The **Chapter Presidents Council** (CPC) of APA has kindly provided this document as a free resource for examinees preparing for the AICP Certification Exam. To purchase the full CPC Exam Prep Guide, please contact your chapter’s **Professional Development Officer**.

## HISTORY

The history of the planning profession dates back hundreds of years, but yet understanding what’s happened in the past decade is just as important. Our cities reflect planning history and that history affects us every day as planning practitioners.

### RECOMMENDED APA RESOURCES

- **American Planning History since 1900:** [https://planning.org/timeline/](https://planning.org/timeline/)
- **American Planning Association History:** [https://planning.org/history/](https://planning.org/history/)
- **APA Planning Pioneer Awards:** [https://planning.org/awards/pioneers/](https://planning.org/awards/pioneers/)

### ESSENTIAL TOPICS

**Timeline**
The following are key events in the history of the planning profession. Additionally, APA has an interactive timeline on their [website](https://planning.org) which should also be referenced that provides more detailed information on many of these key events.

- **1785** Ordinance of 1785 provided for the rectangular land survey of the Old Northwest. Daniel Elazar called the rectangular survey has been called "the largest single act of national planning in our history and ... the most significant in terms of continuing impact on the body politic".
- **1855** First "model tenement" built in Manhattan.
- **1862** Homestead Act opened lands of the Public Domain to settlers for a nominal fee and five years residence.
- **1864** New York Council of Hygiene of the Citizens Association mounts a campaign to raise housing and sanitary standards.
- **1867** First major tenement house law (New York) restricting physical conditions.
- **1867** San Francisco prohibits specific obnoxious uses in certain districts--beginning of land-use zoning in U.S.
1879 Debut of the “Dumbbell Tenement”. A form of multifamily housing widely built in New York, and notorious for poor living conditions (lack of light, air, space).

1880-84 Building of Pullman, Illinois, a model industrial town by George Pullman.

1890 *How the Other Half Lives* by Jacob Riis is published; a powerful stimulus to housing and neighborhood reform.

1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. A source of the City Beautiful Movement and of the urban planning profession.

1898 Ebenezer Howard publishes *Tomorrow A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, start of the Garden City movement. Reissued in 1902 as *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*.

1899 First state court support of ordinance/act restricting heights of buildings.

1901 New York State Tenement House Law, which is the legislative basis for the revision of city codes that outlawed tenements such as the "Dumbbell Tenement."

1903 Letchworth, the first English Garden City, is constructed. This is a stimulus to the New Town movement in America.

1903 First local “civic center” plan developed for Cleveland, by Daniel H. Burnham.

1906 Daniel Burnham’s *Plan for San Francisco* and the first application of "City Beautiful" principles to a major American city.

1907 First comprehensive city survey, Pittsburgh.

1907 First official, local, and permanent planning board in Hartford, Connecticut.

1909 First National Conference on City Planning in Washington, D.C.

1909 First American use of zoning to restrict future development in Los Angeles.

1909 First *State Enabling Act* passes in Wisconsin.

1909 *Plan of Chicago* by Daniel Burnham is the first metropolitan regional plan in the U.S.

1913 Flavel Shurtleff’s *Carrying Out the City Plan* is the first major American textbook on planning.

1913 *Technical Advisory Corporation* is the first private planning consulting firm, located in New York City and created by George B. Ford and Earnest P. Goodrich.

1913 New Jersey is the first state to institute mandatory referral of subdivision plats.

1913 Massachusetts is the first state to make planning mandatory for local governments.

1914 Newark, NJ hires the first full-time municipally employed planner, Harland Bartholomew.

1915 California is the first state to institute extraterritorial mandatory referral of subdivision plats.
1915 Patrick Geddes writes *Cities in Evolution*, a foundation for regional planning theory.

1916 The National Park Service established.

1916 The nation’s first comprehensive zoning resolution adopted by New York City Board of Estimates under the leadership of George McAneny and Edward Bassett.

1916 Nelson P. Lewis published *Planning of the Modern City*.

1916 First federal-aid highway act.

1916 First regional functional authority plan adopted by the Miami Conservancy District, Ohio.

1917 Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. becomes first president of newly founded American City Planning Institute, forerunner of the American Institute of Planners and the American Institute of Certified Planners.

1919 Three regional authorities—Metropolitan Sewerage Commission, Metropolitan Water Board and Metropolitan Park Commission combine to form the Boston Metropolitan District Commission.

1919 First parkway in America completed in Bronx River Parkway, New York.

1919 Ohio Planning Conference is the first statewide citizens organization in support of planning.

1921 New Orleans designates the Vieux Carre Commission, the first historic preservation commission in the U.S.

1921 The Port of New York Authority is the first bi-state functional authority.

1922 Inauguration of Regional Plan of New York under Thomas Adams.

1922 Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission is created.

1922 The first suburban auto-oriented shopping center, "County Club Plaza" in Kansas City, Missouri is constructed.


1925 Cincinnati, Ohio, becomes first major American city to endorse a comprehensive plan. Later it was adopted by the planning board.

1925 Ernest Burgess’s "Concentric Zone" model of urban structure and land use is published.

1926 First public subsidy for housing was developed in the state of New York.

1926 Supreme Court upholds constitutionality of comprehensive zoning in the *Village of Euclid v. Amber Realty Co.* case.


1928 The first "new town" is built in Radburn, New Jersey.

1929 *The Regional Survey of New York and Its Environs* by Clarence Perry is published.
1931 National Land Utilization Conference is convened in Chicago where three hundred agricultural experts deliberate on rural recovery programs and natural resource conservation.

1933 The New Deal begins.

1933 Federal Emergency Relief Administration is set up under Harry Hopkins.

1933 The Home Owners Loan Corporation is established to help homeowners facing loss through foreclosure.

1933 The Tennessee Valley Authority is created for unified and multipurpose rehabilitation and redevelopment of the Tennessee valley. It was the first large-scale regional program in integrated economic, social, and physical development planning by the federal government.

1933 First U.S. National Planning Board created. It was later abolished as the National Resources Planning Board in 1943.

1934 The National Housing Act established FSLIC for insuring savings deposits and the FHA for insuring individual home mortgages.

1934 American Society of Planning Officials (ASPO) was founded with Alfred Bettman as the first president.

1934 First U.S. federally built housing for the general population.

1935 Resettlement Administration established under Rexford Tugwell to carry out experiments in land reform and population resettlement.


1937 Housing Act of 1937 is the first major federal legislative commitment to public housing.

1939 Homer Hoyt’s ”sector theory” is described in The Structure and Growth of Residential Neighborhoods in American Cities.

1939 ACPI renamed American Institute of Planners (AIP).

1944 Serviceman’s Readjustment Act (“GI Bill”) guarantees loans for homes to veterans under favorable terms.

1945 The first state redevelopment act passed in Pennsylvania.


1948 Cincinnati is the first city to adopt a new comprehensive plan following World War II.

1949 Housing Act (Wagner-Ellender-Taft Bill) is the first U.S. comprehensive housing legislation and also provided funding for urban redevelopment.

1949 The National Trust for Historic Preservation is created and chartered by Congress.
1954 In *Berman v. Parker*, the U.S. Supreme Court upholds the right of the Washington, D.C. Redevelopment Land Agency to condemn properties that are unsightly, though non-deteriorated, if required to achieve objectives of duly established area redevelopment plan.


1954 The Housing Act of 1954 creates the Urban Renewal program.

1960 *Image of the City* by Kevin Lynch defines basic elements of a city’s “imageability”.

1961 Hawaii becomes first state to institute statewide zoning.

1961 *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* by Jane Jacobs is published.

1961 First U.S. federal housing subsidy program.

1961 New York City is the first major American city to introduce “flexible” controls in their zoning ordinance.

1963 Columbia, Maryland, a new town between Washington D.C. and Baltimore is constructed.

1964 Civil Rights Act outlaws discrimination based on race, creed, and national origin in places of public accommodation.

1964 T.J. Kent writes *The Urban General Plan*.

1965 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) created and Robert Weaver is the first Secretary.

1966 The National Historic Preservation Act passed, and establishes the National Register of Historic Places and provides, through its Section 106, for the protection of preservation-worthy sites and properties threatened by federal activities. It also creates the national Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and directs states appoint a State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

1966 The Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act launched the “model cities” program.

1969 Ian McHarg publishes *Design with Nature*, linking planning to the natural environment.

1969 National Environmental Policy Act requires an environmental impact statement for every federal or federally aided state or major local action that may harm the environment.

1970 Federal Environmental Protection Agency is established to administer the Clean Air Act also adopted in 1970.

1971 First major introduction of the transfer of development rights (TDR) concept in Chicago.


1972 First rapid transit system built in the San Francisco Bay area.
1974 The Housing and Community Development Act replaces the categorical grant with the block grant as the principal form of federal aid for local community development.

1978 American Institute of Planners (AIP) and American Society of Planning Officials (ASPO) merge to become the American Planning Association (APA).

1978. The U.S. Supreme Court upholds Penn Central Transportation Co. v. City of New York, New York City’s landmark preservation law as applied to Grand Central Terminal.

1983 The New Jersey Supreme Court rules that all 567 municipalities in the state must build their “fair share” of affordable housing.

1987 In Nollan v. California Coastal Commission, land-use restrictions, to be valid, must be tied directly to a specific public purpose.

1991 Passage of Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) by Congress. This is the first federal transportation law to mandate planning.

1992 In Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Council, the U.S. Supreme Court limits local and state government’s ability to restrict private property without compensation.

1994 In Dolan v. City of Tigard, the U.S. Supreme Court rules that a jurisdiction must show that there is a "rough proportionality" between the adverse impacts of a proposed development and the exactions it wishes to impose on the developer.

2000 The Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA) is adopted.

2000 The Disaster Mitigation Act was the first time a proactive approach to disaster relief had been taken, including requirements for state and local entities to coordinate mitigation planning and implementation.

2005 The Kelo V. City of New London case was decided by the Supreme Court of the United States.

Important Planners
Behind every historical event or movement in planning is a planner or planners who have provided contributions to the industry. The following are planners that have been key in the industry.

The American Planning Association has recognized planning pioneers with their Planning Pioneer Award. These pioneers, all who had had significant impacts in American planning can be found on APA’s website at https://planning.org/awards/pioneers/.

In addition to those recognized by APA, the following planners have also made important contributions.
Saul Alinsky – Born in 1909, Alinsky is best known for his work as a community organizer and writer. His organizing started when he worked part time with the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Eventually, he moved from labor organizing to community organizing where he focused on improving the living conditions and city services for those in poor communities. Alinsky is the author of *Rules for Radicals*, published in 1971.

Ernest Burgess – Burgess was an urban sociologist with the University of Chicago. With his colleague, Robert Park, he developed the concentric zone model in 1925 which depicts land use in a series of rings including the central business district, residential zone, and others. This model was discussed in the 1925 book he authored, *The City*.

Peter Calthorpe – Calthorpe, born in 1949, is an urban planner, urban designer and architect. He is known for developing the concept of Transit Oriented Development in *The Next American Metropolis*, as well as for focusing on sustainability. He was the founder and first president of the Congress for New Urbanism.

Rachel Carson – Carson (1907-1964), was a marine biologist, a conservationist, and author. She started her career at the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, and later, she transitioned to writing full time. In 1962, *Silent Spring*, was published which focused on pesticides and the environment. The book is credited to helping to launch the environmental movement.

Walter Christaller – A German geographer, born in 1893, Christaller developed the Central Place Theory after studying settlement patterns in southern Germany. The Central Place Theory, published in 1933, attempts to explain the size and distribution of cities.

Andres Duany – Born in 1949, Duany is an architect and planner. He is known for his work on sustainable urban development and new urbanism. Duany is recognized as the designer for Seaside, Florida and the Traditional Neighborhood Development zoning ordinance. He founded the Congress for New Urbanism

Joel Garreau – Garreau is a journalist and author born in 1948. He wrote the book, *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier*, which was published in 1991, and where the term Edge City was the made popular. Garreau was also a reporter and editor with *The Washington Post*.

Patrick Geddes – Geddes was a Scottish biologist and planner born in 1854. He is known for his innovative thinking and coined two key ideas—the concept of “region” to the architectural and planning fields and the term conurbation. Because of this, Geddes is known as the “Father of Regional Planning”. He authored *Cities in Evolution*. 

Ebenezer Howard – Howard was born in London in 1850. He founded the Garden City movement where he felt that people should be exposed to both the city and the countryside. This came in response to how cities were being developed at the time—industrial, sprawling, pollution and no green space. Two garden cities, Welwyn and Letchworth were built by Howard in England in the early 1900's based upon the principles of the Garden City. He is the author of *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, which is now known as *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*.

Jane Jacobs – Born in 1916, Jacobs is known for her work as a journalist and author. In 1961, her book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, was published. The book, based upon Jacobs' own experiences and observations, looked at urban planning and principles happening in the 1950's which she felt led to the decline of cities.

Norman Krumholz – Krumholz is a professor at Cleveland State University, and prior to that time he practiced planning in Ithaca, Pittsburgh and Cleveland. He also served as President of the American Planning Association. Krumholz is known for his work and publications around equity planning.

Le Corbusier – A pioneer of modern architecture, Le Corbusier was born in 1887 in Switzerland. He was also influential in urban planning, in particular with his vision of an ideal city—the Radiant City. The Radiant City envisioned superblocks and delineated between different uses such as housing, factories, and businesses.

George Pullman – Known for his work designing and manufacturing the Pullman railroad car, Pullman who was born in 1831, created the town of Pullman. Located just south of Chicago, the town of Pullman was built for factory employees and contained housing, churches shopping and parks. In the end, the town of Pullman did not succeed because of the desire of the town to make money like a private business. The town is now incorporated into the City of Chicago.

Edward Ullman – Ullman was an American geographer born in 1912. In 1945, with Chauncy Harris, Ullman created the Multiple Nuclei Model. The model said that outside of the central business district, there are other smaller nodes of economic activity which then acts as a growth point.

William Whyte – Born in 1917, Whyte spent time studying behavior of people in urban spaces. The observations led to the “Street Life Project” which looked at pedestrians and city dynamics. The Project for Public Places, a nonprofit organization, is based upon Whyte's work.
Frank Lloyd Wright – Best known as an architect, Wright also contributed to the planning industry with his Broadacre City vision. Wright’s Broadacre City vision was introduced in 1932 and focused on low density cities away from urban areas. Technological changes such as the automobile and telephone, made such a vision possible.

Catherine Wurster – Wurster, a member of the “housers”, was an advocate for affordable housing and improving housing for low income households. She wrote Modern Housing in 1934, and later was an author of the Housing Act of 1937 and advisor for five presidents. Later she went on to become an educator.

Planning Movements and Influences
Many of the important planners listed above have been influential in historical planning movements or influential on the planning world in other ways. The following are just a few of the important planning movements in history.

Hippodamus Hippodamus is known as the Father of urban planning. As an ancient Greek urban planner, he developed the Hippodamian Plan or grid plan.

Sanitary Reform & Public Health Movement The Sanitary Reform and Public Health Movement began in the mid 1800’s as urbanization was happening at a rapid rate. The goal was to prevent the spread of infectious diseases and epidemics.

Settlement Housing Movement A social movement in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Settlement Housing Movement’s goal was to create a connectedness between the rich and the poor. Settlement Workers, often from the middle class, would live and volunteer their time in settlement houses. The most famous Settlement House in the United States was Chicago’s Hull House founded by Jane Addams in 1889.

Garden Cities The Garden City movement was an idea from Sir Ebenezer Howard in the late 1800s. The concept of this planned community of 32,000 people was that it would be self-contained with residential, industry and agriculture and then surrounded by green space. The cities would then be linked by roads and railways back to a center city. Letchworth, England was the first Garden City constructed beginning in 1903.

City Beautiful Introduced on a large scale for the first time at the World’s Columbian Exposition in 1893 by Daniel Burnham, the City Beautiful movement’s intent was to beautify cities, promote social order and encourage civic pride. The McMillan Plan of 1902 updated
L’Enfant’s Plan for Washington D.C. and designed the parks and monuments in the city. Other successes of the City Beautiful movement include Chicago and Cleveland.

**City Efficient**  The City Efficient movement focused on bringing technical details of city planning (such as engineers, attorneys and others) forward rather than focusing on architects. The City Efficient movement also replaced the City Beautiful movement when resources needed to go to public works projects to support the automobile rather than civic buildings.

**City formation theories**  In the early 1900s, urbanists and others were observing cities and explaining their patterns in different theories. Theories such as the concentric ring, sector, and multiple nuclei attempt to explain how cities were organized in a simplified way.

**Broadacre City**  The Broadacre City is a Frank Lloyd Wright concept presented in his 1932 book *The Disappearing City*. The concept in this low density community is that each family would be given one acre of land, and the surrounding community would have some office and apartments, as well as a train station. The automobile would be the dominant form of transportation.

**City Humane & the New Deal**  The City Humane movement arose in the 1930s following The Great Depression. The purpose of the City Humane movement was to focus on jobs and housing.

**City Functional**  The City Functional movement was prominent in the 1940s. It focused on functionalism and administrative efficiency.

**Urban Renewal & Housing Acts**  From the 1930s until the 1960s, Congress enacted a series of housing acts that aimed at accomplishing a variety of things including funding to build more public housing and financing for slum clearance and urban renewal programs.

**Post War Suburbia**  Prior to World War II, only about 13% of Americans lived in suburbs, which jumped to approximately 50% by 2010. A lot of the migration came just after World War II, when there was a shortage of housing and when people wanted to live outside of the city. While residential development was migrating to the suburbs, jobs, retailers and others began to follow.

**The Great Society**  Led by President Lyndon Johnson in the mid 1960s, The Great Society focused on programs that help eliminate poverty and racial injustice. Programs developed during this time addressed issues on education, poverty and transportation.
Image of the City  A 1960 book by Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City*, studied how people observe the city and then make mental maps based upon it. Lynch then concludes that mental maps are based on five elements including paths, edges, district, nodes and landmarks.

Advocacy and Equity Planning  Advocacy and equity planning began in the 1960’s with Paul Davidoff as a key contributor. The model discusses the inequities in the political system and that the goal was to make sure all people are represented in the planning process.

New Towns  Developed from the Garden City Movement, New Towns were planned communities developed after World War II with a focus on moving the population away from the city into a new town. Examples of New Towns in the United States include Reston, Virginia and Columbia, Maryland. Other examples exist throughout Europe and Asia.

Smart Growth  Smart growth theory focuses on development that is compact and has a mix of uses to prevent sprawl and encourage sustainability. Some of the earliest discussions on smart growth were in the early 1970s. APA has developed a [Policy Guide on Smart Growth](#).

Edge Cities  Edge cities are a phenomenon of the growth of the automobile. Edge cities were primarily residential or agricultural areas before, but have developed into areas with more businesses and jobs than residents. Tysons Corner, Virginia is one example of an edge city. The term edge cities was coined in 1991 by Joel Garreau in *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier*.

Environmental Justice  Dating back to the 1980s, environmental justice focuses on making sure that environmental burdens, as well as benefits are equally distributed. Environmental justice relates to laws, regulations and policies and ensures that all people are treated fairly.

Back to the City Movement  In the 1950s and 1960s, many urban areas began to see population decline as people, mainly the middle class, moved to the suburbs; however, since about 2000, the number of upper income people moving back into the city or core areas have increased rapidly.

Sustainability  Sustainability is a broad term, but generally, most look at it as programs, processes or other that are not being harmful to the environment. According to a 1987 United Nations report, sustainability when thinking about urban planning is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

New Urbanism  Arising in the 1980’s, the New Urbanism movement focused on walkable neighborhoods, interconnected land uses, sustainability, and creating a sense of place. Seaside, Florida was constructed in 1981 as the first New Urbanist town.