

NEWSBRIEF



American Planning Association
Virginia Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Virginia Chapter of the
American Planning Association



Volume 12, Issue 1
Spring 2015

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Photo by James May.



NORFOLK 2015

Making Resilient Communities: July 19 - 22

Join us in Norfolk for APA Virginia's 2015 Conference!

by Will Cockrell, VP Chapter Affairs

We at APA Virginia would like to welcome you to Norfolk, for our 35th annual conference. At Norfolk 2015, we will celebrate over three decades of learning and supporting the planning profession. Activities begin Sunday, July 19 and conclude Wednesday, July 22.

At this year's conference, APA Virginia will bring back its most popular features, along with new and exciting elements for our attendees. We have even more learning and training opportunities this year, including special skill-building sessions. We are currently organizing extra networking events for Norfolk 2015, including a reception on the Battleship Wisconsin, to give participants more time to meet with colleagues and friends. APA Virginia partnered with Virginia Tech's Land Use Education Program, bringing us added resources and features that will make your conference experience great.

We are excited to present you with the [program schedule](#) for the 2015 Annual Conference. Resiliency is *Norfolk 2015's* theme. Several sessions are focused on

anticipating risk, mitigating hazards, and adapting to a changing environment. While some sessions will help planners prepare for natural disasters, the resiliency theme includes every aspect of community. The conference will embrace resilient infrastructure, economies, housing, transportation systems, food policies, public health, growth management and more. Resiliency at Norfolk 2015 focuses on efforts that sustain great communities.

This year, "featured tracks" will be a new element. Three featured tracks highlight the host region of Hampton Roads: coastal planning, transportation, and economic development. The program will also include our largest and most diverse collection of sessions and plenaries.

Several mobile tours and off-site locations will highlight the host City of Norfolk and the region. Stay tuned for additional details in the coming months. Learn more about this year's conference, by visiting planvirginia.com/2015apavirginia.



Photo Courtesy of Matthew Sullivan. Cropped

Mixed Grill

While we prepare for the 2015 Conference in Norfolk, it has come to your Board's attention that at last year's Conference at least one member was given reason to question the Chapter's commitment to diversity and gender neutrality. I am saddened that any member could be left with that impression as a result of our events or publications. Please know that your Chapter is fully committed to ethnic, cultural, and gender diversity. We are unswerving in our exploration of the diversity of ideas in our profession and the inclusion of communities of interest well beyond those that have the ability to pay to influence opinions and planning outcomes.

I look forward to welcoming you to what we hope will be our largest Chapter Conference ever to Norfolk in July. There are a few changes to this year's edition, including that the first full day of activities will be on Sunday 19 July 2015. Mobile workshops by foot, bike, bus, and light rail will be offered that day followed by the opening reception that evening on the USS Wisconsin in what may be the only APA event ever on a battleship. For those who are willing to give an afternoon helping the City of Norfolk develop a vision for a portion of our urban waterfront, we will have a visioning charrette led by one of the preeminent practitioners in the field, Ray Gindroz, FAIA, who was one of the founding partners of Urban Design Associates and now lives in Norfolk.

The theme of this year's Chapter Conference is Resiliency. Our keynote speaker is Andrew Salkin, Chief Operating Officer of the 100 Resilient Cities (100RC) network pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation. 100RC will select a total of 100 cities worldwide to participate in the network which, by working with each other and with various strategic partners in both industry and non-profit arenas, will develop tools and ideas around resilience as a basic building block of communities. So far, 67 of the 100 cities have been selected for the network; Norfolk is one of the 15 US cities in the network. 100RC aims not only to help individual cities become more resilient, but will facilitate the building of a global practice of resilience among governments, NGOs, the private sector, and individual citizens. Mr. Salkin has had a distinguished career with New York City before becoming part of 100RC and will set the theme for the balance of the Chapter Conference.

The APA National Planning Conference (NPC) will take place later this month in Seattle. It will again be my privilege to represent the Chapter at the leadership meetings preceding the NPC. APA has launched a number of new initiatives since the Policy and Advocacy Conference last fall. Among those was the opportunity for all members to provide input for and comment on the 2015-2035 APA Development Plan. This sort of open process is the hallmark of our profession and kudos go to the APA Board for choosing to replicate that openness within our organization. Another new initiative to be introduced at the NPC is a grassroots advocacy network program allowing individual APA members to participate in a grassroots network to advocate for good planning and for planning-related legislation and funding. Initially, this network will be focused on the federal side of things, but the goal in the future is to also be able to provide advocacy resources at the state level. Keep an eye on Interact for more information about this effort.

Finally, it is with much regret that your Board made the difficult decision to increase Chapter dues. As some of you already know, in the fall of 2014 the Chapter parted ways with our previous management firm and in the process did a complete evaluation of our financial position. What we discovered was unsettling—we were not bankrupt, but we were certainly not flush and had considerably less net revenue than we had been budgeting. Our elected Treasurer, Julie Timm, and our new management firm, Eldon James and Associates, have worked diligently to establish fiscal controls, reduce expenditures and set up a reinvigorated effort to secure sponsorships and non-dues revenue. While these efforts have stabilized our current position and allow us to meet our contractual obligations, they do not provide a sustainable trajectory for future operations that allow us to expand the direct member services to which the Board is committed. As Julie explains in much greater detail elsewhere in this issue, your Board has taken the recommendation of the Chapter Finance Committee as well as the direction suggested by the Chapter Presidents Council and pegged Chapter dues to APA dues such that a member paying higher APA dues will also pay higher Chapter dues. No one on the Board took this decision lightly and it was only done after considering many alternatives. In the end, the Board felt it was the only way to ensure the financial stability of the Chapter for the long term.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as Chapter President and please do not hesitate to contact me.

George



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APA Winter Update

Spring: A Time for Planning

I hope you have enjoyed your winter, but I know one thing for sure.....I am ready for spring. Spring has always been special to me. Growing up in San Diego, it was the one time each year when the hills were green and the desert bloomed. In North Carolina, the daffodils, crocus, dogwoods, and azaleas welcome the warmer temperatures. It's a time for rebirth and reflection for me each year.

When I fly, I love the window seat. Flying across the country this year for the Winter retreat, peering out my window, I am reminded how important our planning work is. Our transportation systems are an obvious choice from 30,000 feet. The mighty rivers and the floods they bring during rainy weather. The many dangerously low reservoirs I saw flying over the drought stricken west. The relationship between military installations and the cities that serve them. Patterns of development and the impact it has on all of these. It's really important work that makes me glad I chose planning as my trade. Planning truly touches aspects of everyone's lives.

This spring at APA we will be working on the organizations new development plan. We want this to be the most open and interactive development plan process in our organizations history. We've started by sending out surveys and inviting participation through Mind Mixer and social media. As we prepare a draft plan, we will be sending it to chapters, divisions and student organizations to get their feedback and hopefully get even more great ideas on how we can make APA relevant to current and future members. I hope you will take the time to participate in the conversation. We want to hear from you. Please feel free to send me your ideas anytime at rlentz@wilsonnc.org. What can we do to make APA more relevant for you and the important work you do in the communities you serve?

One overarching goal is the desire to get more of you involved in planning leadership and advocacy. We will never be able to hire enough staff to handle all the needs under the heading of advocacy. We as members need to take an active

role when issues arise that could impact the way we do our work or undermine a community's ability to plan its future success. To be successful we need you to play a leadership role in advocacy. Contact your congressional delegation and let them know how and why your feel a certain way about pending legislation. Pay attention to budget negotiations and let your legislative delegation know why certain programs are important to your work. Don't assume they know the planner's and/or local governments perspective. This goes for state legislation and budgets too.

Not only are we working on a new development plan for the organization, we are also ensuring that APA is transparent and member focused. When you have questions on how your dues are spent, you should be able to easily find answers. When you need assistance, you deserve courteous and prompt responses. APA staff and our new executive director are committed to this. Be patient, but I believe, in the end, you will appreciate the changes that are in the works and those already made.

I am really excited about the upcoming National Planning Conference in Seattle. I know it's a long way for us to go from the east and southeast, but this year's conference will be worth the trip. Great sessions and mobiles are planned. Take a look at the registration page and see everything being offered this year. Come to Seattle and get all of your continuing education taken care of in one conference! I have fond memories of Seattle traveling there a few times with my parents. I was lucky growing up since my dad was an airline mechanic and my mother a travel agent. We got to travel often as a family. The northwest was a favorite destination. If you go to Seattle, stay a few extra days and try out one of APA's extended post-conference trips to Vancouver, BC or Portland. You can also do your own tour by catching a ferry to Victoria, BC or a train to Vancouver. You could also head out to the Olympic Peninsula National Park. Whatever you choose, you won't be disappointed.

Look for another APA update after the conference. In the meantime, I'll be tweeting from Seattle. If your interested follow me @lentztweet. ■



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Veteran Planners - Visionary Ideas - Viable Solutions

It's spring, which means the annual conference is right around the corner! Join us in Norfolk this July for networking, professional development sessions, gaming, and more! This conference promises affordable fun and learning, with reduced registration costs for students and young professionals and a prime location in the progressive and resilient City of Norfolk.

One conference event we are really excited about is our Networking Open House. Employers from across the state are invited to host booths at the event. Come out to meet the most influential public, private and non-profit planners in the state!

We have regional events in the Central (Richmond), Hampton Roads, Northern Virginia and Piedmont sections coming up soon, so stay tuned for more details! You can keep track of all our events by checking out our [website](#), joining our [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) groups, and following us on [Twitter](#). Email apavirginiaypg@gmail.com if you want to sign up for our monthly email list!

See you in July!
Abbey and Mario



YPG Co-Chair Abbey Ness
Former YPG Chair Gareth Prior
YPG Co-Chair Mario Wells

Enticing the Creative Class in Ashland

By Gareth Prior

In late March, the Town of Ashland invited APA Virginia members to consider how to attract and retain young professionals in their historic town. Eight young planning, economic development, and housing professionals from the greater Richmond region (and as far as Williamsburg!) attended the event. They were treated with bagels and hot coffee from Ashland Coffee & Tea, while receiving a presentation from Town staff reviewing Ashland's main selling points to young professionals and their families.

Then, the group headed to the Ashland Theater, where resident young professionals Chopper and Beth Dawson, Kelly Thomasson, Sara Holloway, Josh Farrar, James Murray, and Dallin Kimble, shared why they moved to the town, the highs and lows of living in Ashland, and what should happen next. This was a spirited discussion and many of the recommendations for what should happen next are reflected in the opportunities mentioned at the assessment.

The final part was an hour-long moderated discussion and SWOT analysis of Ashland's appeal to the young professional market. Key findings were as follows:

1. Ashland has a great small town culture and events, but not enough capacity to compete with surrounding areas (e.g. Richmond) that retain a large number of young professionals in the community. The Town should improve the packaging and promotion of its messages to Richmond area young professionals on all the town has to offer. *Continued on Pg 6*



Downtown Ashland, VA. Photo by Gareth Prior.

Creative Class (Continued)



Clockwise from left: Melissa Miller, Latisha Jenkins, Rebecca Askey, Dan Sherer, Gareth Prior, Mike Hawkins, Emily DeHoog, and Annie Moncure. Photo by Mario Wells.

2. Housing availability for young professionals is limited to those who want to purchase and revitalize a smaller house. Options for single young professionals, who may want to rent an upper story downtown apartment, or have a family and want a larger lot and new house (or one already revitalized), are limited within the town.
3. Ashland has an untapped opportunity in partnering with Randolph-Macon College to connect students to businesses in the community. Connections should be made to develop and foster an environment of Randolph-Macon College entrepreneurship. A quote from one participant summed this up as she stated, “Every college student’s dream is to open up a local bar.”
4. Young professional includes multiple age groups, Ashland’s appeal is better suited towards those with children or those over the age of 30.

Strengths:

- Music and events
- Lower than regional real estate taxes
- Historic small town and street grid
- Small town culture
- Ease of mobility within town
- Great affordable housing opportunities for young families
- Close proximity to Richmond and highways

Weaknesses:

- Not enough nightlife opportunities for 18-35 age group
- Retaining other young professionals
- Lack of high end hotels
- Lack of affordable and quality restaurants
- No access to primary/children medical care or urgent care facilities

Opportunities:

- Aging housing stock could be revitalized by people looking for a fixer upper – incentivize local builders with a track record of quality revitalization project to renovate existing stock
- Promoting proximity to greater Richmond area
- Promote Ashland’s unique place/amenities
- Capitalize on bike trails and bike enthusiasts
- Improve partnership with R-MC through connection to local business (e.g. downtown bar/business run by recent R-MC graduate)
- Be a complement to surrounding economic drivers (e.g. Hanover County and Kings Dominion)

Threats:

- Non-attractive rental or housing market
- Lack of available space to attract new investment
- Keeping the footprint of the college defined
- Hotel development in surrounding area
- Perception of being far from Richmond

A summary of participant findings was given to members of Town Council, Planning Commission, Town Management, Market Ashland Partnership, Ashland Main Street Association, and Randolph Macon College, all of which are key stakeholders in Ashland economic/community development efforts. The Town plans to use the findings to shape the marketing update it is currently conducting with Punch and the Virginia Tourism Corporation. In the long term, the findings will inform incentives, regulations, and policies in the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

YPG is grateful to the Town of Ashland for hosting this event. A special thanks to Latisha Jenkins, Becca Askey, Gareth Prior and Mario Wells for spearheading this opportunity for planners to serve Virginia communities. YPG hopes that this partnership is the first of many. ■

Young Planners of the Season

Each month, YPG selects one young planner to feature on our website. Check out their thoughts on the profession, getting a planning job, working in their respective sectors, and more on the YPG website. Here are our most recent Young Planner of the Months:



January

Name: Charles Kline

Title: Floodplain Program Planner

VA Dept. of Conservation and Recreation

Division of Dam Safety & Floodplain Management

Why did you decide to pursue urban planning as a career?

My first job out of undergrad landed me in wildlife conservation. At one point I overheard a comment that threw me into planning as a career. A field biologist half-jokingly, but all too seriously, said, “at least we’ll have a good record of what was here.” I started researching more proactive approaches to conservation than the purchase and maintenance of public lands, reserves, and easements. I found that through environmental planning, communities could successfully mix the needs of the natural world with their economic and social goals by meeting a broader audience than traditional conservation. And so off I went to graduate school and began a career in planning.



February

Name: Alison Alexander

Title: City Planner, City of Hampton

How did urban planning find you?

After being 100% certain in high school that I was going to be an architect, I went to architecture school, where I decided I was absolutely not going to be an architect. Somewhere along the way, urban planning showed up on my radar - considering the larger city and regional context seemed much more appealing – not to mention I kept finding myself more interested with the way people used the spaces between buildings than with the actual buildings themselves.



March

Name: Robert Narvaez

Title: Planner II, Prince William County

Parks and Recreation Department

What do you like best about your job or urban planning in general?

Planning opens up dialogue. It gets people talking. The talk may be positive or negative, but it engages people in their community. When people are engaged, they are involved. If they want (or do not want) something in their community, they will say so.

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Hampton Roads Happy Hour

By Tolu Ibikunle



The Hampton Roads Young Planners Group hosted a happy hour at O'Connor Brewing on Thursday, March 12th where attendees tried out some of Norfolk's local craft brews. The event was attended by professionals representing various facets of the planning profession, giving us the chance to discuss opportunities surrounding our community such as: transportation, youth civic engagement, historic preservation, career endeavors, and more! These casual conversations helped identify the topics members are interested in, to help plan future events. The Hampton Roads Young Planners Group is actively planning future events including: more happy hours, informational bike tours, and more, so stay tuned for more fun activities. ■

Clockwise from bottom left: Mike Anaya, Tolu Ibikunle, Alexis Baker, Porter Stevens, Sam Sink, Jimmy McNamara, and Whitney NcNamara. Photo by Allison Alexander.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN YOUR LOCAL SECTION?

For more info, visit the APA-Virginia Sections website: www.apavirginia.org/member-resources/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.

Get Involved!

Come join us!

Changes to Virginia Chapter Dues

By Julie Timm, Treasurer

Bi-annually, the chapter board develops a two-year work plan to bring more benefits and meaningful engagement opportunities for chapter members. However, chapter revenues – primarily coming from annual dues and the state planning conference - have been kept very low and only cover basic operational costs and key chapter priorities. Rarely have revenues been consistently high enough to implement most of the elements of this work plan.

In order to bring our chapter members the greater benefits envisioned by the work plan, the Chapter Board voted to increase chapter dues effective July 1, 2015 and to change the method of calculating from a flat rate to a percentage of APA dues. This increase will give members greater value to their membership including more frequent section and regional forums, Young Planner Group events, Ethnic and Cultural Diversity workshops, Planning Directors round tables, support for the Student Representatives Committee, and a wider diversity of CM sessions.

Currently, annual dues are broken down by APA dues and chapter dues and each APA member must pay chapter dues based on the member's address. National dues are prorated by salary with some special categories offering discounted dues. Currently, the chapter dues are a flat rate of \$50 for the majority of our members. We have adopted a chapter dues structure that is 35% of your national dues. Basing chapter dues on a percentage of APA dues is a best practice recommended by a task force of the Chapter Presidents Council in 2014. For the members in the lowest salary brackets, this will be an increase of \$6 annually. To see how you might be affected by this change, please see the table below.

Membership	APA Dues	Current Chapter Dues	New Chapter Dues
Salary Outside US	\$160	\$50	\$56.00
Less than \$42,000	\$160	\$50	\$56.00
\$42,000 - \$49,999	\$190	\$50	\$66.50
\$50,000 - \$59,999	\$220	\$50	\$77.00
\$60,000 - \$69,999	\$245	\$50	\$85.75
\$70,000 - \$79,999	\$270	\$50	\$94.50
\$80,000 - \$89,999	\$295	\$50	\$103.25
\$90,000 - \$99,999	\$320	\$50	\$112.00
\$100,000 - \$119,999	\$350	\$50	\$122.50
\$120,000 and above	\$380	\$50	\$133.00
Undisclosed Salary	\$385	\$50	\$134.75
U.S. Student Member	\$40	\$16	\$16.00
New Professional	\$40	\$16	\$16.00
Planning Board	\$40	\$5	\$5.00
U.S. Retired Member	\$75	\$10	\$10.00
U.S. Life Member	\$50	\$10	\$10.00
Faculty	\$40	\$25	\$25.00
Unemployed Member	\$10	\$10	\$10.00
Chapter Only	\$0	\$55	\$75.00

Planners Touring Norfolk

by Will Cockrell, VP Chapter Affairs

Over the last several months, your APA Virginia Board has worked tirelessly to bring you an exciting and informative conference in Norfolk this summer. Expanding on a favorite from years past, this year's conference offers three opportunities to see the dynamic City of Norfolk and experience the vibrancy that makes this city special. Join us on these mobile workshops and see Life, Celebrated Daily.



Photo Courtesy of D. Allen Covey, VDOT



Photo Courtesy of Patrick Bloodgood, USACE



Photo Courtesy of Scott Smith

Downtown Norfolk

Monday afternoon

Attendees will take a tour of downtown Norfolk, to see the redevelopment and innovation of this coastal city. The tour will include a ride of the City's new light rail system, along with a visit to a low-income neighborhood, transformed into a mixed-use community. *Registration is \$10*

Fort Norfolk

Monday afternoon

Come with us to visit Fort Norfolk and learn how the City of Norfolk partners with the US Military, creating a strong partnership that benefits the community and our armed forces. The site is accessible from The Tide, where attendees will also have the opportunity to learn about the City's transit investments. *Registration is \$10*

Hit the Boardwalk

Tuesday afternoon

Come with us to the beach and see how the City of Virginia Beach is building a true downtown. Attendees will learn about the redevelopment along the strip, investments in transit and how the City plans to remain resilient. The tour will require a 20+ minute bus ride from the conference site. *Registration is \$30*

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LUEP Roundup and Upcoming 2015 Events

By Jonah Fogel

LUEP Legal Seminar May 29th Charlottesville Omni

APA Virginia's very own Emily Gibson will provide a review of land use related General Assembly actions. Additional issues to be addressed during the event include an in depth discussion of the new variance standard, set to take effect July 1st. A model variance application form will be presented by a panel of experts for review and comment by attendees. Fracking, as an issue, continues to cause concerns at the local level. A panel of experts will provide context on the issue and offer ordinance guidance. Finally, the application of eminent domain can cause confusion and heartburn for planning commissioners, BZA members, and landowners. We'll have experienced attorneys and local elected officials on hand to help clarify its application; best practices and limitations will be discussed.

AICP CMs will be available. Registration and lodging details are available at planvirginia.com

Land Use Education Program

education that brings Virginia's future into the present



Leadership Skill Building for Planning Commissioners and Emerging Planning Professionals July 21st Norfolk Sheraton

This event will take place as part of the 2015 APA Virginia Conference. Offered as a single-day training program it will provide both planning commissioners and staff planners advanced training in four critical areas: team building, public finance, project management, and procurement. Emerging leaders will work throughout the day on hands-on applications that provide the experience they need to emerge as leaders in their communities.

Funding the Future October 11-12th (TBA)

This two day workshop will be a hands-on advanced learning opportunity aimed at helping you kick start and enhance your capital improvement planning process. We will be looking for locality representatives ready to work on their capital improvement plan (CIP). Planning commissioners, professional planners, economic development professionals, local elected officials, and allied interest groups are welcome to attend. Space will be limited. Stay tuned for more details...

85th Certified Planning Commissioner Program (registration not yet open) Opening Session: Sept. 28-29 Closing Session: Dec. 10-11 (Newport News City Center)

This will be our final CPC offering of the year. This nationally recognized program is designed to provide each registrant with a complete understanding of the legal foundations of community planning in Virginia and insight into current planning practices and approaches. The course also provides each participant with the technical and process expertise planning commissioners need to discharge their duties in a procedurally and substantively correct manner.

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Featured Tracks at Norfolk Conference

by Will Cockrell, VP Chapter Affairs

At APA Virginia's 2015 Conference, there will be even more opportunities for attendees than ever before to expand their knowledge bases and explore new issues areas. This year's program will include 50 open sessions, two keynote addresses, two plenaries, and several modile workshops (see pg 11). APA Virginia has planned to provide sessions on policy and legislative updates and ethics and a suite of skill-building sessions designed to help aspiring management level planners and experienced professionals enhance their efficiency.

The conference will also highlight the host region of Hampton Roads with featured tracks that will span the duration of the conference. These Tracks expand upon the general theme of the conference, Making Resilient Communities, and help planners build specific skill sets that are most beneficial to their individual needs.

As the host community for the 2015 Conference, the City of Norfolk and the surrounding Hampton Roads region provides an excellent opportunity to focus on Coastal Planning as a featured track. These sessions will cover a wide variety of topics, including: coastal erosion, sea-level rise, economic development in coastal communities, recurrent flooding, hazard mitigation, growth management along shorelines, and much more.

While transportation is a high profile topic in Hampton Roads, all communities must face the challenges of moving people and goods efficiently. The Transportation track will give conference attendees the opportunity to experience a series of sessions that address the various modes and issues of transportation. These sessions will cover best practices for highway, bicycle and pedestrian, transit, and travel demand management planning. Featured speakers will also provide insight on recent transportation legislation, House Bill 2.

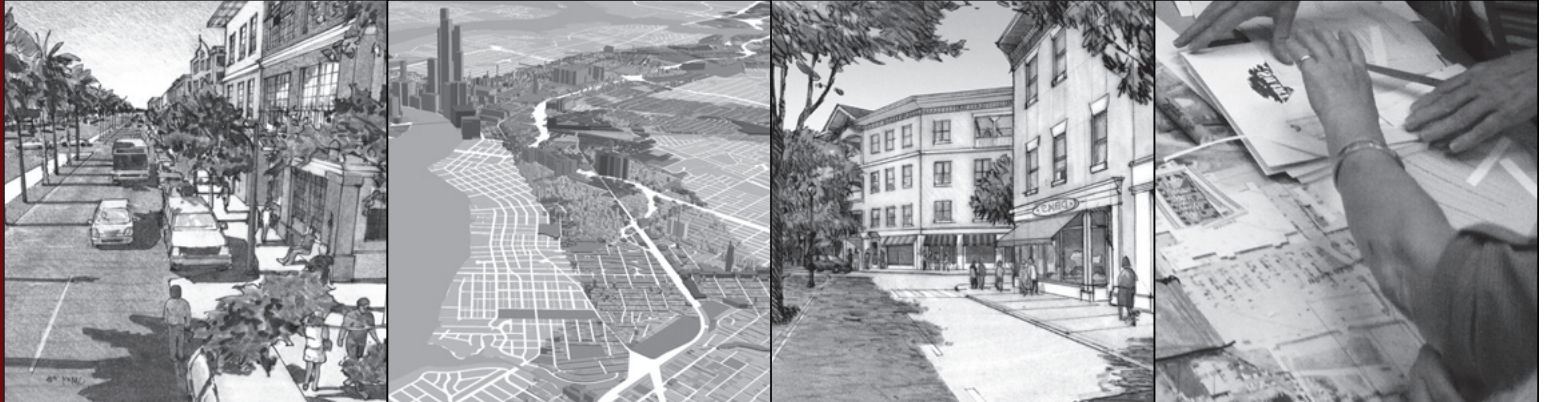
By popular demand, recognized in the survey following the 2014 Conference, the conference will provide a track to address Economic Development. Efforts to grow local economies in Hampton Roads and across the state will be highlighted.

Finally, the conference theme of Resiliency will be highlighted in a separate track. Resiliency includes every aspect of community building, not simply recovery from natural disasters. Issues addressed in this track include infrastructure, economies, housing, transportation systems, food policies, public health, growth management, and more. In the 2015 Conference, resiliency focuses on efforts that "make great communities happen."

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