

NEWSBRIEF



American Planning Association
Virginia Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

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How Planners Can Rescue Virginia from the Fiscal Abyss

James A. Bacon

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Posted on *Bacon's Rebellion* on July 22, 2014

This is a copy of a speech that I presented to the Virginia Chapter of the American Planners Association Monday, with extemporaneous amendments and digressions deleted. — JAB

Thank you very much, it's a pleasure to be here. Urban planning is a fascinating discipline. As my old friend Ed Risse likes to say, urban planning isn't rocket science – it's much more complex. Planners synthesize a wide variety of variables that interact in unpredictable, even chaotic, ways. In my estimation, you don't get nearly enough respect and appreciation for what you do.

OK, enough with the flattery. Let's get down to business.

This is you. You're toast. Unless you change the way you do things, you and the local governments across Virginia you represent are totally cooked. ... Here's what I'm going to do today. I'm going to tell you why you're toast. And then I'm going to tell you how to dig your government out of the fiscal abyss, earning you the love and admiration of your fellow citizens.



Why You're Toast

Here's the first reason you're in trouble — old people. Or, more precisely, retired government old people. Virginia can't seem to catch up to its pension obligations. The state says the Virginia Retirement System is on schedule to be fully funded by 2018-2020. But the state's defines 80% funded as "fully funded," which leaves a lot of wiggle room. The VRS also assumes that it can generate 7%-per-year annual returns on



its \$66 billion portfolio. For each 1% it falls short of that assumption, state and local government must make up the difference with \$660 million. As long as the Federal Reserve Board pursues a near-zero interest rate policy, depressing investment returns everywhere, that will be exceedingly difficult. A lot of very smart people think 5% or 6% returns are more realistic. In all probability, pension obligations will continue to be a long-term burden on localities.

Second, the infrastructure Ponzi scheme — that's Chuck Marohn's coinage, not mine — is catching up with us. For decades, state and local government built roads and infrastructure, typically with federal assistance, proffers or impact fees with no thought to full life-cycle costs. State and local governments have assumed



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APA Virginia Chapter President's Column— October 2014 Edition

Time of Change in APA

As I write this, we have just concluded the APA Fall Leadership Meeting and the APA Policy and Advocacy Conference as well as the announcement that Virginia has two of the 30 Great Places in America. The commitment to positive change in APA fully charged the atmosphere at the leadership meeting. APA President Bill Anderson, FAICP and President-Elect Carol Rhea, FAICP together with their counterparts on the AICP Commission have given the green light to innovation throughout the organization. This was, by far, the most energizing and forward thinking leadership meeting I have attended. All of the components together with the staff were fully engaged in laying the foundation for a long-term development plan for APA. The irony has never been lost that for an organization that is all about planning, we rarely looked farther out than two years. However, that is changing with a goal of having a long-term vision and development plan for APA ready for adoption in April in Seattle. The plan that is being developed will also have unprecedented opportunities for the APA membership to comment and provide input so that it will resemble the bottom-up planning that we advocate for in the communities in which we work.

APA advocates for communities and part of the new vision is that APA will lead, inspire and guide that effort, both here and internationally.

The vision looking forward is to make APA more relevant, nimble and agile on the cutting edge. In the immediate term, APA will work to improve communication—among the leadership, with the membership and to existing and potential partners as well as the public. This means, among other things, that APA will endeavor to align policy, communications and research to develop a clear and consistent message, back it up with data and work with partners to advance the message. The range of potential partners is expansive and includes not only our long-standing partnerships with AIA and ASLA, but also a myriad of new partnerships with health-based organizations, engineering associations, builder and developer groups, environmental and sustainability entities, aging and housing advocates, transportation activists and any other partner with which a mutually beneficial relationship can be built on one or many issues and projects.

According to APA President Bill Anderson, FAICP, one of our biggest challenges ahead is that APA needs to represent the diversity that we serve.

While APA is transforming its outlook and approach, so too is the AICP Commission. The clear goal of the AICP Commission is to elevate the value of the AICP credential. Two efforts are underway to emphasize that planning is a career for life. The first is the Core Competencies Initiative which is an effort to identify and understand the knowledge and skills planners should possess during each stage of their careers. This effort will help inform the curriculum expectations for accredited planning schools, the subjects tested on the AICP exam, and future consideration of additional advanced specialty certifications. The second initiative involves the AICP application process to ensure that it is consistently applied and correctly screens candidates for relevant experience and work responsibilities. These will go a long way toward ensuring that AICP remains the single most important professional planning credential.

This was also my first opportunity to meet APA's new Executive Director James Drinan. The APA Board chose to employ a professional association executive instead of a planner to manage our organization. That choice was a conscious decision to provide a clear divide between the policy-setting role of the Board and day-to-day operations managed by the Executive Director. Jim told us that the four pillars of success for any association executive are respect, trust, openness to change and commitment to consensus-based decision making. I believe that the Board has chosen well and the APA is in very good hands.

The Great Places in America recognition of the Fan in Richmond as a Great Neighborhood and The Lawn at UVA as a Great Public Space are both richly deserved. Our Commonwealth has so many incredible places and spaces that merit recognition so I plan to propose a Great Places in Virginia program to allow the Chapter to recognize those loved places that have benefitted from that love as well as planning. My goal is to kick off the program in 2015 with the initial recognitions in 2016. If there are Chapter members who would like to help in this effort, please let me know.

Finally, your Chapter needs your help in

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Presidents Letter (continued)

other ways. We are looking for volunteers to assist in planning next year's conference in Norfolk (contact Will Cockrell), help do an informal audit of the Chapter's financial records (contact Julie Timm), and to identify prospects to ask to sponsor the Chapter monetarily (contact

Andy Boenau).

Thank you for your continued support of Chapter programs. ■

George

How Planners Can Rescue Virginia (continued)

responsibility for maintaining and replacing this infrastructure. Well, the life cycle done cycled, and the bill is coming due. We're finding that we built more infrastructure than we can afford to maintain at current tax rates, leaving very little for new construction.



Third, after years of delay, serious storm water regulations are kicking in. Local governments bear responsibility for fixing broken rivers and streams like Accotink Creek, showed here. (Yeah, that's a creek. It's having a bad day.) Best guess: These regs will cost Virginia another \$15 billion. But no one really knows. And it may just be the tip of the iceberg. I recently talked to Ellen Dunham-Jones, author of "Retrofitting Suburbia," and she noted that a lot of the storm water infrastructure that developers built in

the '50s and '60s is crumbling. The developers are long gone. Someone's going to have to fix that, too. Guess who?

Meanwhile, the largest source of discretionary local tax dollars — real estate property tax revenues — is stagnating. According to the Demand Institute, residential real estate prices in Virginia will increase only 7% through 2018 — the third worst performance of any state in the nation. Don't count on magically rising property tax revenues to bail you out.

In fact, the tax situation is worse than it looks. Demand for commercial real estate is dismal, too. Consider what's happening to the retail sector.

We're going from this...



To this..



Every Amazon.com distribution center represents dozens if not hundreds of chain stores closing. It means more vacant store fronts, more deserted malls, less new retail development.

Don't look for help from new office space. Due to the rise of the mobile

workforce, 50% of the desks, cubicles and offices in commercial buildings are vacant at any given time. Corporate America can — and will — save billions by downsizing their office portfolios. I recently heard one Washington, D.C., official refer to it as the "compression"



of office space. He predicted that businesses will get by with 20% less space. As leases roll over, millions of square feet of office space will dump onto the market. Commercial real estate property values will stay depressed.

Finally, you're dreaming if you think industrial recruitment will bail you out. There may be a manufacturing renaissance in America but most of the investment is going to increasing productivity of existing plants rather than building new plants. Other than industries that feed off cheap and abundant natural gas — mostly along the Gulf Coast — the U.S. will see fewer greenfield plant expansions than in years past. ... Admittedly, no sooner had I written these words in my rough draft then a Chinese paper company announced a \$2 billion investment in Chesterfield County. OK, Chesterfield won the mega-million jackpot. Congratulations, Chesterfield! The rest of you won't be so lucky.

The bottom line is this: If we continue doing the same thing the same way, all is lost. The prosperity



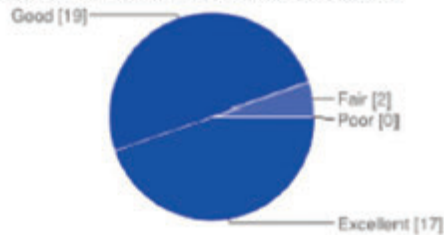
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Annual Conference at Wintergreen Huge Success!

Earl W. Anderson, AICP

The survey responses to the 2014 APA Virginia Annual Conference show that many enjoyed the conference and loved the wonderful setting of the mountains. The conference was our opportunity to share successes from around the state and nation and to teach lessons learned from a variety of planning specialties. Additionally, the location at Wintergreen Resort provided a place where everyone was sequestered together and allowed for many networking opportunities.

What was your opinion on the Content of Sessions?

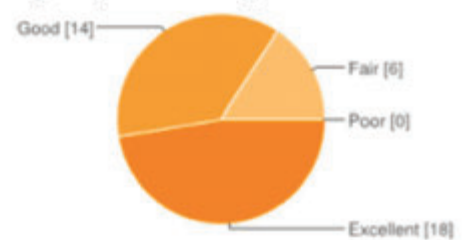


Attendees were happy with the content, organization, and presentation of sessions with some of the same comments we have gotten in the past, asking that future conferences use less slideshow presentations and include more interactive/hands-on sessions. Many thought the sessions were timely and had relevant topics to what they did on a day-to-day basis. However, attendees commented on how they got plenty of exercise with the many stairs that led back and forth between session rooms and Skyline. Additionally, attendees stated they would like to see more variety in the types of sessions that are presented at the conference, with specific calls for topics on economic development, technology in planning, practical skill based sessions, and preparing for the future.

The location at Wintergreen Resort received both positive and negative comments from attendees. Many had trouble getting a room before the room block was used up, as well as, having too many stairs for those that could not move around as easily. Others felt the location was beautiful and provided them with a focused atmosphere.

Attendees believed the conference was successful, even with some rain. Many thanks were given to the organizers, sponsors, and presenters. One commenter stated, "We just keep getting better and better with conferences, particularly in places where we repeat like Wintergreen. It seemed very smooth and I heard few complaints. Can't wait for Norfolk!" We hope that you will join us in 2015 as we move the conference out of the mountains and to the coastal plain at the Norfolk Sheraton July 20-23, 2015. See you there! ■

What was your opinion on the Organization of Sessions?



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How Planners Can Rescue Virginia (continued)

model that worked for Virginia in the 1960s, 70s, 80s and 90s is not working any more. If it's any consolation, it's not working anymore anywhere, not just Virginia.

An immense competitive advantage will go to those who reinvent themselves first. Fortunately, the early 21st century just might be the most exciting time ever to be involved in local government. Two broad strategies can make a huge difference if localities choose to adopt them... and the planning profession is positioned to play a pivotal role in making sure that they do.

Smart Cities

The first strategy falls under the rubric of Smart Cities – the application of information technology and communications to deploy sensors, collect vast amounts of data, store it on the cloud, and analyze it for far less than anyone imagined was possible a few years ago. That data can be used to cut costs, guide decision making and engage the citizenry.

Some investments are no brainers and there is no excuse not to make them. Smart street lights can cut lighting costs by 50%. Smart pipes can reduce water leakage by 20%. Building automation in municipal buildings can generate energy savings of 30% to 40%. Admittedly, those are investments that the Public Works department should be pushing for. But other smart-cities investments will never be made unless planners make the case for them.



For example: Variable priced parking. Here's a picture of Jay Primus, manager of SFPark in San Francisco, who I visited back in April. Using smart meters and adjusting prices to reflect localized supply and demand conditions allowed

San Francisco to reduce average parking prices, ensure that parking spaces were



almost always open, reduce the number of people cruising around looking for parking, and generally make the city a more hospitable place to do business. Interestingly, San Francisco regards smart parking as an *economic development initiative*. Virginia planners should be pushing for this tool.

Another example: Traffic management. The cost is dropping to equip traffic lights with sensors, link them to a central control facility, and change the lighting sequences dynamically in response to traffic conditions. This is not a cure-all for traffic congestion but it can delay the necessity for undertaking super-expensive ROW acquisitions and construction projects. Virginia planners should be agitating for this technology.

Smart Growth



The second big strategy falls under the rubric of smart growth, although you also could call it fiscally disciplined growth. The labels are unimportant. What matters is understanding the fiscal implications of different patterns of development. It is axiomatic that denser, more compact growth requires less supporting infrastructure than scattered, low-density growth. Undertaking fiscally disciplined growth won't balance your budget

tomorrow but it will pay huge dividends year after year, pretty much forever. Just look at Arlington County, which has stuck to the strategy for 40 years. Arlington has done such a superior job with its transportation and land use policies its supervisors can afford to indulge in such questionable niceties as million-dollar bus stops and \$30 million natatoriums.

In an era of chronic fiscal stress, roads, utilities, public facilities and other infrastructure are major drivers of local government spending. Local government financial officers lack the analytical tools to guide growth decisions. But those tools are out there – planners need to use them.

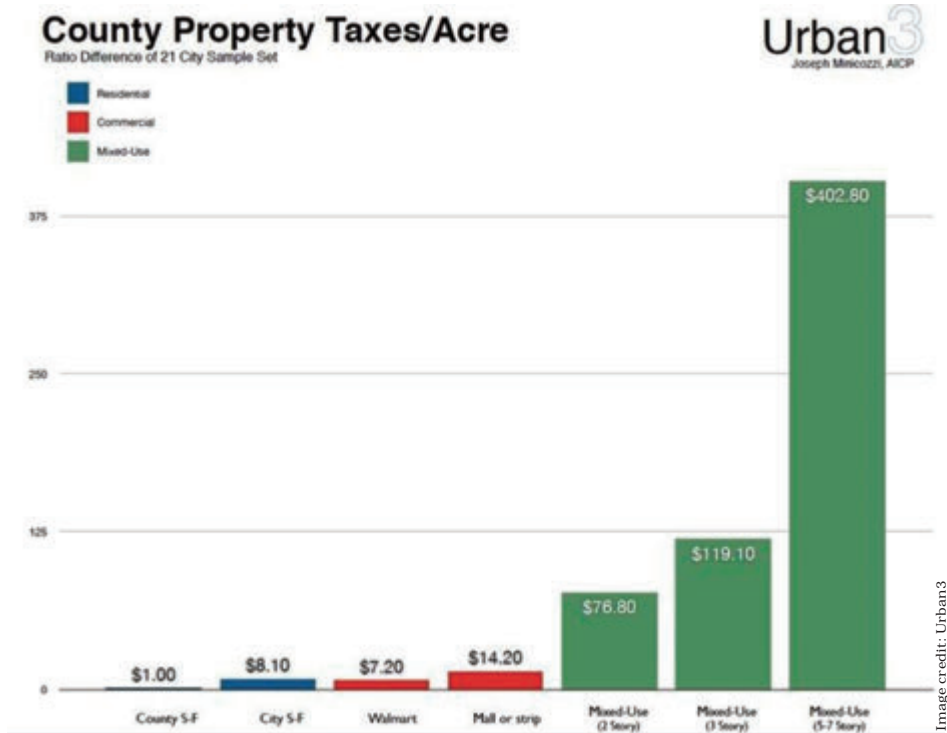


Joe Minicozzi and Peter Katz conducted a famous study in Sarasota, Fla., comparing the real estate tax yield per acre of different types of development. The findings were mind-boggling: Mid-density, mixed-use development yielded 50 to 100 times the property tax per acre of a new Wal-Mart. At the same time, the cost of providing infrastructure for compact development can be cheaper per acre. Compared to conventional suburban development, according to Smart Growth America, fiscally efficient development can save 38% in up-front infrastructure costs and 10% of the cost of supporting police, ambulance, fire and other public services.

Sarasota was not a fluke. The slide above comes from Joe Minicozzi who has compiled these numbers from a sample of 21 jurisdictions. Mixed-use development yields 20 to 40 times more revenue per acre than Walmarts and shopping malls, and 400 times that of low-density single-family dwellings. Higher revenues per acre, lower costs per acre – you can't beat

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How Planners Can Rescue Virginia (continued)



that combination. The single most important thing you can do to survive hard fiscal times is to promote in-fill and re-development at higher density than existing land uses and maximize utilization of the infrastructure already on the ground.

Now, let's talk about the second most important thing you can do. Tattoo this on your forehead so you can see it every day when you look in the mirror:

To pick an obvious example,



highway interchanges like this one in Fredericksburg create economic value in nearby land, as measured by real



estate property assessments.

Metro stations like this one in Arlington create economic value.

Parks, even small ones like this one in Richmond, create economic value.



Bike lanes create economic value.



Walkable, bikable, people-friendly "complete streets" create incredible economic value. People are willing to pay incredible premiums to live, work



in play in places like this, as opposed to...

Places like this...

Stroads like this one destroy economic value. Stroads are street-

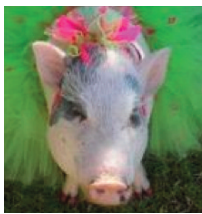


road hybrids. They do a worse job than roads of moving cars and they do a worse job than streets of creating places where people like to live, work and shop. Most stroads in Virginia can be found along old state and national highways. They arose as businesses began using them as de-facto main streets and local governments failed to limit access and protect their integrity as highways. They are neither walkable nor drivable, and they will take billions of dollars to fix. Sadly, this pattern of wealth destruction is endemic across Virginia. By permitting this stuff, we are running our communities into the ground. A number of counties have created ambitious plans to "revitalize" old, decaying segments of these corridors but I can promise you, unless

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How Planners Can Rescue Virginia (continued)

you convert them into people-friendly streets, you are totally wasting your time.

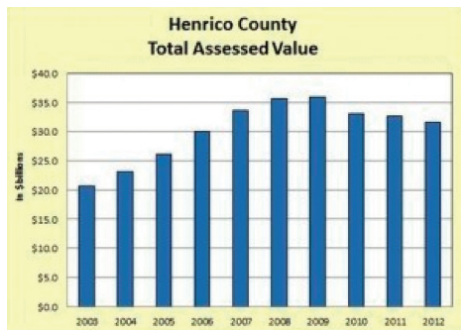


Putting a tutu on a pig does not make him a ballerina

Toward a New Fiscal Analytics

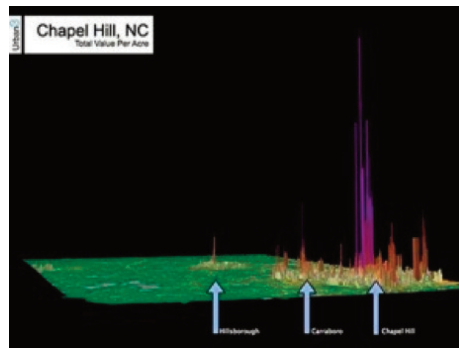
This question is fundamental: Are zoning codes and capital investment plans in your city or county creating taxable wealth or destroying it? There's a key metric that every planner needs to know about their jurisdiction — total assessed value of real property. Do you know how the total assessed value of your jurisdiction? A senior planner not knowing the answer to that question is like a Chief Financial Officer of a corporation being unable to tell you how much revenue his company generates. How can he possibly do his job?

I pulled the numbers for Henrico County where I live. The number was about \$32 billion in 2012. Admittedly, this is a crude measure. Total assessed value is influenced by things out of your control like interest rates, housing trends and economic conditions. But it is still a useful proxy for how good a job you're doing at running your city or county. If you pursue policies that create wealth, homeowners and businesses will invest more in maintaining their properties, and new enterprises will expand, and property values will rise. If you create places that people shun, your property values will decline.



Let's take a closer look. It's possible to display assessed property values graphically in information. This map from Joe Minicozzi shows Orange

County, N.C. The spikes represent taxable real estate value per acre. Look at the difference between Chapel Hill, Carrboro and Hillsboro. Sure, Chapel Hill has a big advantage over the other two because the University of North



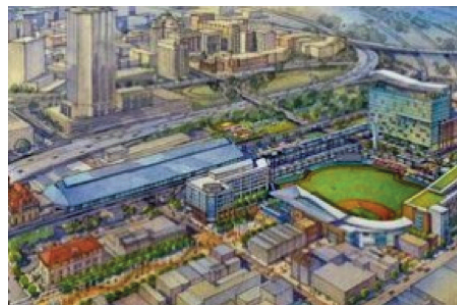
Carolina sits right in the middle. But the town also has permitted development at higher densities that throw off lots of tax revenue without a lot of offsetting liabilities. Do you know where the spikes are in your city or county? Can you tell if any given property is a net contributor or drain on the tax base? Do you know where property values are increasing in your jurisdiction and where they are declining? Can you predict the impact — pro or con — of public investments on the local tax base?

Cities and counties have finite resources to invest in public projects. You don't have the luxury of throwing money away. It is imperative that you analyze the fiscal return on investment — how a capital expenditure will impact the assessed value of real estate and the revenue it throws off vs. the expense you will incur to maintain infrastructure on a full life-cycle basis. Without this data, you cannot possibly make informed decisions.

Perhaps you're familiar with the minor league baseball stadium proposed for the Shockoe Bottom neighborhood of the City of Richmond. Mayor Dwight Jones wants to invest \$80 million in public funds to build a stadium and parking deck, contribute

towards a slavery museum, and install flood control infrastructure. He argues that the project will "pay for itself" by stimulating commercial and residential development around it. City Council is not convinced. Neither side can make a fully convincing case and the result is a stand-off in which nothing gets done. In all the hoopla, however, there is one question no one is asking — is this the best expenditure of \$80 million that the city can come up with? When you spend \$80 million on Project A, you cannot spend it on Project B. Can Richmond get more bang for its buck developing the riverfront? Or creating complete streets? Or building bike lanes? Or investing in Bus Rapid Transit? Or building a new stadium at the current site? We simply don't know because the city has no methodology for comparing Return on Investment on different projects. We're fumbling in the dark.

In Arlington County, there's a huge controversy over construction of a \$360 million streetcar line on Columbia Pike. Supporters say the project will pay for itself by increasing



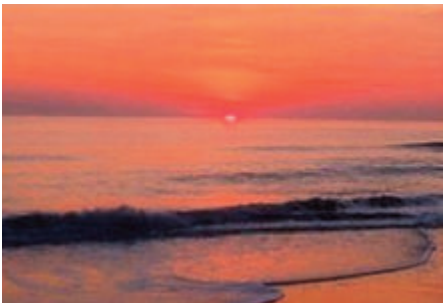
property values and bolstering investment along Columbia Pike. Foes question that argument. People on both sides of the debate tend to believe whatever they want to

believe and can't be convinced otherwise. Maybe the street car line will pay its own way, I don't know. But Arlington faces a bigger question that nobody seems to be asking: Is this really the best investment of finite tax dollars compared to alternatives, either a different mega-project or broken up as a lot of smaller projects? Would \$360 million generate higher returns elsewhere? Arlington planners, as savvy as they are in many ways, cannot answer that question.

Local government finance departments aren't set up to deal with these issues. Basically, they're bean counters. Their job is to balance the

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How Planners Can Rescue Virginia (continued)



budget. Public works departments can't do this either - they're engineers focused on cost.

Someone in local government has to

ask the higher-order questions that are, by their nature, inter-disciplinary in scope. You planners are best equipped to do this. If you don't ask these questions, no one else will. If you do ask those questions, and if you develop the tools it takes to answer them, you will dominate the local government decision-making process. Remember, information is power. If you have the information, you will have the power. You will set the agenda. Everyone will look to you to



dig local governments out of their fiscal holes. You can be the heroes. Go for it! ■

2014 APA-Virginia Award Winners

2014 Outstanding Comprehensive Plan Award

City of Charlottesville 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Charlottesville was developed in-house by City Planning Staff, without the use of outside consultants. The Awards Committee found the Plan notable in several aspects. The City employed a thorough and engaging public process, to solicit input and build support for the planning process. The Plan is also presented in a very readable and user-friendly format, with a reliance on high-quality graphics and concise text that includes links to additional resources and reference material. The Committee also appreciated the Plan's implementation and tracking matrix, which identifies clear steps, responsible parties, and progress to-date. The Committee believes this Comprehensive Plan will serve the City of Charlottesville well and is a transferable model for developing clear, concise, and understandable planning documents.



Mary Joy Scala, Melissa Thackston, Ruth Emerick, Missy Creasy, Kathy McHugh, and Brian Haluska

2014 Outstanding Public Outreach Award

New River Valley Livability Initiative

The New River Valley Livability Initiative was a three year planning process that provided opportunity for residents to develop a vision for the future and identify strategies that businesses, community organizations, local governments, and individuals can use to make the future vision a reality. The project was managed by the New River Valley (NRV) Planning District Commission; however, a Consortium of partners was established to guide the project. The Consortium consists of 16 organizations including, four counties, one city, two towns, Virginia Tech, Community Housing Partners (a non-profit low-to-moderate home developer), National Committee for the New River (non-profit environmental organization), Community Foundation of the NRV (regional philanthropy), New River Community Action, NRV Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), New River HOME Consortium and the New River Health District.

The Consortium experienced significant opposition to the planning process at the front end; however, in the face of great adversity they stayed the course knowing the value planning offers communities and as a result found highly innovative ways to engage citizens in genuine conversations about their communities. Quickly recognizing typical governmental public outreach would not be successful given the political climate at the start of the project, the staff developed highly innovative outreach methods to obtain input from the general public. Moving beyond traditional methods, the group partnered with the Virginia Tech Performing Arts Department to utilize interactive performance theater as a public engagement tool as well as creating a planning board game called, BUILT NRV. These unique and innovative public engagement tools are highly transferable to other organizations.

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Kevin Byrd, Executive Director of New River Valley PDC and Carol Davis, Sustainability Manager of the Town of Blacksburg.

2014 APA-Virginia Award Winners (continued)

2014 Outstanding Preservation Plan Award

Liberia Master Plan

The former Liberia Plantation site served as the headquarters for both Confederate and Union generals during the Civil War military occupation and was visited by President Abraham Lincoln. Now the City of Manassas owns the Liberia House built in 1825 and 18 acres surrounding it. This property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Liberia Master Plan establishes a vision for the restoration and future use of the Liberia landscape. The Plan's four Goals and five Plan components are exceptionally thorough and rigorous in its preservation approach emphasizing restoring the property to its 1862 period of significance through landscape elements. The Plan balances preservation and restoration of historic details with the need to make the project financially viable.

The Plan provides a model for localities that have revenue-draining historic properties to transform the properties into economically self-sustaining historic resources. The garden and multi-use building planned for the area behind the house is designed for revenue-generating events with the space for tents and the inclusion of a catering kitchen, bathrooms and changing facilities without intruding on the views of the historic home. The creative approach to siting the parking and designing circulation would accommodate visitors for large events without impacting the surrounding neighborhoods.

In addition, the Plan proposes an open space amenity with woodland restoration, walking trails, an amphitheater, memorial garden, and venues for living history events, festivals, and other public and private events



Matt Arcieri, City of Manassas, Deana Rhodeside and Eric Feldman, Rhodeside & Harwell

2014 Outstanding Redevelopment Plan Award

City of Charlottesville Strategic Investment Area Plan

This recent redevelopment plan for the downtown Charlottesville area creatively addresses infill and redevelopment on the 300 acre area adjacent to the well-known pedestrian mall area. The Awards Committee found that the plan successfully accomplished this intent and further provides a strong vision supported by a hierarchy of elements defining the City's desired future. The Committee was particularly impressed with how the mixed use and environmental elements dictated the aesthetic and functional design characteristics for redevelopment. The inclusion of a linear park was very impressive as was the unusual, but effective, pairing of new higher density mixed income housing with existing single family housing with improved infrastructure. The Committee also appreciated the Plan's holistic approach, excellent graphics and attention to detail. The public process was also notable and included a "Residents Bill of Rights". The Committee feels this Redevelopment Plan will serve the City of Charlottesville well and is exemplary for other small, urban communities striving to be vibrant places that respect their heritage while preparing for growth and change.



Lee Quill, Cunningham| Quill Architects and Rob McGinnis, OCULUS

2014 Outstanding Regional Planning Process Award

Historic Triangle Coordinated Comprehensive Plan Review

The Historic Triangle Coordinated Comprehensive Plan Review was a collaborative effort on the part of three localities (James City County, City of Williamsburg and York County) to coordinate the timing of the comprehensive plan reviews as a means of fostering joint discussion and consideration of land use, transportation, housing and other planning issues the jurisdictional boundaries of the Historic Triangle. The initiative to work regionally on this effort grew from the subregion's joint efforts for the 2007 Jamestown 400th Commemoration and represents a self-motivated effort to improve regional cooperation and planning in the region. It was not prescribed by federal, state or regional mandates.



Tammy Rosario of James City County, Tim Cross of York County, and Rodney Rhodes of the City of Williamsburg

2014 APA-Virginia Award Winners (continued)

2014 Outstanding Private Sector Plan Award

Scott's Run Station

The Scott's Run Master Plan innovatively turns the site's many redevelopment challenges into opportunities and builds on and implements a significant portion of the Tysons Corner Comprehensive Plan. The focus of the 8.5 million square foot mixed-use master plan for the 40-acre site is the Scott's Run stream valley park that will be a visual, natural and recreational amenity for the residential, office, hotel, retail, and restaurant uses that surround it.



The challenges were: existing single-use office buildings surrounded by surface parking; the site's hilly topography; a degraded stream valley; and a "placeless" suburban development. The Master Plan leverages proximity to the Metro; the revitalized stream valley; a street and block network; a sustainable layout; stormwater management system; energy-efficiency and context-responsive architecture. The Plan's implementation will result in a 24/7 vibrant place where an individual can live, work, play and have access to recreation. The desired legacy is a model for reinventing an "Edge City" site. ■



George Homewood, President APA Virginia and Earl Anderson, AICP Professional Development Officer



George Homewood, President APA Virginia, and Gareth Prior, Town of Ashland



Delegate Keith Hodges

2014 President's Award

Outstanding Service to the Chapter Earl Anderson, AICP

For more than a decade, Earl has been an active member of the APA Virginia Board in multiple capacities. As he transitions to a new role as the AICP Professional Development Officer, it is fitting to celebrate his years of service as the Vice President of Chapter Affairs. For the last four years, Earl has planned and managed the annual conference, each one better than the last. Earl has exemplified leadership through service, and provides a model for all who work with him.

2014 President's Award

Outstanding Service to the Chapter Gareth Prior

Gareth has provided an unparalleled willingness to serve and get involved. With the establishment of the Young Planners Group, Gareth has helped to ensure that the next generation of planners is welcome at the table and able to gain valuable experience and knowledge. His guidance in the formative stages of this important group has been essential to its success.

2014 Legislator of the Year

Delegate M. Keith Hodges

Delegate Keith Hodges represents the 98th House District. Even though he only began his service in the House of Delegates in 2012, he has become a recognized advocate for improving the Chesapeake Bay. He serves on three committees: Counties, Cities and Towns, General Laws and Health, Welfare and Institutions. He is a Pharmacist and owner of Gloucester Pharmacy. Delegate Hodges also serves on the Rappahannock River Basin Commission and the Joint Subcommittee to Formulate Recommendations to Address Recurrent Flooding which is holding its first meeting today and why he cannot be with us. We are recognizing Delegate Hodges for his

Continued on page 11

2014 APA-Virginia Award Winners (continued)

critical work on this session's Stormwater legislation, HB1173.

Both Delegate Hodges and our next legislator worked through the entire session to bring the different factions together to pass these companion bills. They both provide critical leadership essential to hammering out the final compromise bills.



Emily Gibson, V.P. for Legislative and Policy Affairs, Senator Emmett Hanger, and George Homewood, President APA Virginia.

2014 Legislator of the Year *Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr.*

Senator Emmett Hanger represents to 24th Senate District. He has been a member of the Senate since 1996, before that he served 11 years in the House of Delegates. He is the Chair of the Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources Committee; he is a senior member of the Finance Committee and serves as a budget conferee. He also serves on the Local Government, Rehabilitation and Social Services and the Rules Committee. Senator Hanger is a long time member of the Chesapeake Bay Commission and the Rappahannock River Basin Commission. He is a dedicated advocate for many issues important to Virginia's planners including economic development and resource conservation. Those passions led him to serve as Chief patron for this past session's Stormwater bill, SB423.



2014 Outstanding Chapter Leadership Award *Jeryl Phillips, AICP*

As the most recent President of APA Virginia, Jeryl has served the organization admirably for years. Her work this year with the management of the Chapter's FAICP nomination effort has been superlative even for her high standards. Under her guidance, seven members of the Virginia planning community were honored this year as Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners. Through her commitment to her fellow planners, Jeryl has shown herself to truly be an outstanding leader.



John Komoroske, City of Alexandria Planning Commission

2014 Outstanding Lifetime Achievement in Citizen Planning Award *John Komoroske* *City of Alexandria*

For more than twenty years, John Komoroske has served the City of Alexandria as a member, Vice Chair, and Chair of the Planning Commission. Reviewing more than 5,000 land use cases, serving on multiple advisory committees, John has helped guide the development of the City of Alexandria. No stranger to conflict, this experienced attorney has handled several contentious issues, including balancing affordable housing with historic preservation as well as small area plans for former military installations.



Inta Malis, Arlington County Planning Commission

2014 Outstanding Citizen Planner Award *Inta Malis* *Arlington County*

Inta Malis, Planning Commission member and Form Based Code Advisory Working Group chair, was recognized for 10 years of leadership in Arlington County. "Inta is at the top of the list of those that have made substantial contributions to who we are as a community today," said County Board Chair Jay Fissette during his public recognition of Malis at the July 24, 2014, Board meeting. Ms. Malis has been an integral community leader behind the Columbia Pike Initiative Plan, the Neighborhoods Area Plan, and the adoption of two Form Based Codes. Her dedicated work is helping to bring investment back to the Columbia Pike corridor.

Malis took the last major planning phase for Columbia Pike to new levels. She successfully led a community working group that benefited from her ability to understand and balance competing interests as well as her technical knowledge in areas ranging from Form Based Codes to economic analysis to transportation planning. She used her role to unify staff's ideas and objectives with those of housing advocates, developers and neighborhood representatives. She is both action-oriented and inclusive. Her desire to learn from diverse stakeholders helped her build the trust necessary for bringing people together and moving discussions forward.

"The award winning Columbia Pike plan has been recognized nationally for achieving something that has never

Continued on page 12

2014 APA-Virginia Award Winners (continued)

been accomplished before — marrying smart growth and transit oriented development with the preservation of affordable housing,” said Malis. “I am grateful for the opportunities that I have had and I share this award with the County staff, the Board and everyone else who has worked so long to create the vision for Columbia Pike.”

The planning process behind the revitalization of Columbia Pike is itself a recipient of multiple awards. This effort culminated in the adoption of a long-range plan (the Neighborhoods Area Plan) and the County’s second form based code (Neighborhoods Form Based Code). Ultimately, this plan and the precedent-setting, new form based code will help preserve 6,200 affordable housing units with the intention of maintaining diversity and creating a mixed-income community. Malis’ leadership ensured that the community vision and County goals for transforming Columbia Pike into a lively, mixed-use main street were at the heart of every discussion. ■

2014 OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARDS

Virginia Tech

Undergraduate Student
John J. Bardo

Graduate Student - Blacksburg
Graham Owen

Graduate Student - National Capital Region / Alexandria
Yasmine Doumi

University of Virginia

Undergraduate Student
Amy Triscoli

Graduate Student
Julia Triman



Get Involved!

Would you like to participate in your local section?

For more information, visit the **APA-Virginia Sections** website:

www.planning.org/chapters/virginia/sections

First, use the map on the website to locate your section. Next, contact your section director to receive notices about activities planned in your area. Section activities are a great way to meet other planners and earn CM credits.

Come join us!

Virginia Locations Identified As Great Places in America

Donald Whipple, AICP, ASLA

American Planning Association's (APA's) list of 2014 Great Places in America is out and two Virginia sites have been recognized. Each year APA celebrates the top places across the U.S. that embody character, quality, and planning. Such places represent the gold standard in terms of having a true sense of place, cultural and historical interest, community involvement, and a vision for tomorrow. They are enjoyable, safe, and desirable places where people want to be – not only to visit but where people want to work and live. The top ten places are identified within three individual categories of Great Places: Great Neighborhoods, Great Streets, and Great Public Spaces. America's truly great streets, neighborhoods, and public spaces are defined by many criteria, including architectural features, accessibility, functionality, and community involvement. "The Fan" in Richmond was identified as a top ten Great Neighborhood and Jefferson's

"The Lawn" at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville was identified as a top ten Great Public Space.

The Fan

Adjacent to downtown Richmond, the Fan contains one of the largest collections in the U.S. of intact Victorian homes from the early 20th century. The neighborhood has remained largely unchanged, with a

Homes along 1800 Block of Hanover Avenue. Photo by Calder Loth.

grid of short shady streets lined with historic homes that creates a pedestrian friendly atmosphere. The neighborhood's name, "The Fan," reflects how certain streets physically fan westward from Monroe Park to the Boulevard. The neighborhood is most famous for its architectural cohesiveness and variety. There are two historic districts listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places; the Fan Area Historic District and the Monument Avenue Historic District. The Fan is primarily a residential district composed of side-hall-plan townhouses designed in a variety of styles including late Victorian and early 20th century with uniform heights, materials, setbacks, textures, scale, compatible landscaping, and uniform planting of trees.

The Lawn at the University of Virginia

Conceived and designed by President Thomas Jefferson, The Lawn at the University of Virginia (UVA) is surrounded by residential and academic buildings and gardens. Its focal point is the Rotunda, the most recognizable symbol of the University and originally designed by Jefferson as the school's library. The Lawn and Rotunda serve as models for similar designs of "centralized green areas" at universities across the United States. Jefferson's design broke the traditional English university quadrangle form that earlier colleges in the colonies had emulated. The open-ended layout of the Lawn was intended to encourage learning, living, dining, and playing all in one place. Jefferson's vision of a mixed-use campus where students and faculty interact in varied settings on a daily basis continues today. His concept was of a utopian "Academical Village" set apart from the world and focused on the teaching, learning, and cultivation of educated citizens. The University of Virginia remains committed to the upkeep and restoration of the buildings enclosing the Lawn. The Lawn and surrounding structures are listed on the Virginia Historic Register, the National Historic Register, and the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. These structures are used as residential, ceremonial, and academic spaces as Jefferson originally intended. The space has also become a tourist destination drawing 100,000 visitors per year.

Congratulations Virginia on having two of the top 30 Great Places in America! See the complete list with full description of each of the 30 places at www.planning.org/greatplaces. ■



Aerial View of the Lawn. Photo by Dan Addison



The Academical Village, University of Virginia. Image Courtesy of UVA.



**American Planning Association
Virginia Chapter
Young Planners Group**

Making Great Communities Happen



Jeremy Latimer, Chelsea Jeffries
and Leo Pineda

YPG Updates

Work Plan

Abbey Ness and Mario Wells, YPG Committee Co-Chairs

The co-chairs have been furiously working since the 2014 APA VA Conference to create a new work plan for the upcoming year. The 2014-2015 Work Plan is based off of what young planners have told us they need to build their planning careers. *We invite all to review our new work plan at this URL: <http://bit.ly/1uj2oBN>*

YPG members: There are many ways you can be involved in making our goals happen. Please look at the work plan and website and see what you would like to help with. Contact Abbey Ness, Mario Wells, or your regional point person (see the Regions page of the website for that information) to share your ideas and donate your skills. We are also looking for some help with website maintenance and developing AICP resources/study groups.

For non-YPG members: Please take a look at our work plan and see how you can get involved. Current needs include people who can lead skill-building workshops and speak at and attend YPG networking events.

Website

YPG also has a new website where members can look for upcoming YPG and educational events, keep up with YPG news, and discuss planning-related issues. Please take a look and give us suggestions for

how you think we can improve the site to meet our goals. The URL is: <http://apavaypg.wix.com/vaypg>.

Now that we have a work plan and website, we are focusing on building YPG networks across Virginia and starting to plan skill-building and AICP test preparation events. Join our Facebook group or follow us on Twitter to get the latest news!

"YPG Quarters: A Great Success"

Garet Prior

It was an evening of fun and lively discussion as planners from Chesterfield to King William gathered at Storefront on Thursday evening. The winning organization was Chesterfield County with three attendees and VCU was well represented with two graduate students, Leo Pineda and Toby Vernon, who enjoyed the free food.

For those who did not attend, you missed a terrific start to the My Story speaker series. Rob McClintock shared his stories of his past experience as a planner working in the coalfield and Amish countryside of southwest Virginia, to the state economic

development agency. Here are some highlights of Rob's words of wisdom:

- Never stop learning
- Hire smarter and more talented people to work with you
- Know the details and how to write
- Start with the end in mind (via Steven Covey)
- Understand how business views your community
- Communicate with your economic development staff and vice versa
- Frequent your local brew pub – a must!

In partnership with the Greater Richmond Chamber, YPG is helping get the word out about ImproveRVA. The Chamber has purchased a license for Mind-Mixer, an online collaboration tool, to gain input from the young professional community and organize around ideas that need to be implemented in the region. Feel free to get your ideas and thoughts into the mix.

If you are interested in being a part of the YPG Central Virginia team, we will have a "team leadership" meeting in mid-October to help coordinate efforts in growing our group and making an impact in Richmond. Send an email to garet.prior@gmail.com if you are interested or respond when the call is sent out in a few weeks.

Thanks to all who attended the September edition of YPG Quarters and mark your calendar for December 11th, Central Virginia's next YPG Quarters. ■



APA Update

By Rodger H. Lentz, AICP

APA Board of Directors, Region II

August 2014



What an exciting time to be involved with APA! Let me fill you in on the retreat, the APA Board, and AICP Commission just held in Chicago a few weeks ago.

I can honestly say that the four days spent in Chicago have been my most rewarding as an APA Board member. We really rolled up our sleeves and talked about the future direction of our organization. The collaboration and camaraderie between APA Staff, the Board and the Commission was really at an all-time high as far as my experience goes with APA National leadership. We had free flowing conversations about how APA could improve the ways we serve members and be an even larger voice for the work you do in your communities. Here are some items we worked on:

1. We want APA to be more nimble and responsive to emerging issues and member needs
2. Empowerment of various APA component groups, such as Chapters and Divisions, by recognizing that the volunteer leaders and members around the country can and should play an active role and be looked to as partners in furthering our common mission
3. Become a more open organization and have a willingness to try and implement new ideas more rapidly and openly share information in a timely manner
4. Build new and improve existing partnerships with allied organizations, advocacy organizations, and academic and research practitioners
5. Place greater emphasis on the Planning Foundation; rethink its mission and role for planning; and ensure that everything the Planning Foundation does is open and transparent

Our next step is developing our next APA Development Plan to further develop ideas on how to carry out the ideas from the retreat. President-Elect Carol Rhea, FAICP, will be chairing the committee charged with its development and I am a member of that committee. Please feel free to contact me with your ideas on how we can improve APA to meet your needs as a planner, appointed board member, or elected official. My e-mail is rlentz@wilsonnc.org.

At the end of September, APA will be heading to Washington for the annual Policy and Advocacy Conference. This will be a time to learn about legal trends, improving your advocacy skills, and hear about various state and federal policy issues. On the last day, APA will setup meetings for you on Capitol Hill with your congressional representatives so you can educate them on the issues you are dealing with at home. This will be your opportunity to let them know why various federal programs are important to your work. I hope you will consider attending the conference. *For more information, please visit planning.org/policy*

On the front end of the Policy Conference is the APA Fall Leadership Meetings. This is when the APA Board, AICP Commission, and Chapter/Division/Student leaders come together to discuss the business of APA. Here we will be sharing more information from the summer retreat and hear your ideas for APA. This will be our new Executive Director's, Jim Drinan, first chance to meet many of the chapter presidents and division chairs. I hope you will join the Board and Commission in welcoming Jim.

The fall chapter conference season is upon us. While not all chapters hold their conference in the fall, the vast majority do. I hope you will take the opportunity to attend your chapter's conference or even consider attending a chapter conference in a nearby state. You won't regret taking a few days to engage with your colleagues and learn about cutting edge planning practice.

Finally a few deadlines coming up and other items for your consideration:

- National Conference Session Proposals due August 21; planning.org/conference
- National Planning Awards Nominations due August 26; planning.org/awards
- Nominate a Neighborhood, Street or Public Space for the APA Great Places in America designation; planning.org/greatplaces
- Request assistance from APA's Community Assistance Program to tackle a planning issue in your community; planning.org/communityassistance
- Commemorate National Community Planning Month and utilize the resources on APA's website to help you; planning.org/ncpm

Thanks for all you do to help build wonderful communities!

ECDC Explores the Mosaic

Miguel Salinas, Assistant Director, Economic Development, Loudoun County, VA

Karen T. Campblin, AICP, ktcPLAN, LLC, Fairfax, VA

Joanne K. Fiebe, LEED AP BD+C, Office of Community Revitalization, Fairfax County, VA

The Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Committee (ECDC), a standing committee of the Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association, hosted an in-depth journey through the history and development of the Mosaic District, Merrifield Virginia with members of the project development team, EDENS and the Fairfax Office of Community Revitalization.

The Mosaic District is a LEED ND certified urban neighborhood redevelopment comprised of approximate 31-acres of residential units; LEED certified townhomes; Class-A office space; national and local boutique style retail and restaurants; an urban-style Target; a Hyatt House hotel; the region's first Art-house movie theater, Angelika; two parks; and abundant open space for neighborhood festivals, farmers markets, performances, and social gatherings. The Mosaic District is metro accessible and is located within walking distance of the Dunn Loring Metrorail station (Orange Line).



Presenters from EDENS: William C. Caldwell, AIA, AICP, LEED AP, Managing Director; Reed Kracke, Development Associate; Angela Rakis, Managing Director and Steve Teets, LS, Senior Project Manager, and Fairfax Office of

Community Revitalization JoAnne K. Fiebe, LEED AP BD+C, provided an overview of the design and entitlement process. The presenters pointed out a few salient points during the tour. The project was assisted by Fairfax County through a Tax-Incremental Financing District - the first TIF utilized in the County. The TIF was formed to assist in the financing of the district's streets,



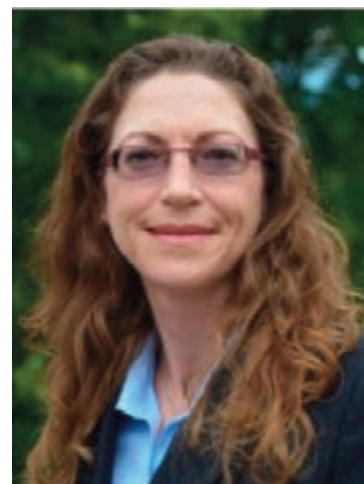
stormwater infrastructure, and parking garages. The Mosaic District includes affordable and workforce housing available to households up to 120% of the area median income. Designers from EDENS talked about the design aspects of the development. A grid of streets was designed to integrate the new district into surrounding existing development and create a walkable environment. Each storefront has its own unique design and projects outward by a foot or so from the façade plane, which reduces the monotony of the street wall which is so typical of other projects. Adjacent to the grassy expanse of the green is a huge digital screen that draws crowds when they show sporting events like the world cup. And the architecture on some of the buildings has a unique, industrial feel. Overall, the project is built in such a way that it gives an impression of organically developing over time.

The event concluded with fun ECDC networking at Matchbox located in the district.

Upcoming ECDC events will include: Diversity Network Breakfasts, an Affordable Housing Symposium (Spring 2015), Non-Traditional Methods of Community Outreach Forum (2015) and various Meet and Greet activities. To learn more or to get involved, please contact Miguel Salinas, Chair at Michael.Salinas@loudoun.gov. ■

CONGRATULATIONS MARY!!

The Town of Buchanan has hired Mary Zirkle as its first Town Manager. Zirkle has previously served as a Planner with Roanoke County and as a Senior Planner with Bedford County. Mary also worked on local government projects with Hill Studio in Roanoke and on-site location research for Advance Auto. She is a graduate of Mary Washington College and has a Master of Urban and Regional Planning degree from Virginia Tech. Mary began her tenure on October 1, 2014.



Achieving Green Healthy Cities *Bristol, UK, June 29-July 3, 2015*

At this conference, we will examine creative strategies, tools, and design solutions for Achieving Green Healthy Cities. We will review how the built and natural environment can be designed and managed to increase social and physical health and well-being, and to foster ecological, social, and economic sustainability.

These goals cannot be achieved by professionals in one field alone. They require collaborative efforts and insights from many disciplines. We will hear from world-renowned experts working at the interface between planning, public health, urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, transportation planning, and social sciences and review outstanding projects from the UK, Europe, North America, and around the world.

Paper proposals are invited from elected officials, scholars, and practitioners centered around Achieving Green Healthy Cities:

- Physical Planning for Healthy Cities
- Ten-Minute Neighborhoods and Town Centers
- Healthy Buildings, Healthy Architecture
- Healthy Transportation Planning
- How Public Health and Planning Collaborate
- Counteracting Environmental Health Inequalities
- Urban Design for a Hospitable Public Realm
- Street Design in the Healthy City
- Sociable Squares and Special Places
- Green and Blue in the Livable City
- Regeneration Projects
- Lifetime Communities
- A Green Healthy City for Children
- Pedestrian Paths
- Wayfinding
- Festivals
- Community Participation in Planning and Reshaping the City
- Learning from Bristol

For more details, please see www.livablecities.org/conferences/52nd-conference-bristol.

Those wishing to present papers should submit a 250 word abstract for consideration before October 31, 2014. Please submit online, following the Call for Papers Guidelines on the web at www.livablecities.org/conferences/52nd-conference-bristol/call-papers.

Please prepare proposals for blind peer review. Notification will be sent within 4 weeks of submission. Final accepted papers are due March 2014. Papers must be presented in person at the conference and will be published in the digital conference proceedings. Selected papers will also be published in eReports on focused topics.

DESIGN AWARDS COMPETITION

Deadline December 20, 2014

52nd Conference, International Making Cities Livable
Achieving Green Healthy Cities
Bristol, UK, June 29-July 3, 2015

Co-organizers:

Bristol City Council, The Academy of Urbanism, University of the West of England

Projects that showcase the urban design principles and livability criteria espoused by IMCL will be considered for exhibition or an award. Projects related to the topic, Designing for Green, Healthy Cities, are actively sought and will be given particular consideration.

Eligibility: Urban design, architecture, planning, and landscape architecture projects are eligible. Projects may be already in use or proposed. There are no geographic limitations.

The Awards Committee will be looking for built and natural design projects that enhance the livability of the city by creating a more humane, multi-functional, stimulating, useful, beautiful, egalitarian public realm. They will seek projects that contribute to creating a city integrated with its region and landscape, a city for children, a city based on human scale and the pedestrian, a city that promotes health and healthy behavior, a city of short distances, a city that is a work of art...A Livable City.

IMCL awards are an extraordinary honor, difficult to attain. Every awarded project will represent a case study intended to be used in support of IMCL goals; and therefore, must be of extremely high quality and packed with award-worthy content. The results will be displayed to represent IMCL aspirations at future Conferences, in publications, or on the IMCL website.

For more details about the conference, please see: www.livablecities.org/conferences/52nd-conference-bristol

To enter the Competition, please submit online before December 20, 2014. See: www.livablecities.org/design-awards-competition



CERTIFICATE of RECOGNITION

By virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution of Virginia in the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, there is hereby officially recognized:

NATIONAL COMMUNITY PLANNING MONTH

WHEREAS, changes in economic and population growth affect all Virginia cities, towns, and counties; and

WHEREAS, community planning and plans can help manage these changes in a way that provides better choices for how people work and live; and

WHEREAS, community planning provides an opportunity for all residents to be meaningfully involved in the decisions that shape the future of their community; and

WHEREAS, the full benefits of planning come through public officials and citizens who understand, support, and demand excellence in planning and plan implementation; and

WHEREAS, each year, members of the American Planning Association and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, celebrate National Community Planning Month to highlight the value of sound planning and implementation to our communities; and

WHEREAS, National Community Planning Month is an opportunity to recognize the Commonwealth's planning commissions and other citizen planners whose efforts improve the lives of all Virginians;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Terence R. McAuliffe, do hereby recognize October 2014 as **NATIONAL COMMUNITY PLANNING MONTH** in our **COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Terence R. McAuliffe".

GovernorA handwritten signature in black ink, reading "J. Mark Harris".

Secretary of the Commonwealth

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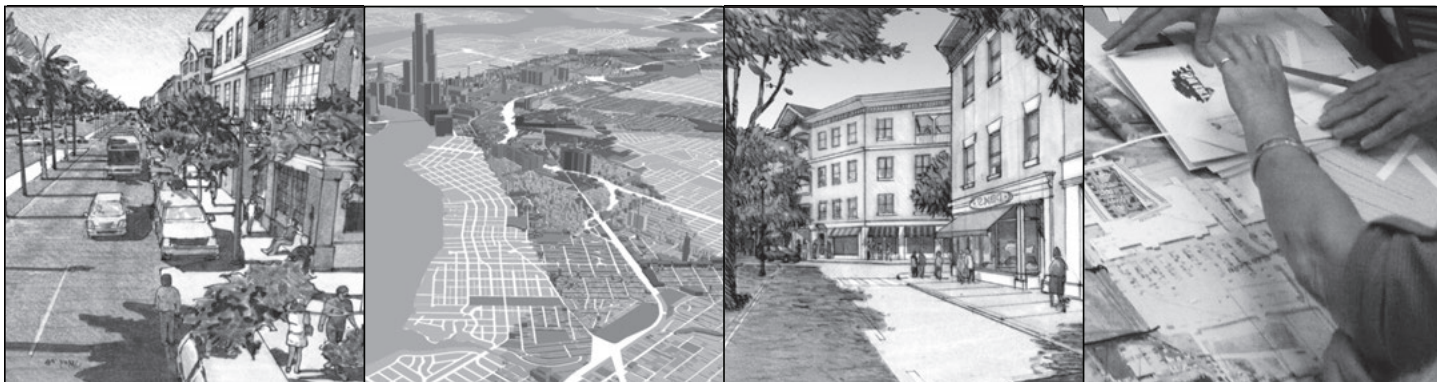
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The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of APA Virginia or its Board of Directors.



Get Involved!

See page 12 to find out how you can get involved with your local section!