

PA Chapter of APA 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

The PA Chapter of APA had a busy year in 2018, continuing with several successful programs, including Great Places, elections for some of the Sections, and a successful annual conference and Awards Program in Erie, PA. Much of our focus in 2018 was on preparing our **2019-2022 Development Plan**. The Development Plan was approved by the Board of Directors in December. **The plan is ambitious and focuses on four priorities for the next four years:**

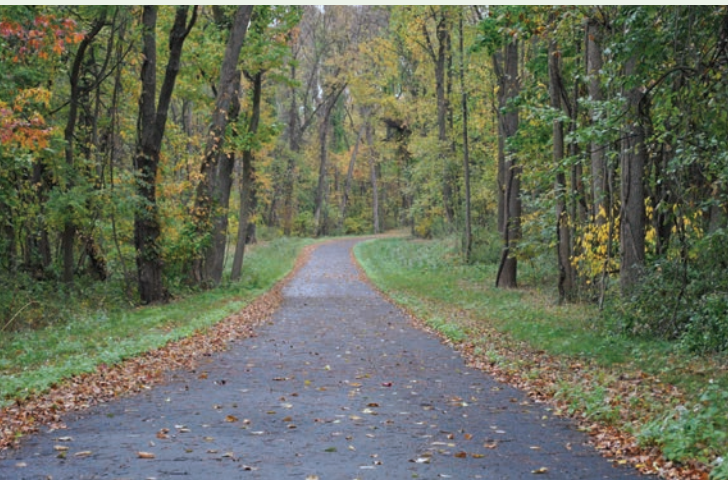
- 1) strengthening the organizational capacity of the Chapter through implementation of the plan;
- 2) reinvigorating the Legislative Committee;
- 3) orienting new Board members and engaging planning students; and
- 4) researching and providing educational opportunities for Chapter members.

The Board believes that focusing on these priorities will enhance the Chapter's ability to deliver valuable services to members. In 2018, the Executive Committee completed their first year of second terms. This Annual Report summarizes the Chapter's many 2018 activities.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Our 2018 Annual Conference was held on October 14-16 in Erie at the Bayfront Convention Center. It was hosted by the Northwest Section and attracted 350 attendees. The conference had over 40 concurrent sessions, including a Healthy Communities based “Fast, Fun, Fervent” session; a brand-new mentoring event on Monday; and a variety of mobile workshops. Our opening session was presented by **Tom Murphy**, a senior resident fellow, ULI/Kliengbeil Family Chair for Urban Development of the **Urban Land Institute**, in Washington, DC. Tom, a former mayor of Pittsburgh, presented “**Intentionality: Competing in the 21st Century**”. Tuesday morning began with a plenary session presented by **Kevin Wright** of **Yard and Company**. Kevin discussed the Neighborhood Play Book, a field guide for community members and developers that facilitates the activation of spaces with the goal of influencing physical and economic growth in neighborhoods. The **Pitkin Lecture speaker** was **Charles Marohn, Jr., PE, AICP**. Mr. Marohn’s presentation was on “**Infrastructure Crisis: It’s Time to Rethink Our Approach to Growth**”.



GREAT PLACES IN PENNSYLVANIA

The PA Chapter of APA held its “*Great Places in Pennsylvania*” Program for the fifth year under the leadership of **Pam Shellenberger, AICP**. The purpose of the Program is to recognize places with exemplary character, quality, identity, cultural interest, and community involvement. Great Places are unique and have a sustainable vision for tomorrow; they serve as a model that other communities want to emulate.

For 2018, the Great Places categories were **Great Public Spaces** and **Great Greenways/Trails**. Sixteen nominations from across the Commonwealth were submitted. A panel of eight judges reviewed and rated the nominations. The outcome was the designation of eight Great Places in Pennsylvania: five in the category of Great Public Spaces and three in the category of Great Greenways/Trails.



GREAT PUBLIC SPACES

- Buhl Park – City of Hermitage, Mercer County
- Central – Doylestown Township in Bucks County
- Emmaus Triangle Park – Emmaus Borough, Lehigh County
- Susquehanna Riverfront – City of Lock Haven and Woodward Township (Clinton County)
- Village of Boiling Springs – Boiling Springs, Cumberland County

GREAT GREENWAYS/TRAILS

- Boyce Mayview Park – Upper St. Clair Township, Allegheny County
- Schuylkill River West Trail – Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County
- Susquehanna Riverwalk – City of Williamsport, Lycoming County



PA CHAPTER OF APA ANNUAL AWARDS

The “best and brightest” were recognized at the Annual Awards Luncheon in Erie during the Annual Conference. A panel of seven judges reviewed and rated the nominations. Awards Committee Chair, **Denny Puko**, announced the following individuals and organizations who were honored for their excellent contributions to planning in Pennsylvania.

Award for a Plan

Alleghenies Ahead – Shared Strategies for a Stronger Region
Southern Alleghenies Regional Planning & Development
Commission and the Counties of Bedford, Blair, Cambria,
Fulton, Huntingdon & Somerset

Award for a Plan

Uptown/West Oakland EcoInnovation District
City of Pittsburgh, Department of City Planning

Award for a Project, Plan or Practice

Greenways for Pittsburgh 2.0
evolveEA
City of Pittsburgh, Department of City Planning

Award for a Project, Plan or Practice

My Meadville
My Meadville

Award for Special Achievement

Philadelphia2035 Comprehensive Plan
Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Award for a Leader – Professional Planner

Patty Elkins, AICP
Director, Planning Division, Delaware Valley Regional
Planning Commission

Award for a Leader – Distinguished Service

Michael M. Stokes, AICP
Retired, Montgomery County Planning Commission

Certificate of Merit

Downtown Upper Darby Vision Plan
Delaware County Planning Department



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES IN PA

The Healthy Communities in PA task force combines the expertise of health and planning professionals statewide to advise the American Planning Association (APA), Pennsylvania Chapter (APA PA) on actions to better facilitate projects on common areas of interest. The Healthy Communities in PA increases awareness of the link between planning and health and provide resources to health and planning professionals to further this message in their work in healthy community design. In 2018, the task force:

- Organized a Healthy Communities track on Monday, October 15 at the Erie conference.
- Held six steering committee calls
- Sent letters to PennDOT to encourage action around Healthy Transportation
- Produced articles on healthy community design and shared resources on training opportunities



STATEWIDE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) is a multi-year strategic plan developed in collaboration with a diverse public partnership of stakeholders across the commonwealth. A number of meetings were held in 2018 to further implement the Plan. **Justin Dula, AICP**, attended these meetings on behalf of the Chapter.



GOVERNOR'S AWARDS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE

The Governor's Awards for Local Government Excellence are a celebration of successful local government initiatives within a variety of award themes. The Governor's Center for Local Government Services presented the awards at the 22nd Annual Local Government Day award ceremony on April 11, 2018, at the Governor's mansion. The PA Chapter of APA nominated **Felicia Dell, AICP**, Director of the York County Planning Commission, who was recognized at the event.



COMMITTEES

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

After ten years of exemplary service, **Susan Elks, AICP**, handed the Professional Development Committee (PDC), baton to **Alexis Williams, AICP, PP**. Under their leadership, this committee serves planners in pursuit of professional development. With representatives from each of the six Sections and one additional at-large member, there are currently eight members. The Chair of the PDC also serves as the Chapter's Professional Development Officer, or PDO, to liaise with APA on certification and continuing



education. In addition to providing information online and through email blasts and social media, the PDC played an active role in the following:

Training

- “*Integrating Green Infrastructure into Pittsburgh’s Urban Fabric*” was APA-PA’s contribution to the Planning Webcast Consortium, which provides free weekly webcasts. Many thanks to **Christine Mondor** and **Megan Zeigler** for repeating what had been a very well-received session at the 2017 annual conference.
- Support was provided to Sections and partners on developing professional development events and submitting them to APA for Certification Maintenance (CM) credits. Such support helps ensure that members have multiple options for training and CM credits. A total of 25 events, plus the Annual Conference, were submitted for CM accreditation.
- Supported development of two ethics sessions for the annual conference.

AICP Membership

- Assistance was provided to planners aspiring to AICP status, through the spring in-person exam prep session, which had 34 attendees. The full day session attracted APA-PA members (for whom the session is free), as well as planners from surrounding states. In the fall, condensed information was presented at the annual conference. These sessions included information on the revised AICP exam.
- Personalized support was provided to members seeking input on their AICP exam application and formation of study groups.
- Assistance was provided in the nomination of three APA-PA members for inclusion in the College of Fellows of the AICP (FAICP). **Richard (Rick) Collier** was inducted into the American Institute of Certified Planners College of Fellows (FAICP) for his outstanding achievements in environmental planning.

MEMBERSHIP/COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Chapter published its quarterly newsletter, the *Vantage Point*, in an online only version. The *Vantage Point* is posted on the website, along with past issues, and all interested parties are notified via the email blast system utilized by the Chapter. E-blasts are sent regularly with information about education, resources, or other topical news items. The Chapter posts information almost daily on its website and on social media. The committee is comprised of co-chairs **Amy Evans, AICP** and **Amy McKinney**, and representatives from each of the six Sections.



LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

This Committee advocates for planning issues with local, State, and Federal elected officials. It also monitors and makes recommendations or takes positions on State and Federal legislation or regulatory action. In the summer of 2018, **Ed LeClear, AICP** was appointed as chair. **Charles Courtney** is the co-chair. This committee also includes liaisons from most of the Sections as well as several members from throughout the Chapter. Late in 2018, an RFP was issued for additional legislative services. Under Ed’s leadership, this committee is more active and has held in-person and conference call meetings.

PLANNING OFFICIALS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Planning Officials Development Committee is the link between local Planning Officials and the Chapter to achieve good planning in the Commonwealth. This Committee is chaired by **Troy Truax, AICP**.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

In 2018 the Chapter Board affirmed the mission of the Education Committee to engage students that aspire to enter the planning profession, support student mentoring, education, and training and to collaborate with universities offering planning degree and related programs. The Committee coordinates with Planning Student Organizations and advises the Chapter Board and Sections about student engagement and support.

GOVERNANCE

ELECTIONS

Our current officers are serving the second year of their two-year terms.

President	James Cowhey, AICP
Vice President	Amy McKinney
Secretary	Leah Eppinger, AICP
Treasurer	Justin Dula, AICP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Executive Committee met in February and November, while the full Board met in April, June, August and December. Minutes are posted on the Chapter website.

FINANCES

Each year the APA-PA offers a Scholarship Program to support individuals seeking funds for academic degree programs, internships, and professional development activities that enhance planning at the local, regional, state, and national levels.

- The **Leslie & Greta Spaulding Educational Fund** is a Trust. The Trust awarded \$2,500 in 2017 to three student recipients. As of 12/31/2018, the Trust had \$9,490.46.
- Funding from the **Francis Pitkin** scholarship supports student scholarships. \$2304.02 was disbursed to three recipients. Funding from the **Richard P. Byler Charitable Fund** of The Philadelphia Foundation, in the amount of \$695.98, was combined with the Pitkin scholarship for a total award of \$3,000. As of 12/31/2018, the scholarship account had \$6696.58.
- Funding from the **Richard G. Bickel, FAICP, Planning Education Award** supports student scholarships. \$2000 was given to one recipient. All monies were disbursed. An additional \$2000 was deposited into the account and will be used to supplement the 2019 award.

The Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute (PMPEI) provides courses in community planning and land use regulations for planning commissioners, zoning hearing board members, zoning administrators, elected officials, and others with an interest or involvement in planning. The Chapter helps to support the work of PMPEI through an annual grant. The grant amount for 2018 was \$6,500. Sections also sponsor individual workshops. Course offerings are posted on the Chapter website calendar.

At the end of 2018, the Chapter had the following cleared balances:

Checking	\$92,601.26
Money Market	\$197,041.54
Scholarship Fund	\$6696.58

In 2018, the Chapter had expenses of \$192,000.75 and income of \$244,947.75. The Chapter uses an accrual accounting method.

BYLAWS

There were no changes to the Bylaws in 2018.



SECTIONS

CENTRAL SECTION

Six meetings of the Central Section Council were held either in person or via conference call. The Section also continued to implement the Professional Development Scholarship Program with application deadlines in February and August; no applications were received.

Section Events

- Hosted a Professional Development Workshop on May 18th: “*Guideposts for Decision Making: Land Use Law and Ethics*” (47 registrants); approved for 5.5 CM credits. A social gathering followed the workshop.
- Hosted a Professional Development Workshop on November 9th: “*Community Revitalization: Connecting People to Place*” (44 registrants); approved for 5 CM credits.
- Co-Sponsored three (3) PMPEI courses: Cumberland County Planning Commission – Course in Zoning Administration, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission – Course in Zoning Administration, and York County Planning Commission – Course in Zoning Administration.
- Provided a sponsorship for the Annual Conference in Erie.

LEHIGH VALLEY/BERKS SECTION

In addition to offering professional development through CM-credit approved workshops, the Section held five in-person meetings including an annual luncheon and meeting in December. The Section continues to participate in the Lehigh Valley Consortium of Professional Organizations (LVCPO.)

Section Events

- Hosted a Professional Development Workshop in January entitled “*Planning for Sign Code Success*” which earned 3.5 CM credits.
- Co-hosted “*Growing Greener Practitioner Training*” in February providing 6 CM credits.
- Earning 4.5 Law CM credits in March, co-sponsored the Albright Center for Excellence in Government and Berks County Bar Association legal update on “*Recent Land Use Court Decisions & Transportation Impacts of Logistic Parks & Mini Casinos.*”
- Co-hosted “*Form Based Codes*” in April providing 1 CM credit.
- “*Redevelopment of Iron Works Catasauqua*” was presented in May providing 1.5 CM credits.
- Hosted a bus tour in October on the “*Revitalization of Reading, West Reading, & Wyomissing*” for 1.5 CM credits.

NORTHEAST SECTION

The Northeast Section convened four Board meetings in 2018 in April, June, September, and December.

Section Events

- The Section met in April to host a workshop “*PA Land Use Law Update – Zoning Cases*”. The event earned 1.5 Law CM credits.
- Co-sponsored three PMPEI events in collaboration with the Wyoming County Planning Commission, Lackawanna County Planning Commission & Middle Smithfield Township (Monroe County). The courses included Course in Community Planning and Course in Subdivision & Land Development.
- At its December meeting, which included a holiday luncheon, the Section presented information on short-term rentals.

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NORTHWEST SECTION

The Northwest Section hosted the 2018 APA-PA Planning Conference at the Bayfront Convention Center. A report of APA-PA Chapter activities and Section activities is given at every Northwest Regional Planners meeting that is held every other month in Oil City. Over the past year, the Northwest Section has been working on a regional water quality training initiative. They offered the following trainings:

Section Events

- Act 167 Webinar trainings – they partnered with the Center for Watershed protection to offer one (1) webinar training to our Section on Act 167.
- Three trainings on MS4's and Act 167 – these trainings were held in three different locations in our Section; Mercer, Meadville and Erie. The training in Erie focused on MS4's and was a full day of training with a morning of classroom and the afternoon in the field on a mock inspection. The Mercer and Meadville trainings were 4-hour trainings and focused on Act 167 – Stormwater Management.
- Three trainings on utilizing GIS with Stormwater – these trainings were held in three different locations: Grove City, Meadville and Erie.
- Provided a sponsorship for the Annual Conference in Erie.

SOUTHEAST SECTION

The Southeast Section Council met every other month through 2018. The section is organized into action committees to discuss issues of interest in more detail outside of council meetings. The four active committees are Events, Engagement, Education, and Local Presence of APA Divisions. More about the committee structure can be found on the Section website at www.apapase.org.

Section Events

- The 2018 [Annual Event](#) brought together planners in Lansdowne Borough, Delaware County to explore how communities can leverage history and the arts to revitalize communities. The event was held on Wednesday, September 12, 2018 and included a walking tour and panel discussion as well as time for socializing.
- Hosted an informal [happy hour at winterfest](#) on January 20, 2018.
- A Tour of Upper Darby was held on June 16, 2018. The event was organized by local members of the local presence of the LGBTQ and Planning Division of APA sponsored by the Section and called the Queer Urbanist Exchange (QUE).

- The Section organized a [Rail Park Talk and Tour](#) on July 16, 2018 to visit the city's first elevated park.
- “[Inside the Planner's Studio](#)” with Deputy Director for Philadelphia's Department of Planning and Zoning and the Executive Director for the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, Eleanor Sharpe, was held on November 7, 2018.

Partnership Events

The Section looks to partner with other organizations hosting events to help increase the visibility of planning among other professional organizations and the public.

- The [Future City Philadelphia Competition](#) was held on January 20, 2018. The section financially sponsors the Future City Philadelphia Competition event as well as provides a judge for the special award for Planning Excellence. The program helps open up the world of city planning to middle school students, which is why we held an online [mentorship training program](#) and participated in the [Future City Philadelphia Engineering Fair](#) to encourage further participation by planners.
- 2/9/18: Conservation by Design Course presented by the Natural Lands Trust (NLT) in Lehigh Valley
- Volunteered with [Temple EarthFest](#) on April 20, 2018. The Southeast Section staffed a booth on planning and presented information on the Chapter.
- Presented at and helped plan FitCityPHL's [Healthy Communities Collaborations](#) event on June 7, 2018.
- “[Cards against Urbanity](#)” game night was held on July 10, 2018 in partnership with Young Professionals in Transportation (YPT).

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SOUTHWEST SECTION

The Southwest Section sponsored the Best City Layout award as part of the Future Cities Competition held on January 20, 2018. Council members participated in pre-event judging for this year's competition. The Section also held elections. The Southwest Section assisted with sponsorship for the mentorship social event held as part of this year's annual conference in Erie. Also in 2018, the Southwest Section Council development a sponsorship packet for individuals and organizations willing to support programs, workshops, and events held by the Southwest Section.

Section Events

- On Thursday, February 8, 2018 the Section held the Winter Social at Arsenal Bowling Lanes in the Lawrenceville neighborhood of the City of Pittsburgh. Attendees enjoyed an evening of bowling and socializing.
- Hosted a workshop on June 13 on the "Urban Tree Canopy Loss" study. 2 CM credits were awarded.
- On September 13, the Section assisted with sponsorship of CMs as part of the City of Pittsburgh's "Panel on Public Engagement" held at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. 2 CM credits were awarded.
- Provided a sponsorship for the Annual Conference in Erie.



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