is important to pursue an entrepreneurial culture agency-wide. In doing so, new ideas will find broader internal support and more rapid adoption. One way to empower intrapreneurs is to encourage staff members to actively consider how current and future trends, be they economic, demographic, or otherwise, will impact their community.

By embracing future-oriented thinking, Tallahassee & Leon County’s joint planning department provides a strong example of agency-wide support for intrapreneurship. From 2000 to 2010, [Tallahassee led the country in urban focused growth](#), and in 2014 the department received APA’s prestigious National Planning Excellence Award for a Planning Agency. Tallahassee planning staff is given the opportunity to brainstorm big ideas and future trends as a part of regular staff meetings. “Every one of our staff meetings we offer the opportunity for somebody to throw out an idea,” said planning director Wayne Tedder. “We have so many people with different backgrounds, and they are always reading and paying attention and keeping their eyes open. These folks in here, they pay attention to what’s going on in the world. They travel all over and see things that are cool. They come back and study it somewhere and say I think we can do this here.”

Importantly, these brainstorming sessions are more than a mere chance to sound off. Management often empowers and incorporates ideas that resonate. “They bring me ideas, I take those—some of them can’t go anywhere but some are pretty cool—and I move them up the chain to my line of managers,” said Tedder. “I can’t do this on my own. And if you can’t listen to ideas from your staff then you don’t need to be here.”

Tedder’s empowerment of staff-driven ideas represents another important step in the process of cultivating robust intrapreneurship: innovative planning offices turn the traditional hierarchies of organizational charts on their head. They may be led by a Director and cascading set of managers, but they do not allow impact, access, and respect to scale with seniority alone. This point was brought up and discussed in greater detail on the MindMixer page set up for the Planning Office of the Future Task Force (Appendix 3).

The screenshot shows a MindMixer idea post. The main content area has a title "Less org chart - more focus on product - great communities" and a sub-header "Posted May 15, 2014". Below the text is a diagram showing a traditional organizational chart with three levels: "CITIZENS/STAKEHOLDERS" at the top, "PRIORITIES" in the middle, and "STRATEGIC PLAN" at the bottom, all connected by downward arrows. To the right of the main content is a "TOPIC" section titled "Envisioning the Planning Industry" with a sub-question: "Given the trends and issues, what should the planning office of the future look like?". Below the topic is an "AUTHOR" section for "Lisa N.", who is a member since June 11, 2011, with 0 total comments and 2 total ideas.

Source: <http://apa.mindmixer.com/ideas/119292/less-org-chart-more-focus-on-product-great-communities>

Engage Entrepreneurs

Governments at all scales have taken to partnering with experienced, serial entrepreneurs through a variety of strategies. Most overtly, many local governments have taken on new in-house entrepreneurs, often called entrepreneurs-in-residence (EIRs), and tasked them with driving more creative use of outreach, partnerships, and public policy. [San Francisco’s EIR program](#), which pairs 16-week voluntary cohorts with the Mayor’s Office and beyond, is a strong example. One of the many projects that emerged as a result of San Francisco’s forward-thinking use of innovative entrepreneurs was Synthicity, a 3D visualization program now uses to assist in scenario planning and community engagement.

Other cities, such as Albuquerque, have found civic tech players like [Code for America](#) to be invaluable resources for inspired policy innovation and product development. In Albuquerque, Code for America brought in the bandwidth

necessary to assist the city in launching an [open data initiative](#). Open data, procurement reform, community engagement methodologies—these are just a few of the many areas that cities have engaged entrepreneurs for assistance and support.

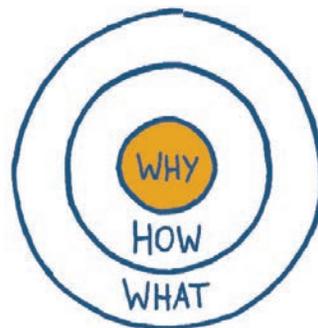
In addition to established entrepreneurs and programs, planning agencies and local governments must realize that entrepreneurship takes many forms, much of it grassroots. Emerging trends such as [tactical urbanism](#) need to be given legitimate consideration, and citizen-driven action must be treated as user feedback. It falls to planning offices of the future to incorporate grassroots feedback into their plans and processes. In [The Planner’s Guide to Tactical Urbanism](#), millennial planner Laura Pfeifer interviews past APA President Mitchell Silver, noting that forward-thinking approach adopted by Raleigh. Noticing that guerilla way-finding signs were popping up around town, Raleigh’s planning department prepared a proposal that helped citizens drive formal adoption of the signage through the City Council. This kind of responsive to new ideas is the currency of innovation and entrepreneurship.

The screenshot shows a MindMixer idea post. The main title is "Citizen surveyors empowered to deal out tactical urbanism", posted on May 21, 2014, with 22 views, 2 stars, and 1 comment. The author is "urbnist". The post content asks: "How do you think the city planning office of the future will be different than the planning office of today?" and includes a paragraph: "I hope for a future with roving teams of citizen surveyors who look for the quick, light projects that can quickly and cheaply improve people's experience of the city! A ramp here, a planted parklet there- little things that make a huge difference!". To the right, there is a "TOPIC" section titled "Envisioning the Planning Industry" posted on Apr 25, 2014, with the question: "Given the trends and issues, what should the planning office of the future look like?". Below that is the "AUTHOR" section for "Lucas Lindsey", a member since Apr 29, 2013, with 15 total comments and 2 total ideas.

Source: <http://apa.mindmixer.com/ideas/120271/citizen-surveyors-empowered-to-deal-out-tactical-urbanism>

Inspire Purpose-driven Work and Lifelong Learning

If the planning office of the future hopes to attract and retain motivated and entrepreneurial workers, then the office needs a driving purpose and clear sense of mission. More and more, the talent of today is attracted to mission-oriented work. As a result, cutting-edge planning agencies need to be able to express both to themselves and to others why they do what they do. It is not enough to be able to explain merely what we do or how we do it, but instead why we plan. Simon Sinek’s viral TED Talk, [How Great Leaders Inspire Action](#), provides an excellent overview of just how vital it is to imbue a workplace with passion and purpose.



Source: Adapted from the work of leadership author Simon Sinek

This idea was echoed on Mind Mixer, where Karen H. keyed into the importance of offering staff the “opportunity to contribute in a substantive way.” Everyone wants to know that their work matters, that it has impact and meaning. Planners, who are driven by ethics and aim to serve the public good, are especially attracted to meaningful work. As a result, those who lead and set the tone for the planning office of the future must communicate both why staff’s work matters and how it has resulted in positive momentum, however incremental it may be.

The screenshot shows a Mind Mixer idea post. The main title is "The opportunity to contribute in a substantive way", posted on May 27, 2014. The author is Karen H., a member since April 29, 2014, with 1 comment and 1 idea. The topic is "Recruitment & Retention", posted on April 29, 2014, and is now closed. The topic question is "What will it take to attract and retain the most talented and passionate young planners?". The idea text reads: "I think people want to be able to feel like they are making substantive contributions...to the office, to the community, to a particular area of emphasis, to the field." Admin tools include "Apply an Idea Status".

Source: <http://apa.mindmixer.com/ideas/120874/the-opportunity-to-contribute-in-a-substantive-way>

One question planning agencies must honestly address is: how will they attract and retain young talent? In the taskforce’s outreach, Millennial planners especially referenced the importance of lifelong learning via ongoing professional development and interdisciplinary cross training. As a group that came of age during a time of ongoing rapid technological change, Millennials carry with them into their professional lives an expectation for retraining and ongoing exposure to rapidly emerging technologies, skills, and subject matter. The office that encourages lifelong learning will be the office that attracts and retains the most ambitious and intellectually curious young planners.

Emphasize Multi-lateral Outreach and Implementation

Now more than ever planning agencies drive successful outcomes to the extent that they engage in multiple forms of collaboration. The taskforce’s own brainstorming as well as ongoing outreach points to two primary ways the planning office of the future can emphasize multi-lateral outreach and successful plan implementation:

- Establish collaborative relationships
- Design a creative office structure that utilizes mobile technologies

Collaborative Relationships

In order to maximize efficiency and impact, the planning office of the future will have to find opportunities to promote the formation and use of cross-department teams and interdisciplinary project coordination across the local government org chart. Cities like Raleigh and Austin have managed to deploy implementation-oriented teams that draw upon multiple agencies so that planning is not left to go it alone.

Additionally, our taskforce believes the same level of collaboration will be necessary between the planning office of the future and the many community groups, private actors, and constituencies that make up the city it calls home. Staff should be empowered to attend a diverse set of grassroots meetings and cultural events. They should also be encouraged to extend highly social, “never eat alone” mentality of the private sector into the public sector. A rich set of interaction with startups, entrepreneurs, and small business owners will provide planning staff with plenty of opportunities for local innovation.

Tallahassee’s award-winning planning department promotes collaboration in an interesting way. The department includes an in-house design team that works at no cost with developers and property owners on the front end of development submittals and reviews. The team provides early technical assistance with site design and urban design standards, often resulting in more projects that meet the intention of newly implemented urban design standards. “We have a design studio here in the office,” said Wayne Tedder, Tallahassee’s Planning Director. “That’s all they do—and help developers get the bigger picture and show them how it can be done on site even if we have to draw a site plan for them. We’ll do that early. We’ll draw out ideas for them. That’s gone a long way for them in helping to see how it works. Really the proof is all of the development we’ve approved that’s consistent with our standards.”

By collaborating with developers earlier in the land development process, Tallahassee’s planning department improves working relationships with those driving urban growth and, ultimately, amplifies the impact of its standards and plans.

Creative Office Structure and Mobile Technologies

If the planning office of the future is to lead cities into the 21st century, then it must fashion itself a 21st century workplace. For the office itself, this means that design and workplace expectation matter. The office should embrace configurable furniture, places for design and brainstorming, and social spaces that maximize creative collisions between staff. Equally important are community-facing social spaces, such as a café or streetside seating that act as an in-between place for planners and the community to interact without pretense. The goal is to build an office that reflects planning’s tenants of inclusion and accessibility, one that promotes creativity and relationship building. The office’s spaces could even be used to host inventive programming events and networking series. Brookings’s recent [report on Innovation Districts](#) describes these kinds of spaces as important because they “make the process of innovation more porous between the public and private realms. Ideas, for instance, can be brainstormed in wired, public spaces, advanced in shared work spaces, prototyped in private technology labs, and tested on public streets.”

As mobile technologies and robust project management and CRM software become more ubiquitous, it be increasingly important for the planning office of the future to give greater credence to the possibility of telecommuting and mobile work. Distributed teams, common in many of today’s industries, utilize messaging platforms and on-the-go hardware to stay in touch. We anticipate this trend will find its way into the planning office. We also anticipate that forward-thinking agencies will empower staff to get out of the office and engage in more site level observation and iteration with local context. Mobile hardware and software platforms that run in the cloud make this option more attractive and more feasible by the day. This idea of mobile work, even a mobile office, was submitted on the APA Planning Office of the Future Mind Mixer page:

The screenshot shows a Mind Mixer interface with the following content:

- IDEA** header with 24 Views, 14 Stars, and 2 Comments.
- Title:** It should look like a food truck.
- Posted:** Apr 28, 2014
- Text:** Planning offices should be accessible, transparent, and flexible. If our goal is to engage with local people, organizations and businesses, we should go to them, not the other way around. The food truck model also represents a creative approach to the use of public space and the ability to start infill projects in areas with vacant lots.
- Admin Tools:** Apply an Idea Status
- TOPIC:** Envisioning the Planning Industry, Posted Apr 25, 2014, Topic is now closed.
- QUESTION:** Given the trends and issues, what should the planning office of the future look like?
- AUTHOR:** James E., Member Since Mar 18, 2014, Total Comments 0, Total Ideas 2.

Source: <http://apa.mindmixer.com/ideas/115783/it-should-look-like-a-food-truck>

Conclusion

Core to each strategic direction is the active pursuit of deeper and more dynamic relationships—both internal to planning agencies and external across the community. This need for greater collaboration places planning, itself a conscious act of outreach, facilitation, and co-creation, indubitably high on the list of civic priorities.

Most important of all, the work of this task force has found that tomorrow’s planners are well positioned to drive the planning office of the future toward a more innovative, entrepreneurial, and collaborative culture. Planning is a field that has always wanted to change the world, and Millennials—the staff that will drive future planning agencies forward—are a generation that buys into that idea perhaps more than any generation before. They are a group of inspired imaginations, but action and results-oriented actors empowered by rapidly emerging new toolsets. So if our profession builds it the right way, the planning office of the future has an opportunity to harness and focus the passion of an entire generation.

In short, the planning office of the future needs to nurture an entrepreneurial culture, inspire others to remember why we plan, and emphasize collaboration wherever possible. The infrastructure we plan takes many forms. It is as much social as it is material, and both forms are connected, even self-reinforcing. Planners, both those of today and those of tomorrow, must leave the desks behind, engage the public’s best ideas, and build relationships with people throughout the community—the more diverse the better. The mark we live on our cities may be physical, but the impact is, above all else, human.

Table 4. Changing Culture: Strategic Directions and Actions

Strategic Directions	Actions
Nurture entrepreneurship’s creative discontent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower “intrapreneurs” and future-oriented thinking. • Engage experienced and motivated entrepreneurs.
Inspire purpose-driven work and lifelong learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with why we plan, not simply how we plan. • Offer ongoing professional development and opportunities for continuous learning.
Emphasize multi-lateral outreach and implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish collaborative relationships. • Develop creative office structures that engage the community and utilize mobile technology.

6. Implementing Big Ideas

The work of a planning office in developing plans relevant to its community is a basic activity taught in school and reflects the ideals that attracted most planners to this profession. Bringing those ideas and goals into reality takes hard work that often fails to account for challenges in resources, attestation, and political pressures. Moreover, without a strong emphasis on implementation, the best plans are still collections of ideas on a shelf.

Business planning is an important tool that successful private sector enterprises large and small utilize to achieve short and long-term success. Comprehensive plans do much the same when a strong implementation element is included and followed up with regular review and adjustments. Effective agencies find a way to make plans a reality. As resources continue to be difficult to obtain, creating realistic, measurable tasks and showing results is ever more important to the long-term viability of the planning office. In the private sector businesses that cannot implement typically go bankrupt and close. Public agencies that do not implement their plans effectively can lose resources during annual budget cycles. Even worse, they contribute to a public perception of government as being an ineffective barrier to what the citizens think they want.

“You’ve got to eat while you dream. You’ve got to deliver on short-range commitments, while you develop a long-range strategy and vision and implement it. The success of doing both. Walking and chewing gum if you will. Getting it done in the short-range, and delivering a long-range plan, and executing on that.”

—Jack Welch

Set Stretch Goals

“Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men’s blood.” Planners love to quote Daniel Burnham. Broad sweeping goals do in fact inspire and rally politicians and community members around common causes. Such goals are important to inspire change that would not otherwise occur through tinkering of organizational agendas or ways of thinking. Robert Behn at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard observed that “a ‘Stretch Goal’ is one that the organization cannot achieve simply by working harder or a little smarter. To achieve a stretch target, people have to invent new strategies, new incentives – entirely new ways of achieving their purpose.”

The Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan was adopted in November 2011 with a very aggressive goal of achieving a jobs-to-employee resident ratio of 1.3, raising it from approximately 0.8 during the life of the plan. For the plan’s Task Force, broader community, Planning Commission, and City Council, this was critical to achieve a sustainable financial footing after a decade of budget cutting. Despite broad support, the reality is that the city does not actually create jobs, but rather plans to accommodate them. Thus the plan looked at actions both to increase the number of jobs and to track the rate of housing growth against new job formation.

The City actively measures how it performs in attracting new job growth compared to new employment for current residents in the City yearly. The City used the stretch goal to create new ways to manage the levels of residential development that in prior years was aggressively encouraged. New residential capacity is “metered” through the adoption of village plans that actively plan for residential intensification. Incentives to create jobs are now aligned with more than growth targets.

Set Achievable Goals

This is the practical reality that faces most organizations and is applicable to most goals planners set. It may sound uninspiring but goals do need to account for the community’s ability to deliver; otherwise they can be just a marketing phrase. When setting goals, the planning office needs to ensure that they are realistic, have a clear sponsor, and a means of being resourced appropriately.

It is important to ensure that the community has the necessary resources to implement the goals. This means that the planning office should work with other departments and agencies not just report activity, but also to step up and advocate for resources where needed. In an era of scarce resources, supporting another department in a request to get a larger share of budget allocations is a courageous conversation, but one that successful planning agencies need to be prepared to have. Planners have a leadership role as managers and planning agencies are often looked to by the community to lead on difficult issues. What better way is there to show support for implementing the plans we develop than to lead budget conversations?

“Setting a goal is not the main thing. It is deciding how you will go about achieving it and staying with that plan.”
—Tom Landry

Create Plans with Short and Long-term Goals

Goals that only focus on the long term lack the ability to generate momentum through successes in the early years of implementation. Such momentum is critical to rally the community and obtain resources to achieve the goal. While much “wisdom” has been promulgated on this topic, the reality is that you have to start somewhere and that first small victory can get you started.

Action schedules, work plans, a performance measures all are tools that can help. The challenge for the planning office is to “deconstruct” the long-term goals into a series of logical steps that can be carried out. The danger in this incremental approach is that, by focusing on programming and completing a prescribed series of tasks, the office can fail to recognize and respond to changing community goals and priorities.

Consideration should also be given to the base (tolerable) level of service vs. what is desirable. Plan 2040 by the Atlanta Regional Commission specifies two sets of performance standards – one required and one to achieve excellence – that local governments are expected to in order to be eligible for grant funding (www.atlantaregional.com/plan2040). Incentives are provided for local governments to meet the excellence criteria.

Track Your Progress

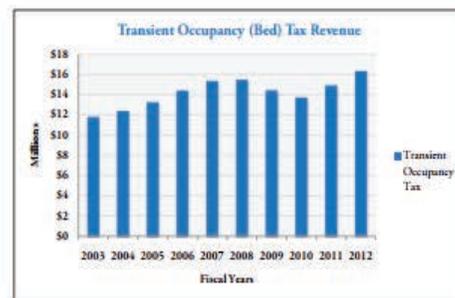
With the adoption of a Comprehensive or General Plan, area plan or other policy document, the next question is how the agency should track and report progress in achieving those goals. Several agencies have tracked their progress in easy to read and understand formats on a regular basis. Most agencies report their progress on a select set of goals to better manage time commitments given the potentially hundreds of goals found in a typical general plan.

Following the adoption of a General Plan in 2011, the City of Santa Barbara, CA started annual reporting of implementation progress. The report provides a briefing on progress to date. The report includes both qualitative elements in the form of status updates of key General Plan implementation actions and quantitative indicators from the City’s Adaptive Management

Economy and Fiscal Health Element

Adaptive Management Program Indicators					
Indicator	2011 FY	2012 FY	Target	Unit	% Change
Transient Occupancy Tax ¹	15.0	16.4	?	Millions of Dollars	+9.7%

Significance of this Indicator
General Plan goal *Strong, Diverse Economy* aims to ensure a strong economy with a diversity of business sizes and types. This indicator acts as a barometer for the fiscal health of hotel and tourism businesses in Santa Barbara, which constitutes a significant component of our local economy. Data is on an accrual basis of accounting. Recent trend data is shown in the graph below:



Program (AMP). The purpose of the AMP is to help ensure that General Plan goals and objectives are achieved through regular monitoring and timely policy adjustments. The document is written in plain English that allows the community to easily follow progress made on implementing the goals. San Diego, CA has also conducted this level of reporting since the adoption of an award-winning general plan. San Diego has adjusted the format of the report over successive years to focus on topical areas of interest that particular year. While this approach makes comparing results year to year more difficult, it does allow the city to highlight progress on specific priorities.

Many communities use award programs to highlight their successes. The State of Utah had been looking at statewide growth issues and wanted a means to take the goals of a plan and show what success looked like in real communities. The Envision Utah created a set of annual awards in partnership with the Governor of Utah, called the Governor's Quality Growth Awards. In addition to educating policymakers and the community members about the growth strategies, the Envision Utah awards demonstrated real successes and the positive publicity was seen as a positive incentive for change.

Advances in technology provide new tools to enable the local agency and (most recently) the broader community to track the progress of implementation by the local agency. The era of big data, open data, and infometrics all align to help the various parties "digest" the mountain of data created by local agencies and partner organizations. New York City has created a whole section in the City administration focused on collecting and distributing city data to the broader community to encourage new perspectives on long-term issues.

Internet companies such as Walkscore, Nextdoor, and Zillow are collecting vast quantities of data and processing them in ways we only dreamed of a decade ago. They create new ways of delivering services, sharing information, and disrupting the ways of the past. Information that in the past may have been buried within an organization for technical staff to review is now able to be overlaid with information from other sources and mapped to tell compelling stories. Walkscore is one of the best means of measuring the health of a neighborhood by looking at access to services, amenities and neighborhood connectivity. Formerly the domain of separate city staff, these topics were "mashed up" into a totally new product.

Joint Venture Silicon Valley issues an annual State of the Valley that looks at a number of data sources and connects the trends into a compelling storyline each year. The report is rolled out annually with a high visibility, daylong conference for the public and private leadership of the Valley featuring local school entertainment and national caliber speakers. It is a superb example of a community report card that also serves as a public policy tool to drive the community to take on big policy issues.

Implementing Big Ideas: Envision Utah Community Engagement



Envision Utah is a non-profit organization that engages people to create and sustain communities that are beautiful, prosperous, healthy and neighborly for current and future residents. Established in 1997, Envision Utah began a conversation about the future of Utah in the role of a neutral facilitator bringing together business, government and residents to decide how the state will grow.

Utah faces an increase of 2.5 million additional residents by 2050 in one of the driest states in the nation. In that context, Envision Utah started with a premise that the public has the right to decide the future of the state, and the entire process was designed to allow the public to choose the path forward in a transparent manner. The end result was a vision for Utah's future and an implementation framework for making that vision a reality. The framework includes toolkits and strategies defining how different entities can contribute to implementation.

For more information, visit <http://envisionutah.org>.

The challenge for local agencies is to identify information they have in their systems and make it easily available to the community. Civic hacking groups are becoming popular across the country and many focus on the local community for projects to adopt. In some cases the best strategy is to get out of the way and let the community run loose.

Revise and Adjust

The one certainty is that what we plan for will rarely arrive as planned. There are many variables that we try to anticipate in our plans, but recessions, natural disasters, state legislation policy changes, and like events all have impacts to our community plans. Building resilience into those plans is critical to staying focused on the goals. Examples that local governments faced in the past five years include the lingering impacts of the Great Recession, Super Storm Sandy, and the dissolution of redevelopment financing in California. Each of these required planning agencies to adjust their strategy implementation in significant ways.

“Everyone has a plan ‘till they get punched in the mouth.”

—Mike Tyson

San Diego in the 2012 General Plan Annual Implementation Report noted:

“A major change that took place in 2011 affecting community plan preparation and implementation was the passage of AB 1X 26, the “Dissolution Act.” Under this legislation, all California Redevelopment Agencies were dissolved and their successor agencies began to function on February 1, 2012. Civic San Diego was formed in 2012 to replace CCDC and SEDC, to continue the wind down of redevelopment contracts and activities, and to pursue strategies to replace the former redevelopment program. In 2012, staff work began on a General Plan amendment to address the dissolution of Redevelopment, which will be brought forward to public hearings in 2013.”

Given that community planning and major infrastructure financing depended on redevelopment funding, the city was faced with a situation in which the general plan could become out of date with major implementation holes exposed. Planners used the annual general plan review to highlight that challenge and bring attention to its impact on achievement of long-term community goals. The annual report includes annotations of projects that have had No Action in the preceding year with room for staff to provide commentary on the challenges to implementation.

Ultimately, when an agency has no resources available to implement a specific goal, the question becomes: should that goal remain in the plan if it is impossible to attain? Atlanta’s Plan 2040 does a good job in providing a level of protection by aiming high for some goals while setting a more reasonable floor for actual performance.

Table 5. Implementing Big Ideas: Strategic Directions and Actions

Principles and Strategic Directions	Actions
Set meaningful goals for big ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create measurable goals for each area you want to change. • Consider one “moon shot” goal to stretch the organization beyond its comfort zone. • Ensure that the goals come from the community and are politically supported.
Utilize the big ideas to set priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align the goals with operating and capital budgets. • Annually review implementation progress to identify barriers and adjust goals as necessary.
Report regularly on implementation of the big ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create annual progress reports for the public and elected leaders. • Engage the community in tracking progress and calling for results. • Communicate with simple and compelling graphics.

7. Advancing Equity

The advancement of the public's health, safety and welfare has undergirded the very existence of the American City Planning function from its inception. By definition this means a commitment to advancing equal and fair access to basic human needs such as food, shelter, transportation, and safe and healthy living environments. In a democracy it also requires a commitment to fair and even-handed treatment of participants in city planning and the active recruitment of those frequently left out of the circles of power. In response to a recent survey conducted for this report, the following strategies and actions were identified by professional planners in order to become more effective voices for equity and fairness (see Appendix 2):

- Provide consistent and fair staff reports
- Apply the same rules to everyone
- Meet the needs of underserved and disadvantaged
- Focus on issues not individuals
- Establish public trust
- Remedy injustice
- Counter racism and discrimination
- Oppose placing locally unwanted land uses into areas lacking political influence
- Allow apartments where they are needed rather than where they are without opposition
- Define equity and fairness based on the community's values/expectations
- Hire minorities/embrace diversity
- Be the voice for future generations

Implementation of these strategies and actions into the workings of the planning office of the future requires careful consideration of three related themes:

- Make equity and fairness an integral part of the planning office's values, goals, and day to day activities
- Engage the community in innovative and inclusive ways to define equity and fairness
- Do what planners do best in an equitable and fair manner

Putting equity and fairness into practice involves interrelated and complex choices for individual planners, planning offices, and the communities that planners serve. The above themes provide a context to examine these issues in more detail.

Make Equity and Fairness Integral

Making equity and fairness integral to the workings of a planning office is mandated by AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. Many statements in the section titled "Principles to Which We Aspire" define how planners have previously agreed to approach this subject:

"We shall seek social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration. We shall urge the alteration of policies, institutions, and decisions that oppose such needs." (AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, Principle A.1: Our Overall Responsibility to the Public)

Specific items under Principle A.1 directly or indirectly relate to equity and fairness, providing insights into how planners should address these issues:

- a. "We shall always be conscious of the rights of others.
- b. We shall have special concern for the long-range consequences of present actions.
- c. We shall pay special attention to the interrelatedness of decisions.
- d. We shall provide timely, adequate, clear, and accurate information on planning issues to all affected persons and to governmental decision makers.
- e. We shall give people the opportunity to have a meaningful impact on the development of plans and programs that may affect them. Participation should be broad enough to include those who lack formal organization or influence.
- f. We shall promote excellence of design and endeavor to conserve and preserve the integrity and heritage of the natural and built environment.
- g. We shall deal fairly with all participants in the planning process. Those of us who are public officials or employees shall also deal evenhandedly with all planning process participants." (ibid.)

Taken together these aspirations broadly commit planners to equity and fairness. Members of AICP are directed to aspire to protect the rights of others, to consider long range consequences, to consider the interrelatedness of decisions, to provide timely information to all affected persons, to include those with little influence, and to deal fairly and evenhandedly with all participants.

As if the equitable and fair treatment of fellow human beings were an assignment of insufficient consequence planners are also directed to aspire to preserve the integrity of the natural and built environments within their communities.

While the AICP Code of Ethics is directed towards the behavior of individual members, implementation in the workplace will impact work programs and recommendations for which members bear responsibility. These aspirations taken together create serious and consequential responsibilities for all certified planners and the programs and offices for which they are responsible. They also provide guidance for the entire planning profession to advance equity and fairness in our work.

Engage the Community

While it is clear that the AICP Code of Ethics directs individual planners to aspire to high standards of equity and fairness, its application to planning policy (which is to say advocating for a "just" or "good" city) evoked mixed responses from practicing planners in the survey. Many are concerned that these issues take them outside the normal sphere of professional planning practice and into areas best resolved through the community's broader decision-making processes.

Greater consensus results from the consideration of the opposite side of the issue. There is broad agreement that planners must avoid contributing to inequity and unfairness. Perhaps this is another way of saying that planners are comfortable with high standards of equity and fairness to govern their personal behavior but look to the broader community to assist in translating these standards into public spending and regulatory policies.

So what practical definition would help planners advance the issue in their professional practice and work places as well as allow planners to advocate for equitable and just public policies? How do we define equity and fairness other than that we intend for it to be the opposite of injustice? Is there consensus among practicing planners about what actions and behaviors advance the cause of equity and fairness?

Susan Fainstein in her book “Just City” says:

“Our knowledge of what constitutes injustice is virtually instinctive – It consists of actions that disadvantage those who already have less or who are excluded from entitlements enjoyed by others who are no more deserving...

Nevertheless, my effort within the urban context is to “name” justice as encompassing equity, democracy, and diversity and to argue that its influence should bear on all public decisions...” (Susan Faunstein, *The Just City*, Cornell University Press, 2011)

The recent survey results indicate that most planners generally agree with Ms. Fainstein (79.2%). Some respondents would modify Ms. Fainstein “equity, democracy, and diversity” by substituting “inclusive” for “diversity”. All four terms are already broadly supported by the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

Do What Planners Do Best Equitably and Fairly

Planning offices are expected to add value to their community's decision-making processes by focusing on long range consequences, the interrelatedness of decisions, and through broad and open public participation in plan making and implementation. This is who planners are and what they do best, which is also strongly supported by the AICP Code of Ethics.

“We shall have special concern for the long-range consequences of present actions.” (AICP Code of Ethic and Professional Conduct, Principle A.1.b)

The application of this principle means that planners are responsible not only for considering the equitable and fair treatment of present residents but also to prepare their communities for the arrival of future residents regardless of social or economic status. This means that planners have an equal responsibility to prepare for the equitable and fair treatment of the homeless person riding towards their community on top of a freight train and a CEO coming by a private jet.

“We shall pay special attention to the interrelatedness of decisions.” (AICP Code of Ethic and Professional Conduct, Principle A.1.c)

The application of this principle requires planners to think not only about access to basic needs but also the resources needed to support necessary services to fulfill and sustain those needs. This means consideration of fiscal and economic impacts of development proposals as well as the protection of

Best Practice: Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan



Austin citizens helped create a citizen participation plan with several key principles, including transparency, openness to all, and broad community engagement, with proactive outreach to the underrepresented.

Engagement tools included:

- Public meetings with multi-cultural/ multi-lingual staff offered food, music, children's activities, child care, and translation services.
- Online and paper surveys in Spanish and English throughout the process, which included online participation, public events, library copies, and inserts in local periodicals.
- Online forums offered a less structured way to participate.
- Traveling multi-cultural teams visited high-traffic areas such as football games, farmers markets, and festivals to distribute surveys and directly engage passers-by.
- Meetings-in-a-Box allowed community groups, businesses, and individuals to host their own meetings at their convenience.
- A Speakers Bureau allowed community groups to host presentations from City staff.

community’s sustainable assets such as the built and natural environments. This can perhaps best be accomplished in an integrated manner through sustainable comprehensive planning. Sustainable comprehensive plans can be organized around broad interrelated concepts (e.g., the “triple bottom line” of environment, economy, and equity) and can be approved and implemented through well-established democratic processes such as operating and capital budgets. The Sustaining Places standards for comprehensive plans developed by APA include **Interwoven Equity** as one of six principles for communities to follow to integrate sustainability into their plans (David R. Godschalk and David C. Rouse, *Sustaining Places: Best Practices for Comprehensive Plans*, PAS Report 578, 2015).

“We shall give people the opportunity to have a meaningful impact on the development of plans and programs that may affect them. Participation should be broad enough to include those who lack formal organization or influence.” (AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, Principle A.1.e)

An obvious and persistent problem is the fact that in most communities only small percentages of the population participate in local elections. Even fewer participate directly in “plans and programs” under development by their local planning offices. In spite of the best efforts of planning offices, participation that does occur is frequently over represented by organizations and individuals with longstanding and special influence.

Planning Offices are becoming more adept at using emerging technology and social media to recruit new participants. While this is positive to increase overall participation, it may have limited capacity to engage those who lack resources, formal organization, and institutional influence and typically are left out of plan making and implementation programs.

Conclusions and Best Practices

Equity and fairness can become the “north-star” of future planning offices by a simple commitment to systematically integrating the issue into what planning offices traditionally do best. Most planning offices are the keepers of extensive demographic and economic data and can present it geographically and in other interesting formats to help focus their community’s attention. The Austin City Demographer, Ryan Robinson posts updated “Income and Poverty Landscapes” on the City’s website and serves as a resource to the City of Austin, media, and the public regarding issues relating to poverty, minority concentrations, and other socio-economic trends (www.austintexas.gov/page/demographic).

Planning offices are uniquely positioned to address equity and fairness in an integrative manner through planning across scales (from comprehensive plans to smaller area, corridor, or neighborhood plans) and for different

Best Practice: Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan



The Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan used innovative techniques to engage the underrepresented in the planning process, including:

- Community forums
- House parties in which residents gathered with their friends and neighbors to generate ideas about Albany’s future
- “Stoop” Surveys that engaged residents in their own neighborhoods to discuss issues and complete written surveys

For more information, visit www.albany2030.org.

projects and functions (e.g., transportation or parks and open space plans). Portland's 2011 Comprehensive Plan has a section called a "framework for equity" which contains a definition of equity and strategies to create equitable outcomes (www.portlandonline.com/portlandplan). Following the plan's adoption, Portland created an office of "Equity and Human Rights".

Planning offices can use reason and data to counter "not in my backyard" arguments when preparing staff reports for proposals that effect access to affordable community services, housing, and transportation. While most planning offices are not directly responsible for budgeting and capital improvement programming they can analyze proposed capital budgets through their comprehensive plan conformance or other review responsibilities. The Lincoln-Lancaster County, Nebraska Planning Department collaborates with their police department to compile accurate crime statistics to counter the commonly held perceptions that apartments inherently produce more per capita crime than detached single family homes. (www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan).

Planning offices can reach underrepresented and minority communities through targeted outreach programs, inclusive hiring practices, sensitivity training, and the development of translation and other communication skills. The Cities of Austin and Albany both used innovative outreach strategies to encourage participation in their recently completed comprehensive planning efforts.

Finally, planning offices of the future can commit to follow the directives of the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. This means planning offices of the future can serve as unapologetic and unrelenting voices for equity and fairness. To advance equity and become effective voices planning offices of the future should seek to:

- Reach underrepresented communities through innovative and targeted outreach programs
- Hire multi-cultural/multi-lingual staff and consultants
- Track demographic changes and trends and explain their significance for the community's future as a basic planning department function
- Integrate the community's definition, goals, and policies for equity and fairness into different plans and broadly implement those policies through regulatory and spending powers
- Recommend against the unfair concentration/distribution of locally unwanted land uses
- Recommend approval of attainable/affordable/workforce housing in distributed locations based on need
- Become the voice for future generations

Table 6. Advancing Equity: Strategic Directions and Actions

Principles and Strategic Directions	Actions
Make equity part of values, goals, and day-to-day activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Aspirational Principles of the AICP Code of Ethics to guide planning office activities. • Hire multi-cultural/multi-lingual staff and consultants.
Engage the community in innovative and inclusive ways to define equity and fairness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach underrepresented communities through innovative and targeted outreach programs. • Track demographic changes and trends and explain their significance for the community’s future.
Do what planners do best in an equitable and fair manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate equity and fairness into plans and implementation through regulations, capital investments, etc. • Educate and engage other departments, decision-makers, and the public on equity issues.

APPENDICES

Task Force Member Biographies Appendix 1

Task Force Outreach:

Division Membership Survey Results Appendix 2

2014 NPC Session Comments and Feedback Appendix 3

Millennial Focus Group Mind Mixer Comments Appendix 4

Appendix 1. Task Force Member Biographies

Joseph Horwedel, AICP, Chair



Joe is currently the interim Public Works Director for San Benito County assisting with organizational reviews and directing the review of several large development and capital projects to improve the County's economic health. He led the San Jose Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement for 7 years before retiring from the City in 2014 after 31 years. During his tenure at the City he led the adoption of the award winning Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan that resets growth patterns for the City and moves the City to an economically sustainable future. He was instrumental in the development of high rise housing in Downtown and creating new complete residential neighborhoods in the North San Jose industrial parks. He was one of the key leaders in achieving the adoption of the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan. He is the Chair of the City Planning and Management Division which has over 600 members and was recently recognized by the California Chapter of the APA for his contributions to the planning profession in the State of California. Joseph graduated from California Polytechnic University San Luis Obispo in 1983 with a B.S. in City and Regional Planning.

Fernando Costa, FAICP



Fernando serves as Assistant City Manager for the City of Fort Worth, overseeing a group of six departments that deal with infrastructure and development. He also serves as a part-time faculty member at the University of Oklahoma, teaching graduate courses in public finance and management. Before moving into both jobs seven years ago, he worked for ten years as Fort Worth's planning director, eleven years as planning director for Atlanta, and eleven years as a planner for the Middle Georgia Area Planning and Development Commission.

Mitchell Silver, FAICP



Mitchell became the New York City Parks Commissioner in May 2014 and is a past president of APA. He is an award-winning planner with almost 30 years of experience and is internationally recognized for his leadership in the planning profession and his contributions to contemporary planning issues. He specializes in comprehensive planning, place-making, and implementation strategies. As Parks Commissioner, Mitchell oversees management, planning, and operations of nearly 30,000 acres of parkland, which includes parks, playgrounds, beaches, marinas, recreation centers, wilderness areas, and other assets.

Prior to returning to his native New York City as Parks Commissioner, Mitchell served as the Chief Planning & Development Officer and Planning Director for Raleigh, NC. His career has included roles as a policy and planning director for the Manhattan Borough President, a principal of a New York City-based planning firm, a town manager in New Jersey, and deputy planning director in Washington, DC.

Commissioner Silver lectures extensively throughout the United States and abroad on a variety of planning topics. He is a contributing author and editor of International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) latest edition of "Local Planning: Contemporary Principles and Practice," which is a resource for local governments engaged in planning. As president of APA, he led an international effort to elevate the value and rebirth of planning in the 21st century. In 2012, the Urban Times named him one of the top international thought leaders of the built environment today. In 2013, UBM Future Cities named Mitchell Silver as one of the top 100 City Innovators in the world.

As planning director in Raleigh from 2005 to 2014, Mitchell led the comprehensive plan update process and a rewriting of the development code to create a vibrant 21st century city. He was an outspoken advocate for Raleigh and helped transform it into a world-class city with great streets, great places and great neighborhoods. His work has been featured in Time Magazine, The New York Times, The Guardian (U.K.), Philadelphia Inquirer, Huffington Post, Associated Press, Atlantic Cities, the Urban Times, Planning Magazine, the News & Observer, the Charlotte Observer, the Triangle Business Journal, Crain's Business Journal, BBC World News and National Public Radio (NPR).

Lucas Lindsey



Lucas is a Community Manager, managing the operations, programming, and marketing of Domi Station, an incubator and coworking space located in Tallahassee, Florida. He was a coeditor for This Big City, an award winning social media organization sharing ideas for cities in English, Chinese, Spanish, French and Italian. This Big City's tumblr supplements thisbigcity.net and delivers short-form ideas to over 225,000 followers. Lucas was named the APA Florida 2014 Planning Student of the Year for the Florida Chapter in September 2014, received the American Planning Association AICP Outstanding Planning Student Award in May 2014, and received the Edward E. McClure Award for Academic Achievement from the Florida State University Department of Urban and Regional Planning, from which he holds a Masters Degree in planning, in May 2014. He served on the APA Student Representative Council.

Katherine Poppel



Katherine is a current graduate and dual MLA/MUP student at the University of Washington. She holds a Bachelor of Urban Planning from the University of Cincinnati with international course work. She has a focus in sustainable, urban public space design, especially public space systems. Past internships include: Lake2Bay, City of Chicago, Department of Buildings; Congress for the New Urbanism; Town of Buena Vista Colorado, Global Site Plans, The Jerde Partnership. Katherine is a former APA Student Representative Council Chair and currently serves as Past Chair. Other APA involvement includes the University of Washington Planning Student Association, University of Cincinnati Planning Student Organization, and Ball State University Student Planning Association. She was also a founding member of the Sustainable Communities Division, an advisor to the APA Board of Directors (2013-2014), Chair of the Outstanding PSO Awards Jury, and served on the APA Membership Committee.

Garner Stoll, AICP



Garner has extensive experience as a city planner in "town-gown" communities. He has managed planning programs in the university communities of Lawrence, Kansas; Lincoln, Nebraska; Boulder, Colorado; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and Austin, Texas. Over his 40-year career, he played a key role in efforts to rethink the functions and procedures of planning departments and improve customer service. One of his biggest accomplishments was managing preparation of the "Imagine Austin" comprehensive plan for Austin, Texas which involved 18,000 citizens and received six state and national awards. Garner received a Commitment to Excellence Award while working for Parker, Colorado; a "Best Department" award while with Oklahoma City; and a "Distinguished Leadership Award" from APA. Garner has a bachelor of anthropology (1974) and master of regional and city planning (1976) from the University of Oklahoma. Interesting lesser-known fact: Garner is in the process of hiking the 2200 mile Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine.

Al Zelinka, FAICP



Al is an Assistant City Manager (and former Community Development Director) for the City of Riverside, California. Prior to joining the Riverside Team, Al was Planning Manager and Community Development Director for the City of Fullerton as well as Vice President with RBF Consulting and served as Principal of RBF Consulting’s URBAN DESIGN STUDIO. For the past twenty years, Mr. Zelinka’s practice has upheld his original planning and urban design career objective: to “make a difference” in communities and the profession. He has practiced planning and delivered presentations or training in more than 28 states (plus the District of Columbia), directed 100 projects and played an active role in another 50 (more than 35 of which have received awards), and has consistently been involved in the profession and public service throughout his career. He is the co-author of two APA publications, *SafeScape* and *Placemaking on a Budget*. Al is currently the immediate Past President of the California Planning Roundtable, a 30-year organization dedicated to advancing the practice and profession of planning and providing leadership for a better California. Al graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Public Planning from Northern Arizona University in 1989 and a Master of Regional Planning from Cornell University in 1991.

David Rouse, AICP



David is an AICP certified planner and registered landscape architect with over 30 years of experience in community planning and design. Since July 2013 he has served as Managing Director of Research and Advisory Services for the American Planning Association in Washington, DC. In this capacity he leads APA’s applied research programs, including Planning Advisory Services and the three National Centers for Planning: Green Communities, Hazards Planning, and Planning and Community Health. David co-authored APA publications on green infrastructure and comprehensive planning and is managing APA’s Sustaining Places Initiative to integrate sustainability into local governmental comprehensive plans. Prior to joining APA David was a principal of WRT, a nationally recognized consulting firm. His WRT projects, many of which received awards for excellence from APA or other organizations, included comprehensive plans for cities, counties, and regions; parks, open space, and green infrastructure plans; transportation, economic development, and urban design plans; and zoning and development standards and ordinances.

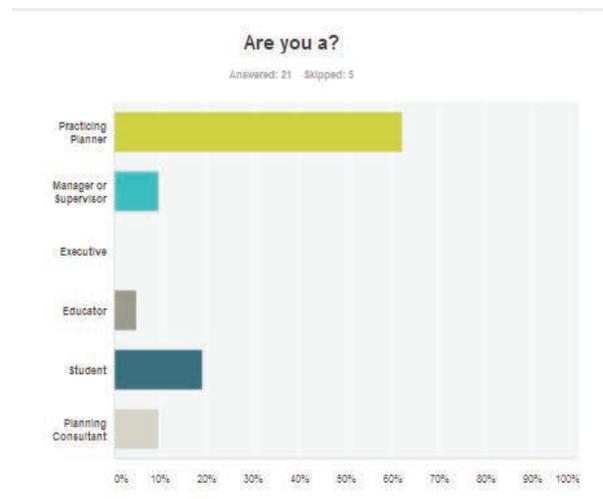
Appendix 2. Division Membership Survey Results

The Task Force conducted surveys of four divisions of the American Planning Association on the issue of equity in planning. These were the City Planning and Management Division, Gays and Lesbians in Planning, Latinos in Planning and Blacks in Planning. (Following each question are paraphrased general themes from survey responses)

Question 1 (Who participated?):

Are you a?

Answer Choices	Responses (% of 59)
Practicing Planner	49.1
Manager or Supervisor	27.1
Executive	8.4
Educator	1.6
Student	8.4
Planning Consultant	3.3



Question 2:

Susan Fainstein in her book “Just City” says defining a “just city” is difficult but what constitutes injustice is broadly understood:

“Our knowledge of what constitutes injustice is virtually instinctive – It consists of actions that disadvantage those who already have less or who are excluded from entitlements enjoyed by others who are no more deserving...”

Nevertheless, my effort within the urban context is to “name” justice as encompassing equity, democracy, and diversity and to argue that its influence should bear on all public decisions...”

Do you agree with Ms. Fainstein that “equity, democracy, and diversity” are guiding principles that should influence all city planning decisions?

Answer Choices	Responses (% of 53)
Yes	79.2
No	20.8

Question 3

If not, how would you define equity and fairness in relationship to City Planning?

- The need to distinguish “equity” from “charity”
- Democracy as practiced in 21st century cities is partial (few participate) and imperfect at best and tends to be dominated by special interests and the powerful
- Planners largely work in “grey areas” and ambiguity makes general definitions difficult.
- Agree that equity and fairness should “bear on” but would not go so far as “influence all” public decisions.
- Agrees with the terms “equity” and “democracy” but feels that “diversity” is not an operational term for planners as it may involve implementation of undesirable quotas. Suggest substituting the term “inclusive” for “diversity.”
- Does not include economy which is an imperative to maintain jobs and an adequate tax base to create resources needed to services.
- Definition is adequate but planners should only attempt to apply this issue to areas outside of planner’s traditional responsibilities. As an example planners should not weigh in on minimum wages while negotiating redevelopment agreements.

Question 4

Please discuss how equity and fairness influences your actions as a city planner.

- Hear and consider all sides of issues/make recommendations that produces the best result for most people
- Provide equal access/treatment to all
- Reach out to those not at the table
- The voice for future generations
- It effects how we frame/define problems
- Advocates for the disadvantaged
- Work for the good of all not just the powerful
- Provide the same information to everyone/consistency
- Bring perspective as a minority planner

Question 5

Describe how your planning office or department provides a voice for equity and fairness.

- We follow federal guidelines for environmental assessment
- Open public forums and community outreach and engagement
- Being fair and logical and by applying codes equally to everyone

Question 6

How do you define “environmental justice”?

- Making sure major facilities (airports) do not negatively impact one part of the community while negatively impacting another part
- Disclosing environmental impacts of planning decisions
- Equal distribution of undesirable land uses
- Executive Order 12898 – “Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income...”
- Not placing undesirable uses in disadvantaged neighborhoods
- Sustainable use of natural resources
- Not concentrating poverty, providing equal access to education and other services
- Should reflect the community’s values
- Equal distribution of environmental benefits and detriments

Question 7

What challenges does your office or department face in providing a voice for equity and fairness/environmental justice?

- Lower income communities lack contacts, organization, and skills to hold officials accountable
- Affluent communities prohibit higher density/multifamily housing.
- “Not in my neighborhood”
- Land use and development decisions dominated by the small number who choose to participate
- Lack of diversity in policy makers
- Locally unwanted land uses placed in low income neighborhoods
- Official notification (newspapers) not effective.
- Separating fact from urban myths
- Lack of participation
- Lack of budget and resources
- Politics and money
- Local politics does not support involvement
- Public’s fear of bureaucracy
- Political will from elected officials
- Outdated tools for public engagement
- The majority of the community is doing well and doesn’t see the problem
- Institutional and bureaucratic inertia
- APA not accepting sessions on environmental justice
- Resources to effectively engage the community

Question 8

In the future how can Planning Departments more effectively provide a voice for equity and fairness? What actions are needed? What will prevent success?

- Open and transparent policies
- Renewed efforts to reach low and moderate income communities
- Needs to be formally integrated into departmental mission statement, goals and training and implemented through performance review
- Educate and lead by example
- New ways to reach greater numbers and through staff diversity, technology, and the elevation of the planning profession
- Point out the costs of disenfranchisement
- Speak up
- Conduct social impact assessments
- Make it a priority in everything we do

Appendix 3. Audience Comments and Feedback 2014 NPC Planning Office of the Future Session May 28, 2014

Panelists:

Mitchell Silver
Joseph Horwedel
Lucas Lindsey

Moderator:

David Rouse

Question: Important thing to acknowledge – many public agencies are going towards a contract model in terms of their operations. If you combine the two things – public/private – you can have innovative things coming out of it. Will contractual services provide an opportunity for innovation?

Mitchell: where you see some move towards privatization is in small or medium size jurisdictions. But public officials need to give public planners the ability, the tools to be innovative and creative. At the same time they need to demand excellence from staff.

Question: Should the planning office of the future be just planners, or mixed in with others (e. g., fire dept. and public works)? Would be a way to build trust / relationships.

Lucas: in Austin the city is deploying teams across disciplines to implement their comprehensive plan.

Mitchell: sees people using “outreach” instead of “in-reach” strategy. Move from a silos to a systems approach. More and more departments are using collaboration, integrating across disciplines.

Question: As a long-time planning director, wonders how the scope of project addresses the three “e”s of sustainability. This touches on the privatization issue. While environmental sustainability has made progress along the way, we have regressed in terms of equity. Privatization can be a way of taking tax resources from the less affluent. What is the millennial perspective on this?

Lucas: equity is the most important issue to people my age, students I talk to in my program. People are more community-oriented, they are going out into communities to organize, get grants. Getting engaged in communities for equity purposes. Management can get in the way, need to be less controlling and more mentorship oriented.

Question: Observation on private sector side is there seems to be a decline in public sector planning agencies. Less public planners coming to APA conferences, showing leadership and innovation. This is challenging for the private sector.

Mitchell: public sector entities are politically challenged, but they can do the right thing. Planners want to do the right thing, but often aren’t in the environment where they can step out and do the kinds of things you are talking about.

Joe: in a session he went to the number one skill young planners wanted was political negotiation.

Question: One of the trends you talked about is sprawl – is that an obsolete term given the trends? Has egative connotations.

Mitchell: maybe, but the goal is to let people know the costs of sprawling land development patterns. Have people understand that land is a commodity, what the choices are.

Question (student from Ball State): Technical skills will be a valuable asset for millennials in the future planning office. What other skills will we need to be effective other than GIS?

Lucas: soft skills, more about leadership, getting involved in community.

Mitchell: first and foremost communications – not just talking, but listening. Observation. Learning not on how to articulate, but also how to listen and learn. You can't look at data and get to know a place. You will be surprised at how your recommendations will improve.

Comment by 1968 graduate of Ball State: Born, lived, will probably die in a small town. Thing that struck me – small towns are kind of like laboratories for big cities. Lot of things Mitch said were challenges in small towns. Looking at quality of life plan plans right now – policy and product oriented.

Question: What are the kinds of things that small towns deal with, how they dealing with them?

Mitchell: not having the same resources as larger cities, they have to work with volunteers. Partner with neighboring jurisdictions. Important to acknowledge trends, that you must deal with them.

Joe: how can you attract people back that left town? San Jose is competing for talent with San Francisco. How do we let ourselves be funky, let things happen that create the right place? Small towns have opportunity to embrace that.

Question: regional collaboration is important. Many issues are beyond planning agency charges, things like sea level rise that transcend regional boundaries. Larger issues like watershed planning, high speed rail. Will the planning office of the future deal with regional issues?

Mitchell: is a matter of governance. In most planning offices there is collaboration across the board. Until the governance structure changes – everything is local, taxes are local.

Lucas: views everything very socially, thinks about the regional network. Need to be meet-ups, regional groups where people connect.

Comment: What is missing from the conversation is how the planning office is changing, most millennials don't want to be in the office all the time, maybe 3-4 days. Maybe there won't be an office of planners, maybe they will meet in coffee shops.

Appendix 4. Millennial Focus Group Mind Mixer Comments

MindMixer

In June 2014, the Planning Office of the Future Task Force launched a round of online outreach using MindMixer (now known as mySidewalk) to host key questions and gather feedback. Those questions included the following:

1. What skills or expertise do planners need to stay on the cutting edge?
2. What will it take to attract and retain the most talented and passionate young planners?
3. What are the key trends and issues that are affecting the planning community today?
4. Given the trends and issues, what should the planning office of the future look like?

Over an approximately two-month period, our taskforce collected sixteen response ideas and twenty-two comments. These topics, ideas, and comments can be found in their entirety at this web address: <http://apa.mindmixer.com/>.

Millennial Focus Group

Over the course of Spring 2014, task force member Lucas Lindsey Lucas collected feedback from Millennial planning professionals, including both graduate students and early-career planners working across the country. On March 28th, 2014, a focus group was held over Google Hangout. Six young professionals attended, representing planning departments in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Dallas, Austin, and Tallahassee. Other young planners were contacted using additional methods of outreach, such as email, Tumblr, and Twitter. The participants were:

Participants

- Alicia Albertson (aalbertson@riversideca.gov)
- Brian Norton (bnorton@riversideca.gov)
- Rebecca Unitt (runitt@riversideca.gov)
- Robert Anderson (Robert.anderson@austintexas.gov)
- Pam Larson (Pamela.Larson@austintexas.gov)
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Focus group questions included the following:

1. What are the core trends shaping the direction and scope of planning?
2. What new skills or expertise do planners need to stay on the cutting edge and actively shape the cities of the future?
3. In response to these trends and skillsets, what does the planning office of the future look like? How is it structured? What does it oversee? Feel free to let this question fire up big and bold trains of thought. What kind of work do we want to be doing?
4. What will it take for the planning office of the future to attract the most talented and passionate planners out there? What kind of office do young professionals want to work in?

Discussion

1. What are the core trends shaping the direction and scope of planning?

Major themes included:

- Collection, organization, and analysis of big data and cross-department data sets.
- Financial impact analyses. Greater emphasis on understanding relative costs and revenues by different land uses and built form.
- Embracing and supporting grassroots action indicative of community trends and interests. Examples include food trucks, better block programs, tactical urbanism, and urban agriculture.

2. What new skills or expertise do planners need to stay on the cutting edge and actively shape the cities of the future?

Major themes included:

- *Design based technical skills.* Two driving reasons: First, plans and outreach are increasingly form based and design intensive. Second, a lot of engagement, outreach, and conversation is online, where content is highly visual and aesthetics are vital. Branding, infographics—these are important but traditionally weak points for local gov.
- *Understanding of financial markets and basic real estate economics.* Better understanding of project financing, costs, and feasibility. Performa review and creation—these skills help bridge gap, support conversation with developers, and improve implementation.
- *Software and social media technical skills.* Hands on understanding of open source, open data, and some of the backend of online tools. Social media analytics also important to analyze what’s trending, craft engagement campaigns, and facilitate conversation. This can be difficult if social media control is exclusively held by other offices or departments.
- *Multilingual and multicultural backgrounds.* This is as much about cultural relationship building and sensitivity/understanding of ethnic customs and neighborhoods as it is about direct language translation.
- *Focus on customer service and interpersonal skills.* Approachable demeanor and presentation. Citizens as customers and work to change perception of stiff, impersonal government.

3. In response to these trends and skillsets, what does the planning office of the future look like? How is it structured? What does it oversee? Feel free to let this question fire up big and bold trains of thought. What kind of work do we want to be doing?

Major themes included:

- Empowered by more mobile hardware. Laptops and tablets and supportive mobile software facilitates real time community engagement processes, data collection, and field observation.
- Site level observation, study of actual interaction and bike/ped/motorists experience on the ground. Helps to focus on more human-oriented mindset as well as facilitates better design decisions. Experience places and spaces first hand. If there’s a new bike lane, try biking it to see how it feels, etc.
- Collaborative, team-based culture and process. Offices may look more like pools of local

professionals tasked to address specific issues rather than segmented bodies who are meant to only address one piece of the larger topic. An example is Austin's interdisciplinary priority program teams and Raleigh's use of implementation teams. Planning, or a piece of the office, could even exist at higher organizational level that gives directive to approach tasks more collaboratively and across departments. Cross-department collaboration repeatedly came up in focus group and phone interviews.

- Partnership building. Relationship building with outside groups, organizations, non-profits, and interest groups. Formalization of periodic communication and outreach process. Outreach continual, not simply driven because of an issue that's come up. Difference between someone who calls you now and then to see how you are doing and someone who only calls when they need something.

4. What will it take for the planning office of the future to attract the most talented and passionate planners out there? What kind of office do young professionals want to work in?

Major themes included:

- Community space and dynamic programming. Offices better located relative to mixed-use areas, transit--embodying the values of planning. Within office more emphasis on informal meeting space, collaborative areas, even areas open to community and partner groups. There is need to interact and provide opportunity for discussion and relationship building outside of boardroom/ conference business meetings. This would improve camaraderie, outcomes, and process--it could also be programmatic with more joint events, open speaker series, meetups, mixers and so on.
- Egalitarian culture, as opposed to strict hierarchical structure. Favoring mentoring over management. Tasks and responsibilities less about the number after a staffer's title and more about interests, backgrounds, and skills.
- Creative compensation and continued education. Incentive based pay, professional training opportunities, even incentive based training, could help with retention, motivation, morale, etc. An example would be mid-career staff that express interest in catching up on emergent skills and programs such as Adobe Creative Suite. Empower curiosity and lifelong learning. Cross training is a must, especially for staff in danger of becoming too specialized and thus lacking upward mobility and management opportunities.

A full transcription of the event can be found here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1U7KvpKaYL93q5x_skFCqBtVXqbEj38qAHpHqvxXdU94

A subsequent MindMixer post **"Given the trends and issues, what should the planning office of the future look like?"** elicited a very good discussion that even carried over into other social media and blogs.

Interactive walls

The planning office of the future requires interactive walls that not only facilitate the interaction of planners who are in the office, but also those who are outside of the office. These walls may be used for face to face and/ or online meetings. It can be as simple as a chalk board. The general concept would be providing opportunities for people to use the walls for (offline/ online) interaction.

Less org chart - more focus on product - great communities

Right now, we communicate local government in terms of the org chart: what are the departments and who reports to whom. This fit the 20th century, but not the needs of communities that need to set priorities, connect dots and invest in multi-purpose activities. This matters for planning because there is frustration with silos and the disconnect between long range and current planning.

Instead, what if we injected a little graphic design, describe processes in an approachable way, build in data/tech and form a continuous improvement loop that works?

This is a raw first cut, but what about a new kind of graphic? This puts the work planners do (planning) at the most important parts of the community conversations.

<http://greaterplaces.com/blog/we-cant-change-cities-until-we-change-this/>

It should look like a food truck.

Planning offices should be accessible, transparent, and flexible. If our goal is to engage with local people, organizations and businesses, we should go to them, not the other way around. The food truck model also represents a creative approach to the use of public space and the ability to start infill projects in areas with vacant lots.

Hi-tech and connected

More online and interactive presence, less reliance on “old school” outreach methods. MindMixer, has the potential to be used in this way. Many cities are using it to create a convenient online platform for citizens to contribute their thoughts. Here’s an example of how Tampa, FL is using MindMixer-<http://www.youinvisiontampa.com>

Another responded that we are a MindMixer community and, while we’ve had some good success in our first four months with getting the conversation going, we recognize that online, digital media only reaches a small segment of our population. Technology must certainly be more embraced by the planning professional, but not to the detriment of in-person interaction.