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Connecticut Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association

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The Southern New England Planning Conference returns to Connecticut's capital!

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OCTOBER 18 & 19

SNEAPA 2018
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



On behalf of the entire Connecticut Chapter membership, I am honored to welcome the Southern New England planning community back to Hartford for **SNEAPA 2018!**

When we last convened in Hartford back in 2015, there was strong evidence of the revitalization happening in the downtown and in city neighborhoods. This year, I trust you will find continued improvement built on a strong foundation of historic preservation, transit-oriented development, and community engagement. Mobile workshops will take you through the adaptive reuse of the former *Hartford Times* building into the amazing center city campus of the University of Connecticut; through the Swift Factory in the city's North End; and to one of the hubs on the recently launched Hartford Line. The Hartford Line is our third passenger service, providing seamless connectivity from New York City to New Haven and New London, thereby making Connecticut one of the region's transit-rich states for new growth.

Economic growth has been the front and center issue for our planning community and is the hot topic in this year's gubernatorial election. CCAPA advances good planning through technical assistance, public awareness, and collaboration and we have brought these values to the forefront of our advocacy efforts this year with the Start With Planning initiative — advocacy focused on our collective sense of place, preserving the authenticity of Connecticut as a core value. Our message also recognizes the need to accelerate our pace of progress in order to stay current with socio-economic trends moving at a rapid speed. And we will need to continue to build up "Team Connecticut," a broad coalition of planning professionals tasked with carrying out this work in the years to come. Please take some time to learn more about Start With Planning at our chapter session on Thursday afternoon.

We will welcome singer/songwriter Dar Williams for the keynote address. Dar's new book, *What I Found in a Thousand Towns*, is an insightful look at community vitality across the nation. The people featured in her book, not to mention the planning-related initiatives,

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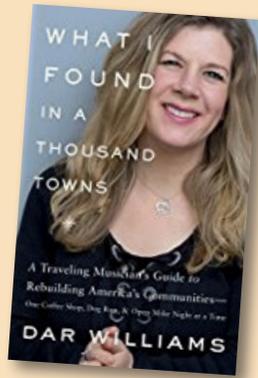
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Rebecca Augur, AICP
Principal Planner
Milone & MacBroom, Inc.
99 Realty Drive, Cheshire, CT 06410
Ph: (203) 271-1773 • Fax: (203) 272-9733
editor@ccapa.org

Layout/Advertising:
Jeffrey H. Mills
J.M. Communications
13 Deer Path, Ste. 2, Maynard, MA 01754
Ph: (860) 454-8922 • Fax: (978) 637-2630
jmcommunications@comcast.net

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, cont'd

are sure to resonate with you. Our planning community has deep reverence for the heritage and cultural significance of great places in New England, so please take some time to read Dar's book in advance of the conference.



October is Community Planning Month and all three chapters (CT/MA/RI) are making special efforts to celebrate the art and science of planning, with events throughout the region. With assistance from APA, the next round of Great Places in America will be announced in October and we will feature the designated places from our region in Hartford. We are also pleased to welcome APA's Emily Pasi to Hartford for a special conference session on APA's policy guides for social equity and housing. The #planning-home initiative touches all of us, as the nation addresses affordable housing and equity in major urban centers and many of our small towns. In response, APA is providing its members with the tools and techniques to lead change at the state and local level.

In closing, allow me to extend the chapter's appreciation to the SNEAPA conference planning committee. Led by Connecticut's Demian Sorrentino from Boundaries, LLC and a dedicated team of professionals from all three states, the SNEAPA planning committee has once again delivered a high-quality program and professional development opportunity for our members. Likewise, no conference of this magnitude is possible without the support of sponsors. Our sponsors are partners, not only with the regional conference, but also with many of our activities throughout the year, contributing time and resources to advance good planning. On behalf of Angie Cleveland, Massachusetts chapter president, and Jim Riordan, Rhode Island chapter president, thank you to committee members and sponsors for your amazing effort! 🏡

— Michael Piscitelli, AICP 

— *Michael Piscitelli, AICP is the Deputy Economic Development Administrator with the City of New Haven and President of the Connecticut Chapter of APA. If you would like more information on the many ways CCAPA can assist you in professional practice, please do not hesitate to contact him by [email](#) or via [LinkedIn](#).*

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A Welcome Message from the SNEAPA 2018 Chairs

by Demian A. Sorrentino, AICP, C.S.S., Conference Chair, and Dan Tuba, Honorary Conference Co-Chair

On behalf of the 2018 SNEAPA Conference Committee, we hope that you will take the time to explore this Special 2018 SNEAPA Conference Edition of *Connecticut Planning!*

Once again, the Connecticut Chapter of APA (CCAPA) has the pleasure of hosting our fellow chapters from Massachusetts (APA-MA) and Rhode Island (APA-RI), and welcoming nearly 600 planners and allied professionals back to the Connecticut Convention Center for the annual SNEAPA conference on Thursday, October 18 and Friday, October 19, 2018.

This year's program aims to foster discussion and audience participation, while exploring an exciting array of contemporary planning issues, including: resiliency, multi-modal transportation, urban agriculture, TOD, urban redevelopment, collaboration, consensus building, and inclusionary planning, as well as fresh takes on law and ethics, and several sessions about emerging technologies that are being used to improve our profession.

You can take home some new skills from the Special Sessions being offered by the SNEAPA Conference Committee, including: guidance on mastering successful meetings, tools and techniques for effective and efficient review of development plans, and how to incorporate APA's new Housing and Equity Policy Guides into your planning efforts.

Feel the need to get out and about? Sign up for our mobile workshops and explore the

City of Meriden's award-winning "Meriden Green" project, see first-hand how Community Solutions and the Chrysalis Center are improving the quality of life in Hartford's distressed north end, or join the Hartford Preservation Alliance for a walking tour of 50 years of downtown planning and architecture.

Singer/songwriter Dar Williams will blend speaking and musical performance into an entertaining and informative keynote address,



and "Winter is Coming" to Friday's lunch with the Game of Thrones-themed planning trivia activity, "Game of Zones."

Of course, no SNEAPA Conference would be complete without a Thursday night reception, where this year's attendees will enjoy two hours of networking amidst drinks and passed hors d'oeuvres at the beautiful, historic Society Room of Hartford.

Whether you plan to come for the conference only, choose to arrive on Wednesday so you can explore all that is fresh and new in our capital city, or extend your stay and enjoy a beautiful autumn weekend here in the Nutmeg state, we sincerely hope that you enjoy this edition of *Connecticut Planning*, and we look forward to seeing you all in Hartford! 🍂

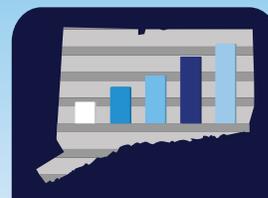
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Make Hartford Yours



Welcome back to Hartford, Connecticut's capital city and emerging technology hub in New England. The Connecticut planning community is excited to welcome our peers from Massachusetts and Rhode Island back to our home state. So much has happened right here in downtown Hartford and in the neighborhoods since SNEAPA last convened at the Convention Center in 2015.

You will see evidence of the city's revitalization at every turn, starting with the opening of the University of Connecticut's amazing new campus in the former Hartford Times building. UConn's return to downtown is both academically focused — with the urban studies and related disciplines based in a vibrant central location — and symbolically important. UConn moved from a suburban location with limited transit to one of the most walkable and transit-rich environments of the state.

In turn, the now-vacated West Hartford campus is now in the process of conversion into a thriving tech community. The \$283-million redevelopment will transform the 58-acre site into an open, community-friendly campus for Ideanomics, a blockchain and fintech-based company that plans to turn the site into its technology and innovation hub. Fintech Village is expected to create 330 jobs for West Hartford and the area. Ideanomics is one of several technology companies to choose Hartford, which was recently ranked seventh on commercial realty broker CBRE's sixth annual survey of the top U.S. and Canadian tech-labor markets.

City and regional planners are at the forefront of this tech-focused economic rebound, in part through Connecticut's Innovation Places program.

Hartford/East Hartford, Stamford, Thames River, and New Haven are the four regions participating in this tech/entrepreneur-focused program which includes heavy emphasis on placemaking, design, and local workforce development. To that end, one of the higher profile projects coming out of Innovation Places here in Hartford is the InsurTech Hub. InsurTech builds up on the global significance of Hartford's insurance sector through tech transfer, innovation, and local workforce development.

Change is even more significant and meaningful in our neighborhoods. As with many cities across the nation, Hartford is working through the challenges of workforce development, affordable housing, and transportation. In 2015 we took planners on the new CTfastrak bus rapid-transit line, and this year we are pleased to feature the new Hartford Line passenger rail service to New Haven and Springfield. Both services have exceeded ridership projections, and system extensions are in the future planning stages. In terms of sustainability, the city created a new office in 2017 specifically dedicated to climate change, resiliency, and environmental stewardship. In furtherance of building partnerships and community connections, the office is funded exclusively by the generous support of three partners: the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, Partners for Places, and UConn's Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation.

The City will be set up in the convention center with information on these and other programs at the hospitality cart and at the CCAPA reception table. Please be sure to join us, as well, for Thursday's luncheon with Mayor Luke Bronin. 

Young people may not be acquainted with the title, but they are certainly familiar with the work of a planner.

APA Ambassadors Bring Planning to the Young People

by *Shawna Kitzman, AICP* 

Kids grow up wanting to be architects, engineers, scientists, or bus drivers. They hear about or interact with these professions from a young age. These roles have a visible presence in our culture. But do they know about the field of *urban planning*? Young people may not be acquainted with the title, but they are certainly familiar with the work of a planner.

Children and teens experience the benefits (or lack) of planning each day. Elements of our trade exist in their activities and the way they travel to school. It’s in how safe they feel in their parks, shopping centers, and local streets. Planning has a role in their access to healthy food and opportunities to play. It influences how clean the local air and water is.

To increase awareness of planning as a profession, the American Planning Association created the Ambassador Program. Implemented in 2016, the Ambassador

Program is an initiative of the APA’s Diversity Committee, designed to reach audiences of diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

In 2016, a colleague at Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI) introduced our firm to the volunteer program. A group of us — planners, scientists, and public outreach specialists — saw the year-long commitment as an opportunity to connect with underrepresented populations, to do good, and let’s face it, to have fun

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Shawna Kitzman (center) presents a “petting zoo” of road and bridge construction materials to a local kindergarten class.



APA Ambassadors, cont'd

with kids and teens. We signed up as APA's first Ambassador group.

Since then, the FHI Ambassador team has conducted outreach to 18 groups throughout Connecticut and metro New York, including schools, after-school programs, an alternative high school, and a homeless shelter. With tailored, age-appropriate strategies that introduce the concept of planning, the FHI team develops session programming to educate, empower, and inspire our youngest and marginalized neighbors.

By its definition, the program is not limited to schools. Ambassadors can volunteer with any community group and at relevant events.

Through our experience, we've learned what works and, perhaps more importantly, what doesn't! We are sharing best practices at the upcoming SNEAPA conference (Session A1 on Thursday). In the meantime, let's take a look at how to pull off successful Ambassador sessions.

Connect with Prospective Hosts

While Ambassadors can branch out, schools have been the easiest venue to partner with — although to classify the coordination as *easy* is a misnomer. School calendars are often scheduled well in advance, with certain periods blocked out for testing and peak busy-ness.

In an era of tightened school security, the best strategy is to leverage a personal connection. This could be via your children, family members, or second-degree connections integrated with a school community. Cold calling is rarely successful. No administrator or teacher is waiting for a pitch from an unvetted guest speaker!

Research the school's mission statement and get a handle on their curriculum. Consider how you can tie your session into their curriculum. One colleague led an interactive wetlands "assembly" for a school's third grade, since it related to their science unit on habitats.

Lastly, reach out early, introduce yourself and the program to build credibility, and expect coordination to take some time. Don't be surprised if you are turned down on your first couple of tries.

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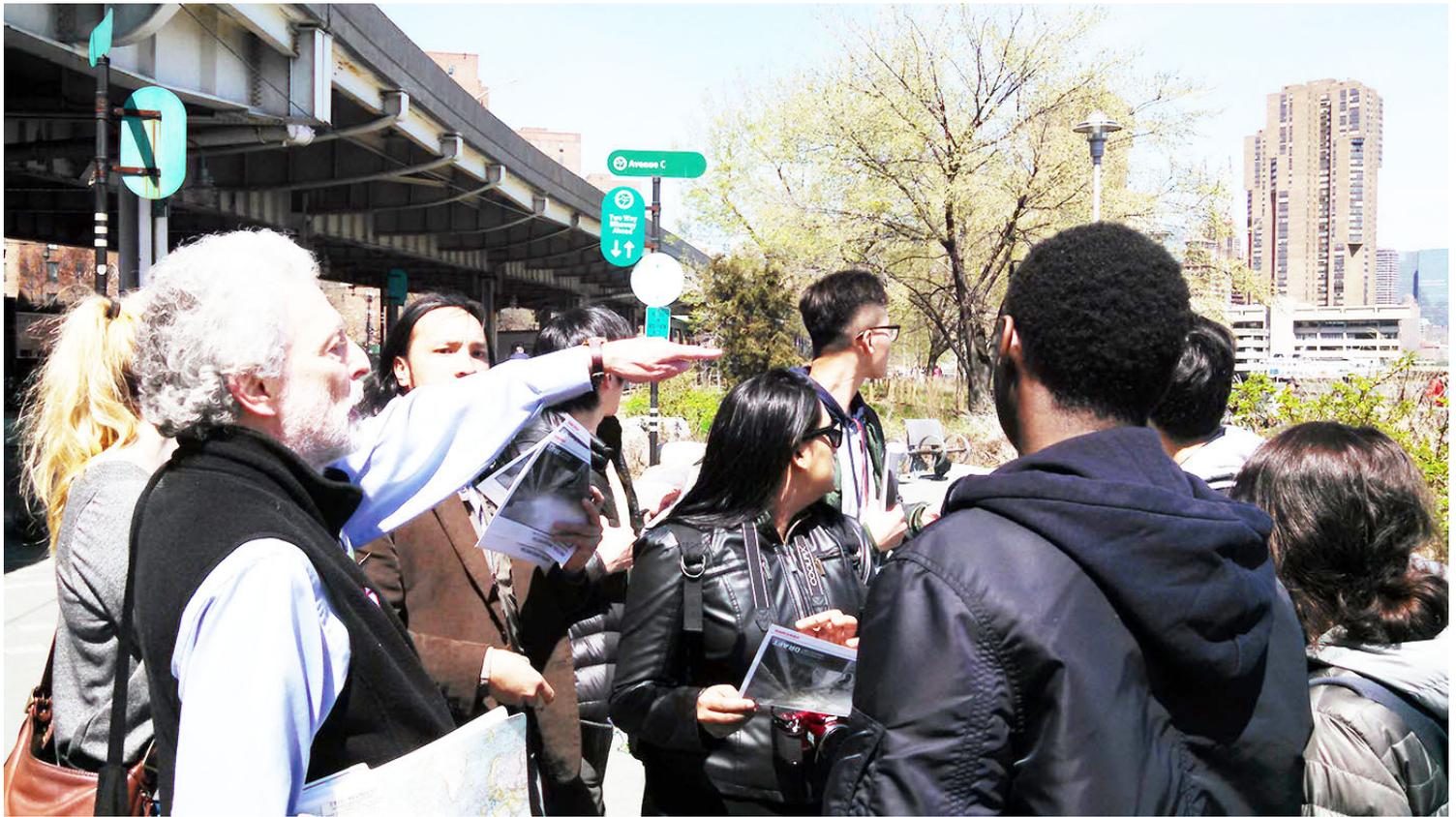
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FHI Ambassador Arnie Bloch, left, leads a group of alternative high school students on a walking tour along the Manhattan waterfront.

APA Ambassadors, cont'd

Keep Your (Often Young) Audience Engaged

We've worked with kindergarteners and high school students, and many grades inbetween. Students' attention spans range from seconds to 15 minutes, so keep instruction or activity less than that, unless you enjoy watching eyes glaze over (or teens veering towards their phones).

APA defines each session as one hour; develop a plan for your time together. Once you've coordinated housekeeping with your teacher (or group facilitator), plan for introductions and transitions (longer for younger kids), present the basics of planning and what a planner does, explain the value of APA, and lead an activity that brings your concept to their level.

We brought a "petting zoo" of road and bridge construction materials to our kindergarten session, including samples of concrete, tar, steel nuts, bolts, and bars. After we'd conducted a few sessions, we asked our *Girls Are Brave* middle schoolers what they like to do. They overwhelmingly indicated a passion for crafts, so we returned with cut paper and glue, and introduced them to zoning. Our presentation was short, allowing more time

to create zoning mosaics while listening to music. Our high schoolers enjoyed a short history lesson on development and transit in their town, with heavy use of Google Maps. Know your audience!

If your group does an activity, encourage participants to share and discuss their work. Or conduct a Q&A. Whatever you do, keep moving between elements. Bonus points if you provide a technology component, sensory experience, or giveaway. As always, get approval from your teacher first!

Don't Assume

As planners, we may take for granted familiarity with our communities and the systems or policies that serve us. But many people, especially disenfranchised populations, are not as aware.

For example, our colleague Arnie Bloch, PhD conducted a session with an alternative high school in New York City. Many students are immigrants or face circumstances that render traditional schooling difficult. With a three-hour session, Arnie presented for 90 minutes, then responded to questions from students, teachers, and administrators, focusing on

(continued on page 9)

APA Ambassadors, cont'd

nearby planning projects and career prospects for emerging planners.

Arnie then led the group on a one-hour, one-mile walking tour of the nearby waterfront. There, a project was underway with the goal of protecting the area from future high tide events and enhancing design and access to the waterfront. After the walking tour, Dr. Bloch joined the group for an impromptu lunch at a neighborhood pizza restaurant, where they all continued the discussion about their future ambitions and possible opportunities in the planning profession.

Students liked the presentation and discussion, but absolutely loved the walking tour. For many, it was an opportunity to see a part of the city that, even though just a few blocks away, they had no idea existed before.

Be Sensitive

The purpose of the Ambassador program is to introduce audiences of diverse racial, economic, and ethnic backgrounds

to planning. Approach them and their spaces with sensitivity.

Are you working with homeless youth? Consider avoiding topics focused on housing choices. Do students live in a neighborhood with low car ownership? Focus talk about transportation on walking, biking, and public transit. Is your audience cautious about what information they share? Be considerate in the types of questions you ask and language you use. Develop good communication with your point of contact, and do as much research as needed beforehand.

Our colleague made the mistake of using the word “wall” with minority teenagers, which invoked an uproar. It’s not to say that you can’t broach hot topics. Many discussions around planning *are* sensitive, as decisions impact peoples’ lives. Use their enthusiasm to your advantage. Explain why getting involved in community decision-making is important, at any age, and how their passion can influence change.

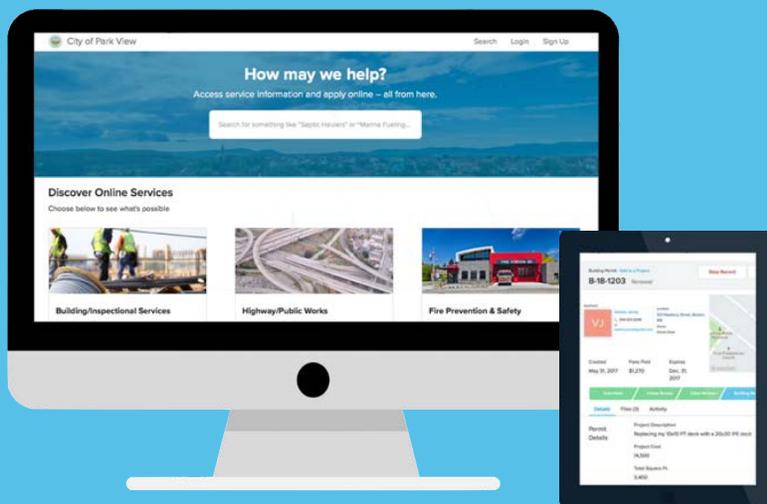
Lastly, consult your contact on their photo policy. While it is awesome to

(continued on page 10)

The purpose of the Ambassador program is to introduce audiences of diverse racial, economic, and ethnic backgrounds to planning. Approach them and their spaces with sensitivity.

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Teaching young people about planning shifts perspectives toward creativity, wonder, and enthusiasm.



A third grader dresses as a habitat, part of an interactive group activity that kept kids engaged.

APA Ambassadors, cont'd

document the Ambassador sessions with photos or videos, many schools and facilities have strict guidelines to protect the safety of minors.

Become an Ambassador

One of the greatest outcomes of our Ambassador efforts are ones we didn't expect. Each time we leave the sessions, we're a bit more enthused about being planners. Teaching young people about planning shifts perspectives toward creativity, wonder, and enthusiasm. Giving back to our communities makes for a well-rounded planner, better equipped to adapt to audiences of all types. Volunteering provides a greater sense of purpose and joy.

Is our work making an impact? It's too soon to tell. But we'll continue our mission, doing good in the community with the aim of diversifying our profession.

Interested in learning more about, or applying to, the APA Ambassador program? The next session begins January 1, 2019 and lasts for the year. See www.planning.org/ambassadors for information. The world needs more planning Ambassadors. Won't you join us? 



Middle school students affiliated with Girls Are Brave gather to plan their utopia.

— Shawna Kitzman, AICP is a Senior Planner with Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc., a planning firm based in Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York. Shawna focuses on public outreach for transportation projects, and never misses an opportunity to infuse creativity with the planning process! Attend Shawna's session with her fellow Ambassadors at SNEAPA's Thursday session, AI: APA Ambassadors Bring Planning to the Young People. Contact Shawna at skitzman@fhiplan.com.

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Sustainable CT Recognizes, Supports, and Inspires CT Municipalities

by Alyssa Norwood, Program Manager, Certification and Innovation



Through Sustainable CT, municipalities are streamlining solar permitting for small solar installations, developing more agriculture-friendly practices, and engaging in dozens of other sustainability actions, chosen from a wide-ranging menu of best practices.

Sustainable CT is a new program to recognize thriving and resilient Connecticut municipalities. In its first-ever certification cycle, municipalities of every size and from every county in Connecticut submitted nearly 600 voluntary sustainability actions, chosen from a wide-ranging menu of best practices. The inaugural cohort of Sustainable CT-certified cities and towns will be announced in early October and then recognized at the 2018 annual meeting of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

So How Did It All Get Started?

Sustainable CT was created by towns, for towns. Municipal leaders and residents from across the state, the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, and people from key agencies, non-profits, and businesses partnered to develop the program during 2016 and 2017. The Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University led and coordinated program development, with generous support from a funding collaborative comprised of the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation, Hampshire Foundation, and Common Sense Fund.

This grassroots effort articulated the following vision for Sustainable CT: *Sustainable CT communities strive to be thriving, resilient, collaborative, and forward-looking. They build community and local economy.*

(continued on page 12)

Ted Shafer, First Selectman of Burlington and Sustainable CT board member, speaks in Wickham Park, Manchester, at a 2017 celebration of the completion of the initial Sustainable CT action drafts.



SESSION A3 ■ THURSDAY, OCT 18

All of Connecticut's 169 towns and cities participated in Sustainable CT's development, represented directly by a municipal official, staff person, local volunteer, or by a regional entity representing member municipalities.

Sustainable CT, cont'd

They equitably promote the health and well-being of current and future residents, and they respect the finite capacity of the natural environment.

All of Connecticut's 169 towns and cities participated in Sustainable CT's development, represented directly by a municipal official, staff person, local volunteer, or by a regional entity representing member municipalities. Nine working groups comprised of nearly 200 members met from February to June 2017 to develop the menu of actions.

So What's Planning Got to Do With It?

Among other requirements, communities seeking Sustainable CT certification must complete at least one action in each of the following nine categories:

- Thriving Local Economies
- Well-Stewarded Land and Natural Resources

- Vibrant and Creative Cultural Ecosystems
- Dynamic and Resilient Planning
- Clean and Diverse Transportation Systems and Choices
- Efficient Physical Infrastructure and Operations
- Strategic and Inclusive Public Services
- Healthy, Efficient, and Diverse Housing
- Inclusive and Equitable Community Impacts

Every single area has deep and important implications for planners, from implementing low-impact development (see the land and natural resources category) to developing a creative placemaking plan (see the cultural ecosystems category). Full action write-ups under each category are available at <https://sustainablect.org>.

(continued on page 13)



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Sustainable CT, cont'd

Why Should a Municipality Participate?

This year, municipalities registered in Sustainable CT received wide-ranging free technical support to implement Sustainable CT actions. Support ranged from up to four hours of paid consultation services from selected equity coaches to help implement the Sustainable CT action “Optimize for Equity,” to free support from the Partnership for Strong Communities to assist with the Sustainable CT action, “Design and Implement a Housing Needs Assessment.”

Why Else Should Your Municipality Participate?

Recognition. Put your municipality on the map for its existing sustainability successes.

Inspiration. Inspire other municipalities with your stories and accomplishments.

Peer Learning. Be part of a vibrant, locally-driven network to accelerate the exchange of information, materials and best practices.

The Future. Current and future residents depend on forward-looking, local action now to ensure vibrant economies and healthy, resilient communities in the future.

Resources. Leverage existing funding and connect with our Sustainable CT Fellowship Program to support local sustainability action.

Economic Benefit. Demonstrate municipal commitment to sustainability, and businesses and potential residents may be more likely to locate in your community, growing the local tax base.

Partnerships. Connect with partners — other municipalities, regional entities, business, and nonprofits — to create synergies and alignment with existing, data-driven efforts.

Community Building. Through our uniform platform across municipalities, engage community stakeholders, increasing ownership, legitimacy, and support for sustainability action.

(continued on page 14)

Put your municipality on the map for its existing sustainability successes.



Sustainable CT, cont'd

Track Data. Utilize our framework to track your municipality's progress on specific sustainability indicators.

Innovation. Be part of a learning laboratory that drives innovation.

How Does My Community Get Involved?

An ever-growing number of Connecticut communities — now nearly 40% — are formally registered in the program.

Sustainable CT is open to all cities and towns in Connecticut. The program is voluntary and participation is free. To register for the program, your municipality first must pass a resolution (a sample template is available for download at <https://sustainablect.org>). The resolution outlines your city or town's intent to seek certification and establishes a Sustainability Team that will implement program actions. Second, designate a municipal elected official or municipal employee to register your community on the Sustainable CT website and submit your resolution for review.

If you still have questions, please email us at info@sustainablect.org, or come find us the morning of Thursday, October 18 at Session A3, "Score Points for Your Planning — Embrace Equity, Economy, and the Environment in Sustainable CT." 🏡

— *Alyssa Norwood manages the certification process and provides legal counsel to Sustainable CT. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree, cum laude, in Biology from Harvard University and her Juris Doctor, with honors, and Master of Public Health Degree in Health Law and Policy from the University of Connecticut. Alyssa formerly*

served as Project Manager for Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging, where she led the state's livable communities initiative and served as a policy expert on wide-ranging health, planning and zoning, transportation, and housing issues.

Johnnycake MT Park design committee meeting with Burlington's landscape architect, BSC Group of Glastonbury, to incorporate possible Sustainable CT initiatives into the design of this former 60-acre farm. (Submitted by Ted Shafer)



Farmer's forum in Woodbridge, eligible to earn points in the Planning category of Sustainable CT. (Submitted by Sheila McCreven)



I-84 Viaduct: Connecting Planners to Reconnect Hartford

by Ben Carlson, AIA 

Almost immediately following its completion in 1969, planners and engineers responsible for the design of the Interstate 84 Viaduct through downtown Hartford recoiled at its devastating impact on the city it served. In a 1970 report, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), using unusually frank language, noted that “the impacts of the I-84 freeway upon the physical environment into

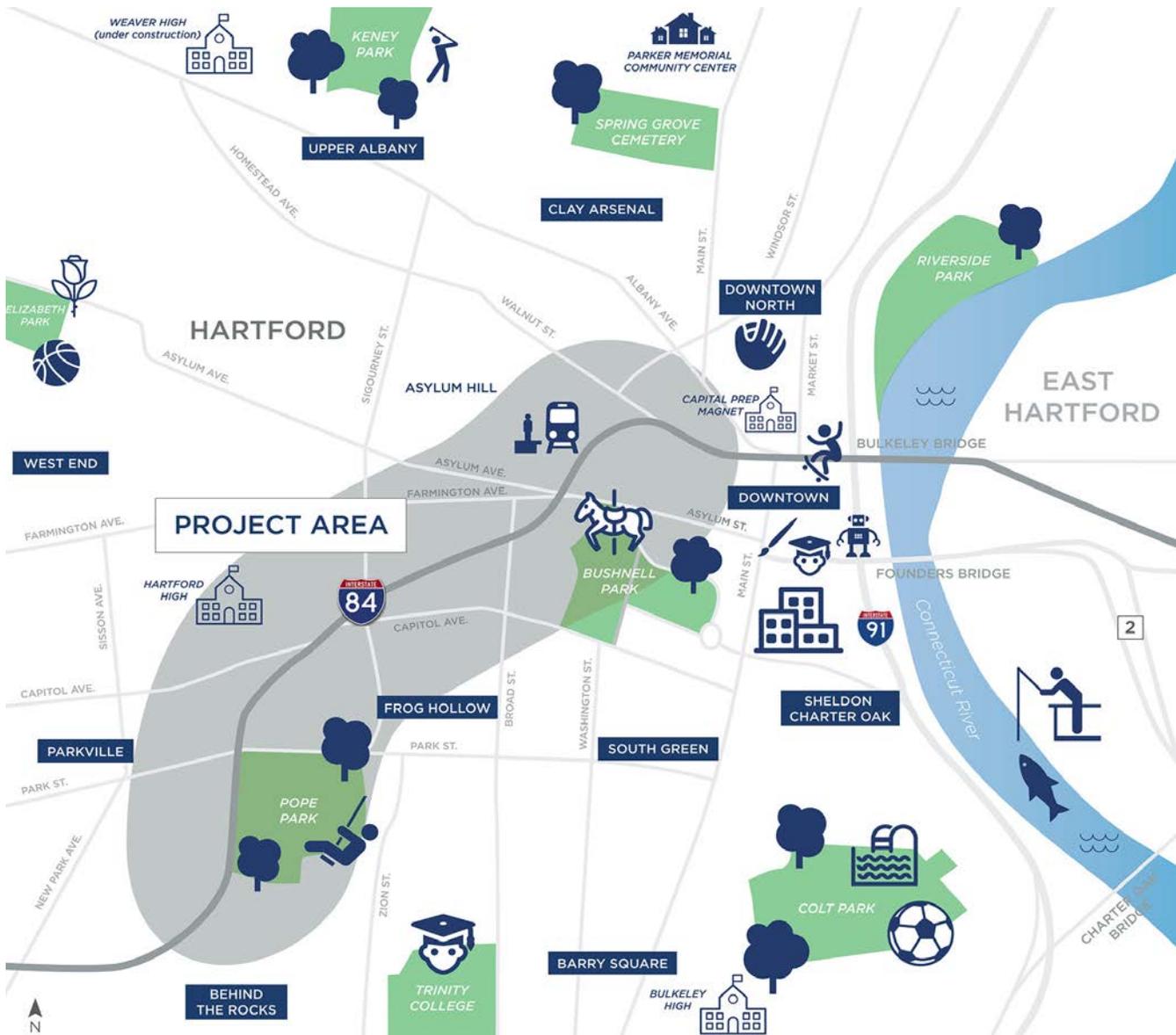
which it has been introduced has been both dramatic and overwhelming.” While many similar highway projects of this era would degrade urban centers across the nation, few were a cause of such immediate alarm to the well-intentioned professionals who had planned and designed them.

Now, a half century later, Hartford is poised to remove the dark shadow that the Viaduct has cast on its core area — *(continued on page 16)*



SESSION D3 ■ THURSDAY, OCT 18

The I-84 Hartford project area extends along two miles of the highway and the parallel rail corridor, touching on multiple neighborhoods and downtown. (Photo credit: Connecticut Department of Transportation)



While the task of constructing the replacement highway through an urban area is already complex, the Lowered Highway alternative would also involve relocation of the main New Haven-Hartford-Springfield rail line which also lies within the corridor.

I-84 Viaduct, cont'd

to unlock the potential of blighted land along the corridor, reconnect neighborhoods, enhance transit, and spur mixed-use development. Faced with escalating and unprecedented costs to maintain a deteriorating 50-year old structure that carries more than 175,000 vehicles daily and experiences high accident levels, CTDOT has been at work for almost a decade exploring replacement alternatives. Seeking to avoid the mistakes that characterized the planning processes of the earlier era, CTDOT has embraced a process that has included extraordinary levels of public involvement, with more than 200 public and stakeholder meetings to date. Kevin Burnham of CTDOT stresses the importance of this collaboration to the success of the project. “Our partnership with the City of Hartford, our Project Advisory Committee (PAC), and continuous consultation with neighborhoods and other project stakeholders has been vital to understanding and resolving all of the challenges that come with a project of this

kind of complexity,” says Burnham.

The proposed Lowered Highway alternative for Interstate 84 would be constructed through the corridor, but unlike its predecessor, this iteration would weave the highway much more carefully into the surrounding urban fabric, combining transportation, economic development, and urban design goals.

While the task of constructing the replacement highway through an urban area is already complex, the Lowered Highway alternative would also involve relocation of the main New Haven-Hartford-Springfield rail line, which also lies within the corridor. This idea, which first emerged in a public meeting almost 10 years ago, has become a cornerstone of the project. By eliminating two crossings of the highway and rail line, the relocation would save hundreds of millions of dollars in highway infrastructure costs, create a new intermodal transportation facility, enable new surface street connections with good urban design qualities, and expand opportunities for use of the existing historic station.

(continued on page 17)

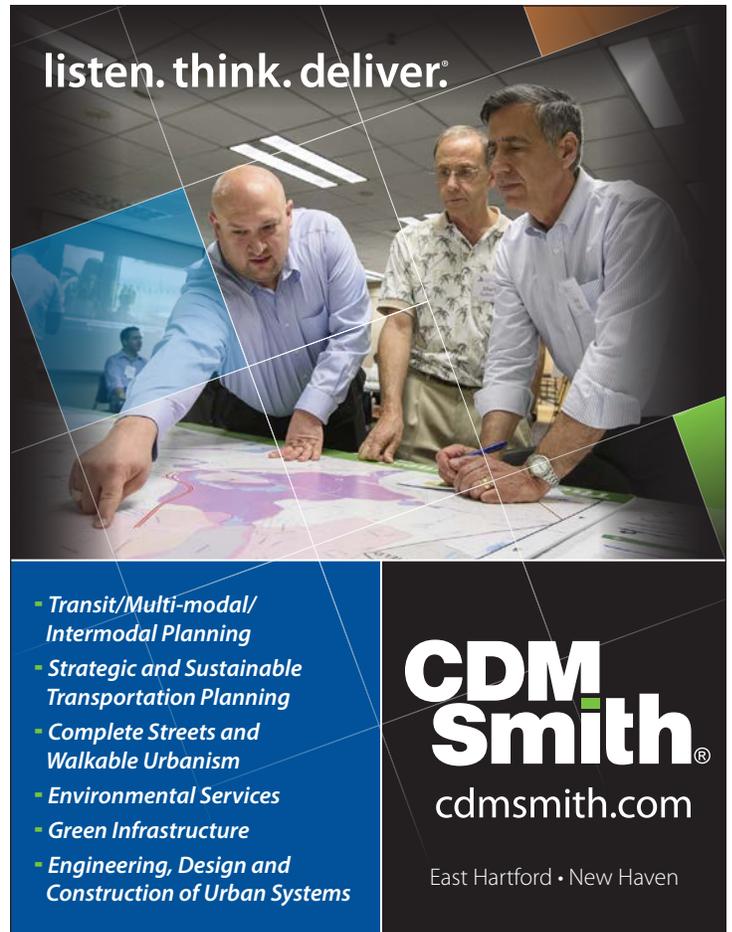


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I-84 Viaduct, cont'd

Some of the most notable benefits of the project would be visible in the area of the State Capitol, Bushnell Park, and Asylum Avenue. Today, existing elevated highway and train line structures dominate the landscape. Through careful right-of-way adjustments and use of grades, the new highway and rail line would be located out of sight, below the level of new streets. Approximately 25 acres of new mixed-use development would line new streets and enjoy stunning views of Bushnell Park and the Capitol building, in an area currently defined by the rail viaduct and occupied by highway ramps. Along Asylum Avenue — one on the city's most historic streets — a bleak environment shadowed by viaducts would become an active pedestrian-oriented place edged with transit-oriented development and new public spaces. Hartford's new inter-modal transportation center combining Amtrak, commuter rail, and local and inter-city bus service would provide a civic

(continued on page 18)



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Asylum Avenue, Hartford, looking from Asylum Hill past I-84 toward Hartford Union Station and Downtown.



Goody Clancy

After several years of discussion and detailed exploration of transportation, urban design, and environmental questions, many aspects of the project are well-defined and have won broad public support.

I-84 Viaduct, cont'd

focus for the transformed Asylum Avenue. Following relocation of the rail corridor and opening of the new intermodal station, Hartford's historic train station would be reused and repurposed as an iconic urban mixed-use destination. Sandy Fry, who represents the City of Hartford on the PAC, speaks of the immense potential of the area "as a new gateway to Hartford, a place that is friendly to pedestrian and bicyclists, whether heading to the new station or simply moving around the city, crossing between neighborhoods, downtown, and parks."

After several years of discussion and detailed exploration of transportation, urban design, and environmental questions, many aspects of the project are well-defined and have won broad public support. Other variables continue to be a focus of discussion and are being explored through assessments of alternatives. CT-DOT's consultant team is led by TranSystems, which is supported by a large team of specialist consultants. Casey Hardin of TranSystems has the task of coordinating the work of this multi-disciplinary team.

"Almost every choice we face on this project is a complex balancing act involving tradeoffs," says Hardin. "The transportation and engineering challenges are significant, but in this kind of setting the urban design opportunities are critically important, too."

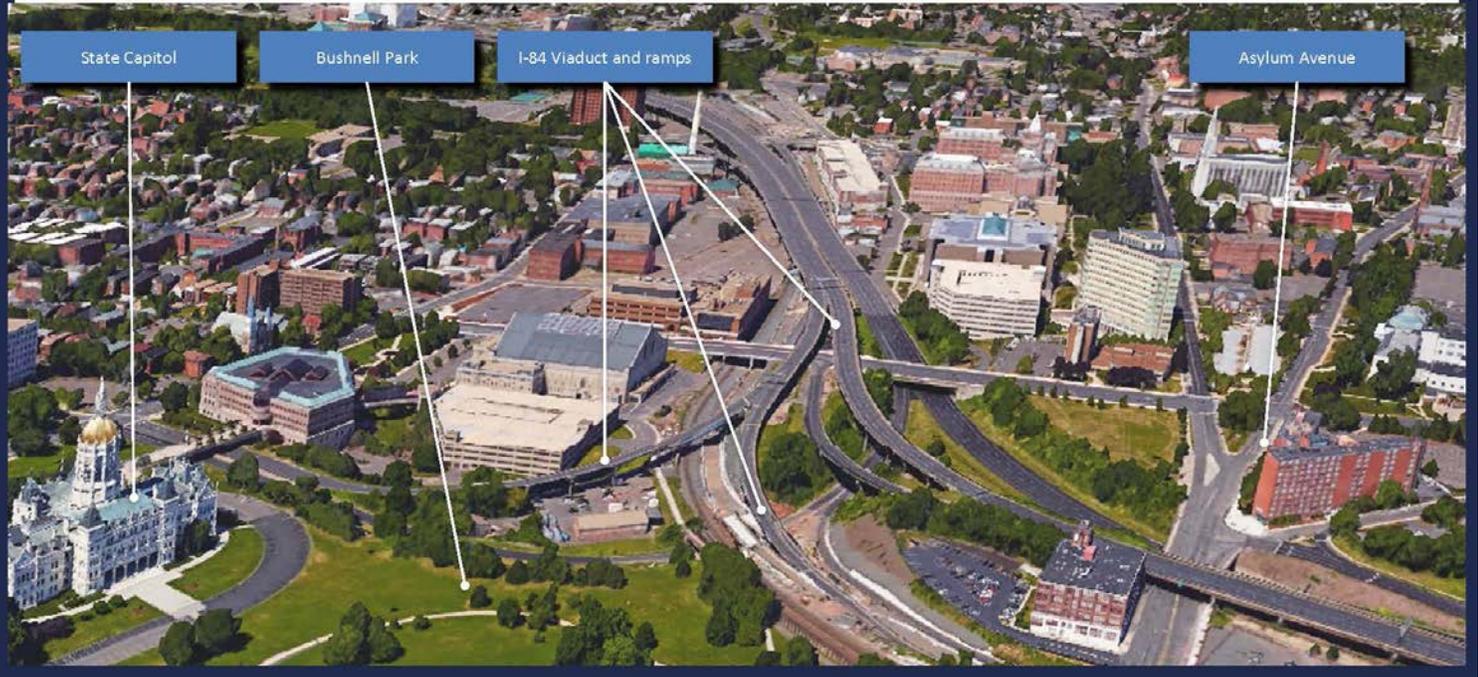
David Spillane of Goody Clancy, who has been involved with the project as an urban designer for almost 10 years, echoes Hardin's point. "For so many of the project stakeholders, urban design issues were the concern that brought them to the table. They were confident CT-DOT would successfully resolve the regional transportation challenges, but they were looking for a transformational urban design outcome that reconnected a city torn asunder by the original I-84 construction."

As the project approaches its second decade in planning and design, much of its promise as a transformative transportation, economic development, and urban design initiative is well on its way to being realized. A key project milestone will be reached in 2019 with the anticipated completion of the project's Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

(continued on page 19)



I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT



This before/after image sequence, taken from a 2016 I-84 Project presentation, demonstrates the transformative opportunity to lower I-84 and introduce walkable streets, attractive development sites, and inviting public spaces connecting downtown with Asylum Hill and other neighborhoods. Refinements studied since 2016 include additional surface street connections, different rail/bus station configurations, and an extended CTfastrak busway.



I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT



(continued on page 20)

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I-84 Viaduct, cont'd

Current efforts include:

- Refining the proposed local street network and related capping of the highway around Union Station, including streets that will cross over the highway.
- Confirming a preferred configuration for the new intermodal rail and bus station, that best provides convenient transit access, activates street and park spaces with its presence, and invites transit-oriented development on adjacent sites.
- Evaluating options for integration of CTfastrak within the corridor. This bus rapid-transit system has operated between New Britain and downtown Hartford since 2015 and will become an increasingly important transportation resource during highway reconstruction.

A session at SNEAPA 2018 will highlight the working relationships between the multiple agencies collaborating on this complex project. Session panel members will include Kevin Burnham, CTDOT; Sandra Fry, City of Hartford; and Casey Hardin, TranSystems. David Spillane of Goody Clancy, part of the TranSystems team, will moderate. ■

More information on the project can be found at:

- www.i84hartford.com
- www.hartford.gov/dds/232-development-services/2308-prj-capitalgateway

— Ben Carlson, AIA, LEED AP, Director of Urban Design for Goody Clancy, has served as project manager and lead urban designer on a wide variety of master planning and architecture projects, with emphasis on revitalizing downtowns, neighborhoods, and university/innovation districts. Ben has managed much of Goody Clancy's award-winning work for cities.

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SESSION G4 ■ FRIDAY, OCT 19

The American Planning Association produces policy tools annually, designed to help planners advocate for policies that advance the principles of good planning in their communities.

Advancing Good Planning Through Policy

by Emily Pasi, Public Affairs Manager, American Planning Association

Communities nationwide are addressing a wide array of infrastructure challenges, ranging from lack of housing choice to lack of long-term funding for critical infrastructure projects. As communities — and planners — grapple with how best to address these issues, they need support identifying policy recommendations that will advance local efforts to invest in critical infrastructure, and ultimately, strengthen the community at large. The American Planning Association produces policy tools annually designed to help planners advocate for policies that advance the principles of good planning in their communities. At the 2018 Southern New England APA conference, attendees will learn about these tools and how they can engage in the process to shape them.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Stand up for planning in 2018

Our policy agenda calls on Congress to address four issues to create stronger, more just communities for all.

1	2	3	4
Infrastructure	Housing Choice and Affordability	Federal Data	Healthy and Safe Communities
			
Share these priorities with your representatives at planning.org/policy			

APA policy guides are one of the most important tools members can use to advance good planning in their communities. Policy guides are developed with input by chapters, divisions, and members for policymakers under the guidance of APA's Legislative and Policy Committee. The positions taken in policy guides provide the foundation by which APA engages on key legislative issues, including those identified in our annual slate of legislative priorities. Policy guides represent

the collective thinking of our members on positions of both principle and practice. To date, APA's board of directors has approved 27 guides on topics ranging from health in planning and energy to hazard mitigation and aging in place. Working groups led by and comprised of APA members are currently developing three new guides: housing, surface transportation, and equity and inclusive growth.

The process by which guides are
(continued on page 23)

Advancing Good Planning, cont'd

developed is member-driven, with multiple opportunities for APA members to influence the outcome. The policy guide development process begins with the selection of a topic or issue that aligns closely with APA's legislative priorities. After a topic is chosen, a team of authors and reviewers is selected to produce a draft guide for review by the Legislative and Policy Committee, a national standing committee. Once the draft guide is approved by the Legislative and Policy Committee, it is sent to all APA chapters and appropriate APA divisions for review and comments. During this time, draft guides are also made available to the full membership for comments. Comments are submitted to the Legislative and Policy Committee, and a final draft is prepared for presentation at a chapter delegate assembly, which takes place at APA's national or policy conferences. During the assembly, chapter delegates make final changes and then vote to adopt the draft guide. Finally, the adopted guide is shared with the APA Board of Directors for ratification, marking the end of the development process. Policy guides propose policy recommendations on a set topic

and are intended for local policymakers. Policy guides are just one of the many tools available to members for advancing good planning locally.

Policy principles are another tool APA uses to influence policymakers on timely topics. Policy principles represent the association's position on major legislative issues under consideration by federal and state policy makers now, and provide the foundation for future policy guides. APA members have used policy principles in talking with their elected officials in recent years on topics, including **autonomous vehicles**, **housing**, and **infrastructure**. Since January 2017, planning advocates have shared APA's newly adopted infrastructure policy principle 359 times with federal elected officials. Policy principles are also at the heart of APA's Planning Home action agenda, which give planners the policy recommendations to address housing affordability and availability issues in their communities.

APA **legislative priorities** are another tool planning advocates can use to drive home the point that good planning requires federal partners and support. The Legislative and Policy Committee adopts and the Board of Directors approves a new policy agenda each year

(continued on page 24)

Policy principles represent the association's position on major legislative issues under consideration by federal and state policy makers now, and provide the foundation for future policy guides.

APA **Federal infrastructure legislation should:**

- Support all types of infrastructure
- Provide sustainable funding
- Expand access and equity
- Lead with local visions
- Embrace innovation
- Improve safety and resiliency

planning.org/policy

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Advancing Good Planning, cont'd

that identifies a short list of key issues planning advocates will ask Congress to advance. The legislative priorities reflect the positions articulated in APA policy guides. Infrastructure, housing affordability and choice, federal data, and healthy and safe communities topped the policy agenda this year, and advocates made sure their elected officials knew. Within 30 days of the release of APA's 2018 legislative priorities, 228 advocates wrote their members of Congress to share the new priorities, setting the expectation that communities nationwide need their legislators' support on a wide range of issues.

These tools and others provide planners with a platform for telling local, state, and federal officials how they can support, and more importantly, advance good planning at every level of government. Join us on Friday, October 19 from 2:00-3:15 p.m. for a lively facilitated discussion about how planners can leverage these tools to address infrastructure issues

in your community, and ways you can influence the outcome of APA policy products. 

Emily Pasi is the Public Affairs Manager for the American Planning Association's Washington, DC office. Pasi leads APA's Planners' Advocacy Network of engaged planning advocates working to shape federal and state policy outcomes. She also manages APA's national outreach campaigns, including Great Places in America and National Community Planning Month. Prior to her time with APA, Emily worked as a public affairs associate for the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) in Washington, DC.

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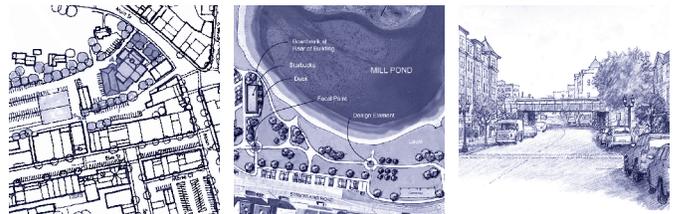
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