

TEXAS PLANNING REVIEW



American Planning Association
Texas Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association

Spring 2009



Photo Source: Texas Images, www.texasescapes.com/travelandtexasupdates.html, bottom right, by Lori Lee

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Texas Chapter

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Message from the President



Okay planners, someone help me out here. Who put the calendar on fast forward? It seems like yesterday that I started my term as President. Now I sit here almost 18 months into my 2-year term wondering what happened to the time. Hurricane Ike didn't help. The cancellation of our Galveston conference led to a 5-month sprint to prepare for Plan B in El Paso. But that was nothing more than a minor inconvenience for most of us. For the residents, communities, businesses and planners along the upper coast, the storm's impacts are devastating and lasting. I can't say that I have much to complain about in comparison.

Speaking of Plan B, I want to recognize our President-Elect, Veronica Rosales-Soto for a job well done. Vero and her team of West Texas Section members did an incredible amount of work in record time to make it possible for us to convene in El Paso. The re-scheduled conference was a great success, and the Local Host Committee deserves our thanks.

Chapter Business

The Chapter's Board of Directors met on Wednesday, February 4 in El Paso. Here are a couple of updates on Chapter business.

Future Chapter Conference Locations

2009 – The Board of Directors agreed to return to Galveston for the 2009 Conference, which is scheduled for October 7-10. This unique conference will be built around a theme of disaster preparedness, planning and recovery.

2010 – The Board voted to hold the 2010 Conference in San Antonio.

Conference Rotation – After several years of investigating alternative methods for selecting future conference locations, the Board has decided to maintain the Conference Rotation Schedule. The tentative schedule is:

2011 – Central Section (Austin area)

2012 – Midwest Section (Fort Worth area)

2013 – Southernmost Section (Rio Grande Valley/South Padre/Corpus Christi)

2014 – North Central Section (Dallas area)

2015 – West Section (El Paso)

Chapter Action Plan

The Board of Directors met in June of 2008 for a Board Meeting and Retreat. The second day of the Retreat was dedicated to a workshop to begin the process of updating the APA Texas Action Plan. The workshop resulted in the creation of a proposed Vision Statement and a list of five key Action Plan Topics, along with proposed goals and priority Action Items for each topic.

The proposal was discussed at the February 4 Board meeting. Since we barely had a quorum present for the meeting, the Board agreed to postpone voting on the Action Plan until the Spring Board meeting.

The draft Vision Statement, Action Plan Topics and Goals are provided below:

Vision Statement: APA Texas is a respected leader and partner that makes great communities happen in Texas. APA Texas and its members provide expertise and innovation to shape Texas communities that are sustainable and livable now and in the future.

Message from the President

Professional Development

- *Encourage APA Texas membership for all Texas planners*
- *Encourage attainment and recognition of AICP certification*
- *Support Certification Maintenance (CM) & continuing education*
- *Recognize the significant contributions of Texas planners to the planning profession*
- *Make information on planning practice and techniques available to Texas planners and other interested individuals*

Annual Conference

- *Hold an annual planning conference that provides value to professional planners*
- *Hold an annual 'Short Course' that provides value to plan commissioners*
- *Complete annual update of the Conference Planning Manual*
- *Make information from past conferences available to members*

Communications & Outreach

- *Provide an effective and innovative APA Texas website*
- *Provide a high quality Chapter Newsletter*
- *Recognize outstanding planning through APA Texas Planning Awards*
- *Recognize communities through Planning Excellence Program*
- *Raise awareness of planners and planning issues in Texas*
- *Engage Texas young people in planning*

Legislative Affairs

- *Establish Chapter legislative priorities*
- *Conduct legislative program that communicates and secures support for these priorities*

Partnerships

- *Enhance partnerships with organizations representing related professions*
- *Enhance collaborations among universities and practicing planners*
- *Enhance collaboration between the public and private sectors on planning issues*
- *Enhance collaboration with organizations representing cities & other governmental entities*
- *Increase membership and involvement by 'citizen planners'*

By the time you read this, the National Conference in Minneapolis will be upon us. I hope to see many of you there. Don't miss the traditional Monday night Texas Chapter Reception. If you can't make it to Minneapolis, start making plans to be in Galveston on October 7-10, 2009.



John K. Kaminski, AICP
Chapter President
APA Texas

Feature Articles



The Truth about Air Pollution:

What Your Mother Didn't Tell You

By Lori Lee, Editor

The most frustrating thing is that pollution it is unavoidable.

We usually forget it's there because we're so accustomed to it. As invisible as it may seem, it is there, and though colorful words can't make it fun to read about, everyone should understand its importance. I speak of air pollution, and it is a part of our world that we just can't seem to avoid. Its health effects range from minor annoyances like throat and eye irritation, headaches and nausea to hypertension, heart disease, stroke, damage to the liver and brain, and our most dreaded visitor, lung cancer. And don't deny it as irrelevant to yourself. Though some are more sensitive--the young, the elderly, and those with heart and lung diseases, it affects us all in some way.

Ever wonder how many people die because of air pollution? As I tend to anger very easily at the mention of the topic, I stew over the question regularly. Turns out, particle pollutants are estimated to cause more than 500,000 deaths annually. According to the National Resources Defense Council, possibly 64,000 people die each year from cardiopulmonary problems alone associated with air pollution, with 30,000 of these attributed to coal-fired power plants. It is believed that lives may be shortened an average of one to two years in the murkiest cities.

In the great Smog Disaster in London in 1952, four thousand people died in a few days due to high concentrations of pollution. As planners, you should be aware:

Normally measured as a percentage of particulate matter in the air, pollution includes anything from common road dust and diesel soot to fertilizer nitrates, lead and arsenic. The primary cause is the burning of fossil fuels, that is *coal, gasoline and wood*, with coal's use in electricity production as the guiltiest party. From the burning of coal, we get dangerous chemicals that drift thousands of miles from their source. These chemicals include metals, such as lead and mercury, which have been found to cause depression, neural dysfunction, including reductions in memory, problem solving, and comprehension, and possibly retardation and hyperactivity in children. The burning of coal also releases arsenic and radioactive elements, which have been shown to contribute to birth defects and many diseases through a weakening of the immune system. By burning gasoline in cars, we get carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides, which also reduce disease resistance and pulmonary functioning, contributing to lung cancer and tuberculosis, and in higher doses, vascular disease, impaired liver function, fetal growth retardation, perinatal mortality, changes to the cortical cellular structure, as well as damage to the nervous system.

Probably the most frightening thing about air pollution is that you can't really avoid it.

By its very definition, pollution implies a risk to health, so why is it that so many people aren't really that concerned? Warnings are broadcast when pollution reaches a level where a health risk is present, yet people continue their normal routines. Whether unaware or apathetic, they refuse to allow it to interfere with their lives. Maybe its transparent nature keeps it *out of site--out of mind*, and not seeing its immediate effects, people disregard it. But when people experience air pollution in high concentrations, and for people who already have health issues like heart problems and asthma, its effects come all too soon. Unfortunately, for many, it is simply unavoidable. For the worker in the factory with poor ventilation, who has to work, and for the person living along a major arterial where fumes are highly concentrated, its consequences can be devastating. Makes you wonder, is it worth it? . . . But then again, do we have a choice?

Feature Articles

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Planning for Health

by John Osten and Rebecca Paskos

Both urban planning and public health share a common goal--to promote and protect the well-being of citizens. While zoning codes were enacted to promote public health, safety, and welfare, have planners done enough?

According to the 2004 U.S. Census Bureau, at least half of our population lives in suburbs. Typical zoning and other development practices in suburbs lead to low-density residential uses, an over-separation of land uses and an over-reliance on automobiles to connect us to these uses. Consequently, urban sprawl and heavy automobile use have led to a many negative consequences.

In land use, there has been an unwise allocation of land devoted to large parking lots and roadways. While individuals have paid in terms of operating maintenance costs for their automobiles, local, state and federal governments have paid in terms of construction and maintenance of infrastructure. Environmental consequences include air pollution, expansion of the urban heat effect, negative impacts on water quality, and high water usage. And as individuals become isolated within their automobiles, there is the consequence of social disintegration. However, perhaps the most significant consequence, which we are reminded of daily is the number of motor vehicle accidents, injury, property damage, and death.

Parking lots have taken over the urban landscape, as we make room to store our cars. Our city codes mandate high numbers of parking spaces, primarily too high. If you look around in shopping centers and office buildings, there is often a surplus of available parking, with many spaces left unused at various times of the day. But the blight does not end with the amount of space devoted to storing cars. We have devoted plenty of space to using them as well, disrupting neighborhoods and communities. By relying on the automobile, we are allowed to leave our cities and move further and further out into undeveloped land, leading to more and more dependence on the automobile.

Furthermore, the road is made to move cars, not people. Streets are built wide to allow cars to move, as the person on the side of the road becomes a spec and an obstruction to the flow of vehicular traffic. The majority of trips are made from home to work with occasional trips to stores or restaurants. The car, the distances we travel, and the time spent in our car means that most of us do not even know the person across the street. This is the most prominent social cost to our car obsession. We don't know our neighbors, and as we spend more time alone, not stretching our legs, we have become obese as well.

Feature Articles

Additionally, obesity is killing us literally, with the highest killer in America as heart disease. According to the Trust for America's Health, there are two major contributors to obesity; lack of exercise and poverty. So to finance our cars, we're spending several hundreds of dollars each month. For low- to mid-income families, it is a considerable percentage of their budget. If they could apply that to healthier food, education or simply saving for the future, they would likely be much better off? Because we are auto-dependent, Americans are becoming less active, poorer, and unhealthier. This is a vicious cycle here that needs to be broken.

To minimize these consequences, urban planners and other community members have to come up with alternative development models such as higher density mixed-use and transit-oriented developments, where people can walk, bike, use mass transit, and drive a car when needed. Driving a car should be the preferred option, and not the only option. Our cities have become unhealthy as a consequence of poor urban planning. It is time for planners to promote and for governments to adopt policies that lead to a healthy society.

John Osten and Rebecca Paskos are Senior Planners for the City of San Antonio Planning and Development Services Department, Neighborhood and Urban Design Section.

Chapter News

APA Texas Chapter Awards

The annual APA Texas Chapter Awards recognizes and appreciates great planning in Texas. APA Texas gives awards to projects, plans, studies, individuals and organizations nominated by various Texas Chapter members within two years of the nomination date. This year, there were 42 submittals. Any member can nominate what they consider a great project, plan, study, individual or organization. Please consider making a nomination for next year's awards.

The criteria used by the Awards Committee is based on *innovation, transferability, quality, implementation, and comprehensiveness*. One representative from each of the nine sections, appointed by their Section Directors, attends a meeting, usually held August or September to vote on the submittals. The Chair does not vote. The Chapter Presidents selects the recipient of the Chapter President's award.

The 2009 Texas APA Awards were announced at the State Conference in El Paso. They are listed below:

Comprehensive Planning Awards . . . and the winners are . . .

City of Mesquite Comprehensive Plan – ETJ Element
City of McAllen – Foresight Plan

Project Planning Awards . . .

City of Arlington – *Oak Hill Neighborhood Plan*
City of Fort Worth – Southwest Cluster Plan
City of Austin – N. Burnett Gateway Plan
City of Pharr – Honorable Mention - Illustrated Design Guide

Current Planning Awards . . .

City of Galveston – *Height & Density Standards*
City of El Paso – Subdivision Ordinance
City of Tomball – Future Land Use Plan

Planning Commissioners Award . . .

Sonia Falcon – *City of McAllen*

Long Range Planning Award . . .

City of Dallas – Trail Network Plan

Student Project Award . . .

UT at Arlington – Connecting People & Places

Chapter News

Community of the Year . . .

City of El Paso

City of Mesquite – Honorable Mention

Chapter President's Award . . .

Mike McAnnally, FAICP . . . Very impressive!

Y'all go Texas planners!

Chapter Awards Committee

Craig Farmer, FAICP	Northwest Section
Audra Buckley	North Central Texas Section
<i>Richard Schell, AICP</i>	Midwest Section
Christina Stokes	West Section
Jaime Acevedo	Southernmost Section
Brian Chandler	San Antonio Section
Cameron Walker, AICP Chair	

*Three sections were not represented due to Hurricane Ike (Southeast, Houston and Central)

2009 Officer Elections

The terms of current APA Texas elected officers will expire in October of 2009. Veronica Rosales-Soto, AICP will transition from President-Elect to President at the conclusion of the Annual Conference in Galveston. Elections will be conducted this summer for the positions of President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer.

A Nominating Committee will be appointed at the Spring Board meeting in May. Look for a Listserve notice announcing the Call for Nominations in June. Members interested in serving the Chapter in one of these leadership positions are encouraged to contact John Kaminski (jkaminski@victoriatx.org) or Veronica Rosales-Soto (RosalesV@elpasotexas.gov) for additional information.

John W. Jackson, Jr. Endowed Scholarship for the School of Urban and Publication Affairs, University of Texas at Arlington

In 2005, following the unexpected death of John Jackson, TxAPA leader from Houston, the Texas Chapter raised funds and created the John W. Jackson, Jr., Endowed Scholarship for the School of Urban and Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Arlington, where John received his planning degree. This permanent endowment was established at just over \$10,000, the minimum level for establishing a scholarship fund. Interest from the fund is intended to provide scholarship support to graduate students enrolled in the urban and public affairs program at UTA. At the specific request of the Jackson family, financial need is the primary criterion in selecting scholarship recipients.

The scholarship had grown to only \$10,900 by last August. With interest rates on investments at a very low level, there was insufficient interest income available to award even a single, small scholarship. At the request of former Chapter President Gene Lewis, TxAPA President John Kaminski included an item on the El Paso board meeting agenda to find ways of increasing the endowment fund. With an increase in the base fund amount, there will be enough interest earned to provide at least one \$500 scholarship grant each year to a planning student at UTA.

Those wishing to contribute, or who know of potential corporate contributors, should send their donations to the Office of Development The University of Texas at Arlington, Box 19198, Arlington, TX 76019-0198. The check, or credit card gift, should indicate that the gift is intended for the John W. Jackson, Jr. Endowed Scholarship. For questions about the fund, contact Diane Cooper, UTA Director of Development at diane.cooper@uta.edu or 817-272-5276.

Chapter News

Treasurer's Report

By Lee Battle

I am happy to report that the Chapter is financially very healthy. As a result of very profitable conferences over the last couple of years, the Chapter has been able to establish some reserve funds. This reserve will help the Chapter maintain a stable budget and consistent programs from year to year despite fluctuations in revenues.

Thanks to the hard work of the local host committee, this year's conference in El Paso was also profitable. Although the numbers have not been finalized, all indications are that this will be one of the most successful El Paso conferences. The Chapter's other main revenue source is membership dues. Although we have budgeted for some reduction in membership due to the economy, currently membership is holding steady.

So where does the money go? This year, the Texas APA Board adopted a budget with expenditures just over \$120,000, which is a reduction from last year. The list below highlights the main activities that the Chapter spends money on to support its members and promote planning:

- Website maintenance and Newsletter support
- Publishing of *The Guide to Urban Planning*
- Section Disbursements
- AICP Exam Preparation guides and workshops
- University Scholarships
- Grants to Student Planning Organizations
- Professional Development Activities
- Planning Commissioners training
- Awards Program
- Legislative Affairs
- Texas APA Planning Conference

Once again a significant amount of funding is dedicated to educational activities for members and disbursements to Sections for local events and activities.

The current economic uncertainty may lead to reduced revenues and activities in the immediate future and the Board is implementing a conservative financial strategy accordingly.

The Texas APA Board continues to strive to be good stewards of our financial resources and seeks the best possible value in implementing activities that benefit Texas APA members and promotes planning throughout the State.



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Publication Announcements



March 3, 2009

Experts Weigh the Pros and Cons of 2008 Wetlands Regulations

(Washington) In 2008, the U.S. EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued new compensatory mitigation regulations in response to the 2006 U.S. Supreme Court ruling on wetland jurisdiction. The new regulations are a significant development in the process of streamlining existing rules and guidelines created to achieve the national goal of "no net loss" of wetlands.

The March-April issue of the *National Wetlands Newsletter* provides an in-depth look at the potential impacts of the new compensatory mitigation regulations on wetlands. The featured articles, excerpted from the forthcoming issue of the *Stetson Law Review*, offer a dynamic discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the regulations and identify key areas in which the wetlands community can expect stronger protections, as well as specific ideas on how to address areas of needed improvement.

Numerous professionals in the public and private sectors, including former members of the National Research Council Committee on Mitigating Wetland Losses, weigh in on the inclusion of a watershed approach, stewardship in conservation and mitigation banking, conservation easements, adaptive management, avoidance, ecosystem services, and the implementation of the Corps' Standard Operating Procedures.

The *Stetson Law Review* graciously allowed the *Newsletter* to provide readers with a "sneak peak" of its upcoming Volume 38, Issue 2, where each of the featured articles will appear in full.

For three decades, the nationally recognized *National Wetlands Newsletter* has been a widely read and esteemed journal on wetlands, floodplains, and coastal water resources. The *Newsletter*, published by the highly respected Environmental Law Institute®, analyzes the latest issues in wetland regulation, policy, science, and management through feature articles written by local, national, and international experts from a variety of perspectives.

The Environmental Law Institute strengthens environmental protection through improving law and governance worldwide. ELI delivers timely, insightful, impartial analysis to opinion makers, including government official, environmental and business leaders and journalists. ELI is a clearinghouse and a town hall, providing common ground for debate on important environmental issues.

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Calendar

April 25-29, 2009: 2009 APA National Conference in Minneapolis

Join APA and more than 6,000 planners and officials in Minneapolis for the 2009 National Planning Conference. Minneapolis and St. Paul are two of the most livable cities in the country, with historic neighborhoods, bike and walking trails, and a revitalized riverfront. For more information regarding the conference, view the conference preliminary program at <http://www.planning.org/nationalconference/registration/pdf/prelim.pdf>.

April 27: 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – APA National Reception

APA National Reception will be held on April 27 from 6:30 – 8:30
Hors d'Oeuvres will be served
Drink tickets will be available

47th International Making Cities Livable Conference on True Urbanism: Cities for Health & Well-Being

Portland, OR, May 10 – 14, 2009

Co-sponsored by The City of Portland & Portland Metro Planning Council

An international conference for city officials, practitioners and scholars in planning, urban design, transportation planning, architecture, landscape architecture, health policy and social sciences from many parts of the world to share ideas, and establish working relationships.



The organizers of the 10th International Conference on Arts and Cultural Management (AIMAC 2009), to be co-hosted by the Cox School of Business and Meadows School of the Arts at SMU in Dallas, Texas, USA, 28 June-1 July, 2009, invite the submission of papers on any aspect of arts and cultural management to be considered for inclusion in the conference.

This scientific conference will address various sectors of the arts and cultural industries (performing arts and festivals, heritage, museums and visual arts, film production and distribution, book publishing, recording, broadcasting, audiovisual media and multimedia). For more information, visit the conference website: www.smu.edu/aimac, and email questions to: abstractsaimac2009@smu.edu.

May 12, 2009: 8:00am-4pm, Granbury First United Methodist Church

The [Texas Watershed Steward program](#) is a free, one-day educational workshop designed to help watershed residents improve and protect their water resources by getting involved in local watershed protection and management activities. The workshop will provide an overview of water quality and watershed management in Texas. It will primarily focus on water quality issues in Lake Granbury as well as efforts by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the Brazos River Authority (BRA) to help improve water quality in the lake and the health of the surrounding watershed. The workshop has been approved to provide 7 AICP CM Credits (5.5 CM, 1.5 CM Law). Pre-register for the workshop by going to: <http://tw.s.tamu.edu>.

Calendar

April 23, 2009

Lone Star Convention Center, Conroe, TX

Building With Trees

Saving trees during construction requires more than the right attitude – it requires the right actions. This information-packed seminar is designed to benefit anyone involved in the planning, building and designing of residential or commercial structures by saving trees, time and money. Discover the techniques that save these valuable assets from the bulldozer. This is a great opportunity for builders and developers to participate in a seminar that focuses on retaining tree canopy pre-development. REGISTER TODAY AT:

<http://tfsregister.tamu.edu>

COST: \$99 if you register by April 8th; \$120 if registering after April 8th.

CONTACT: Michelle Gonzales (979) 458-6650 or mgonzales@tfs.tamu.edu

May 20 - 22, 2009

San Antonio, Texas

National Water Quality Conference 2009

Science - Policy - Assessment - Restoration – Monitoring. The Northwest Environmental Training Center is presenting the National Water Quality Conference 2009 to be held on May 20 - 22, 2009 in San Antonio, Texas. This exciting and informative meeting will address the issues and discuss the technology of the quality and supply of the world's most valuable resource - water. This conference will intertwine four tracks through many workshop sessions in this three-day conference. This event is not one to miss! For more information:

http://nwetc.org/hyd-550_05-09_san_antonio_schedule.html.



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Texas Planning Review is published quarterly by the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association. Submissions should be typewritten and submitted via email to loridlee@gmail.com, including the name, telephone number and short bio of the individual writing the piece. Material may be edited to conform to space and style needs. Please address floppy or CD submissions to Lori Lee at 9000 Poppy Drive, #808, Dallas, Texas 75218. A sincere thank you goes out to everyone who contributes to this publication.

Calendar

IAP2 Public Participation Training is Coming to Texas



Change is here and we can help you get ready.

Public participation and building consensus will be one of the hallmarks of the new Obama Administration and everyone will need to know how to create effective and meaningful programs to obtain and use public input.

Over the past decade, The International Association for Public Participation Certificate training has become the standard for organizations that wish to implement effective public involvement.

IAP2 is pleased to announce that its full Certificate Training program will be presented in **Texas**:

Austin – April 20-24, 2009

Crowne Plaza Hotel
6121 North IH-35
Austin, TX 78752

Houston – May 11-15, 2009

Location: To Be Determined

If you work in:

- Communications
- Public Relations
- Public Affairs
- Planning
- Public Outreach and Understanding
- Community Development
- Advocacy or Lobbying

This training will help you to increase your skills and to be of even greater value to your employer.

This is your chance to join the many thousands of practitioners worldwide who have completed the certificate training. There are still some seats available.

For more information, please visit the website at <http://iap2.org/calendarshowevents.cfm> or call us at 703-837-1197. Please Forward to All Potential Students.

Leadership

Texas APA Board of Directors 2008 - 2009



President	John Kaminski, AICP	361/485-3379	361/572-6697	jkaminski@victoriatx.org
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