



American Planning Association  
**Pennsylvania Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

P.O. Box 4680  
Harrisburg PA 17111  
planningpa.org

**Please review conference session details below before submitting your proposal in the *Call for Presenters***

**Deadline to Submit:**

Friday, March 14, 2025 at 11:59 PM

**Conference Date and Location:**

October 12 – 14, 2025

Hilton Harrisburg

One N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Harrisburg PA 17101

**Conference Theme:**

*Planning the Keystone: Shaping a Resilient Future*

**Format:**

Proposers are encouraged to submit **traditional and non-traditional sessions, plus mobile workshops**. Traditional sessions typically involve presentations and audience interaction with an expert panel. Non-traditional sessions can include problem-solving roundtables, “fast-fun-fervent” presentations, and peer-group sessions.

All sessions and presentations should **emphasize useful takeaways** for participants. Examples include breakthrough information that makes a convincing case for an innovative idea; usable tools and methods with an understanding of how and when to use them; and key resources for deeper examination of an idea or tool. Proposals should consider incorporating real world scenarios to walk participants through the application of an idea or tool. In the proposal, please note how you will structure the session to address the above areas of emphasis.

**All sessions must include some measure of facilitated interaction** with the audience in addition to any traditional Q&A. At least one-third of session time must be devoted to facilitated interaction and Q&A. Also, in each session, spoken presentations should not run longer than 15 minutes without insertion of an interactive segment or a change of speaker. In the proposal, you will be asked to indicate agreement with these guidelines.

## **Non-Traditional Sessions**

Proposers are invited to submit three types of non-traditional sessions:

- **Problem-solving roundtables** – These sessions may be proposed by one or a team of persons with expertise in a particular planning problem or issue. Session leader(s) will introduce the problem, provide brief background on the problem and a real-world example of the problem or issue, then facilitate interaction with participants to discuss solutions and best practices. There should be time for participants to pose their own experience with the problem for response by the experts and discussion by the group.
- **“Fast-fun-fervent” presentations** – Individuals may propose a presentation including 20 slides, 20 seconds each slide (about 7 minutes). Seven such presentations will be chosen for one session at the conference. Subjects can be any planning topic (including places and persons) and should emphasize a presenter’s unique perspective and opinion. Presentations should be insightful, not frivolous, and also be passionate, witty, and personal.
- **Peer-group sessions** – Teams of two or three persons may propose sessions for participants of a particular peer group by demographic segment, professional specialty, level of experience, or other common characteristic. Session leaders will propose topics of unique interest to the peer group, facilitate discussion around those topics, and facilitate discussion of other topics that may arise from the group.

*Proposers of non-traditional sessions are encouraged to be creative. The Conference Planning Committee will be open to ideas from proposers in deciding the final structure and format of non-traditional sessions.*

## **“Mini” Sessions**

The Conference Committee invites proposals for sessions – both traditional and non-traditional – that are 45 minutes in length. “Mini” sessions are encouraged to be higher-energy dives into planning details and finer subject matter by individual experts or small panels.

## **Mobile Workshops**

Proposals are encouraged to accomplish a dual objective. First, mobile workshops should provide valuable, relevant, and AICP-creditworthy information on planning issues and success stories. Second, mobile workshops should expose conference-goers to the unique places, assets, character, and lifestyle of the Harrisburg area. If your mobile workshop requires transportation and you are able to provide this at no cost, please include this detail into your proposal.

## Session Topics

Proposals are particularly requested for the following topics:

- **Planning Officials and Planning Commissioners** – Including roles, procedures, leadership development, and current issues for planning commissions and zoning hearing boards.
- **Planning law** – Two sessions will be selected, at least an hour in length with AICP-creditworthy content and presenters. Suggestions for content include guidance or updates on case law or legislation.
- **Planning ethics** – Two sessions will be selected, at least an hour in length with AICP-creditworthy content and presenters. Suggestions for content include discussions on how to adhere to the Code of Ethics, whether in whole or focused on a specific aspect, including aspirational principles.
- **Planning equity** – Two sessions will be selected, at least an hour in length with AICP-creditworthy content and presenters. Suggestions for content include topics related to equity, diversity and inclusion that provide the opportunity for planners to expand their equity toolkit, leading to more equitable outcomes in communities.
- **Planning sustainability and resilience** – Two sessions will be selected, at least an hour in length with AICP-creditworthy content and presenters. Suggestions for content include topics related to sustainability and resiliency that help planners better plan for sustainable and resilient outcomes.
- **Rural planning issues** – Including the changing face and economy of rural areas and small towns, the lack of planning capacity, landscape conservation, recreation and outdoors tourism, ag viability, and rural broadband.
- **Focus on Capital Region** - Emphasis on community development, revitalization, affordable housing, transportation, planning/development, green infrastructure, etc..

Other topic examples include, but are not limited to:

- Transportation, including capitalizing on the PennDOT Connects initiative, public-private partnerships, bike travel and walkability, and the relationship of various modes of travel to community development and revitalization.
- Community development, including placemaking, neighborhood revitalization, dealing with blight, providing affordable housing, and historic preservation.
- Changing demographics and how they will affect future societal needs, land uses, development markets, and the broader community and economy.
- Core MPC tools – comprehensive plans, plus zoning, subdivision, and official map ordinances – including ways they can be innovated to better address current thinking and changing times.
- Current environmental and conservation issues, including integrated water resources planning, flood insurance program changes, sustainability, resilience, and a variety of “green” practices.
- Economic development, including promoting entrepreneurship and neighborhoods as economic drivers in the connected age.
- Local governance, including dealing with municipal fiscal distress, planning education, leadership development, and public involvement including the increasing use of online civic platforms.
- Community health, including obesity, access to healthy food, and relationship to design of communities and developments.

- Planning operations, including organizational strategic planning and development, office management, technology tools, meeting facilitation, project management, and conflict management.

### **Review online form requirements:**

#### **Questions:**

If you have any questions about the submission form or the Conference, please send your emails to Kim Gusic at the PA Chapter office [admin@planningpa.org](mailto:admin@planningpa.org).

#### **Submitting a Proposal**

Session proposals must be submitted by completing an online submission form. Click the “Proposal Submission” button below to get started.

#### **Proposal Questions:**

To assist you in preparing a session proposal, the questions asked in the online submission form are listed below. Questions marked with an asterisk “\*” are mandatory.

*After submitting your proposal online, you will receive an automatically generated email recapping your submittal.*

**Please note the committee’s decisions are made based on the strength and clarity of the session title, session summary and learning objectives. Please pay careful attention to these items when completing your proposal.**

\* Speaker Policies: **I have read and agree** to the following speaker policies. **As the Lead Presenter for this session I verify that I will share this information with any additional presenters. If you do not agree, your session will not be considered for presentation.** The PA Chapter of APA maintains the following policies that are consistent with APA’s speaker policies:

- All speakers **MUST** register for the conference. This applies whether you will attend the event for only your session, a single day, or the full event.
  - All speakers who will attend sessions and conference events **MUST** pay regular registration fees. As a courtesy, we extend the early bird registration fee to all presenters regardless of when you register for the event.
  - Speakers who will attend the conference to **ONLY** present their session are not required to pay registration fees (but still **MUST** register for the conference).
- Speakers are responsible for their own hotel accommodations and travel.
- An audio-visual request form will be sent to the Lead Presenter for each session. Lead Presenters are responsible for coordinating the audio-visual needs for their sessions. The conference provides the following equipment **as needed**: microphones, LCD (data) projectors, screens, and flipcharts.
- **VERY IMPORTANT: Speakers MUST provide their own laptops.**

\*Lead Presenter Contact Information: The Lead Presenter is responsible for coordinating the session with additional presenters (if any). Include professional designations such as AICP, FAICP, PhD, PP, etc.

\* Lead Presenter Biography: Please include a narrative biography, of no more than 300 words, that includes the following: current position, professional credentials, education and 2-3 sentences describing your expertise in the subject matter. **DO NOT submit resumes or bulleted lists.**

\* Proposed Session or Presentation Title (**Please note the session title is a critical element in the committee's review of this proposal.**)

\* Primary Target Audience (choose all that are applicable – Professional Planner, Planning Official/Commissioner, New Planner, Student or Other)

\* Please classify your session (choose one): Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, All

\* Which description most closely follows how you envision the session (choose one): Overview/analysis of program/policy/topic; Review of a best practice/real application of a program/policy/tool, etc.; Interactive dialogue to explore a concept/topic; other.

\*Indicate the type of session (choose one): Traditional, Problem-solving roundtable, Fast-fun-fervent, Peer group, or Mobile workshop.

\* Session Length: Proposals will be accepted for sessions: 45-minute, 60-minute, 1:15, and 1:30 in length. (*Note: The conference committee may choose to modify session length as the program is developed.*) Please confirm your session content is appropriate for a :45, :60, 1:15, or 1:30 time slot, two back-to-back sessions for in-depth training, a mobile workshop /walking tour, or is a fast-fun-fervent presentation.

\* Brief Description of the Session or Presentation: Provide a brief (300 words) description of the proposed session, and include how the session will enable others to replicate results and engage attendees. **Please note the session summary is a critical element in the committee's review of this proposal.** Session summaries may be edited by the Conference Committee for publication in the conference program.

\*Indicate by checking the box that you agree to the guidelines for sessions to include facilitated interaction and time limits on spoken presentations.

\* Learning Objectives: Please provide up to 3 objectives that attendees will be able to achieve by the conclusion of the session.

\*How Does the Session Meet the APA CM Criteria? Is this session appropriate for Certification Maintenance Credits (refer to criteria below)? **Sessions do not need to be appropriate for Certificate Maintenance for inclusion at the conference. If you are submitting a proposal for "fast, fun, fervent" simply type N/A.**

Your session may be submitted for CM. **No material changes in content should occur after your session is accepted for presentation. Changing speakers requires us to re-submit the entire CM application to APA. Speakers should only be replaced in very compelling circumstances.** The content of CM activities must be designed to meet a specific planning-related training objective. The content of CM activities must be designed to teach subject matter in appropriate depth and scope for the level of the typical AICP member, a practicing planner with at least two years of professional experience.

- The content of CM activities must be non-promotional in nature. Program content must be unbiased. An organization's services or products may be discussed prior to or after the completion of the CM credit portion of the activity.
- The content of CM activities must address demonstrated educational needs of AICP members.
- The content of CM activities must communicate a clearly identified educational purpose or objective.
- In order for CM activities to fulfill the ethics requirement, providers must demonstrate that the content of the activity is related to the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
- In order for CM activities to fulfill the law requirement, providers must demonstrate that the content of the activity is related to planning law. Such activities may include, but are not limited to, topics such as environmental law, land use law, redevelopment law, administrative law, and housing law.

Has this session been presented before?

Restrictions on Session Date & Time (optional). If you cannot present on a particular day or time slot (morning/afternoon), please tell us

Presenter #2 Information Include professional designations such as AICP, FAICP, PhD, PP, etc. Presenter #2 Biography

Presenter #3 Information Include professional designations such as AICP, FAICP, PhD, PP, etc. Presenter #3 Biography

**If you feel your session would be more valuable with an additional presenter please include their information (name, address, email, biography) under "Additional Information/Comments".**