



# Planning Research Highlights

Q3 2008

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<http://www.planning.org/research>

The mission of APA’s 12-member research staff is to engage in a program of applied research that results in practical information about best practices in urban and regional planning in the U.S. Our principal audiences include community and regional planners, planning consultants, citizen planning officials, and professionals in allied fields. Information is disseminated through research reports, newsletters, conferences and symposia, and an inquiry-answering service. The Merriam Center Library is at the heart of APA’s research efforts. It is one of the finest focused collections of materials on planning practice in the nation. The APA National Centers on Planning is currently comprised of three research centers dedicated to work on the intersection of urban and regional planning with hazards, public health, and green communities.

**Sponsored Research.** About one-third of APA’s research budget involves research sponsored by government agencies, research institutes, NGOs, and foundations. APA welcomes the opportunity to collaborate on special projects with organizations having similar or complementary interests.

Collaboration also makes it possible for other organizations to have their research results reach APA’s diverse audience of professional planners and planning commissioners.

**Research Publications.** APA’s research unit is responsible for preparing two serial publications available by subscription--the monthly magazine *Zoning Practice*

(<http://www.planning.org/zoningpractice/>), and the *PAS Memo*, a bi-monthly online newsletter for PAS subscribers. Together, these research publications reach over 4,000 organizations and individuals.

**Planning Advisory Service (PAS).** The premier planning research service since 1949, PAS provides over a thousand planning agencies, consultants and educational institutions with access to the most innovative planning practices across the nation. To date, the service has produced over 550 PAS Reports--research monographs that provide practical solutions to the problems planners face every day. In addition to

automatically receiving each new PAS Reports, subscribers also have access to the bi-monthly *PAS Memo* and PAS Subscribers Only—the exclusive PAS webpages featuring digital access to PAS Reports, Essential PAS Info Packets, and *PAS QuickNotes*. The PAS Inquiry Answer Service allows subscribers to tap into APA’s vast collection of planning reports, ordinances, regulations, and vertical files on 500 planning subjects. PAS receives thousands of inquiries a year from its subscribers. Learn more about PAS

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at <http://www.planning.org/pas/>.

The American Planning Association provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in community planning, promoting education and citizen empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to effect positive change. APA is a national nonprofit organization with more than 44,000 members, 46 chapters, 20 specialty divisions, and a student representatives council. Its subsidiary, the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), represents more than 15,000 professionally certified planners.

APA ... *Making Great Communities Happen.*

# APA National Centers for Planning

The APA National Centers for Planning currently consists of three research centers that focus on specific planning domains or areas of study.

## *Hazards Planning Research Center*

- *Hazard mitigation capacity building* at all levels of government, and for all types of hazards.
- *Integrating hazard mitigation* into all types and stages of routine planning activities from visioning to plan making and plan implementation.
- Facilitating and strengthening the necessary *communication* between planners and other types of professionals involved in natural and other hazards.
- *Planning for post-disaster recovery and reconstruction*, the long-term process of guiding a community's redevelopment following the destruction caused by a natural or other type of disaster.
- Advancing understanding of the *resources, institutional structures, and knowledge base* needed at all levels of government in order to further effective planning for hazard mitigation and post-disaster recovery.

## *Planning and Community Health Research Center*

- *Physical activity and active living* (pedestrian and bicycle facilities, complete streets, context sensitive solutions, transit services, siting of parks, greenways, schools and other public buildings, mixed use, and compact development).
- *Access to healthy food and good nutrition* (grocery store access, community gardens, farmers markets, agricultural preservation).
- *Aging population and people with disabilities* (housing mix, co-housing accessory units, van and transit service, home health care, improved access to the built environment).
- *Community design* (barrier free access, universal design, mixed use, complete streets, compact development).
- *Schools* (school siting and standards, safe routes to school, community centered schools, preserving historic school buildings, nutrition in schools).
- *Environmental justice and social equity* (health empowerment zones, supermarket siting, access to health maintenance, affordable housing, hazardous waste sites).
- *Environmental health* (incidence of mortality and morbidity, geographic information systems, clean water and air, brownfield remediation and reuse).
- *Future planners and health professionals* (dual degree programs in public and planning, supplementary healthy built environment courses for public health or planning schools).
- *Family friendly cities* (child care, access to parks and open space, bicycle and pedestrian access).

## *Green Communities Research Center*

- *Climate change* (mitigating potential impacts through comprehensive planning, urban greening, transportation choices, and smart growth; and adapting urban form in anticipation of adverse climate change impacts, including floodplain management and building technologies).
- *Clean energy sources and energy efficiency* (supporting the integration of alternative energy technologies into the built environment, allowing for decentralized generation and distribution in planning management tools, and supporting energy efficiency in housing and other development).

- *Land conservation* (promoting land-saving action to protect areas of biodiversity, habitat protection, prime farmlands, and aquifer recharge areas).
- *Urban greening* (supporting the integration of “green” into all aspects of the built environment, including urban parks, urban forestry, green roofs, street trees, riparian corridors).
- *Sustainable economic development* (encouraging the development of an economic development strategy in communities where workers are in healthy work environments and are producing materials and products that support green technology industries).
- *Green infrastructure* (replacing “gray” infrastructure solutions with “green” technologies like natural stormwater systems, wetlands, and pervious paving materials).
- *Watershed Protection* (to protect source water resources, riparian corridors, and habitat).

## Recent Releases

The following research products have been released over the past 24 months.

### **PAS Report 539/540**

#### ***Integrating Planning and Public Health: Tools and Strategies to Create Healthy Places***

**Edited by Marya Morris**

Is the form of American cities to blame for the shape of Americans? With obesity rates climbing ever higher, planners are reconsidering how the built environment affects public health—not only obesity, but also asthma, cardiovascular disease, water quality, air pollution, pedestrian safety, and mental health. This report examines collaborations between planners and public-health professionals committed to building healthy communities. It outlines the five strategic points of intervention at which planners and public-health professionals can coordinate their efforts: visioning and goal setting, plans and planning, implementation tools, site design and development, and public facility siting and capital spending. Case studies illustrate the specific tools—including health impact assessments—used in such collaborations. The report also examines the role of universal design in creating healthy communities.

### **PAS Report 541**

#### ***An Economic Development Toolbox: Strategies and Methods***

**by Terry Moore, FAICP; Stuart Meck, FAICP; and James Ebenhoh, AICP**

This practical guide to economic development will help local governments analyze their economies and incorporate economic goals into comprehensive plans. It will help local officials and planners understand the forces that shape their economies and how they can influence those factors by encouraging the development of infrastructure and promoting regional cooperation in creating jobs. The report is supplemented by a glossary and extensive bibliography, as well as an interactive worksheet that can be used to evaluate economic development planning.

### **PAS Report 542**

#### ***Planning Issues for On-Site and Decentralized Wastewater Treatment***

**by Wayne Feiden and Eric Winkler**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that as much as 33 percent of new development in the United States relies on decentralized wastewater treatment, including septic systems. EPA also reports that improperly operating decentralized wastewater treatment systems are a leading cause of environmental damage to shorelines and the second-most-sited cause of groundwater and drinking water contamination. In addition, these systems allow for development to occur in places and densities often in conflict with a community's vision for its growth. This report shows why, ideally, planners, not engineers or sanitarians, should be coordinating community discussions about which areas should be sewered and

which should be served by decentralized wastewater treatment to achieve community goals for growth, safer drinking water, and less pollution of natural resources.

**PAS Report 543/544**

***Planning Active Communities***

**Marya Morris, General Editor**

How can planning processes, development regulations, and community participation be used to ensure that development patterns facilitate everyday activity?

**PAS Report 545**

***Planned Unit Developments***

**by Daniel R. Mandelker**

Ten large builders build more than 20 percent of all homes in the United States. And those builders are changing the way land is developed, relying increasingly on planned unit development and master-planned communities. Is your ordinance equipped to handle the new generation of PUDs? This report from APA's Planning Advisory Service offers new alternatives and standards.

**PAS Report 546/547**

***The Land Use/Transportation Connection***

**by Terry Moore and Paul Thorsnes, with Bruce Appleyard**

Communities that integrate transportation and land-use policies are better able to manage growth, improve the efficiency of travel, and contain infrastructure costs. Highways have shaped America's growth—and will continue to do so—but highways have a big problem: congestion. Building more roads rarely solves this problem, at least, not for long, but changes in the way we approach transportation and land-use planning might. This report examines the need for public-sector investment in land-use and transportation development and the tools and techniques planners can use to integrate transportation and land use. It looks at the forces shaping cities and their transportation systems, frameworks for evaluating transportation and land-use policies, and the role of regional comprehensive plans. The book's unique format makes it easy to skim, gleaning the basics and finding the specific information you need. Appendices cover congestion pricing, microeconomic analysis, benefit-cost analysis, and more. This is a comprehensive update to the best selling report by the same name.

**PAS Report 548**

***Zoning as a Barrier to Multifamily Housing Development***

**By Garrett Knaap, Stuart Meck, Terry Morre, and Robert Parker**

Does your code prevent the development of often-affordable multifamily housing? This report examines the relationships between zoning and housing in six metropolitan areas. Using census and GIS data, the authors found indicators of zoning regulations and housing market performance in Boston; Miami-Dade County; Minneapolis-St.Paul; Portland; Sacramento; and Washington, D.C. They evaluated state statutes and regional and local plans in each metropolitan. The result is documentary evidence that exclusionary zoning is a significant barrier to higher-density, multifamily housing, which is often—but not always—more affordable than single-family housing. The new GIS approach the authors used clearly illuminated the impact of regulatory barriers on housing affordability. A CD-ROM included with the report includes detailed information on research methodology and data sources and summarizes the literature and public-policy document review undertaken by the authors.

## **PAS Report 549/550**

### ***Fair and Healthy Land Use: Environmental Justice and Planning***

*By Craig Anthony Arnold*

Lawsuits challenging the disproportionate effects of government decisions on low-income and minority communities are on the rise. Studies show that low-income families and racial minorities are more likely to suffer from health issues related to pollution. Grassroots environmental justice groups are increasingly fighting the siting of LULUs in low-income and minority communities. The principles these groups adopt are good planning principles: that no person or neighborhood should be burdened by harmful environmental conditions and that all persons should have the opportunity for meaningful participation in the decisions affecting the health, safety, and identity of their community. This report explains how the principles of environmental justice can be incorporated into land-use planning processes.

## **PAS Report 551**

### ***From Recreation to Re-creation: New Directions in Parks and Open Space System Planning***

*Megan Lewis, General Editor*

Parks are more than just playgrounds. This report shows you how to plan for parks that protect wildlife, help manage stormwater, and allow residents to connect with nature.

## **PAS Report 552**

### ***Great Places in America: Great Streets and Great Neighborhoods, 2007 Designees***

This report documents the success of the 10 Great Streets and 10 Great Neighborhoods that were designated by APA's *Great Places in America* program in the fall of 2007.

## **Reference Book**

### ***Planning and Urban Design Standards***

In 2006 John Wiley & Sons, Inc. released its 750-page reference book, *Planning and Urban Design Standards*, the content of which was developed and edited over a three-year period by APA's Research Department. Over 200 contributors from leading private planning and urban design firms, academia, and public planning agencies across the U.S. were involved in the effort.

*Planning and Urban Design Standards* is similar in scope and depth to *Architectural Graphic Standards*, currently in its 10th edition, also published by Wiley. While that book focuses on structural and functional issues related to buildings, *Planning and Urban Design Standards* addresses elements outside the building, from individual lots, subdivisions, and neighborhoods to towns, cities, and regions. The audience for *Planning and Urban Design Standards* includes planners (public and private sector), planning academics, developers, and city managers, as well as those in allied professions such as architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design.

The effort was guided by an advisory board, which helped determine the form and content of the publication. Senior Research Associate Megan Lewis, AICP, served as managing editor, Research Associate Lynn M. Ross, AICP, served as Assistant Editor, and Research Director Bill Klein, AICP served as Executive Editor. Other APA Research Department staff who made substantial contributions to the effort included Shannon Paul, Jim Hecimovich, Jim Schwab, AICP, and Stuart Meck, FAICP. Emina Sendich of InfoDesign in New York City served as Graphics Editor.

## In the Pipeline

The following research products are scheduled for release in 2008:

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Great Places in America</i><br>by Karen Finucan   | April 2008<br>PAS Report 552   |
| 2. <i>Planners and the Census</i><br>by Chris Williamson  | July 2008<br>PAS Report 553    |
| 3. <i>Food System Planning</i><br>By Samina Raja  | August 2008<br>PAS Report 554  |
| 4. <i>Planning the Urban Forest: Ecology, Economy, and Community Development</i><br>By Jim Schwab | October 2008<br>PAS Report 555 |
| 5. <i>Smart Codes</i><br>by Megan Lewis, Joe MacDonald, Jim Schwab, Marya Morris, Stuart Meck     | December 2008<br>PAS Report    |

## Projects Underway

The following is a sampling of projects currently underway within APA's research department.

*Green Communities Research Center*

### □ ***Planning and Climate Change: Mitigation and Clean Energy Strategies***

Not since the early 1970s have energy issues consumed as much national attention as today. Americans are living with rising gasoline prices, electricity blackouts, and soaring heating and cooling costs. Our over-dependence on petroleum and other fossil fuels threatens our national security, exacerbates the U.S. trade deficit, affects our global climate, and harms the health of our most vulnerable populations — low-income residents, the elderly, and children. The manner in which our communities are sited and developed has an impact on both energy demand and the type of energy resources available to use in the future.

Planners are on smart growth's front lines. A growing number of urban and regional planners are aware of the impact their work has on energy consumption and energy choices. However, many have had no direct experience with energy-efficient community design or with the range of renewable energy options now available.

APA and the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) have come together to identify ways that planners can encourage efficient energy use and diversification of energy supply through their influence over the built and natural environments — including both where and how we build, and where and how we preserve open spaces. Professional planners have a real opportunity to affect change on a wide variety of subjects through their strategic position as advisors to policy makers in town, city, county, and regional governments. For more cities and towns to implement efficient and clean energy strategies, planners must be aware of the energy implications of what they do and have the knowledge and tools to incorporate energy considerations in all aspects of planning.

With funding from the Surdna Foundation, the Gund Foundation, and APA's Environment,

Natural Resources, and Energy Division, APA and EESI are undertaking initiatives that will lead to better integration of energy sustainability with planning.

Products: Needs assessment survey and scoping memo; energy and planning symposium report; best practices database, website, and manual; federal policy briefing; journal articles; and training and technical assistance. Sponsors: Surdna Foundation, Gund Foundation. Project Manager: Suzanne Rynne, AICP. Completion date: September 30, 2009. Project. Status: Underway. Project email: [energy@planning.org](mailto:energy@planning.org).

*Hazards Planning Research Center*

## □ ***Integrating Hazard Mitigation Into Local Planning***

The major question haunting hazard mitigation planning in recent years has been how best to move beyond the serious disconnect that often exists between such planning and other local planning activities. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, which conditions eligibility for hazard mitigation grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) upon a state's or local jurisdiction's official participation in an approved local hazard mitigation plan under the act, has moved many communities forward in thinking about such plans. But there remains considerable room for improvement in tying those plans effectively to daily planning activities in those communities.

The APA Hazards Planning Research Center will prepare a Planning Advisory Service Report on best practices in integrating hazard mitigation into all forms of local plan making and planning activities. FEMA has contracted with APA for a 30-month study costing \$250,000. FEMA will provide \$206,000 of this total, with the rest provided by APA through the Planning Advisory Service. The project start date was August 1, 2007.

What local planning activities could benefit from better integration of hazard mitigation concerns? The study will examine the following for best practices and developing opportunities:

- Long-range community visioning and goals and objectives activities;
- Plan making of all types: Comprehensive, master, or general plans; Sub-area plans, such as specific plans, neighborhood plans, corridor plans, and downtown plans;
- Functional plans, such as plans for sewer, water, transit, housing, and open space;
- Land-use management tools, such as zoning, subdivision, planned unit development, and form-based codes;
- Review and approval of development projects;
- Capital improvements programming, including public investments in infrastructure, public buildings, and facilities.

In many communities today, planners have either limited involvement and input into hazard mitigation plans or none at all. In some cases, the plans are the exclusive domain of emergency managers, or in small communities there may be no local planning staff. In other cases, planners may not yet have asserted a role in such planning, sometimes for lack of adequate familiarity with the subject matter. Planners and emergency managers, in particular, must interact and communicate more in planning and implementing hazard mitigation. Establishing this link is essential if hazard mitigation is to be thoroughly integrated into local planning activities. Most hazard mitigation involves some element of land use or other planning activities, such as economic development, transportation, and historic preservation. Planners can provide vital input as well as assemble other vital input during the process of planning for effective hazard mitigation planning. For example, zoning and open space preservation are frequently essential tools in planning for flood mitigation.

Products: Needs assessment survey and scoping memo; best practices manual; Sponsors: FEMA. Project manager: Jim Schwab, AICP. Completion date: September 30, 2010. Project. Status: Underway.

## □ ***Creating Community-Based Brownfields Redevelopment Strategies***

The American Planning Association is the recipient of a Brownfields Training, Research and Technical Assistance Grant from the U.S Environmental Protection Agency. *Creating Community-Based Brownfields Redevelopment Strategies* is a three-year initiative with the goal of helping community groups in low-income communities develop a new set of “eyes” to see brownfields sites as opportunities.

It is estimated that there are more than 450,000 brownfields sites in the U.S. In many brownfields redevelopment projects, community groups are frequently left out of the process. However, they represent the main constituency that suffers from the negative impact of vacant and abandoned brownfield sites. By creating a workbook and training program for community development corporations and similar groups, the project team hopes to empower residents to actively and effectively participate in brownfields redevelopment and understand how different development strategies will benefit their communities.

APA’s research department is undertaking this project, working in close collaboration with Bethel New Life, a Chicago-based CDC with extensive experience in brownfields redevelopment issues.

Products: training module and workbook. Sponsors: EPA, APA, and Bethel New Life, Inc. Completion date: September 2008. Status: Underway. Project email: brownfields@planning.org.

*Green Communities Research Center*

## □ ***Planning for Urban and Community Forestry***

The Research Department at APA is working in close collaboration with the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and American Forests (AF), to prepare a state-of-the-art best practices manual about how urban and community forestry can best be integrated into long-range and current municipal planning activities in the U.S. This \$240,000 project is made possible by a \$120,000 grant from the USDA Forest Service and matching funds from the three partnering organizations. The project began in January 2006 and is scheduled to last 24 months. The primary audience for the manual will be:

- urban planners working for municipalities or working as consultants to municipalities;
- planning commissioners and planning board members;
- city and town managers;
- city and town public works, engineering, and parks department managers;
- municipal arborists and urban foresters;
- developers and those in the design professions serving them.

The manual will take the form of a Planning Advisory Service (PAS) report, which will be distributed to members of the Sustainable Urban Forests Coalition and more than 1,350 planning agencies and consultants nationwide. Individual copies of the manual will be available from APA's PlanningBooks.com and from project sponsors.

Products: PAS Report. Sponsors: USDA Forest; ISA, AF. Completion date: December 2007. Project Team: Jim Schwab, AICP, Project Manager; William R. Klein, AICP, Project Supervisor; Carrie Fesperman, Program Development Associate; Jim Hecimovich, Project Editor. Status: Underway.

*Planning and Community Health Research Center*

## □ ***Planning and Public Health***

APA has partnered with the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for the past five years to restore the bridge between urban planning and public health practice. NACCHO is the national nonprofit organization representing local public health agencies (including city, county, metro, district, and tribal agencies). The two organizations are exploring shared objectives, providing

tools, and recommending options and strategies for integrating public health considerations into land-use planning.

The project aim is to promote an interdisciplinary approach to creating and maintaining healthy communities. The long-term objectives of the project include improving the performance of local planning and public health agencies by providing tools, resources, and networks to foster improved collaboration. An important part of that process is to help local public health agencies (LPHAs) and local planning agencies gain a better understanding of their respective authorities and functions, and how they can provide input and guidance to one another for healthier land-use planning.

In 2002, NACCHO conducted several focus groups with local public health officials to ascertain their agencies' role in land-use planning and to bring to light whatever barriers may exist to achieving more substantive integration of public health issues in the land-use planning process. Most participants characterized their contribution to the planning decision making process as valuable, but also said their role was more reactive rather than proactive and too localized. These factors limited their effectiveness in the process overall. There are numerous causes for this lack of integration in the planning process, ranging from a lack of awareness of the link between land-use planning the role of local health officials, to a lack of resources, authority, or understanding of how to become more involved. Fortunately, there are also concrete methods for bridging this gap between health officials and land-use planners.

The feedback NACCHO received from the focus groups, coupled with the fast-growing interest and awareness of the relationship between obesity, health, and the built environment by planners and public health providers alike, led NACCHO and APA to enter into this current collaboration. Through the project we are seeking to raise the awareness of local public health officials so they can proactively participate in land use planning decisions; raise the awareness of local planners so they can bring a more informed health message into the planning process; and facilitate long-term partnerships between these disciplines to design healthier communities.

Products: PAS report (completed), workshops, conference sessions, health impact assessment products. Sponsors: CDC. Completion date: May 30, 2008. Project. Status: Underway. .

## **□ *Model Smart Growth Codes***

This project critically assesses the structure of land development regulations and provides a guide development of model smart growth ordinances, including models, with commentary, that may be adapted by local governments to implement specialized planning policies. “Smart growth ordinances” mean regulations intended to achieve a variety of objectives including encouraging mixed uses, preserving open space and environmentally sensitive areas, providing a choice of housing types and transportation modes, including affordable housing, and making the development review process more predictable. In addition, smart growth ordinances, since they involve providing more transportation options and more compact, mixed-use development, inevitably have public health implications; they encourage walking and bicycling, and more human interaction, with the potential to support more active, socially engaged lifestyles that results in better public physical and mental health. Ordinance models contained in the forthcoming report include the following: mixed-use zoning district ordinance; live/work ordinance; town center ordinance; affordable housing density bonus ordinance; model unified development permit review process ordinance; transfer of development rights ordinance; cluster development ordinance; pedestrian overlay district; on-site access, parking, and circulation ordinance; shared parking ordinance; and street connectivity standards ordinance.

Products: PAS report; audio conference. Sponsor: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Center for Disease Control. Completion date: September 2006. Project team: Joe MacDonald, AICP, project manager; Bill Klein, AICP, project supervisor; Jim Schwab, AICP; Eric Damian Kelly, FAICP, and Kirk Bishop, Duncan Associates.

□ ***The City Parks Forum<sup>SM</sup>***  
**A Fellowship for Mayors, Their Park Advisors, and Community Leaders**

APA created The City Parks Forum (CPF) to advance urban parks leadership at the highest levels of city government. The forum serves as an exchange of ideas between mayors and program faculty about acquiring, building, managing, and programming urban parks. It focuses on practical solutions involving public-private partnerships, innovative financing techniques, good park design, and meaningful ways to engage citizens. Twice a year, mayors from five cities are invited, along with their principal parks advisor and a private sector partner, to a host city. Participants discuss best park practices and the roles urban parks can play in solving some of America's toughest urban problems. Each mayor presents an urban park case problem from their own community, which then is used as a focus point by faculty in the program's highly interactive curriculum. Cities that successfully complete the program are eligible to apply for a catalyst grant of up to \$35,000. Grants are used back home to help implement some of the case problem solutions developed at the forum. The principal audience of The City Parks Forum is mayors of cities with a strong mayor form of government and with populations ranging from 100,000 to 800,000.

Since 1999, twenty-five mayors have participated in six forums. Catalyst grants totaling more than \$850,000 have been awarded to cities for a diverse array of projects, from public participation initiatives to bricks and mortar projects.

In addition to the symposia, CPF utilizes other educational media to promote urban parks. In May 2000, nearly 600 listeners across the country participated in an audio conference about parks and open space. Recent APA publications about urban parks include the PAS Report, *Parks, Recreation, and Open Space: A Twenty-First Century Agenda*, written by Alexander Garvin, was released in March 2001. A second report, *Parks and Economic Development* by John L. Crompton, was released in January 2002. A third PAS Report, *From Recreation to Re-creation: New Directions in Parks and Open Space System Planning Recreation*, was completed in 2008. The City Parks Forum also has produced an on-going series of mayoral briefing papers called *How Cities Use Parks For...* that describes how cities use parks to address a variety of urban challenges. Current papers, which are available in the program web page, include topics on economic development, community revitalization, community engagement, making neighborhoods safer, green infrastructure, helping children learn, public health, tourism, arts and culture, smart growth, and climate change.

Program information is available on CPF's web site at <http://www.planning.org/cpf>. The City Parks Forum is made possible by grants from the Wallace Foundation and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. For more information on The City Parks Forum, email [cpf@planning.org](mailto:cpf@planning.org).

## Major Research Completed

The following major research projects were completed and closed out in the last several years.

☑ ***Planning the Physically Active Community***

In the last decade, the paradigm of smart growth has prompted many communities to improve the physical design of neighborhoods, downtowns, and communities as a whole. When communities make and implement plans to grow smarter, the result can be places that allow for more walking and physical activity than is typical in many post-war suburban and urban environments. That said, while smart growth planning has been in full swing for several years, very few communities have developed a systematic way to incorporate health and activity issues into the normal course of such planning.

The APA Research Department completed a project funded by the Robert Wood Johnson

Foundation to conduct research and prepare a PAS Report and other educational materials on “Planning and Designing the Physically Active Community.” The grant to APA was part of a five-year Robert Wood Johnson Foundation initiative to encourage changes to the built environment that will promote physical activity as a means of improving the health of Americans.

The approach APA used was to identify and focus on the strategic points of intervention—where the most critical community planning decisions are being made that affect future physical activity. The resulted in numerous products and educational opportunities for APA members and others interested in improving public health through community design. The centerpiece of the effort was a PAS Report containing best practices principles and case studies illustrating how leading-edge communities are addressing physical activity concerns in comprehensive plans, functional plans, urban design initiatives, capital improvement programs, and development review processes.

Products: PAS Report, Physically Active Community Institutes, audio conference, expert symposium, case studies, web resources, and other educational materials. Sponsor: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Project Team: Bill Klein, AICP, Project Supervisor; Marya Morris, AICP, Senior Research Associate; Carrie Fesperman, Program Development Associate; and Shannon Paul, Librarian. Status: Completed. Project email: [cfesperman@planning.org](mailto:cfesperman@planning.org).

### ***Tribal Transportation***

The APA Research Department was selected from among 20 competing research organizations to conduct a synthesis study for the Transportation Research Board's (TRB) National Cooperative Highway Research Program on the current status of transportation programs among Indian tribes. It compiled information from tribes that are currently undertaking transportation planning, project development, construction, safety, transit, and maintenance. Information included current staffing for tribal governments and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the amount and source of funding for transportation programming activities. Tribal governments, and state, local, and federal agencies will use the information in this study to determine the state of tribal transportation programs and steps needed to assist tribes in developing capacity to perform transportation-related functions. APA coordinated its efforts with two divisions, Transportation and Indigenous Planning.

A total of 30 tribes are profiled in the final report, including: Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians (Minnesota) Oklahoma Cherokee Nation (Oklahoma); Eastern Band Cherokee (North Carolina); Confederated Salish Kooteni (Montana); Navajo Nation (New Mexico); Bois Forte Band of Chippewa (Minnesota); Southern Ute (Colorado); Hoopa Valley Tribe (California); Standing Rock Sioux (North Dakota); Tohono O'odham (Arizona); Fort Belknap Indian Community (Montana); Prairie Band Potawatomi (Kansas); Seminole (Florida); Sac and Fox (Iowa); Coeur d'Alene (Idaho); Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin (Wisconsin); Pueblo of Zuni (New Mexico).

Product: Report. Sponsor: Transportation Research Board. Project Team: James C. Schwab, AICP, co-principal investigator; Stuart Meck, FAICP, co-principal investigator; Bill Klein, AICP, project supervisor; Lynn M. Ross, AICP, research associate; Rebecca Retzlaff, AICP, intern; Shannon Paul, librarian. Status: Completed. Project email: [jschwab@planning.org](mailto:jschwab@planning.org)

### ***Housing Choice***

With support from the Fannie Mae Foundation, APA conducted a series of six Housing Choice scoping sessions designed to get in tune with real world affordable housing problems and opportunities throughout the country. The sessions took place during Fall 2004 in conjunction with APA chapter conferences. The sessions focused on current innovative practice, marking a departure from the standard

descriptions of, and approaches to, the problem in the 1970s and 80s. The half-day sessions brought together six to 12 participants for a facilitated discussion focused on two principal questions: (1) what is the unique nature of the affordable housing challenge in the region and what makes it different from other regions of the country?; and (2) what tools are available, or should be available, in the region that hold out the most promise for helping to meet the housing challenge?

APA chapters and the APA Housing and Community Development Division assisted APA in the selection of scoping session participants. Session invitees were selected to represent the disciplines that are most directly involved in affordable housing planning, production, and retention at the local level. Participants represent urban planning, NGOs, the design professions, CDCs, affordable housing production entities, and the development community.

Each session was facilitated by APA staff and tape recorded for transcription. APA Research, using the transcripts and detailed notes taken by scribes at each session, developed the session summaries, an analysis of common themes and a list of most promising affordable housing strategies. Several of the scoping sessions were followed with an APA chapter conference session the next day at which the findings of the scoping session were presented and further comments solicited from the audience to help refine or expand findings. The project team also presented a session on the Housing Choice project at the 2005 APA National Planning Conference in San Francisco.

Products: online Affordable Housing Reader; Housing Choice website featuring session summaries and common theme analysis; a feature article in *Practicing Planner*; and a set of most promising strategies that help planners address affordable housing issues. Sponsors: Fannie Mae Foundation. Completion date: March 2005. Project Team: Paul Farmer, AICP, Executive Director; William R. Klein, AICP, Director of Research; Stuart Meck, FAICP, Senior Research Fellow; Lynn M. Ross, AICP Research Associate; and Susan Turner, Leadership Affairs Coordinator. Status: Completed.

## ☑ ***Growing Smart<sup>SM</sup> Legislative Guidebook***

States and their local governments now have new practical tools available to help combat urban sprawl, protect farmland, promote affordable housing, and encourage redevelopment. They appear in the APA's new *Growing Smart<sup>SM</sup> Legislative Guidebook: Model Statutes for Planning and the Management of Change*, 2002 Edition (Stuart Meck, FAICP, General Editor). The *Guidebook* and its accompanying *User Manual* are the culmination of APA Research Department's seven-year Growing Smart<sup>SM</sup> project, an effort to draft the next generation of model planning and zoning legislation for the U.S.

A unique feature of the *Guidebook* is the variety of options provided for statutory reform instead of a one-size-fits-all model. Commentary provides background information (including summaries of key state statutes), describes pros and cons of legislative alternatives, and makes suggestions concerning implementation. Topics covered in the *Guidebook's* 15 chapters include a wide range of state, regional, and local comprehensive and functional planning issues, urban growth area designation, zoning, subdivision control, development impact fees, administrative and judicial review of land-use decisions, enforcement, regional tax-base sharing, innovative land-use regulations, including incentive systems, a model "smart growth act" modeled after a well-regarded 1997 Maryland law, authorization for traditional neighborhood development, farmland and historic preservation, redevelopment, and tax increment financing. The *Guidebook* contains provisions on establishing a "state biodiversity conservation plan" and on integrating state environmental policy acts into local comprehensive planning. Also included are model statutes to ensure the availability of affordable housing at the local level and streamline local development permit review practices, making them less cumbersome and more predictable.

The *User Manual* helps those interested in statutory reform navigate through the *Guidebook* and, by means of checklists and case studies, select from the options available in the *Guidebook* and tailor a program of statutory reform that will meet the unique needs of their state. The *Growing Smart<sup>SM</sup>*

*Legislative Guidebook, 2002 Edition*, and companion *User Manual* may be ordered through APA's PlanningBooks.com.

Sponsors: The Henry M. Jackson Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, six Federal agencies (HUD, EPA, FHWA, FTA, USDA), the Siemens Corporation, and APA. Term: October 1, 1994, to November 30, 2001. Investigators: Stuart Meck, FAICP, Principal Investigator; William R. Klein, AICP, Project Supervisor; Marya Morris, AICP, Senior Research Associate; Jim Schwab, AICP, Senior Research Associate; Jim Hecimovich, Project Editor; John Bredin, Esq., Research Fellow; various consultants.

## ***Site Planning Fundamentals: A Training Program for Central America and the Caribbean***

In fall 1998, many communities in Central America and the Caribbean were severely damaged by Hurricanes Mitch and Georges. As part of the long-term rebuilding effort underway in the region, APA's research department was contracted by U.S. HUD's Office of International Affairs to develop and deliver a training course on the fundamentals of site planning. Nine workshops were conducted in Spanish during fall 2001 in Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic, the countries hit the hardest by the storms. A training workbook and trainers' guide, university course, and a multimedia teaching product were also produced. APA teamed with Spanish-speaking individuals, institutions, and firms both here in the U.S. and in the region to help carry out many aspects of the work.

The principal audiences for the training included planners, design professionals, public officials, builders, contractors, lenders, and nongovernmental organizations. Skills taught included natural features interpretation, slope and drainage analysis, stormwater management, soils analysis, erosion control, grading, climatology, hazards mapping, site design concepts, program and plan development, and construction management practices.

Research team members visited the Dominican Republic, Honduras, and Nicaragua to see the impact of the storms first-hand and, in particular, to scope out what the site planning issues were in each country. The trips also gave the team an opportunity to meet with potential partner organizations and possible audience groups. A project launch meeting involving representatives from all three countries, project consultants, and HUD was held in mid-winter 2001 in Chicago to hammer out some of the final details about the program. A pre-workshop meeting held in August included the team of trainers and workbook authors, to define the overall teaching approach.

Products: Site Planning Training Course with supporting materials. Sponsors: HUD. Completion date: December 2001. Project Team: Senior Research Associate Megan Lewis, AICP, Project Manager and Honduras Training Supervisor; Senior Research Associate Jim Schwab, AICP, Dominican Republic Training Supervisor; Research Associate Jerome Cleland, Nicaragua Training Manager and Project Researcher; Senior Research Associate Sanjay Jeer, Distance Learning Component; Assistant Research Director Jim Hecimovich, Project Editor and Production Manager; Shannon Paul, Librarian; and Research Director William Klein, AICP, Project Supervisor. Status: Completed. For more information on the project, e-mail [mlewis@planning.org](mailto:mlewis@planning.org).

## **Land-Based Classification Standards (LBCS)**

APA's research unit has completely revised the 1965 *Standard Land Use Coding Manual* and has made the new classification system available to planners for free on its Web site. Land-Based Classification Standards (LBCS), five years in the making, now provides a completely new integrated and consistent system for classifying land uses. Moving beyond the old system, in which planners had to assign one, and only one, classification category to a geographic area, relational database technology has made it possible to classify land uses using a multidimensional model. Rather than forcing all-or-nothing,

mutually exclusive classification categories on a piece of land, LBCS expands traditional categories into five dimensions—physical activities, economic functions, building types, site development character, and ownership character. Each of these dimensions has its own set of categories and subcategories, allowing planners to have much more control over land-use classifications and be much more accurate.

The most obvious benefit of LBCS is its flexibility. It is eminently adaptable to a variety of planning applications, data collection methods, data-sharing and data-integrating methods, and color-coding and mapping schemes. LBCS has been structured so that planners can easily assign new categories to new land uses brought on by a rapidly changing economy and new technology. It can also accommodate new methods and technologies for analysis, and be easily customized for local needs without losing the ability to share data. LBCS products consist of: (a) classification codes; (b) land-use descriptions, including a database of land-use images; (c) color codes and mapping standards; (d) GIS templates for color coding; (e) metadata standards for data sharing; (f) conversion tables and tools to convert land-use data from other standards; and (g) supporting educational material, including examples of 104 other comparable standards for classifying land-based data.

Funding for the development of the new standards came from APA and the following six federal agencies: the Federal Highway Administration, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Department of Defense, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Agriculture. All of the LBCS products are available online at <http://www.planning.org/LBCS>.

### ***Firewise Post-Workshop Assessment Project***

The APA research unit has completed an assessment project to help the National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Program determine how training participants in national Firewise workshops affected the way they addressed wildfire hazards. The National Fire Protection Association, which managed the workshop series, sponsored the project. APA conducted both an online survey of workshop participants and a series of regional focus groups to complete the project. The online survey included time-series data to identify the frequency with which participants undertook certain actions and the length of time typically required to do so. With this information, Firewise Communities might better be able to constitute timely intervention or provision of services and thereby successfully influence community behaviors.

Products: assessment report. Sponsor: National Fire Protection Association. Completion date: July 2003. Project Team: Jim Schwab, AICP, project manager; Lynn M. Ross, AICP, Research Associate; Sanjay Jeer, AICP, Senior Research Associate; William R. Klein, AICP, Project Supervisor; Status: final report.

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### *APA Research Staff – Chicago*

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