



American Planning Association

Making Great Communities Happen

CPAT TEAMS consist of four-to-five senior-level planners and designers, each of which is selected specifically for their skills and experience - a tailored fit to each project. APA draws from its diverse membership of nearly 40,000 professionals who volunteer their time to serve communities who need planning assistance.

ENGAGE

CPAT | COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSISTANCE TEAMS

The purpose of APA's Community Planning Assistance Teams (CPAT) is to help underserved communities address planning issues through direct engagement with the public and the pro bono skills and experience of professional, certified planners from around the country.

How does a CPAT work?

- The CPAT Team Leader and APA staff conduct an initial site visit to obtain
- more detailed information about the study area.
- Team members are then recruited based on the specific expertise needed.
- Over three to five days, the team leads community engagement activities
- and focused discussions with residents and stakeholders.
- The team delivers their findings and recommendations, receiving additional
- feedback at a public meeting.
- APA releases a final report incorporating all community input, team analysis,
- and suggested next steps.

How will your community benefit?

- Obtain an independent, professional, third-party planning analysis and
- suggested planning approach to an issue identified by community leaders.
- Build consensus by facilitating communication among stakeholders to find
- common goals.
- Empower residents to actively shape current issues in their community.
- Develop models for future community planning efforts.

Who can apply for assistance?

- All levels of local government agencies
- Nonprofits, neighborhood associations, and other advocacy groups
- Applications: www.planning.org/communityassistance/teams
- Questions? Please contact us: CPAT@planning.org

Don't take our word for it...

"This was an incredible opportunity for La Feria to have so many highly qualified professionals provide their expertise to our small community... We could never have afforded to bring this much talent without the CPAT program."

Steve Brewer

Mayor, La Feria, TX

"Having a team of professionals from outside the community come and focus specifically on their area made a tremendous positive impression on the residents, and helped them realize they have the ability to pursue neighborhood improvements."

Kathi Ingrish, AICP

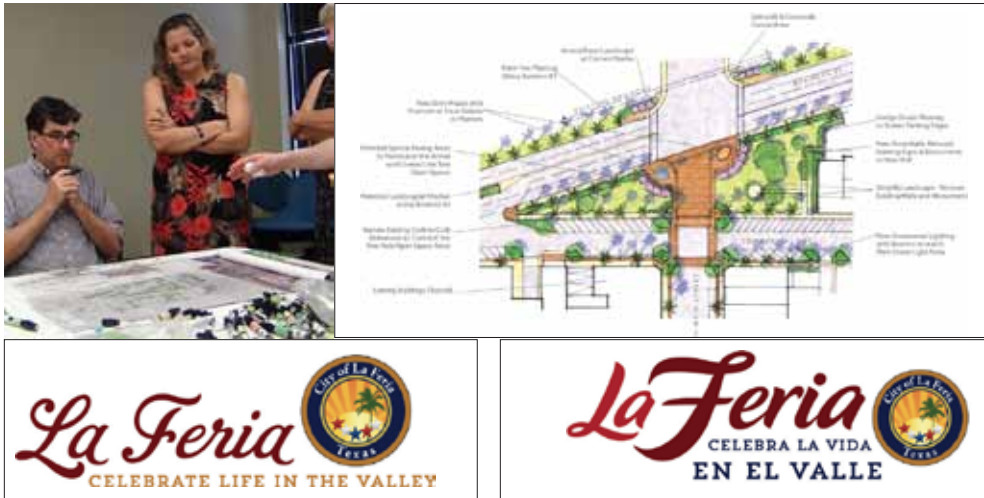
Planning Director, Matthews, NC

"I was impressed with how a group of experts from scattered places could come to Story County and make such a quick assessment through citizen input, and then point out areas where we could make some small to significant gains in the arena of economic development."

Daryl Vegge

Chair, Story County, IA Planning & Zoning Commission

CPAT PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



La Feria, TX

Located in the heart of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, the small border city of La Feria struggles to provide basic services to its residents. Unemployment rates are high and taxable retail sales are low. The CPAT engaged a La Feria public that had no prior involvement in planning their city's future. With the support of local officials, the CPAT engaged residents and local business owners who had no prior involvement in planning their city's future, with the following results:

- **Regional market analysis** to identify missed retail potential
- **Branding package** reflective of community's values (logos, signage, sample advertisements, stylistic guidelines & more)
- **Conceptual designs** to draw more regional traffic by establishing attractive city entryways and streetscapes
- **Guidelines to preserve the historic integrity of downtown** while still promoting economic development & growth
- **Identification of development potential** for housing and related opportunities with detailed design concept plans
- **Spanish translation** of all CPAT-led engagement with the community

Heritage Trail - Dubuque County, IA

Heritage Trail, one of the first rails-to-trails projects in the U.S., was devastated by three epic rain events in four years. After a complete overhaul of the trail's infrastructure, the County and seven cities along the 26-mile trail formed a consortium. A CPAT supported the new group by providing expertise in regional economic development, trail planning, transportation planning, urban design, and watershed management in their effort to develop a regional plan centered on the trail. The Team

built regional consensus by identifying shared goals among varied stakeholders. By providing a **strategic framework to harness the trail's economic potential**, the CPAT **garnered support for additional trail development among elected officials**. This collaborative process of regional participation is now **a model for future regional planning projects in the area**.



The American Planning Association's
Professional Institute
**American Institute
of Certified Planners**

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Assistance is part of our code...

Community assistance is built into the professional role of a certified planner. One principle of the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct states that certified planners shall aspire to "seek social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration." Another principle is that certified planners should aspire to "contribute time and effort to groups lacking in adequate planning resources and to voluntary professional activities."

Examples of expertise CPATs provide...

- Urban design
- Hazard mitigation
- Consensus building
- Transportation
- Economic development
- Parks & open space
- Land use
- Downtown revitalization
- Infrastructure
- Affordable housing
- Watershed management
- Small towns/rural
- Historic preservation
- Energy resources
- Environment
- Neighborhoods
- Zoning
- Sustainability
- Regional planning
- Parking
- Implementation