



FINAL PROGRAM

APA PA 2025

Harrisburg



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PA Chapter of the American Planning Association
2025 Annual Conference
Sunday, October 12 – Tuesday, October 14
Harrisburg, PA
#APAPA25



American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

The largest annual gathering of Planners in PA!



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- Economic Development Plans
- Comprehensive Plans
- Capital Improvement Programs
- Zoning Ordinances
- Zoning & Site Plan Review/Administration
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- Land Use Studies
- Stormwater Management Ordinances
- Water & Wastewater Planning
- Grant Writing & Administration
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American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

PA Chapter of APA President: **Leah Eppinger, AICP**
2025 Conference Chairs: **Leah Eppinger, AICP** and **Rachelle Abbott, AICP**

PA Chapter of APA
PO Box 4680
Harrisburg, PA 17111
admin@planningpa.org

@AGLANCE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2025

11:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Registration
12:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Mobile Workshops
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Concurrent Education Sessions A
3:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Break (coffee & tea)
3:30 PM – 4:45 PM	Concurrent Education Sessions B
5:15 PM	Walk to the reception
5:30 PM – 7:00 PM	Whitaker Center
Evening	Dinner on your own

MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2025

6:00 AM – 7:00 AM	Fun Run & Walk
7:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Registration
7:00 AM – 5:30 PM	Exhibit Hall
7:00 AM – 8:00 AM	Continental Breakfast with Exhibitors
8:15 AM – 8:30 AM	Welcome & Introductions
8:30 AM – 9:30 AM	Opening Keynote with Sascha Meinrath
8:30 AM – 5:00 PM	Mobile Workshops
9:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Refreshment Break with Exhibitors
10:00 AM – 10:45 AM	Concurrent Education Sessions C
10:45 AM – 11:00 AM	Break/Travel
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Concurrent Education Sessions D
12:00 PM – 1:45 PM	Chapter Address & Annual Awards
1:45 PM – 2:00 PM	Break/Travel
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM	Concurrent Education Sessions E
3:15 PM – 3:45 PM	Refreshment Break with Exhibitors
3:45 PM – 4:45 PM	Concurrent Education Sessions F
After 5:30 PM	Dinner on your own
Evening	Networking event hosted by Central Section

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2025

7:00 AM – 3:30 PM	Registration
7:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Exhibit Hall
7:00 AM – 8:00 AM	Continental Breakfast with Exhibitors
8:15 AM – 8:30 AM	Introductions
8:30 AM – 9:45 AM	Plenary with Morgan Boyd, Angela Brooks, and Phyllis Chamberlain
9:45 AM – 10:15 AM	Refreshment Break with Exhibitors
10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Mobile Workshop
10:15 AM – 11:30 AM	Concurrent Education Sessions G
11:30 AM – 1:30 PM	Pitkin Lecture with Jeff Siegler
1:30 PM – 2:00 PM	Dessert with Exhibitors
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Concurrent Education Sessions H
3:00 PM	Adjourn

MANY THANKS

Many thanks to our Sponsors, Exhibitors and Advertisers (as of September 25)

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Mark Your Calendars

2026 APA-PA Annual Conference

October 18 – 20, 2026
Wind Creek Bethlehem
Bethlehem, PA

2027 APA-PA Annual Conference

October 17 – 19, 2027
Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel
at Station Square
Pittsburgh, PA

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Monday, 8:15a–9:30a

Opening Keynote



How to Bridge the Digital Divide After Snatching Defeat from the Jaws of Victory (8:30a – 9:30a)

SASCHA MEINRATH, Penn State University

CM | **1.00**

Twenty-five years ago, the United States was one of the most advanced Internet countries on earth; yet over the ensuing quarter century, our nation has stumbled. In 2010, the U.S. adopted a “National Broadband Plan” that set a 10-year goal to achieve a universal connectivity speed that was the slowest speed goal of any broadband plan released by any country... yet we failed to achieve even that lowly benchmark. In 2025, neither the United States nor the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have enacted functional universal broadband plans, thus ensuring that many unserved areas of the country will remain underserved into the indefinite future. Today, programs to support universal broadband access are being shuttered without spending their funds; and, in the face of this political negligence, local and regional strategies have become a necessity.

For those of us working to support thriving local communities, we now face a rather harrowing situation: an expensive unfunded mandate whose price is dwarfed by the opportunity cost of inaction. Put simply, implementation is expensive, and continuing inaction will cost local communities far more. This discussion explores both how we got to this current sorry state and highlights successful interventions and best practices that are currently bringing connectivity to underserved communities. The resources shared will aid local and regional leaders looking to implement broadband solutions across the state.

Tuesday, 8:00a – 9:45a



PA Housing Plans and Advocacy (8:15a-9:45a)

MORGAN BOYD, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development

ANGELA BROOKS, City of Philadelphia

PHYLLIS CHAMBERLAIN, Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania

CM | **1.50**

Hear from the dedicated experts behind Pennsylvania’s housing efforts as they share insights on implementing housing plans, advancing advocacy initiatives, and addressing real-world challenges. This discussion highlights the on-the-ground work driving affordable housing, tenant support, and equitable community development across the Commonwealth.



Tuesday, 11:30a – 1:30p
Luncheon & Pitkin Lecture

Civic Pride & Civic Apathy (12:00p – 1:30p)

JEFF SIEGLER, Revitalize or Die

CM | 1.50

Communities across the country have been devastated by apathy, and unless we take drastic action, the problem will continue to worsen. Apathy destroys everything it touches, and it can't be fixed by planning or money alone. The lack of care and concern among residents won't change if we stay on the same path. We need a fresh approach to restore people's connection to their town. Only by fostering a sense of civic pride can we combat apathy. This means bringing people together, restoring beauty, fostering affection, and giving meaning to people's relationship with their community. A small-scale, simple, and incremental approach can help replace apathy with pride. The key is to start working—there is no silver bullet, and no one is coming to fix it for us. Every resident, every day, must do their part to make the community just a little bit better. When everyone participates, we can create something truly special: a community we can all be proud of.



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CONFERENCE ETIQUETTE

The dress code for the conference is **business casual** attire.

Cell phones and other devices that make noise should be disabled during sessions. If you must take a call, please exit the session as quietly as possible and take the call in the corridor.

Room temperatures are difficult to regulate. It is advisable to dress in layers so you can add or remove a layer for your personal comfort.

The conference is a **no-smoking** event. Smoking is not permitted in any conference event, including mobile workshops.

Please be considerate of other conference participants who may have allergies or sensitivities to **fragrances**. If your fragrance is strong, please consider using less of it, or not using it during the day.

APA PA is **not responsible for the materials or opinions of the speakers you will hear.**

Conference

PLANNING COMMITTEE (*CO-CHAIR)

Rachelle Abbott*, *STEP, Inc.*

Renee Addleman, *Lancaster County Planning Department*

Andrew Bomberger, *Tri-County Regional Planning Commission*

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John Whitmore, *Gettysburg Borough*



SPECIAL EVENTS

Sunday, 5:30p – 7:00p (*gather in lobby to walk 5:15*)

Welcome Reception: Whitaker Center

At 5:15p, meet near the conference registration desk to walk to the Whitaker Center (222 Market Street, Harrisburg PA 17101). The Whitaker Center is a premier cultural and educational hub for the Science and the Arts. It seamlessly combines a hands-on STEAM-focused Science Center and Performance Theater – all designed to inspire learning and creativity across science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. This reception includes heavy hors d'oeuvres and refreshments.

Monday, 12:00a – 1:45p

Luncheon, State of the Chapter and Annual Awards Presentation

Join us as we celebrate the achievements of fellow Pennsylvanians who shape where we live, work and play! Join **Craig Peiffer**, chair of the PA Chapter of APA Awards Committee, for an inspiring **Annual Awards** program. We will recognize the work of fellow planners, planning officials, and elected officials and their roles in planning Pennsylvania. PA Chapter of APA President, **Leah Eppinger** will present the **State of the Chapter** highlighting the Chapter's successes and key activities during 2025.

Monday, 6:30p

Planners Social

Planners Social will be at Stocks On 2nd (211 N 2nd Street). Every good planner has a team of colleagues to lean on. This social aims to connect planning professionals from all over the state for an evening of drinks, snacks and good conversations. This social is sponsored by Central Section, Michael Baker International, and GFT. This event is limited to 100 people, please make sure you register for this event. There will be no onsite registrations. (*Additional food and beverage will be available for purchase*)

GENERAL INFO

About the Main Speakers, Sessions and Certification Maintenance Credits

Application will be submitted to APA for approval of Certification Maintenance (CM) credits for all of the main speakers and most of the educational sessions at this year's conference. A total of 11.5 CM credits may be earned depending on session selections. Mobile workshops will have CM credit. And Sustainability/Resilience, Equity, Law and Ethics CM credits are offered.

The list of approved sessions will be posted on the PA Chapter website, www.planningpa.org, after approval is received from APA.

Any session may be cancelled or rescheduled because of low registration or unforeseen circumstances. Changes and cancellations will be noted in the Final Program which is distributed at the conference as well as on the Chapter website prior to the conference.

Following the conference, materials will also be available on the PA Chapter of APA website in electronic format.

The PA Chapter of APA is not responsible for the materials or opinions of the speakers you will hear.



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FORWARD THINKING



MOBILEWORKSHOPS

All mobile workshops require an extra fee to cover transportation and other logistics. **These workshops will be cancelled if sufficient participation is not reached.** Please wear comfortable clothing and shoes suitable for walking or biking.

Sunday, 12:00p – 3:00p

M1. Loop the Loop: Capital Greenbelt Tour

CM | **2.75** *Additional \$25 fee required*

This guided tour explores the Capital Area Greenbelt, a 20-mile loop known as the “Emerald Necklace” encircling Harrisburg and surrounding communities. Serving as a vital transportation connector, the Greenbelt offers diverse opportunities for walking, biking, and mountain biking. The route highlights notable landmarks including the State Capitol, Governor’s Mansion, Wildwood Park, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, and Reservoir Park. Riders travel along the scenic Susquehanna River, through wooded areas, and quiet neighborhoods. Mostly paved and flat with a few gradual hills, the route showcases the evolution of the Greenbelt from its 1900 origins in the City Beautiful movement to a modern example of multi-municipal cooperation and urban cycling infrastructure. Discussion stops along the way cover challenges in creating a continuous, accessible route through historic and car-centric environments.

Includes E-Bike or regular bike with helmets provided. Session is limited to a maximum of 12 participants.

Samantha Pearson, Pennsylvania Downtown Center

Sunday, 2:00p – 5:00p

M2. One City, Two Streams: How Planning Choices in Harrisburg Resulted in Two Drastically Different Ecological Outcomes

CM | **2.75** *Additional \$20 fee required*

This mobile session explores the contrasting conditions of two urban streams in Harrisburg—Paxton Creek and Spring Creek—despite both flowing through heavily developed areas (73 percent and 86 percent urbanized, respectively). Paxton Creek suffers from extreme hydromodification, limited riparian buffering, and extensive impervious land cover, resulting in severely degraded ecological conditions. In contrast, Spring Creek benefits from stream buffers, restoration efforts, and integration with the regional greenbelt, supporting a healthy ecosystem that includes wild trout. The session examines how effective planning and policy implementation can enable urban streams to thrive. Between site visits, an interactive discussion will focus on the watershed planning process under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act as a tool for improving water quality in developed landscapes.

Brian Gish, AICP, Chesapeake Bay Foundation



MOBILEWORKSHOPS

Monday, 8:30a – 11:30a

M3. Planning for Suburban Green Infrastructure: Leading the Way for a Sustainable Future in Lower Allen Township

CM | **2.75 (1.00 Sustainability/Resilience)** *Additional \$25 fee required*

This mobile session showcases the suburban green infrastructure efforts of Lower Allen Township, a first-class municipality in southeastern Cumberland County with a population of over 20,000. Beginning at the Municipal Services Building, the session includes an overview of implemented and planned green infrastructure initiatives aimed at promoting sustainability and resilience. A walking tour of the building grounds and adjacent Cedar Run Park highlights features such as pollinator gardens, rain gardens, pervious asphalt and pavers, and other best management practices. Presenters will discuss project funding sources and implementation challenges. The session also includes a visit to the Lower Allen Township Public Works Facility to examine one of nine completed stormwater basin retrofits developed to meet the Pollution Reduction Plan requirements under the PAG-13 NPDES General Permit for MS4s. This site also features a solar field installation and provides a side-by-side comparison of stormwater basins before and after retrofitting.

Barbara Arnold, Lower Allen Township
Rebecca Davis, Lower Allen Township
Scott Duncanson, AICP, ENV SP, LEED Green Associate, GFT

Monday, 10:00a – 11:30a

M4. SusqueCycle Scenic Ride on the Capital Area Greenbelt

CM | **1.50** *Additional \$10 fee required*

This guided bike tour offers a scenic and historic ride along the Capital Area Greenbelt, with bicycles provided by the Harrisburg Bike Share program, SusqueCycle. Beginning at the Market Street Bus Transfer Center across from the Hilton Hotel, participants will unlock their bikes using the Movatic App before heading west into Riverfront Park. The route follows the picturesque path along the Susquehanna River north to Division Street, with brief stops to explore key landmarks including the historic Market Street and Walnut Street Bridges, the Scenic Overlook at State Street, the PennDOT Workers Memorial, the Sunken Garden, the Governor's Residence, and King's Mansion. This 4-mile ride blends natural beauty with cultural and historical insights, offering a relaxed yet engaging experience.

Participants will receive an email in advance regarding using the Movatic App. This App will unlock your bike for use during this session. Session is limited to 8 participants.

Karen Dixon, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission



MOBILEWORKSHOPS

Monday, 2:00p – 3:15p

M5. Planning for Pedestrian Safety: Conducting a Pedestrian Safety Audit

CM | **1.25** *Additional \$10 fee required*

This session focuses on planning for pedestrian safety through the implementation of Pedestrian Safety Audits, a proven Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) countermeasure shown to reduce pedestrian crashes by up to 60%. With over 7,000 pedestrian fatalities annually in the U.S. and approximately 180 in Pennsylvania, improving pedestrian safety is a critical priority. The session outlines the benefits and step-by-step process of conducting audits for corridors, communities, or specific locations such as school zones. Drawing on recent audits conducted through PennDOT Connects, the session incorporates real-world examples to illustrate the audit process, common focus areas, and lessons learned. Participants will engage in a hands-on audit experience—either via a walking tour or through visual materials—guided by the FHWA prompt list to evaluate elements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, intersections, and other key infrastructure features.

Participants must have PPE, please bring along a class 2 vest and a helmet.

Patrick Wright, PennDOT Connects

Monday, 3:30p – 5:00p

M6. Historic Harrisburg Tour of Riverfront Park and Capitol Complex

CM | **1.50** *Additional \$10 fee required*

This guided walk offers a casual yet enriching journey through the heart of historic Harrisburg, blending scenic views with the city's vibrant heritage. Beginning at the SusqueCycle bike racks at the Bus Transfer Center across from the Hilton Hotel, the route follows the Capitol Area Greenbelt through Riverfront Park along the Susquehanna River, then ascends State Street toward the striking Capitol Complex. Along the way, a representative from the Historic Harrisburg Association shares stories and insights into the city's storied past.

Karen Dixon, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

Tuesday, 10:00a – 11:30a

M7. Downtown Harrisburg Active Transportation Infrastructure Tour

CM | **1.50** *Additional \$10 fee required*

This walking tour through downtown Harrisburg offers an in-depth, on-the-ground exploration of both long-standing and recently implemented bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Participants will observe a range of design features including bike lanes, protected bike lanes, a contra-flow bike lane, curb bump outs, enhanced pedestrian signals, trails, and a road diet. The tour will also identify potential future improvements such as additional road diets, continuous sidewalks, and bike boxes. Experiencing these elements in person allows for a clearer understanding of their form, function, and impact—especially for those outside the design professions. The session emphasizes that street design is context-specific, shaped by existing conditions, spatial constraints, and the comfort level of local decision-makers. Highlighting the shift from car-centric design to infrastructure that supports all users—including the 30% of the population who cannot drive—the tour explores how well-designed, ADA-accessible infrastructure benefits everyone, including motorists. Participants will also learn about evolving design standards and the principles guiding safer, more inclusive streets, prompting reflection on what could be applied in their own communities.

Samantha Pearson, Pennsylvania Downtown Center

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Caption: Interior view of bent wood helix that protects butterflies from predators. 2023 Summer Design Build Institute Project

Tyler School of Art and Architecture
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA 19122





EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Sunday, October 12, 2025

11:00a – 5:00p **Registration Open**

12:00p – 3:00p **M1. Loop the Loop: Capital Greenbelt Tour**

2:00p–3:00p **Concurrent Education Sessions A (1.00 CM)**

A1. Oops, I Did it Again: Lessons from Planning Challenges

CM | **1.00 Equity**

This session examines real-world urban planning missteps to uncover valuable lessons in transportation planning, community engagement, and project management. Through case studies and interactive exercises, presenters will identify common pitfalls and explore strategies for adaptive planning, stakeholder collaboration, and navigating political resistance. A problem-solving workshop will allow attendees to analyze scenarios and collaborate on alternative approaches. Speakers will share personal “Oops” moments, fostering an open dialogue that encourages professional growth and more resilient, community-centered planning.

Nic Fazio, AICP, AECOM

Keyleigh Kern, AICP, ASLA, AECOM

Nicole Ozdemir, AICP, AECOM

A2. Examining the Impact of Warehousing Development in Rural Pennsylvania

CM | **1.00**

Warehousing development has expanded throughout the state of Pennsylvania, particularly in rural regions. These new facilities bring economic benefits to communities, but also present challenges unique to rural areas. This project employs media analysis, interviews, and GIS analysis of publicly available data to examine the impacts of warehousing development in rural areas of Pennsylvania. Six case study counties are examined to identify trends in traffic, employment, land use, and community impacts. The results will help inform planning and policy on warehouses on local and state levels.

Quentin Clapper, Franklin County

Moira Conway, PhD, Kutztown University

David Hunter, AICP, Berks County Planning Comm

Kirk Stoner, AICP, Cumberland County Planning Department



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Sunday, October 12, 2025, *continued*

A3. Creating Safe Streets Together: Integrating Planning, Engineering, and Community Voices in Safety Action Plans

CM | 1.00

Between 2019 and 2023, 284 people in Allentown were victims of high-injury crashes, with incidents on the rise. With support from a Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Planning Grant, the City developed a comprehensive safety action plan aimed at eliminating traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries by 2030 through targeted infrastructure improvements, policy changes, and inclusive community engagement. Presenters will share how an interdisciplinary team of planners and engineers designed a planning process focused on short-term implementation and long-term strategy, culminating in the successful award of an SS4A Demonstration Grant for traffic calming. The session will also highlight community engagement strategies—such as surveys, interviews, pop-up events, and media outreach—that ensured local input shaped the plan while building a coalition of stakeholders ready to support future implementation. Speakers will offer practical insights and lessons learned that attendees can apply to advance safe, community-supported transportation planning in their own communities.

Megan Brehm, City of Allentown

Samantha McLean, AICP, LEED Green Associate, Michael Baker International

Chris Stanford, AICP, PE, PTOE, PMP, Michael Baker International

A4. Tackling Energy Transition Through Planning: How Planning, Goal Setting, and Collaboration Can Lead to Results

CM | 1.00

Local and county governments are increasingly called upon to lead climate action, even as many are new to directly addressing emissions reduction. Successful implementation of Climate Action Plans requires organizational change, coalition-building, and broad education. This session will present case studies from two southeastern Pennsylvania counties where climate action planning catalyzed internal culture shifts and delivered tools to help local municipalities reduce emissions through ordinance-based strategies. Presenters will highlight specific, practical actions municipalities can take to support a transition to clean and sustainable energy. The session will also showcase the collaborative efforts led by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, which has strengthened the reach and impact of county and municipal climate initiatives.

Rachael Griffith, AICP, PLA, Chester County Planning Commission

Jon Leshner, LEED Green Associate, Montgomery County Planning Commission

Lauren Pawlowski, CFM, LEED Green Associate, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Sunday, October 12, 2025, *continued*

A5. Remarkable Revitalization: Leveraging Rural Place to Attract a Creative Industry and Workforce
CM | 1.00

Kane, PA demonstrates how rural communities can harness the creative sector to drive economic revitalization. By partnering with the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA), the Borough activated local assets to attract residents, fill vacant storefronts, and cultivate a culture of volunteerism. Presenters will share how arts and creativity have been integrated into Kane’s five-year plan, guided by the Borough’s “from red tape to red carpet” philosophy. The session will also highlight PCA’s evolving role in supporting the creative economy across Pennsylvania, including program innovations and rebranding efforts aimed at helping communities welcome and grow creative sector businesses and entrepreneurs.

Michelle Brummer, AICP, GFT
Kate Kennedy, Kane Area Development Center
Sarah Merritt, Pennsylvania Council of the Arts

A6. Office Park Revolution: Accelerating a Vibrant Future through Mixed-Use Development
CM | 1.00

This session will explore how outdated suburban business parks can be reimagined as vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods that support living, working, and recreation. Once vital centers of commerce, many business parks now struggle with high vacancy rates, aging infrastructure, and limited functionality. Presenters from the King of Prussia District will showcase how these challenges can be transformed into opportunities through innovative design strategies and purposeful redevelopment. Using two business parks in King of Prussia, PA as case studies, speakers will highlight the benefits of mixed-use development and share real-world examples of how rethinking these spaces can foster community, attract new businesses, and boost the local economy.

Eric Goldstein, RLA, PP, King of Prussia District

2:00p – 5:00p

Mobile Workshop

M2. One City, Two Streams: How Planning Choices in Harrisburg Resulted in Two Drastically Different Ecological Outcomes



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Sunday, October 12, 2025, *continued*

3:30p–4:45p **Concurrent Education Sessions B (1.25 CM)**

B1. Ethics Cases of the Year

CM | **1.25 (1.00 Ethics)**

During this session planners will learn firsthand how the AICP Code of Ethics emphasizes a commitment to equity and inclusion, to protecting the public interest, and to supporting AICP planners from frivolous complaints. Understand how the Code sets certified planners apart from others by focusing on integrity, appearance of fairness, and commitment to supporting fair and just communities. This session will review multiple scenarios, including real-life ethical issues, that came before the Ethics Officer last year in 2024. The scenarios to be reviewed will involve handling potential conflicts of interest, managing private communication, and considering switching jobs from the public to the private sector within the same community. Learn how to readily access the Code on the APA website and how to download a copy of the Ethics Pledge to display as a reminder to themselves and a notice to others that they adhere to a Code of Ethics. Two members from the AICP Ethics Committee will assist in presenting the materials along with the PA Chapter's Professional Development Officer and members of the PA Chapter's Professional Development Committee.

Scott Duncanson, AICP, ENV SP, LEED Green Associate, GFT

Steve Thomas, AICP, Michael Baker International

Alexis Williams, AICP, PP, STV, Inc.

B2. How to be an Effective Citizen Planner: Planning Officials and Commissioners Roles, Responsibilities, and Requirements

CM | **1.25**

This session will provide existing planning commissioners and zoning hearing board members, as well as those interested in becoming more involved in their local planning and zoning decisions, invaluable insights from experienced citizen planners on the roles, responsibilities, and requirements of being an effective planning official. Presenters will cover the requirements for planning officials under the Municipalities Planning Code and share their experiences and insights from their extensive involvement with and serving in the capacity of a citizen planner. The session will also include mock public hearing interactions to illustrate key points.

John Trant, AICP, Esq, CZO, ASLA, Strategic Solutions LLC

Troy Truax, AICP, Michael Baker International



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Sunday, October 12, 2025, *continued*

B3. Comprehensive Planning through the Hourglass: Setting Up Your Comprehensive Plan to Stand the Test of Time

CM | 1.25

South Whitehall Township's 2023 Comprehensive Plan process was launched in response to public backlash over a controversial land development and inspired by the goal of moving plans beyond mere documents to actionable strategies. Presenters will describe the township's "hourglass" community engagement approach, which began with broad public input collected through 36 meetings, workshops, and surveys, then distilled key themes to develop focused vision and goals, and finally expanded into detailed implementation actions. This method ensured sustained community involvement, created a strong foundation for a relevant and lasting plan, and fostered trust among elected officials for resource allocation. The session will also cover the use of the Comprehensive Plan Reexamination Report, a tool to regularly assess and update the plan's implementation, supporting continuous adaptability and success.

Dave Manhardt, AICP, South Whitehall Township

Samantha McLean, AICP, LEED Green Associate, Michael Baker International

Christopher Strohler, AICP, South Whitehall Township

B4. A+ Homes: Changing Minds and Addressing Housing Need in a Growing Community

CM | 1.25

Chester County has a growing population and some of the highest land costs in the Commonwealth, resulting in a tight housing market and decreasing affordability. To better implement the housing goals of the county-wide comprehensive plan Landscapes3, the Chester County Planning Commission has developed the A+ Homes initiative. This initiative is designed to promote and support the creation of greater housing options throughout the County, including through a series of planning guides that provide guidance and best practices to support municipal housing diversity. The A+ Homes guides for Aging-friendly, Affordably-priced, Attractive, Adaptable, and Accessible housing each focus on a specific element of housing that is critical to attaining a well-balanced housing supply throughout the County. This session will provide an overview, success stories, and lessons learned of the A+ Homes initiative as it relates to housing options in the County.

Libby Horwitz, AICP, Chester County Planning Commission

Chris Patriarca, AICP, Chester County Planning Commission



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EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Sunday, October 12, 2025, *continued*

B5. Coding for the Future: Revise Recode Reinvent
CM | 1.25

Updating municipal codes can be a complex and overwhelming task for planners—whether working at the municipal, county, or consultant level. This session will highlight how Lower Merion Township successfully used its award-winning 2016 Comprehensive Plan, developed with the Montgomery County Planning Commission, as a roadmap for step-by-step code updates. Presenters will detail how a one-day charette with consultants, engineers, stakeholders, and advisory board members helped shape a hybrid Form-Based Zoning Code, adopted in just 20 months. The session will also explore the subsequent update of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO), completed through collaboration with county planners and Township advisory boards, and adopted in 2022. Presenters will share how continued minor code updates remain aligned with the Comprehensive Plan and introduce new planning tools focused on affordable housing, traditional neighborhood development, and institutional campus planning. The session will conclude with a look ahead to the 2026 Comprehensive Plan update, including the integration of GIS and online tools to guide future innovation.

Marley Bice, AICP, Montgomery County Planning Commission
Colleen Hall, Lower Merion Township
Jennifer Hurley, AICP, PhD, FCNU, Public Participation Community of Practice
Chris Leswing, AICP, PP, Lower Merion Township

B6. Overcoming Barriers to Active Transportation Planning
CM | 1.25

As interest in walkable neighborhoods, safe bike routes, and accessible parks and trails grows, many communities face challenges in prioritizing active transportation planning due to limited staff and funding. This session will explore how multi-modal connectivity can be achieved through local and regional partnerships, innovative funding approaches, and creative planning techniques. Presenters from both the public and private sectors will share case studies and actionable insights on overcoming common barriers, developing effective plans, and taking meaningful steps toward implementation. Attendees will gain practical strategies to advance active transportation initiatives in their own communities.

Leanne Chaney, AICP, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
Laura Ludwig, AICP, Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.
Lori Morgan, AICP, Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.

5:30p – 7:00p **Welcome Reception: Whitaker Center**

At 5:15p, meet near the conference registration desk to walk to the Whitaker Center (222 Market Street, Harrisburg PA 17101). The Whitaker Center is a premier cultural and educational hub for the Science and the Arts. It seamlessly combines a hands-on STEAM-focused Science Center and Performance Theater – all designed to inspire learning and creativity across science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. This reception includes heavy hors d’oeuvres and refreshments.

Evening **Dinner on your own**



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025

7:00a – 5:00p **Registration Open**

7:00a – 5:00p **Exhibit Hall Open**

7:00a – 8:00a **Continental Breakfast with Exhibitors**

8:30a – 9:30a **Welcome & Introductions**

Opening Keynote

How to Bridge the Digital Divide After Snatching Defeat from the Jaws of Victory

CM | 1.25

Despite early leadership in Internet access, the United States—and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania—have failed to implement functional universal broadband plans, leaving many communities unserved or underserved. As national programs falter and funding remains unspent, the burden of broadband access has shifted to local and regional leaders. This session will examine the policy and planning failures that led to the current digital divide, while highlighting successful local interventions and best practices bringing broadband to underserved areas. Sascha will share resources and strategies to support broadband implementation, helping communities overcome the high costs of inaction and deliver critical digital infrastructure.

Sascha Meinrath, Penn State University

8:30a – 11:30a **Mobile Workshop**

M3. Planning for Suburban Green Infrastructure: Leading the Way for a Sustainable Future in Lower Allen Township

9:30a – 10:00a **Refreshment Break with Exhibitors**

10:00a – 11:30a **Mobile Workshop**

M4. SusqueCycle Scenic Ride on the Capital Area Greenbelt



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

10:00a – 10:45a Concurrent Education Sessions C (0.75 CM)

C1. Planning for Biosecurity in the Pennsylvania Poultry Industry

CM | 0.75

A major outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in Pennsylvania’s poultry industry could cost up to \$13 billion and pose significant public health risks due to potential zoonotic transmission. While traditional biosecurity measures such as sanitation and access control are essential, emerging research highlights the role of environmental and spatial risk factors in outbreak patterns. This session will explore how planners can guide the siting and design of new commercial poultry operations to reduce risk, using insights from recent spatial analysis of HPAI in Pennsylvania. The presenter will also examine related issues tied to large-scale animal farming and outline tools available to planners through the PA Municipalities Planning Code to support responsible agricultural development.

Andrew Turner, AICP, University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine

C2. Demographics is Destiny: So Why is Your Comp Plan Ignoring Demographics

CM | 0.75

A convergence of powerful forces—stagnant fertility rates, restrictive immigration policies, an aging population, housing affordability challenges, and climate change—is reshaping the demographic and economic landscape of towns, cities, and counties across the U.S. Individually significant, these factors collectively have the potential to alter the long-term socio-economic trajectory of local and regional jurisdictions. This session will examine the implications of these shifts for municipal and county governments and explore how comprehensive planning that anticipates demographic and environmental change can strengthen economic and fiscal resilience.

Todd Pool, EDFP, Award Planning Inc.

C3. Lodging at a Crossroads: Short-term Rentals, Leveling the Playing Field & Ensuring Fairness and Safety in a Changing Ecosystem

CM | 0.75

The Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association (PRLA) led efforts to advance PA House Bill 425 (2023–2024), which tasked the Pennsylvania Joint State Government Commission with studying the growth of the short-term rental market and its impacts on traditional lodging, tourism, and housing. In March 2025, the Commission released a comprehensive report detailing the effects of short-term rentals on Pennsylvania’s hospitality landscape and broader tourism economy. This session will unpack key findings from the report, explore evolving challenges, and discuss potential regulatory changes shaping the future of lodging and tourism in the Commonwealth. A Q&A session will follow to engage attendees on issues of fair competition, safety, and strategic policy direction.

Zakary Pyzik, Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association

Lindsay Schoch, AICP, College Township



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

C4. Planning for Affordability: Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grant and Transformation of Pittsburgh's Larimer Neighborhood

CM | 0.75

Pittsburgh, like many cities, faces a shortage of high-quality, affordable housing—an issue compounded by the long-term impacts of concentrated poverty in public housing. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Larimer neighborhood, where decades of population loss, vacancy, crime, and disinvestment took a heavy toll. In response, the Housing Authority and City of Pittsburgh secured a \$30 million Choice Neighborhood Implementation (CNI) grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to transform Larimer through a comprehensive redevelopment strategy. This session will highlight how the grant catalyzed the creation of 319 energy-efficient housing units, upgraded parks and infrastructure, introduced retail opportunities, and required deep community engagement. Presenters will showcase the Cornerstone Village redevelopment as a replicable model for equitable, community-led affordable housing planning and neighborhood revitalization.

Joseph Hackett, RLA, LBA Landscape Architecture
Mark O'Matz, RA, Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency
Randy Rhoads, RA, Cushing Terrell

C5. It's Alive! Modern Census Applications

CM | 0.75

With the discontinuation of American FactFinder and the rise of data.census.gov, methods for accessing Census data have evolved, but the demand for reliable demographic information remains essential for long-range planning, housing assessments, and population projections. This session will guide attendees through navigating the Census website to access key demographic data relevant to municipalities. Presenters will provide a tutorial on using Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) datasets for advanced demographic analysis and trend identification. The session will also highlight how Census data informed Chester County's recent Housing Assessment, offering practical insights into applying data to understand and address local community needs.

David Greenberg, Montgomery County Planning Commission
Libby Horwitz, AICP, Chester County Planning Commission
Jake Michael, AICP, Chester County Planning Commission

C6. Navigating the Future: Scenario Planning for Resilient Transportation in York County

CM | 0.75

Facing uncertain funding, evolving technology, and shifting community priorities, York County incorporated scenario planning into the development of its Go York 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) to build a more resilient transportation vision. This session will explore how scenario planning was used to engage stakeholders, examine critical uncertainties—such as funding levels, development patterns, and climate change—and develop alternative futures for the region. Presenters will detail the structured Futures Forum workshop and how the resulting insights informed strategic objectives and policies within Go York 2050, offering a replicable framework for long-range transportation planning.

Mike Pritchard, AICP, York County Planning Commission



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, continued

C7. Fast Fun Fervent: Partnerships | Plans | Regional Planning
CM | 0.75

Hear four dynamic speakers covering partnerships, plans, and regional planning topics at the lightning speed. Each speaker will have 7-10 minutes to cover a maximum of 20 slides for 20 seconds each. Attendees will get to learn about a wide variety of topics in short spurts.

Moderated by Conference Committee Member

Breaking Boundaries: The Functions of Making Regionalism Work in Pennsylvania

Pam Adams, Centre Regional Planning Agency

Breaking Boundaries: The Benefits of Making Regionalism Work in Pennsylvania

Jenna Wargo, AICP, Centre Regional Planning Agency

From Fragmentation to Collaboration: The Planning District Approach Process

Joshua Spano, Westmoreland County Department of Planning and Development

From Fragmentation to Collaboration: The Planning District Approach Challenges

Jill Caswell, Westmoreland County Department of Planning and Development

10:45a – 11:00a **Break/Travel**

m
McNees

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Esch McCombie, Esq.
Co-Chair - Real Estate Group
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Harrisburg, PA | Lancaster, PA | Pittsburgh, PA | Radnor, PA
State College, PA | York, PA | Frederick, MD | Towson, MD
Columbus, OH | Washington, DC



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

11:00a–12:00p **Concurrent Education Sessions D (1.00 CM)**

D1. Pennsylvania Land Use Law Update: Appellate Cases from 2024-2025

CM | **1.00 Law**

Pennsylvania appellate cases will be presented in a traditional lecture format, encouraging interaction with the audience with hypotheticals and questions and answers. Cases will cover land use cases dealing with zoning (variances, special exceptions, and conditional uses), subdivision and land development (plan approval/denial, modifications/waivers), and validity challenges to ordinances. Practice points distilled from each case will be emphasized.

Tara Hitchens, AICP, East Lampeter Township

Charles Suhr, Esq., Stevens & Lee

D2. Asset Management: A Foundational and Accessible Tool for Achieving Plan Goals

CM | **1.00**

Plans outline a community's vision, but effective implementation begins with a clear inventory of existing assets and their condition. Asset management is a critical tool for aligning capital investments with long-term goals, prioritizing high-impact projects, maximizing limited budgets, attracting external funding, and engaging stakeholders. This session will highlight scalable asset management strategies and funding opportunities available to communities, regardless of size or budget. Presenters will share practical tools and real-world case studies that demonstrate how communities can adopt asset management practices to support informed decision-making and drive successful plan implementation.

Lori Morgan, AICP, Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.

Andrea Viazanko, Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.

D3. Unlocking the Lemoyne Bottleneck: A Collaborative Approach to Safe and Efficient Multimodal Streets

CM | **1.00**

PennDOT's Lemoyne Bottleneck project in the West Shore communities near Harrisburg serves as a case study in addressing the challenges of a contentious road diet proposal. Faced with strong opposition related to traffic congestion, safety, and multimodal access along the Market Street corridor, the project team employed early and continuous stakeholder engagement to build trust, refine concepts, and develop a balanced solution. This session will explore how interviews, workshops, and public meetings informed traffic analysis and design decisions—such as lane configurations, bike infrastructure, and emergency access—leading to a more widely accepted plan. Featuring live polling, case study discussions, and Q&A, the session will offer actionable strategies for managing controversy, fostering community buy-in, and delivering context-sensitive transportation solutions.

Laura Ahramjian, AICP, Kittelson & Associates

Bri Tuttska, Kittelson & Associates



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

D4. Affordable Housing: Lower Merion’s Multi-Pronged Approach to Successful Policies
CM | 1.00

Lower Merion Township is advancing housing affordability through a multi-pronged approach that includes policy reform, public advocacy, and exploration of innovative funding tools. While maintaining Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement status, the Township has adopted zoning incentives such as density bonuses to encourage affordable housing, supported the Ardmore House II development—providing 48 units for low-income seniors—and pursued implementation of Act No. 58 of 2022, an underutilized affordable housing tax exemption not yet leveraged by any other municipality in Pennsylvania. This session will offer planners practical guidance on adopting affordable housing code provisions, building political and community support, and navigating NIMBY opposition. Presenters will share zoning strategies, details on Act 58 exploration, and a case study of the fully funded, \$20 million Ardmore House II project—completed without the use of local tax dollars.

Charles Doyle, AICP, Lower Merion Township

D5. Public-Private Planning for Freight: A Collaborative Model for Success
CM | 1.00

Freight transportation—encompassing trucks, trains, planes, ships, and the workforce that supports these modes—is vital for moving raw materials and finished goods across urban and rural areas. Over the past three years, York County has integrated freight into its transportation planning through adoption of a county freight plan featuring a core freight network and programming framework. The County established a Freight Advisory Committee with active Task Forces, incorporated freight priorities into the metropolitan transportation plan, hosted a municipal freight summit, and produces an annual freight report. Key success factors include strong leadership, private sector engagement, MPO integration, and collaboration among local, state, and federal partners. This session will share York County’s experiences, achievements, and best practices for advancing freight planning at the county level.

Michelle Brummer, AICP, GFT

Chris Caba, York County Planning Commission

Silas Chamberlin, PhD, York County Economic Alliance

D6. From Regional Planning to Local Implementation: Advancing Bicycle & Pedestrian Infrastructure in York County
CM | 1.00

Bridging the gap between regional vision and local implementation remains a significant challenge in planning. York County’s Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan, adopted by York Area Metropolitan Planning Organization in 2023, addressed this by employing a multi-faceted approach that includes education, infrastructure development, stakeholder engagement, ordinance adoption, and project execution. This session will highlight York County’s experiences implementing the plan at the borough and township levels, featuring practical tools such as interactive dashboards, GIS mapping, and Local Complete Streets Committees. Attendees will engage in a collaborative discussion to identify common barriers and co-create strategies to advance active transportation initiatives in their own communities. Lessons learned and funding guidance will also be shared to support successful local execution of regional plans.

Heather Bitner, York County Planning Commission

Ehsan Ershad Sarabi, York County Planning Commission

Mike Pritchard, AICP, York County Planning Commission



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

D7. Fast Fun Fervent: Transportation
CM | 1.00

Hear five dynamic speakers covering transportation topics at the lightning speed. Each speaker will have 7-10 minutes to cover a maximum of 20 slides for 20 seconds each. Attendees will get to learn about a wide variety of topics in short spurts.

Moderated by Conference Committee Member

Unhoused and Unsafe: Vision Zero and Homelessness
Keyleigh Kern, AICP, ASLA, AECOM

Pedaling Forward: Building Bike Share Systems in South Central PA
Laura Heilman, Commute PA

Pedaling Forward: Expanding Bike Share Systems in South Central PA
Karl Graybill, AICP, City of Lancaster

Active Transportation Plans and Better Bicycling Facilities
Kevin Myers, Chester County Planning Commission

Vision Zero Delco: An Innovative County Approach to Vision Zero
Cathy Spahr, AICP, Delaware County Planning Department

D8. Creating Healthier Communities Together
CM | 1.00

Join us for an engaging panel featuring members of Healthy Communities in PA as they share diverse perspectives, success stories, and key insights on advancing community health across Pennsylvania. This session will explore future directions, opportunities for collaboration, and strategies to strengthen local health initiatives. We encourage you to bring your local health department representatives, planners, and other community stakeholders to be part of this important conversation.

Sam Pearson, Pennsylvania Downtown Center
Rebecca Wetzler, AICP, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

12:00p – 1:45p Luncheon, State of the Chapter and Annual Awards Presentation

Join us as we celebrate the achievements of fellow Pennsylvanians who shape where we live, work and play! Join **Craig Peiffer**, Chair of the PA Chapter of APA Awards Committee, for an inspiring Annual Awards program. We will recognize the work of fellow planners, planning officials, and elected officials and their roles in planning Pennsylvania. PA Chapter of APA President, **Leah Eppinger** will present the **State of the Chapter** highlighting the Chapter's successes and key activities during 2025.

2:00p – 3:15p Mobile Workshop
M5. Planning for Pedestrian Safety: Conducting a Pedestrian Safety Audit



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

2:00p–3:15p **Concurrent Education Sessions E (1.25 CM)**

E1. Shakespearean Ethics Skits 2025: To Plan or Not to Plan

CM | **1.25 (1.00 Ethics)**

Back by popular demand, the PA Chapter Players present *Shakespearean Ethics*, a new installment of the acclaimed session that brings AICP Ethics Cases of the Year to life through witty, engaging skits inspired by the works of Shakespeare. Reimagined characters—including Hero, Beatrice, Benedick, and Nick Bottom—grapple with ethical dilemmas in planning, from conflicts of interest and professional competence to political influence and interpersonal tensions. Set in fictionalized planning scenarios drawn from *Much Ado About Nothing*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Julius Caesar*, this session offers both entertainment and education while encouraging thoughtful discussion of real-world ethical challenges in the planning profession.

Scott Duncanson, AICP, ENV-SP, LEED Green Associate, GFT
Pattie Guttenplan, AICP, RLA, Montgomery County Planning Commission
Eric Jarrell, Montgomery County Planning Commission
Matthew Popek, AICP, Montgomery County Planning Commission
Mike Pritchard, AICP, York County Planning Commission
Rebecca Ross, AICP, Delaware County Planning Department

E2. Outdoor-Based Recreation: A Gateway to Nature Engagement

CM | **1.25**

Outdoor-based recreation—ranging from traditional pursuits like hiking and fishing to non-traditional activities such as skateboarding, mountain biking, and kayaking—has seen significant growth and now engages over half of the U.S. population. These nature-centric activities promote lifelong connections to the outdoors and foster conservation-mindedness, particularly through accessible “gateway” experiences. Despite rising interest, participation remains limited among non-traditional demographic groups due to barriers such as cost, transportation, accessibility, and cultural perceptions. This session will explore strategies for overcoming these challenges through inclusive planning and design. Case studies from cities including Columbus, Denver, Bentonville, and Pittsburgh will highlight successful interventions that expand outdoor recreation access and promote equity in lifelong wellness opportunities.

Brett Hollern, Pennsylvania Environmental Council
Carla Lukehart, PLA, LEED AP and EcoDistricts AP, Environmental Planning and Design
Joel Perkovich, PLA, ASLA, Allegheny County Department of Parks
Carolyn Yagle, AICP, EcoDistricts AP and PLA, Environmental Planning and Design



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

E3. Finding Your Way in the Field: Mentors Need Mentees and Mentees Need Mentors CM | 1.25

Entering the planning profession can be daunting for students and emerging professionals who often lack connections and clarity about career paths. This interactive session will explore the vital mentor/mentee relationship through a dynamic, interview-style format. Mentees will pose questions to experienced planners, uncovering insights into career paths, lessons learned, and what seasoned professionals wish they had known early on. Facilitated group discussions and anonymous audience Q&A will create an open, supportive environment for sharing stories, challenges, and aspirations. Topics include navigating the field, managing expectations, the value of cross-sector relationships, and the evolution from mentee to mentor. Designed to foster connections, this session also aims to build a lasting resource network beyond the conference.

Christina Arlt, AICP, McCormick Taylor
Emily Diaz-Melendez, City of Reading
David Hunter, AICP, Berks County Planning Commission
Trajan Jones, Indiana Borough
Jeff Raykes, AICP, Stuart Group Consulting

E4. Measuring Impact on Main Street CM | 1.25

This session will provide an in-depth look at the data-driven approach used to support the revitalization strategy for Meadville, PA's newly formed downtown organization, the Meadville Community Revitalization Corporation (MCRC). Presenters will share the methods and tools used to conduct a comprehensive property condition and business inventory analysis across more than 400 parcels and 224 properties. The resulting insights—covering occupancy rates, tenant types, property conditions, and Earned Income Tax data—are being used to establish key performance indicators for MCRC's strategic goals: real estate intervention, placemaking and connectivity, and business engagement. The session will also highlight how this analysis has supported successful advocacy efforts, helping MCRC secure nearly \$1.5 million in funding for implementation.

Jeff Keeler, Altair Consulting Group
Amy Murdock, AICP, r.plan
Andy Walker, Meadville Community Revitalization Corporation



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

E5. A United Fight Against Blight: The Alle-Kiski Regional Solution CM | 1.25

Blighted properties are a persistent challenge for communities, impacting safety, property values, and economic growth. This session explores the Alle-Kiski Regional Blight Inventory and Plan Project as a best-practice model for addressing blight at a regional scale. Led by Westmoreland County and supported by the Redevelopment Authority, Land Bank, and Local Government Academy, the project brought together seven municipalities to conduct a boots-on-the-ground survey of over 20,000 parcels, analyze housing and market data, and engage a multi-sector Regional Blight Task Force. The result: a practical, implementable plan with both regional and community-specific strategies. Attendees will gain insights into effective multi-municipal collaboration, county-led leadership, and data-informed planning to combat blight.

Victoria Baur, Westmoreland County Planning

Rick Hopkinson, Mt. Oliver Borough

Brian Lawrence, AICP, Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority and Land Bank

Joy Ruff, AICP, Local Government Academy

E6. Artificial Intelligence in Community Planning: Enhancing Efficiency and Effectiveness for Public Sector Planners CM | 1.25

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping public sector planning by enabling more efficient, data-driven approaches to community development, land use, and policy analysis. This session highlights how rural planning agencies are leveraging AI tools—including machine learning, geospatial analysis, and automated review systems—to support tasks such as planning consistency checks, infrastructure analysis, and administrative workflows. Through real-world case studies, presenters will showcase how AI has improved efficiency, reduced processing times, and enhanced public engagement. Attendees will also explore challenges related to data quality, transparency, and ethical use, gaining practical insights on how to responsibly integrate AI into planning processes to build more resilient and inclusive communities.

Zachary Norwood, Crawford County

Ron Mattocks, Crawford County Planning Commission

Planning Sustainable, Connected Communities

- Air Quality
- Architecture
- Aviation
- Broadband
- Civil Site Design
- Emergency Management
- Environmental
- Geospatial (GIS)
- Planning & Urban Design
- Public Engagement
- Rail & Transit
- Stormwater Management
- Traffic Design & Engineering
- Transportation Planning & Engineering

DESIGN HUB





EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

E7. Adventure Awaits: Revitalizing Rural Communities Through Outdoor Recreation
CM | 1.25

Outdoor recreation offers a powerful strategy for revitalizing small towns facing economic transition by creating jobs, attracting visitors, and improving quality of life. This session highlights Pennsylvania success stories where natural assets have been leveraged to drive economic diversification, entrepreneurship, and infrastructure investment. Panelists from county and state agencies will share proven tools such as strategic asset mapping and community engagement techniques that help rural communities manage recreation growth sustainably and equitably. Attendees will learn how to balance economic opportunity with environmental protection, foster collaboration, and ensure access and affordability for all residents—leaving with a tangible roadmap and replicable strategies for building resilient outdoor recreation economies.

Silas Chamberlin, PhD, York County Economic Development

Nicole Muise-Kielkucki, Fourth Economy

Nathan Reigner, PhD, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

3:30p – 5:00p

Mobile Workshop

M6. Historic Harrisburg Tour of Riverfront Park and Capitol Complex

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EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

3:45p– 4:45p **Concurrent Education Sessions F (1.00 CM)**

F1. Trails as Resilient Infrastructure: How Trails can Support Pennsylvania’s Communities

CM | **1.00 Sustainability & Resilience**

As communities adapt to climate change, managing infrastructure for resilience is increasingly important—and trails, often built in vulnerable areas, can be part of the solution. This session will explore the Federal Highway Administration’s new Trails as Resilient Infrastructure guidebooks, which outline how trails can aid stormwater management, support emergency access, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging active transportation. Experts from Toole Design and local trail managers will share practical insights on planning, designing, and maintaining trail corridors for climate resilience and emergency preparedness, with a focus on region-specific challenges and real-world applications.

Carrie Long, Toole Design
Kristin Saunders, Toole Design

F2. Implementation Success Stories: Assembling the Right People, Tools, and Funding to Achieve Plan Goals

CM | **1.00**

Too often, plans are adopted and forgotten—but across Pennsylvania, communities are finding ways to move from vision to action. This session highlights successful implementation stories from urban, suburban, and rural areas, covering projects like riverfront revitalization, pedestrian connectivity, and industrial site reuse. Presenters will focus on three key elements for success: the right people, the right tools, and the right funding. Attendees will gain actionable strategies for prioritizing goals, leveraging partnerships, accessing funding and technical assistance, and maintaining momentum to ensure planning efforts lead to real, measurable results.

Laura Ludwig, AICP, Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.
Kaitlin Mills, AICP, Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.
Tracy Strickland, RLA, Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.

F3. Public Engagement is a Whole Different Animal: How Different Personalities Engage in Planning Processes

CM | **1.00**

Public engagement is essential but unpredictable—planners never know if they’ll encounter Complaining Crabs or Eager Otters at meetings. This interactive session will explore how to navigate a variety of personalities to foster productive conversations and meaningful community input. Attendees will learn practical strategies to manage challenging behaviors and redirect them into constructive dialogue, with hands-on group exercises to apply these techniques in real-world scenarios.

Jillian Dierks, McCormick Taylor
Carrie Machuga, McCormick Taylor



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

F4. Affordable Workforce Housing: What You May Not Know
CM | 1.00

The urgent need for affordable workforce housing is well recognized, yet reliance on federal and state programs has proven insufficient to meet demand. This session will shed light on the challenges private developers face in producing affordable housing and highlight how local land-use policies—without heavy financial incentives—can effectively increase the supply of moderate- and low-income housing. Attendees, especially planning and zoning board officials, will gain practical insights into zoning reforms that promote housing production while supporting local economic development.

Todd Poole, EDFP, 4ward Planning Inc.

F5. Main Street Matters
CM | 1.00

This session introduces the Main Street Approach, a proven community revitalization methodology used in over 1,700 communities nationwide, including many across Pennsylvania. Attendees will learn about Main Street Matters, DCED's new FY24-25 program supporting commercial district and neighborhood revitalization through technical assistance, education, and funding for operations, planning, and projects. Amidst circulating misinformation, this session aims to clarify the program's purpose, benefits, and opportunities for diverse stakeholders—including local and county planners, elected officials, community organizations, developers, and state agencies. The presenters will engage participants in a discussion centered on asset-based revitalization, focusing on leveraging community strengths rather than dwelling on problems. Attendees will leave equipped with actionable next steps to advance revitalization efforts in their own communities. As Pennsylvania Downtown Center serves as the state partner and coordinator for Main Street & Elm Street programs, they bring expert insights into best practices for revitalizing Pennsylvania's downtowns and neighborhoods.

Julie Fitzpatrick, Pennsylvania Downtown Center

Christie Yerger, PA Department of Community and Economic Development

F6. Learning to Love Peanut Butter and Banana Sandwiches
CM | 1.00

Multi-municipal zoning requires careful balancing of diverse community interests, much like learning to appreciate the unexpected combination of a peanut butter and banana sandwich—Elvis' favorite. This session explores three key topics essential for creating lasting multi-municipal zoning ordinances, highlighting crucial steps beyond the PA MPC authorizations that influence whether ordinances are upheld. Using real-world examples, we'll also discuss emerging and unwanted land uses ideal for multi-municipal zoning. Join us ready to embrace the challenges and rewards of this collaborative process!

Mary Liz Donato, Lackawanna County

Carolyn Yagle, AICP, PLA, NAP, Environmental Planning & Design



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Monday, October 13, 2025, *continued*

F7. AICP: Is This Certification For You
CM | **NO CM**

Considering becoming a certified planner by taking the AICP exam but unsure if it's right for you? The PA Chapter and its Professional Development Committee are here to help. This session will cover the benefits and requirements of certification, the application process, and exam format to help you decide if or when to take the test. For those ready to take the exam, we'll share valuable preparation resources. The session will be interactive and driven by your questions and needs.

Scott Duncanson, AICP, ENV SP, LEED Green Associate, GFT
Alexis Williams, AICP, PP, STV Inc.

Evening

Planners Social

Planners Social will be at Stocks On 2nd (211 N 2nd Street). Every good planner has a team of colleagues to lean on. This social aims to connect planning professionals from all over the state for an evening of drinks, snacks and good conversations. This social is sponsored by Central Section, Michael Baker International, and GFT. This event is limited to 100 people, please make sure you register for this event. There will be no onsite registrations. *(Additional food and beverage will be available for purchase)*

Evening

Dinner on your own





EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

- 7:00a – 3:00p **Registration Open**
- 7:00a – 2:00p **Exhibit Hall Open**
- 7:00a – 8:00a **Continental Breakfast with Exhibitors**
- 7:15a - 8:00a **Professional Development Committee Meeting**
- 7:15a - 8:00a **Planning Officials Development Committee Meeting**
- 8:15a – 9:45a **Introductions**
Plenary
PA Housing Plans and Advocacy
CM | 1.50

Hear from the dedicated experts behind Pennsylvania’s housing efforts as they share insights on implementing housing plans, advancing advocacy initiatives, and addressing real-world challenges. This discussion highlights the on-the-ground work driving affordable housing, tenant support, and equitable community development across the Commonwealth.

Morgan Boyd, PA Department of Community and Economic Development
Angela Brooks, FAICP, City of Philadelphia
Phyllis Chamberlain, Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania

- 9:45a – 10:15a **Refreshment Break with Exhibitors**
- 10:00a – 11:30a **Mobile Workshop**
M7. Downtown Harrisburg Active Transportation Infrastructure Tour





EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Tuesday, October 14, 2025, *continued*

10:15a – 11:30a Concurrent Education Sessions G (1.25 CM)

G1. Choose Your Own Adventure: Legal Case Studies for Planning

CM | 1.25 (1.00 Law)

This session features an engaging discussion among land use professionals centered on a reverse Q&A format. Presenters will outline real-world development and planning scenarios considered by the courts, describe the legal issues at stake, and then invite attendees to predict the outcomes. Following attendee input, presenters will reveal the actual court decisions and lead a discussion on the implications for future development and planning practices.

Chris Knarr, AICP, McNees Wallace & Nurick LLC
Esch McCombie, Esq, McNees Wallace & Nurick LLC

G2. Cultivating a Thriving Workplace: Lead, Inspire, Empower!

CM | 1.25 (1.00 Equity)

This interactive workshop explores how psychological safety—fueled by equity, diversity, and inclusion—drives resilient, high-performing teams. Attendees will learn practical strategies to foster inclusive environments where all individuals feel valued and empowered to contribute. Through guided discussions and hands-on activities, participants will deepen their cultural awareness, strengthen coaching and mentoring skills, and gain tools to build trust-based, equitable workplaces. Whether managing staff or engaging the public, you'll leave equipped to lead with empathy, promote belonging, and support a culture of shared success.

Rachelle Abbott, AICP, STEP, Inc.
Beck Moore, Community Action Association of Pennsylvania

G3. Planning for the Present While Considering the Past

CM | 1.25

Session features presenters from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources Heritage Program Area (DCNR), Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), and City of Lancaster planning staff with WRT. SHPO presenter explores deconstructing the myth of heritage preservation. DCNR presenter addresses the significance of intangible heritage and cultural resources. DCED presenter discusses strategies for integrating heritage into land-use policy. City of Lancaster and WRT consultant present the East End Small Area Plan, focused on the future of the Lancaster County Jail building, which carries a complex legacy and will become available once the new county prison is complete. Presentations emphasize the importance of acknowledging difficult historical sites and traumas while maintaining momentum in planning and development. A thirty-minute overview is followed by a forty-five-minute interactive discussion covering heritage's role in planning, barriers to integration, community engagement, and real-world challenges faced by planning professionals. Attendees gain direct access to diverse preservation perspectives, practitioner insights, innovative strategies, potential funding opportunities, and actionable ideas applicable to their communities. Although content aligns with an intermediate understanding of heritage and planning, the session will benefit planners at all experience levels with interest in heritage, culture, and history.

Bill Callahan, Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office
Hannah Clark, AICP, WRT
Lauren Finn, AICP, City of Lancaster
David Maher, Department of Conservation & Natural Resources



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Tuesday, October 14, 2025, *continued*

G4. Planning for Stormwater Management and Flood Mitigation: A Multi-County Perspective

CM | 1.25

This session will explore how five counties in eastern Pennsylvania—Chester, Lehigh, Northampton, Bucks, and Montgomery—are leveraging newly available state funding to update their Act 167 watershed stormwater management plans. Required under Pennsylvania’s Stormwater Management Act, these plans guide stormwater management at the county level and result in enforceable ordinances adopted by each municipality. Presenters will highlight how stormwater planning intersects with land use, hazard mitigation, sustainability, and climate action. Chester County’s update, already underway prior to the funding, has been enhanced through expanded data collection. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission is coordinating updates to 15 plans across Lehigh and Northampton Counties, while Bucks and Montgomery County Planning Commissions are leading updates to 9 and 18 plans, respectively. The session will detail the complexities of conducting these updates concurrently and include a flood impact demonstration exercise to engage participants in understanding real-world implications of watershed-scale planning.

Jamie Eberl, Department of Environmental Protection

Kate Hutelmyer, Chester County Water Resources Authority

Jon Leshner, LEED Green Associate, Montgomery County Planning Commission

Susan Myerov, AICP, Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

Evan Stone, Bucks County Planning Commission

G5. Creating Economic Anchors in Your Community: How a Quasi-Government Entity (tote) Bagged the First Trader Joe’s in Central Pennsylvania

CM | 1.25

Certain sites within a community serve as anchors for broader economic development, with their use significantly influencing the value and quality of nearby development. In Lower Allen Township, the 2017 Comprehensive Plan identified one such 14-acre site along Route 15. When the site’s traditional department store tenant went bankrupt, the Township’s Development Authority recognized the parcel’s strategic importance and intervened—rather than leaving redevelopment solely to private interests. This proactive approach led to the transformation of the site and the successful attraction of the region’s first Trader Joe’s, catalyzing additional investment and revitalization in the area. This session will explore how the Authority’s strategic acquisition, visioning, and implementation process can serve as a model for other communities. The project’s success was recognized with a Pennsylvania Governor’s Award for Excellence in Local Government, underscoring its replicable impact.

Max Stoner, PE, Lower Allen Township Development Authority

Isaac Sweeney, Lower Allen Township

Erin Trone, Department of Community and Economic Development

Troy Truax, AICP, Michael Baker International



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Tuesday, October 14, 2025, *continued*

G6. Driving Pennsylvania Transportation Forward: Insights from the State Transportation Advisory Committee
CM | 1.25

This session will highlight the work of Pennsylvania’s State Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), which has provided independent guidance to the State Transportation Commission and the Secretary of Transportation since its creation under Act 120 of 1970. The TAC chair will begin with an overview of the committee’s statutory role, followed by presentations from two project managers summarizing recent studies. The first study explores how the rise of e-commerce is reshaping land use and transportation across Pennsylvania—affecting traffic patterns, infrastructure wear, and the location and type of commercial development. This analysis underscores the growing need for coordinated planning between transportation and land use entities, particularly as local governments often lack the resources to manage e-commerce-driven change. In addition the presentation will focus on the 2025 Transportation Performance Report (TPR), a biennial resource used to inform the 12-Year Program update. This segment will discuss statewide transportation system performance, the value of performance monitoring, and how planners can integrate reporting into their planning processes to support more data-informed decision-making.

Brian Funkhouser, AICP, Michael Baker International

Jody Holton, AICP, SEPTA

Tom Phelan, PE, Michael Baker International

G7. History, Implementation and Benefits of Expanded Western Pennsylvania Passenger Rail Service
CM | 1.25

This session will focus on the current and future state of passenger rail service in Pennsylvania. Western Pennsylvanians for Passenger Rail (WPPR) will discuss their advocacy efforts to retain and expand rail service in the region, emphasizing rail’s role in enhancing economic vitality, livability, and transportation options, and highlighting the impact of key legislation such as Act 89, PRIIA, and the IIJA. PennDOT will present on ongoing projects with Norfolk Southern and Amtrak to improve New York–Harrisburg–Pittsburgh service, the state’s participation in the Federal Railroad Administration’s Corridor ID program, and station improvement projects along the Keystone Corridor. The City of Johnstown will share how expanded passenger rail supports local economic development and revitalization efforts, including plans for the refurbished train station and incline, funded through a federal RAISE grant. Together, these presentations will provide a comprehensive look at how advocacy, planning, and investment are shaping the future of passenger rail in the Commonwealth.

Art Martynuska, CFPS, EFO, EMC, City of Johnstown

Mark Spada, Western Pennsylvanians for Passenger Rail

Angela Watson, AICP, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Tuesday, October 14, 2025, *continued*

11:30a – 1:30p

Pitkin Luncheon & Lecture
Civic Pride & Civic Apathy (12:00p – 1:30p)

Jeff Siegler, Revitalize or Die
CM | **1.50**

Communities across the country have been devastated by apathy, and unless we take drastic action, the problem will continue to worsen. Apathy destroys everything it touches, and it can't be fixed by planning or money alone. The lack of care and concern among residents won't change if we stay on the same path. We need a fresh approach to restore people's connection to their town. Only by fostering a sense of civic pride can we combat apathy. This means bringing people together, restoring beauty, fostering affection, and giving meaning to people's relationship with their community. A small-scale, simple, and incremental approach can help replace apathy with pride. The key is to start working—there is no silver bullet, and no one is coming to fix it for us. Every resident, every day, must do their part to make the community just a little bit better. When everyone participates, we can create something truly special: a community we can all be proud of.

1:30p – 2:00p

Dessert with Exhibitors & Announcement of Winners (basket, auction and 50/50)

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EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Tuesday, October 14, 2025, *continued*

2:00p - 3:00p **Concurrent Education Sessions H (1.00 CM)**

H1. Energize Southeast PA: A Blueprint for Scaling Residential Decarbonization

CM | **1.00 Sustainability/Resilience**

This session explores strategies to decarbonize one-third of Pennsylvania homes, with a focus on Greater Philadelphia, through the lens of affordability, energy efficiency, and workforce development. Speakers from the City of Philadelphia Office of Sustainability (OOS), Philadelphia Energy Authority (PEA), and Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) share initiatives aimed at addressing energy poverty and scaling clean energy programs. The OOS presents the Energy Poverty Alleviation Strategy, developed through a multi-stakeholder approach, and outlines efforts to create a citywide Clean Energy Workforce Strategy in response to workforce capacity challenges. The PEA highlights the Built to Last program, a nationally recognized whole-home repair and energy efficiency hub that has served over 100 low-income households since 2021. The DVRPC discusses efforts to establish the Southeast PA Regional Energy Center to align residential assistance programs and expand decarbonization efforts to Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery counties. The session unpacks key components of successful planning and implementation, offering lessons learned, guiding principles, and opportunities for residential decarbonization across Pennsylvania communities.

Alison Nemirow, AECOM

Kira Halma, City of Philadelphia, Office of Sustainability

Lauren Pawlowski, CFM, LEED Green Associate, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

H2. Building on Lancaster's Strength: The City Revitalization and Improvement Zone Program

CM | **1.00**

This session offers an in-depth exploration of the City of Lancaster's successful implementation of the City Revitalization and Improvement Zone (CRIZ) Program, established in 2013 to drive private investment, repurpose underutilized properties, and create jobs. Presenters will highlight how CRIZ funding has been strategically deployed to support major redevelopment initiatives, improve infrastructure, strengthen small businesses, and grow the tourism and hospitality sectors. The session will also examine how the program has aligned with Lancaster's economic development strategic plan, Building On Strength—recipient of the APA-PA's 2015 Planning Excellence Award—and how this alignment has positioned Lancaster as a statewide model for sustainable urban development. Attendees will gain practical insights into structuring CRIZ programs for maximum impact, leveraging public-private partnerships, and ensuring long-term economic resilience and growth.

Marshall Snively, Lancaster City Alliance

Jeremy Young, Lancaster City Alliance



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Tuesday, October 14, 2025, *continued*

H3. Data-Driven Decision Making for Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity: Tools for Planners and Local Officials CM | 1.00

This session highlights innovative approaches to advancing sustainable and accessible transportation through improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Presenters from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) will introduce two decision-support tools—DVRPC LINK and the Sidewalk Construction Index—designed to help planners prioritize projects based on connectivity, equity, and long-term resilience. DVRPC LINK evaluates the connectivity benefits of proposed bicycle and pedestrian projects by estimating how many people, jobs, and services would be connected, supporting data-driven prioritization. Delaware County's use of LINK in developing its active transportation plan—from rural Chadds Ford to urban Upper Darby—will be showcased as a practical application. The Sidewalk Construction Index identifies critical sidewalk gaps across Greater Philadelphia by assigning priority scores based on a replicable methodology modeled after Washington, D.C. Both tools are publicly accessible and adaptable, offering planners across Pennsylvania a framework for building robust, future-ready active transportation networks.

Baxter Barrett, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Sarah Moran, AICP, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Cathy Spahr, AICP, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

H4. Energy...What You Need to Know and What You Need to Do CM | 1.00

This session explores the growing challenge of resource adequacy in the nation's electrical grid, as demand for electricity surges due to expanding data center development, electric vehicle adoption, and advanced manufacturing. With potential capacity shortages projected as early as 2026, the session will feature a facilitated panel discussion examining the causes of the energy crisis, the key entities responsible for electricity generation and distribution, and the implications for communities and planners. Panelists will include representatives from an electric utility, a state regulatory commission, and a regional transmission organization, each offering insights into the operational, regulatory, and infrastructural pressures facing the grid. Topics will include the impacts of emerging land uses, the regulatory role in balancing consumer and utility needs, and the challenges of managing grid reliability across multiple states. The session will conclude with a call to action for planners, outlining how the planning profession can engage more actively in energy issues to support reliable, affordable service and help shape a resilient energy future.

Stephan Bennett, PJM Interconnection
Steve DeFrank, PA Public Utility Commission
Shelby Linton-Keddie, PPL
Kirk Stoner, AICP, Cumberland County Planning Department



EDSESSIONSAGENDA

Tuesday, October 14, 2025, *continued*

H5. Implementing Context-Sensitive Housing: Lessons from Media Borough’s Hybrid Form-Based Code CM | 1.00

This session examines Media Borough’s 2023 adoption of a hybrid form-based code for its residential areas in response to development pressures, housing affordability concerns, and the need to preserve community character. Developed through a robust public engagement process led by a planning consultant in partnership with the Borough, the new zoning framework addresses key challenges such as enabling context-sensitive residential growth, expanding housing diversity and affordability, regulating missing middle housing and accessory dwelling units (ADUs), preserving open space, and accommodating varied lot and building conditions. Presenters—including the zoning officer, a planning commission member, and the lead consultant—will share insights from the transition away from traditional Euclidean zoning and discuss the practical impacts of the new code. A comparative case study of projects approved under both the old and new zoning regulations will illustrate how the hybrid approach supports more flexible, community-aligned development. Attendees will gain practical strategies for implementing zoning reforms that balance growth with neighborhood character.

Katie Friesen, Media Planning Commission

Jim Jeffery, Media Borough

Adam Tecza, AICP, PP, IMEG

H6. Key Innovations Around Housing Supply at the Local Level CM | 1.00

This panel will provide a comprehensive assessment of state and local housing needs in Pennsylvania, with a focus on innovative strategies to address housing supply challenges at both the local and statewide levels. Presenters will highlight Philadelphia’s use of the CDBG Pro Housing Grant to advance housing initiatives, explore how statewide programs like the Whole Homes Repair Program are being implemented at the local level in cities such as Pittsburgh, and examine tools like the Mixed-Use Development Tax Credit and 70/30 land lease models. The session will equip planners with practical methods for assessing housing needs, showcase effective program design and implementation, and offer insights into overcoming barriers to delivering equitable and sustainable housing solutions.

Mark Dodds, City of Philadelphia

James Eash, Action Housing

Vincent Reina, University of Pennsylvania

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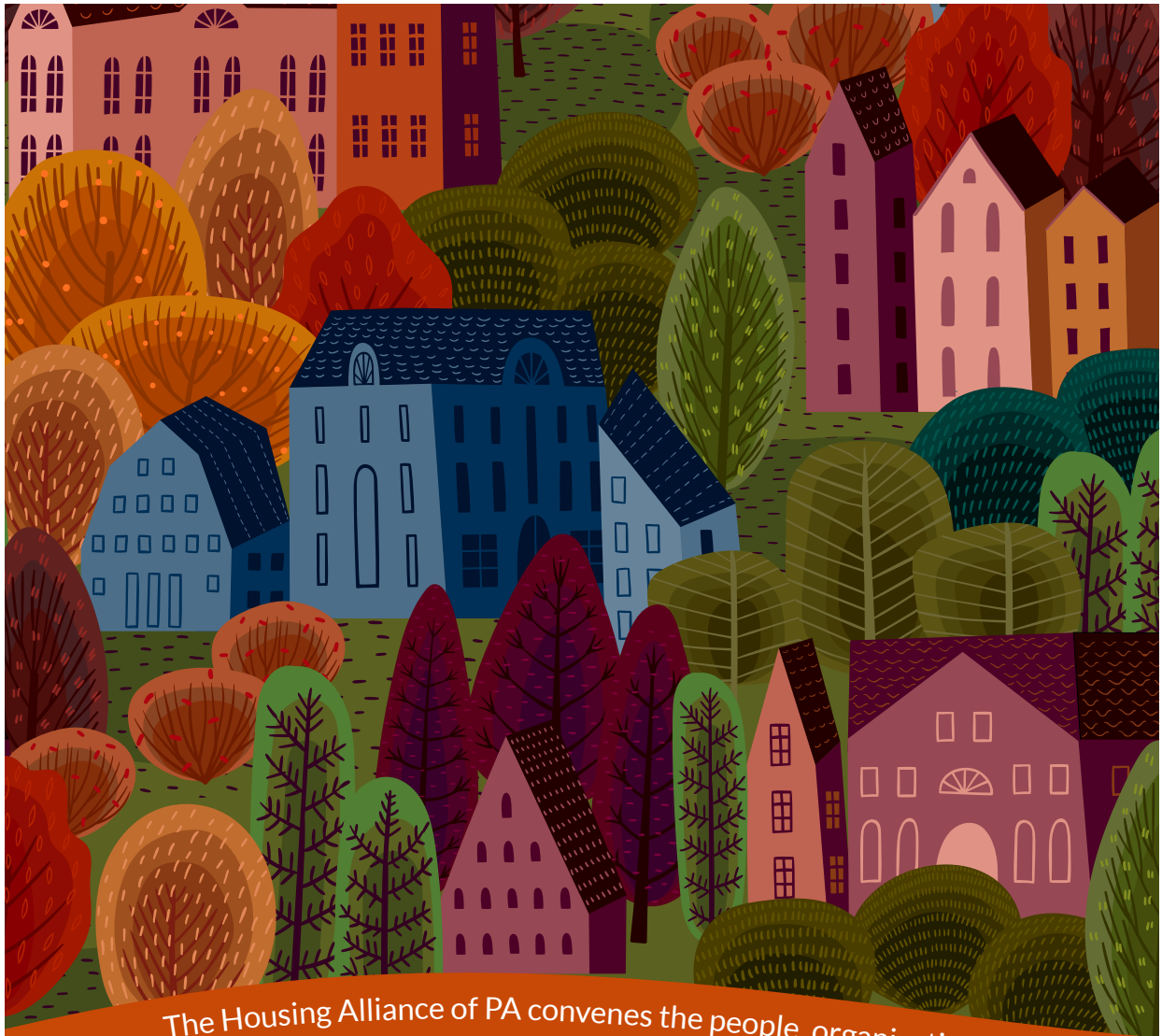
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