

planning perspectives

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year Planners! It has been an honor serving as your President during the last year. 2022 was a great year for APA Iowa chapter with many moments to celebrate.

The APA Iowa Chapter's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee was awarded the Karen B. Smith Chapter Award for Outstanding Outreach from the Chapter President's Council of the American Planning Association. This award is given to Chapter's which demonstrate outstanding performance in public outreach and service to members, professional development and overall Chapter achievement. I want to thank the Committee for their dedicated work on behalf of the chapter to ensure the planning profession in Iowa is diverse, empowered and creating opportunities and collaboration for all.

Eight Iowa Chapter Members received their AICP or AICP Candidate credentials in the last year and the Chapter offered over 90 hours of Certification Maintenance credits throughout the year in virtual and in person programming. Looking forward to 2023, the Executive Board will continue to host meetings every other month and will return to hosting two in-person meetings in 2023. Membership is welcome to join to engage with the Chapter and will be hosting CM opportunities at the in-person meetings.

The Conference Planning Committee is preparing to host their kick off meeting later this month to begin the work for the 2023 Upper Midwest Annual Conference, hosted by the City of Cedar Falls in October 11-13, 2023. Begin brainstorming ideas of the work you want to share with your colleagues and look for the call for sessions to come out in March.

The National American Planning Conference will be held in Philadelphia and the All Iowa Reception will again be hosted in partnership with the planning schools at Iowa State University and University of Iowa. Mark your calendar for the 2024 NPC to be held in Minneapolis April 13-16.

The Iowa Legislative Session begins this week and the Chapter will continue utilizing the legislative assistance from Cope Murphy + Co. This partnership provides additional assistance to the legislative committee in following bills, meeting with legislators and providing representation at the Capitol. The Chapter's approved legislative agenda can be found later in the newsletter. I shared during the December Planning on Tap a favorite resource of mine during session is the Iowa Public Radio podcast, Under the Golden Dome for a weekly recap on issues being discussed.

Madeline Sturms, AICP, APA Iowa Chapter President

The next great idea can move the planning profession forward.

Will it be yours?

Call for Proposals is open for NPC23.
You are the key to an amazing conference. No matter who you are, where you are, or what your experience in the field is, we want to hear from you.

All ideas welcome.
For more information, visit www.planning.org.

FUN FACT:
The Slinky was invented in Philadelphia in 1943.

npc23 PHILADELPHIA | APRIL 1-4
ONLINE | APRIL 26-28
Let's talk planning...

From the APA Blog:

"Removing Freeways and Healing Communities"

Dina Walters, APA Equity Communications Team

It is not an unfamiliar tale in the history of planning: a municipal push for urban modernity in the form of freeways leads to neighborhoods being razed, residents displaced, and a city bisected. Entire communities, primarily composed of historically underserved groups, are those most deeply impacted by the plan.

The urban landscape, altered by highway construction, leads to blight, impacting nearby home values and businesses. Residents in the vicinity of the freeway experience a higher rate of illness, including asthma, as a result of their proximity to increased air pollution from exhaust. While the freeway permits rapid vehicle transit from one part of the city to another, the harms far outweigh the benefits.

Continue Reading Online →

Changes Coming to FAICP Cycle in 2024

The changes to the 2024 Nomination process and guidelines are aimed at increasing transparency and supporting APA's Prioritize Equity strategic initiative. The changes are based on recommendations from the 2022 FAICP Selection Committee, the FAICP Pipeline and Nomination Guidelines Task Force and the College of Fellows Committee.

What does this mean for you? If you are seeking FAICP status in the future, you should assess your career based on the primary criteria outlined in the Nomination Guidelines. Contact Iowa APA Professional Development Officer David Wilwerding at dwilwerding@cityofjohnston.com or 515-727-7775 for more information.

CHART YOUR COURSE TO PARK IMPLEMENTATION

Where is your community on the map when it comes to providing quality park and recreational facilities? Not on the map at all? Feeling lost? Or maybe you’ve hit a few checkmarks, but your plans could use an update.



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Whether you have a solid portfolio of park master plans in place, collection of ideas — or nothing whatsoever, it’s not too late to reorient and put yourself back on course toward providing park and recreational amenities your community can be proud of.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans

This is the all-inclusive document for community park and recreation planning. Different states may call it by different names: CORP, park systems plan, or park and open space plan, to name a few. Whatever the nomenclature, this type of plan is the most exhaustive means to review existing conditions, identify needs and deficiencies, develop goals, make recommendations, and develop a long-range guidebook to reach those goals.

Park Master Plans

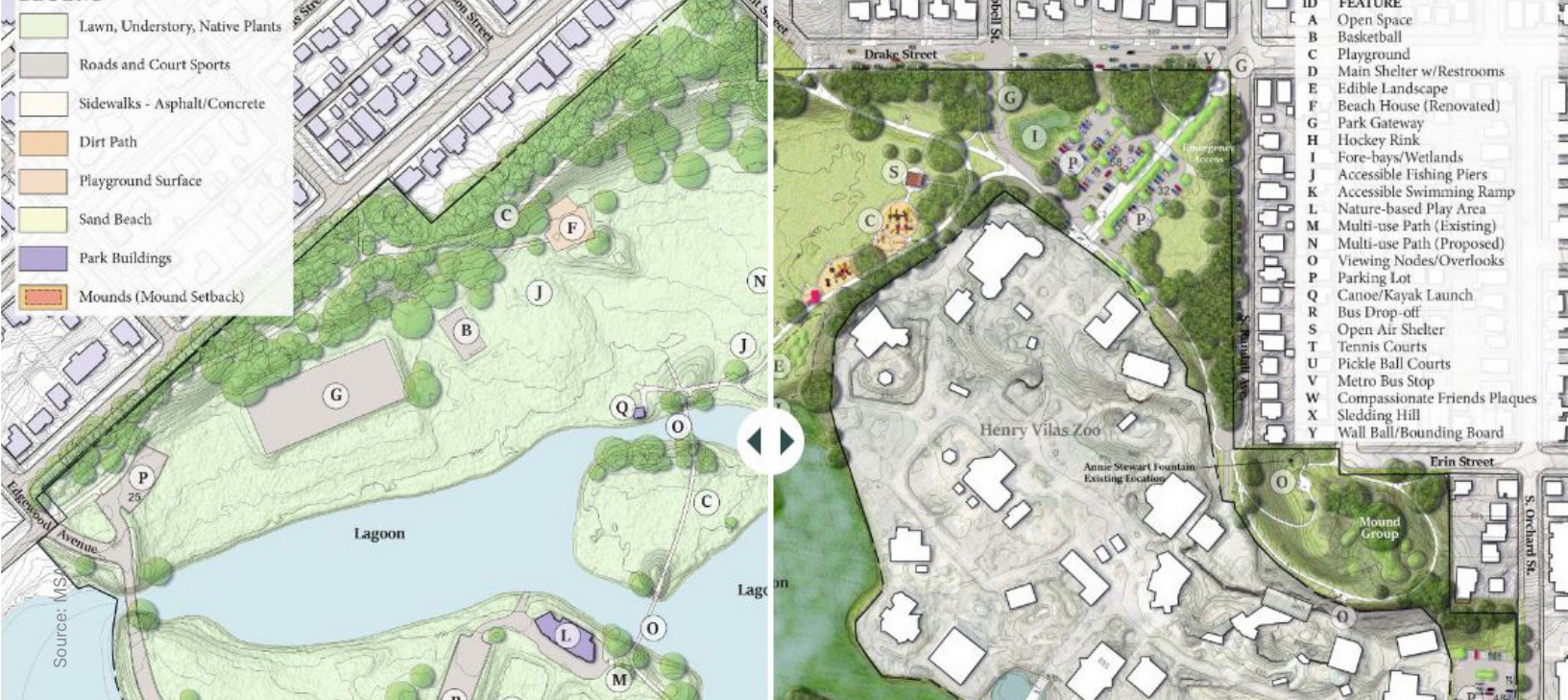
Developing master plans for singular parks or for an entire parks system is similar in methodology to that of the CORP. The difference lies in the amount of design detail and conceptual rendering work. For park master plans, a professional planner might work in tandem with landscape architects to develop concept plans based off citizen and municipality input.



Source: MSA



Source: MSA



Community Engagement

Community engagement is key to developing all types of park and open space plans and can help generate excitement, make a meaningful impact, and elicit public buy-in and support.

There are many excellent means to solicit input from community members and planning professionals must offer a diverse variety of options, created to reach people with a wide spectrum of accessibility, availability, and time.

Community Input Surveys. Surveys are a simple baseline for public engagement. These can be made available online, distributed via mail, or a combination thereof. Surveys collect a wealth of vital information about how people are currently using the parks.

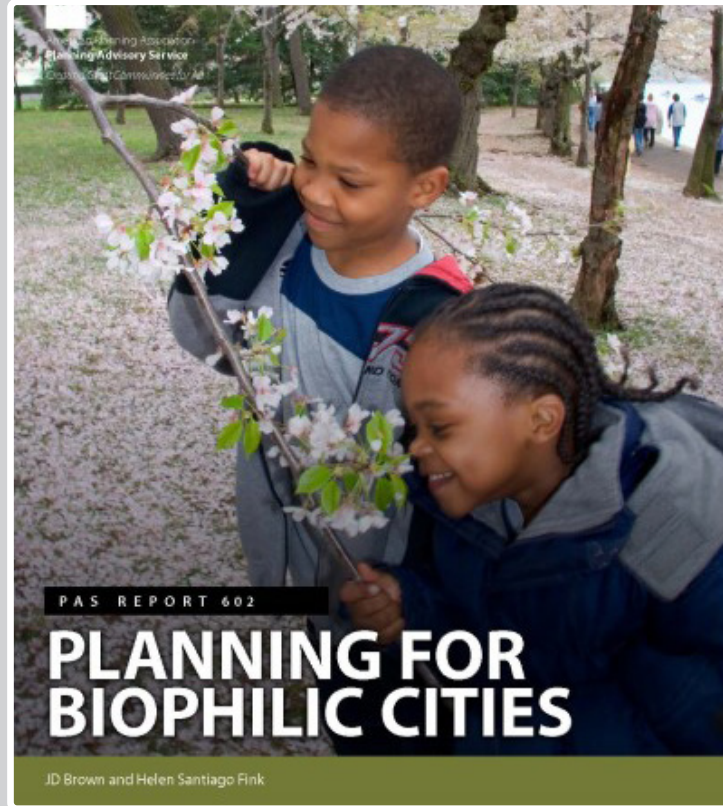
Crowdsourcing Mapping. A slightly newer tool in the public engagement toolbox, crowdsourcing mapping is a fun and interactive way for citizen to pair their opinions and ideas with actual geographic locations on a map. Utilizing ArcGIS

Online — a real-time GIS mapping platform — participants can simply click on a location and add a comment/upload a photo to add their feedback.

Pop-up Events. These events are the perfect means to meet citizens where they are. Tied to existing community events or celebrations, these tents or booths are great for gathering feedback from those who may not otherwise attend a public meeting. Providing activities for all ages, particularly kids, will also collect input from some of the most frequent users of parks. The more input, the better the result!

On the Map

Planning, designing and implementing parks should be fun! With the right tools, documents, and support — it can be. There is no better time than the present to get started. Place your community on the map as a destination for quality recreation and for positively impacting generations to come.



Source: American Planning Association

Planning for Biophilic Cities

JD Brown

Director, Biophilic Cities

Helen Santiago Fink

Climate Urbanist

Published: Oct. 1, 2022

Page Count: 115

[Click Here to Download →](#)

A biophilic city connects the science of biophilia — humans' innate love of nature — and the practice of planning. Biophilic approaches to planning and design create built environments that support daily contact with nature as an essential human need. The benefits of planning for nature are myriad — from better physical and mental health to community resilience and economic prosperity.

PAS Report 602, Planning for Biophilic Cities, explores how biophilic planning and design supports human well-being, ecological health, and sustainable, vibrant cities. This report delves into the science of biophilia, summarizing the research on the benefits of nature for individuals and societies. It provides strategies and tools that demonstrate how nature can be integrated into plan-making and the regulation of urban

environments. It emphasizes the importance of valuing nature-based solutions and investing in biophilic projects for their multiple benefits. And it emphasizes the importance of addressing historical inequities in our communities and co-creating inclusive nature spaces that meet proximity, accessibility, and comfort needs for all residents.

Biophilic planning provides opportunities to meet multiple community goals with an integrated approach — one that is often more cost effective for the long term. This report will help planners create biophilic cities that provide for human flourishing, ecosystem diversity, and economic sustainability that are also efficient, equitable, and responsive to the complex priorities of growing populations.

PLANNING ON TAP

2023 SESSION SERIES

January 19: Zoning Reform

February 16: Sustainability & Green Cities

March 23*: Active Transportation

April 20: Urban Farming

May 18: DEI Session 1

June 15: EVs in Iowa

July 20: Exploring the 2020 Census

August 17: GHG Inventories

September 21: DEI Session 2

October 19: Economic Development Strategies

November 16: DEI Session 3

December 21: Revitalizing a Neighborhood's Housing

**Free Virtual Event
Every Third Thursday
3:00 - 4:00 PM**

Sneak Peak:

January 18, 2024: Parking Reform

** Due to Spring Break the March session is the fourth Thursday of the month.*



American Planning Association
Iowa Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

Next Planning on Tap Webinar: "Zoning Reform" on January 19, 2023

Join us on Thursday, January 9th from 3-4PM for the first Planning on Tap of 2023. The recently-completed Zoning Reform Toolkit: 15 Tools to Expand Housing Choice + Supply from the Michigan Chapter of the American Planning Association provides local governments with important talking points and data to frame a community housing discussion alongside potential regulatory fixes. During this session,

attendees will learn how to integrate meaningful housing goals and actions into a master plan, which zoning and regulatory changes are most appropriate for their community, and understand how to communicate the value of expanding housing choice supply. View the full list of 2023 webinars above!

[Click Here to Register →](#)

FEATURED JOBS

Community Development Specialist II

Employer: Southwest Iowa Planning Council

Location: Atlantic, IA

More Information →

Development Services Director

Employer: City of Des Moines, Iowa

Location: Des Moines, IA

More Information →

Planner II or III

Employer: City of Cedar Rapids

Location: Cedar Rapids, IA

More Information →

Community Planner

Employer: Bolton & Menk, Inc.

Location: Burnsville or Minneapolis, MN

More Information →

Sustainability Planner

Employer: Minnesota Department of Transportation

Location: St. Paul, MN

More Information →

Planner Intern

Employer: Minnesota Department of Transportation

Location: St. Paul, MN

More Information →

IOWA PLANNER PROFILE

BEN CURTIS



What's your professional background?

I am currently the Director of Marketing and Communications for Impact7G, Inc. Impact7G is a private, full-service environmental consulting firm based out of Johnston, Iowa serving clients nationwide. Prior to joining Impact7G in July 2021, I was the Outreach Coordinator for ISWEP, a non-profit organization providing its member municipalities and organizations with public outreach tools and technical assistance for stormwater programs. I also worked in the public sector doing various watershed and city planning projects with the City of Kalona.

What sparked your interest in the planning?

While the profession was unknown to me at the time, I would say it began during my undergraduate coursework in anthropology and environmental policy at Drake University. I was fascinated by the intersection of cities and nature, specifically how large federal policies like the Clean Water Act play out at the local level. This fascination took me to the University of Iowa's graduate program.

What advice do you have for other planners?

First, find a mentor. I was fortunate to get hired by a city administrator that taught me more about local government in 1 year than several 3 credit courses ever could. Find a mentor that teaches you, pushes you out of your comfort zone, and gives you flexibility to fail.

Why did you join the APA Iowa chapter?

After heavy involvement with APA Iowa during grad school, I fell off the radar a bit as my career launched. Blame it on being too busy. Now, having settled into my current position, I have rekindled energy to pursue volunteer opportunities. And the APA Iowa Communications Board Chair position was a no brainer! Not to mention the chapter-only membership is affordable and provides me with a huge network of planning people.

What television show are you binge-watching right now?

We are at the peak of television right now, and nothing illustrates that point better than *Severance*. The plot is fairly straight forward. Man gets new technology that completely "severs" his brain between work life and home life. Adam Scott from every planner's favorite sitcom *Parks and Recreation* stars in my favorite new slow-burn thriller series.

Ben lives with his wife Danielle, son Ethan, and golden retrievers Reese and Gemma in Tiffin. Reach out and say hello at bcurtis@impact7g.com! If you think you see him in public, please know that he's an identical twin. Despite him believing it for 20+ years, his brother is not evil and goes by the name Aaron. Both typically respond to either name.

DESTINATION IOWA ADVANCES CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Launched in May 2022, the Destination Iowa program is now well enough known among planning and economic development circles as a major funding opportunity for furthering placemaking efforts. The program was established by the Governor to utilize federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for bolstering the quality of life in Iowa communities and for attracting visitors and new residents to the state. Now in its sixth funding round, administered by the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA), the program has assisted projects ranging from the installation of a whitewater park on the Maquoketa River and expansion of the popular Cedar Valley Nature Trail.

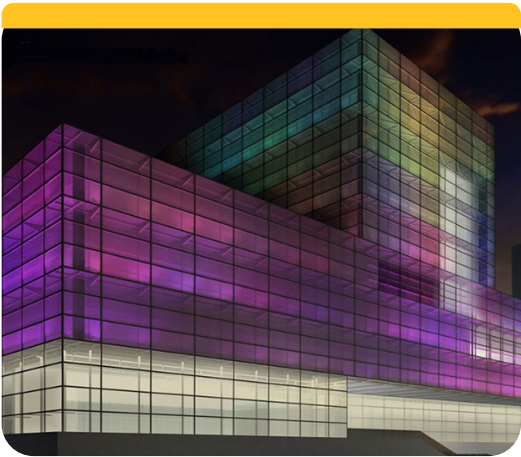
Evanescent Light Field at the Figge Art Museum

The Davenport 2030: A Resilient City comprehensive plan is a roadmap for shaping a more sustainable, active, and inclusive downtown. One of the plan’s five pillars for growth is “Celebrated,” which seeks to define downtown Davenport’s brand as an “unconventional, inclusive, and unforgettable destination.” Investments in pedestrian bridges, colorful lighting installations, passive activity zones, and a railroad “quiet zone” are a few of the major placemaking initiatives underway. Destination Iowa provided the City of Davenport with \$8 million to assist with these efforts; projects of which account for about 40 percent of the \$193 million total in public and private investment in Davenport’s riverfront area. Destination also pledged \$1.6 million for the Figge Art Museum’s evanescent light field project, furthering the City’s

Ben Curtis, Communications Director
bcurtis@impact7g.com



Source: Trail Run Project



Source: Leo Villareal



goal of becoming an unforgettable and must-see riverfront destination. Envisioned by world-renowned lighting designer Leo Villareal, the interior of the building will feature 3,000 feet of LED strips and fixtures that can product up to two million colors and illuminate the exterior façade with pre-set, constantly changing displays.

“This lighting sculpture will be integrated into David Chipperfield’s stunning architecture with the goal of activating the museum through sequences of undulating light for everyone in the Quad Cities to enjoy,” said New Your City based Villareal. The Figge Art Museum will provide the remaining \$2.4 million to fund the \$4 million façade project.

The Surf's District Big Funding Wave

Clear Lake’s Surf District was once the place to be. At the peak of its popularity, the District’s landmark – the Surf Ballroom – was Iowa’s foremost music scene. The Surf is most popular for its association with the “Day the Music Died” when rock stars Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, and J.P. Richardson gave their final performances in 1959. However, according to community leaders, interest, investment, and

activity in District has since declined for a variety of reasons.

In 2007, the City engaged in community-based planning efforts through the guidance of RDG Planning & Design. The multi-year planning process found new hope for the Surf District through creative, out-of-the-box placemaking solutions to create a fresh take on the area’s former glory.

A first major victory for the District came in 2014 when it as announced the cultural and entertainment zone surrounding the historic Surf Ballroom would be designated as an Iowa Great Place. Other recent achievements have solidified the District as a historic and artistic destination, one that is enhanced by strategic advancements to the built environment. With an additional \$4.37 million in Destination Iowa funds announced by the Governor in December, momentum continues to be in favor of preserving the Surf’s legacy. The City plans to utilize the fund to relocate and expand Clear Lake’s Music Enrichment Center, improve gateway and streetscape experiences, and create new connections from the Surf Ballroom to the lakeshore. 🏡

2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

This is not an exhaustive list of critical planning policies important to APA Iowa, but rather reflects items that may be considered during the upcoming legislative session. For more information, please contact APA Iowa Legislative Program Chair Steven Van Steenhuyse, AICP at svansteenhuyse@masoncity.net.

Economic Development	Supports legislation, policies, programs, and funding that allow communities to encourage sustainable development and remove blight.
Environmental Protection	Supports funding and programs that facilitate and encourage nutrient reduction in Iowa's water bodies and watershed-level planning that addresses urban and rural water quality, flood mitigation, and water recreation.
Smart Planning Principles	Supports comprehensive planning and the Smart Planning Principles outlined in Iowa Code, including funding incentives for communities to adopt them, and opposes any legislation to remove or weaken the practice of sound planning in Iowa's communities.
Local Control of Planning Issues	Believes local jurisdictions should have control on planning issues and opposes legislation that mandates regulations or limits local planning and zoning powers.
Recreation & Cultural Programs	Supports programs and funding or incentives that provide a higher quality of life to attract and retain residents such as historic preservation and cultural programs.
Livable Communities	Supports state policies that seek to improve quality of life by promoting development of safe, accessible, and vibrant environments.
Housing	Supports increased investment in affordable housing programs, that provide quality housing for low and moderate income families, reduce barriers to homeownership, and the modification of homes to help people age in place.
Transportation & Infrastructure	Supports investment in healthy modes of non-motorized transportation, including funding for local communities to plan for trails and bicycle routes, and efforts to promote public transit.

TOP 3 UPDATES YOU SHOULD KNOW

1
2
3

Congratulations to APA Iowa Members **Gabriel Appiah, Abbey Hebbert, Michelle Pezley** and **Matthew Werderitch** who all passed the AICP Exam during the November 2022 testing window. All four are now officially AICP Candidates until they complete the One Path to AICP process. The next testing window is in May 2023, if you're interested in becoming AICP certified, feel free to contact Iowa APA Professional Development Officer David Wilwerding at dwilwerding@cityofjohnston.com or 515-727-7775 for more information.

The application window for **AICP Diversity Scholarships** for the May testing window opens January 4th, 2023. AICP Certification Diversity scholarships help make the planning profession more diverse. Diversity is an inclusive concept which encompasses, but is not limited to race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexuality, ability, educational attainment, spiritual beliefs, creed, culture, tribal affiliation, nationality, immigration status, financial status, political beliefs, and veteran status.

IEDA's Center for Rural Revitalization is now accepting applications for the **pilot program BOOST**. The program will dispatch 3-5 experts to meet with a local committee and discuss the existing conditions, assets, and anticipated needs. The Center for Rural Revitalization and supporting partners will then create a resource action plan and provide targeted financial support to launch next steps. Applications are available on IowaGrants and due March 1. An informational webinar will be hosted on January 9 at 2pm.



The American Planning Association's
Professional Institute
**American Institute
of Certified Planners**
Creating Great Communities for All

Newsletter Submissions

We encourage all planners and professionals doing planning work to **submit some good news, cool projects, or upcoming events** to APA Iowa's quarterly newsletter. Please email Ben Curtis, Communications Board Chair, at bcurtis@impact7g.com to submit an idea!

Changed Jobs?

Don't forget to update your official account profile on the APA website so you can continue receiving Chapter and National news. Make sure to update your LinkedIn profile, too!

Copyright Law Reminders

It is good practice to always provide a reference to the source and artist of a photo or graphic you are using, as portraying an artist's work without their permission or giving them credit can prove a costly mistake. If you have questions about how to make sure your photos are in compliance, send an email to bcurtis@impact7g.com.

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Content: APA IA Communications Committee

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Start here 

[https://smile.amazon.com/
ch/46-6004932](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/46-6004932)

Interested in **getting more involved in the chapter** and willing to help with newsletters, social media, content collection, or website development? The Communications Committee would love your help! Contact Communications Chair Ben Curtis to get plugged in: bcurtis@impact7g.com.

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