

# A PLANNING PERSPECTIVE

APA-IOWA CHAPTER  
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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JULY 2019, ISSUE 3

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## CHAPTER UPDATE FROM THE APA IA PRESIDENT

SUBMITTED BY DYLAN MULLENIX, AICP  
PRESIDENT | APA IOWA CHAPTER

Happy Summer Iowa Planners!

I wanted to make you aware of several important activities that have occurred over the last several months and that are coming up.

Thank you to the nearly 70 APA Iowa members who traveled to San Francisco for the 2019 National Planning Conference. APA Iowa, Iowa State University's Community and Regional Planning Department, and the University of Iowa's School of Urban and Regional Planning once again held a successful All Iowa Reception during the conference, and several student teams and members presented their work to the national audience.

The conference also is the setting for one of the two in-person leadership meetings for chapter and division presidents, APA board members, the AICP Commission, Professional Development Officers, and others to discuss matters related to the organization. Among the topics discussed was a proposal from the AICP Commission to update mandatory certificate maintenance (CM) requirements. The current mandatory CM topics and associated credits (1.5 credits in law and 1.5 credits in ethics) have not changed since the program began 10 years ago. The AICP Commission has reviewed the program and has recommended changes. These changes would include adding an additional mandatory topic on equity; adding a mandatory topic that will change every four years, with climate being the first topic; and reducing the number of credits required on all mandatory topics from 1.5 to 1 hour.

The APA Iowa board discussed this proposal at its May meeting to formulate a response to the AICP Commission. The APA Iowa board noted that it supports both the reduction in credits for mandatory topics from 1.5 hours to 1 hour and the addition of equity and climate as mandatory topics. However, the board expressed concerns in confusion that may be caused with a rotating topic area and also asked for flexibility in the qualification of speakers and sessions that may cover these new mandatory topics as to not make their provision cost-prohibitive to smaller chapters, like Iowa's. If approved, the changes would be effective as of January 1, 2021, to allow members and CM providers time to implement these changes. Additional information on this can be viewed at <https://www.planning.org/cm/updates/>.

While these CM changes are still being considered, other changes to the provision of CM credits have already been made that should be a welcome change. The minimum length for CM-eligible sessions, aside from the mandatory topics, have been reduced from 30 mins to 15 mins. Additionally, changes have made it easier for CM providers like APA Iowa to partner with other organizations to host CM-eligible events. An example of this benefit is that APA Iowa can now work with ULI Iowa to have their regularly occurring events be CM-eligible.



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# UNIVERSITY OF IOWA URBAN PLANNING ONLINE COURSES FOR FALL 2019

SUBMITTED BY CHARLES CONNERLY, PH.D.

PROFESSOR AND DIRECTOR, SCHOOL OF URBAN & REGIONAL PLANNING, UNIVERSITY OF IOWA  
CHARLES-CONNERLY@UIOWA.EDU

University of Iowa School of Urban & Regional Planning is excited to announce two online courses available this fall--Jim Schwab's Disaster Recovery & Mitigation course and Dave Swenson's Economic Impact Assessment course. Both are hands on courses taught by practitioners and a great opportunity for planning practitioners interested in continuing education opportunities.

To learn more about the Planning for Disaster Mitigation and Recovery course visit:  
<https://distance.uiowa.edu/highlighted-urban-planning-course-fall-2019>

To learn more about the Economic Impact Assessment course visit: <https://distance.uiowa.edu/economic-impact-assessment-course-fall-2019>

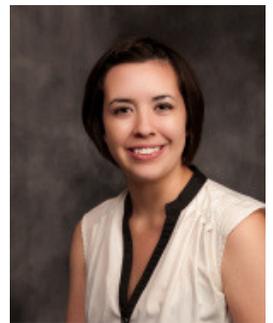
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## NEW APA-IA CHAPTER BOARD MEMBER

SUBMITTED BY DYLAN MULLENIX, AICP

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, DES MOINES MPO, DMULLENIX@DMAMPO.ORG

At it May meeting, the APA-Iowa Chapter board approved the appointment of Alexis Fleener, AICP, to the position of At-Large representative. Alexis is the Community Development Team Leader at the Southwest Iowa Planning Council in Atlantic. She is replacing Amber Lynch, AICP, with the City of Des Moines, who stepped down after serving eight years on the board. We thank Amber for her many years of service to the APA-Iowa Chapter, and welcome Alexis to the board!



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## NATIONAL MIDDLE NEIGHBORHOODS STEERING COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED BY AMBER LYNCH, AICP

SENIOR CITY PLANNER, CITY OF DES MOINES, AMLYNCH@DMGOV.ORG

Because of the work we're doing in Des Moines to redesign our Neighborhood Revitalization Program, in early 2019 I joined a national Steering Committee working to build advocacy for Middle Neighborhoods. Middle neighborhoods are neither healthy or thriving, nor are they the distressed areas marked by high crime, vacant properties, and concentrated poverty. Because of this, they are often overlooked by policy-makers, federal funding programs, and philanthropists. Yet as cities age and populations shift, middle neighborhoods are crucial to managing change, offering communities an opportunity to intervene before the forces of decline or gentrification take root.

The Middle Neighborhoods movement believes that an ounce of prevention is far less expensive than the pound of remediation necessary once a neighborhood has declined. In many communities, most residents live in middle neighborhoods. In weak-market locations, the homeowners in these neighborhoods - many of whom are people of color - are losing their hard-earned home equity. The loss of property value reduces property tax collections, limiting local governments ability to provide quality services. In strong-market places, existing property owners often can't afford necessary improvements and may have no choice but to sell to investors and leave the area.

Resources for neighborhood work often focus on producing affordable housing and serving low and moderate-income households. While this work is important and should continue, we're missing the tools we need to prevent more neighborhoods from becoming distressed in the first place. The Middle Neighborhoods Steering Committee is shaping a long-term effort aimed at bringing attention and support to America's middle neighborhoods. This includes research and analysis, a national policy campaign, and a growing peer-learning network. In the meantime, planners have an important role to play locally in identifying their middle neighborhoods, analyzing which ones are vulnerable, and advocating for strategies that ensure they become more stable and healthy, while remaining diverse.

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# AICP EXAM SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

SUBMITTED BY DAVID WILWERDING, AICP

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, CITY OF JOHNSTON, DWILWERDING@CITYOFJOHNSTON.COM

Are you interested in taking the AICP Exam but are prevented from doing so because of a financial hardship? If so, APA Iowa offers an AICP Exam Scholarship to qualifying members. The scholarship would reduce the exam fee from \$425 to \$75 dollars. In addition, the applicant would need to also pay the \$70 application fee.

If you're interested in applying for this scholarship, please provide a written explanation of financial hardship (including financial hardship caused by a budget cutback in a firm or agency), which necessitates the request. Please note the applicant selected would otherwise be unlikely to take the exam without the reduced fee and the applicant's employer will not subsidize the exam fee.

Scholarship applications should be submitted to David Wilwerding, APA Iowa Professional Development Officer by email at [dwilwerding@cityofjohnston.com](mailto:dwilwerding@cityofjohnston.com). Applications should be submitted no later than August 15, 2019 to qualify for the November 2019 testing window.

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## RDG PLANNING & DESIGN 2018 DESIGN RESIDENCY

SUBMITTED BY CHARLIE COWELL, AICP

RDG PLANNING & DESIGN, [CCOWELL@RDGUSA.COM](mailto:CCOWELL@RDGUSA.COM)

For 8 years now, RDG Planning and Design has hosted the Design Residency, a 3-day charette style learning event which gathers the nation's top graduate students from many fields to address complex community problems. The Design Residency was born out of the desire to connect the community to design practitioners by offering an integrated, collaborative opportunity to graduate students in multiple disciplines. The 2018 panel was comprised of ten graduate students from across the country and thirteen nationally known experts including a FEMA advisor/program director, city engineers and city managers, sustainable and economic policy makers, and a co-winner of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize.



The 2018 Residency focused on resilience, a topic that has risen to the top of importance for leaders on a national scale. The multidisciplinary think tank developed the Design Atlas for Climate Resilience. They realized that effective climate resilience relies as much on good communication and information solutions as it does on physical design. The student residents chose to focus on youth knowing the lasting impact they could have, resulting in a game: SHOCK! The climate change board game prototype was developed to make learning about resiliency both educational and fun. The residents developed interactive learning-through-play prototypes that could be incorporated into school curricula or used in other learning environments both for children and adults. This idea of games to teach resilience is catching on. The County of Marin, CA released a boxed version of its Game of Floods in early 2019, which teaches players about adaptation options to combat sea level rise. More information can be found at: <https://www.marincounty.org/depts/cd/divisions/planning/csmart-sea-level-rise/game-of-floods>.

Climate change is inevitable and is showing its force across the world through more frequent, costly, and deadly natural disasters. Including underrepresented populations such as our youth is important to understanding how resilience can benefit the entire community now and into the future. A video summarizing the 2018 design residency can be found at <https://rdgusa.com/designresidency/>.

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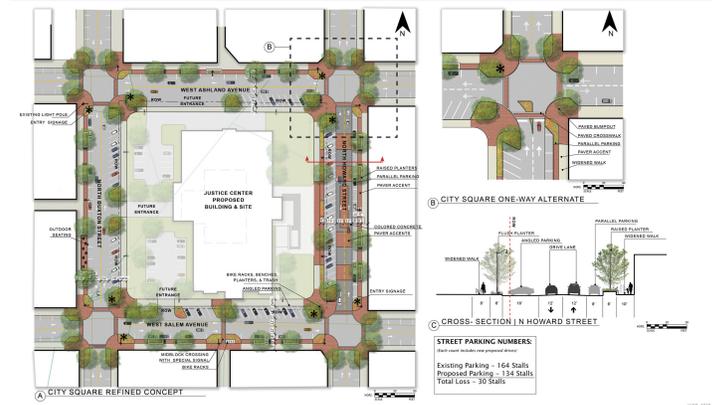
# CHANGES COMING TO INDIANOLA'S DOWNTOWN SQUARE

SUBMITTED BY CHARLIE E. DISSELL, AICP,  
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
DIRECTOR, CITY OF INDIANOLA  
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AND ROSE E. BROWN, AICP, SENIOR  
URBAN PLANNER, BOLTON & MENK, INC.  
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In August of 2018, Warren County voters approved a nearly \$30 Million bond referendum to construct a new justice center for Warren County in the heart of Indianola's Downtown Square. Knowing that changes were coming, in September of 2018, the City of Indianola partnered with the Indianola Chamber of Commerce and Warren County Economic Development Council to have the Iowa Economic Development Authority conduct a Downtown Assessment on Indianola's Downtown Square. The results of the Downtown Assessment visit recommended the City of Indianola focus on six key areas, one of which was to look at the Downtown Square infrastructure and identify improvements that could be made to the streetscape during the construction of the Warren County Justice Center. To assist with this recommendation, the City consulted with Bolton & Menk, Inc. in February of this year to redesign the streetscape of Indianola's Downtown Square. Later this month, the Indianola City Council will receive a presentation on the final recommendations of the Indianola Downtown Square streetscape redesign.

## CITY SQUARE REFINED CONCEPT



The process was led by the leadership of City staff and a local steering committee made up of business owners in the Downtown Square, residents, and other interested parties. A series of meetings were held with the steering committee that led to the presentation of a refined concept that was made available for comment at a public open house in May. The process started with the steering committee identifying issues and opportunities for the Indianola Downtown Square. Topics discussed at the first meeting included: historic elements, current challenges, functionality, and pedestrian circulation. The initial priorities and ideas were used to create three preliminary concepts. The second steering committee meeting was used to discuss each of the concepts and receive direction for further refinement. Each concept portrayed different opportunities for the Downtown Square. The options considered: one-way vs. two-way traffic patterns, bump-outs at the intersections, bike lanes, outdoor seating, parking stall typologies, and pedestrian crosswalks. The refined concept includes: bump-outs, widened sidewalks, a combination of parking types, and hardscape enhancements.

# IOWA INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

SUBMITTED BY TRAVIS KRAUS  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT, UNIVERSITY OF IOWA, TRAVIS-KRAUS@UIOWA.EDU

While working as a regional planner in southeast Iowa, then later as an economic development and chamber director, and now through my role connecting the University of Iowa with communities across the state, I have never once thought I'd get caught up on my to-do list. In community planning and economic development, the problem is rarely a lack of great ideas, but rather too little time and too few resources. Despite my personal tendency to try and do everything myself, I've learned that working with others to accomplish shared goals is much more productive. This is also true for communities- successful communities understand the value of strong partnerships.

The University of Iowa also grows when we collaborate and co-create, which is why "engagement" is one of the main points of the UI strategic plan. The UI Office of Outreach and Engagement supports that effort through mutually-beneficial partnerships that both enrich learning opportunities for our students and build up Iowa communities. We facilitate a campus-wide effort to enhance the capacity of rural and urban communities in Iowa to address the environmental, equity, economic, and cultural issues facing us today and to help plan for a sustainable future.

One way that we work with communities is through the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities (IISC) partnership. Imagine 100+ creative, passionate, and dedicated students and faculty working to make a difference in your community. That's exactly what we've been doing in cities across Iowa through the IISC, which is now marking its 10th anniversary. Btw... we're currently seeking Letters of Interest for the IISC partnership (visit <https://outreach.uiowa.edu> for details). Building sustainable communities requires a collaborative spirit and desire to partner with a diverse array of organizations and institutions. Consider the University of Iowa and IISC as you think about your community's to-do list.

# 2019 IOWA APA CHAPTER ANNUAL CONFERENCE OCT. 9-11, IOWA CITY

SUBMITTED BY APA CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

The APA Iowa Conference Planning Committee has been working diligently to bring you to the Iowa APA Chapter Conference, set for October 9-11 at The Graduate Hotel in Iowa City. Hotel information is currently available on the chapter website at <http://www.iowa-apa.org/resources/apa-iowa-chapter-annual-conference.html>, and conference registration will begin August 1st.



The theme for the 2019 conference is “Multiplicity: Planning for Communities in a State of Change.” The host site of Iowa City will allow conference attendees to witness first-hand a community in a state of change. A center of art, culture, and education, Iowa City is home to the University of Iowa, world class healthcare facilities, and a rich literary tradition that has attracted national and international attention and designation as a UNESCO City of Literature.

Iowa City’s vibrant and bustling downtown features many locally-owned restaurants and shops, public art, and a uniquely successful pedestrian mall. A balance of historic preservation and innovative urban redevelopment contributes to the vitality of the community. Both efforts represent a successful response to two natural disasters—the tornado of 2006 and the flood of 2008—and are part of a strategic plan to build a more sustainable community that is transit-oriented, walkable, and bike-friendly.

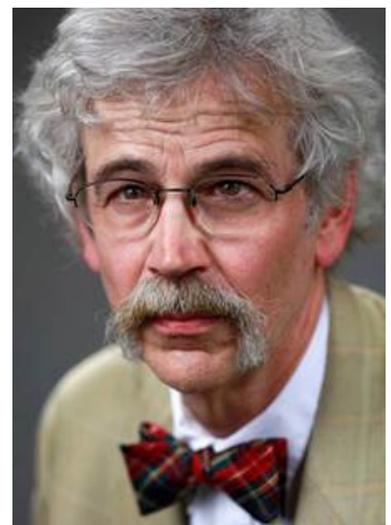
It’s an exciting time in Iowa City in terms of planning! Between January 2018 and today, the City issued 222 building permits. The total value of these projects exceeds \$203 million and includes 625 multi-family dwelling units, 174 single-family dwelling units, and around 1.3 million square feet of non-residential space.

Since the adoption of the Riverfront Crossings form-based code in 2014, the City has approved 14 projects in the district totaling 1,045 dwelling units, two hotels, and several new commercial and retail spaces. Riverfront Crossings is also home to a new public park, which is located along the Iowa River and Ralston Creek. The park is the outcome of the community-agreed upon vision for this area and is included as part of a mobile tour. It includes an amphitheater, a zipline, and direct access to Ralston Creek, which allows children to play and explore in the water.

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## KEYNOTE SPEAKER: ART CULLEN

Art Cullen is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, editor of The Storm Lake Times (a family-run weekly newspaper), and author of Storm Lake: A Chronicle of Change, Resilience, and Hope from a Heartland Newspaper. Cullen has made it his life’s work to ask the big questions, speak truth to power, and share the struggles and successes of his unique community of Storm Lake, Iowa (Census pop. 10,076). His new book is part cultural history, part memoir – it explores the themes of family, community, immigration and diversity, the meaning of home, and the Heartland’s turbulent history and promising progressive future. Drawing from the stories of one special small town on the “broken prairie,” and his family’s perspectives from their small-town newspaper business, Cullen hopes to inspire a broader sense of dialogue, renewal, and understanding of rural places. In politically divisive times, when Americans from Red States and Blue States often feel estranged from each other, Cullen’s book attempts to show an optimistic way forward.



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# IOWA PLANNER SPOTLIGHT: TONY FILIPPINI, AICP

Senior Transit Planner, DART (Des Moines Area  
Regional Transit Authority)  
APA-Iowa Chapter Board Member, Secretary  
tonyfil@gmail.com

## **Degree & School**

BS in Community and Regional Planning from Iowa  
State University.

## **Why did you decide to become a planner?**

I had an early interest in cities probably in large part to playing SimCity way too much. In high school, I distinctly remember watching a TV ad for UIC and the announcer listed programs available including "city planning". That was the first I heard that planning was a real job and had lead me to find the planning program at Iowa State.

## **What are your areas of expertise?**

Most of my career has been in regional transportation planning along with a few years focused on transit operations and system planning.

## **What aspects of planning do you enjoy the most?**

Cities present so much complexity that our profession demands constant exploration in topics from land use, design, transportation, environment, social issues, economics, etc. A satisfying job for me is when I have to learn something new and apply it to my work.

## **Describe a recent project you've contributed to that you are proud of. Why is it important? Highlight methods that made the project a success.**

Over the past few years I have been involved with a local community group focused on making Ames a healthy community through a variety of strategies, including the promotion of physical activity. Their work has resulted in a multitude of contributions including the adoption of a Complete Streets Policy and design guide, hosting open-streets events, and free helmet and fitting programs in local elementary schools. I appreciate being part of a community-driven organization which has provided me a great way to contribute and learn from a group of community members with a diverse set of expertise in areas planners are not traditionally involved with, such as physicians and educators.

## **What is one planning challenge you foresee for Iowa or your community over the next 10 years? What preparation do you recommend to meet this challenge?**

The recent discussions of providing health services in the State highlight the difficulties Iowans face in accessing healthcare. This is especially true for the aging and rural populations in Iowa, which are growing more isolated. While new technology will give us tools for telemedicine and possibly cheaper mobility options, a focus on re-building and maintaining rural communities can provide healthcare advantages as well. Planners have a unique skillset to prepare our communities by bringing together local partners and State agencies to identify gaps and opportunities in accessing healthcare, either locally or to major medical centers. This also means forging new partnerships with practitioners beyond our immediate metro area or rural affiliations for a truly regional approach which preserves the quality of life for both metro areas and rural communities.

## **Do you have a favorite book about planning?**

The book "Trains, Buses, People: an Opinionated Atlas of US Transit" by Christof Spieler is usually near me in my living room. It's a great mix of transit principles, urban design, analysis, and maps (lots of maps!). It's a great primer for any planner on the basics of transit service and a must for any self-described NUMTOT.

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# DON'T MISS OUT CHECK OUT THESE OPPORTUNITIES...

## JOB POSTINGS

### Project Manager

Job Type: Full Time  
Location: Waterloo, IA  
Employer: Iowa Northland Regional  
Council of Governments

### Community Development Specialist

Job Type: Full Time  
Location: Waterloo, IA  
Employer: Iowa Northland Regional  
Council of Governments

### Planner II

Job Type: Full Time  
Location: Cedar Falls, IA  
Employer: City of Cedar Falls

### Senior Transportation Planner

Job Type: Full Time  
Location: Roseville, MN  
Employer: City of Roseville

### MPO Program Manager

Job Type: Full Time  
Location: Grand Rapids, MN  
Employer: City of Grand Rapids

### More openings from the region available on the APA-Iowa Chapter Website

## GET INVOLVED IN APA-IOWA CHAPTER

Are you interested in getting more involved with APA-Iowa Chapter? We are always on the lookout for members to serve on the chapter board, a standing committee, or assist with temporary, short-term projects. If you are interested, please fill out this short form to understand what your interest areas are and to what degree you want to become involved. We anticipate subcommittees will be forming around the various program areas in the strategic plan. Feel free to contact Dylan Mullenix, APA-Iowa Chapter Chapter President, if you have any questions.

## U OF I REACCREDITATION MEETING

SUBMITTED BY CHARLES CONNERLY, PH.D.  
PROFESSOR AND DIRECTOR, SCHOOL OF URBAN & REGIONAL  
PLANNING, UNIVERSITY OF IOWA CHARLES-CONNERLY@UIOWA.EDU

The University of Iowa School of Urban and Regional Planning is undergoing a reaccreditation process for the first time since 2012. The Planning Accreditation Board and the UI School of Urban and Regional Planning invite Iowa APA Chapter members to attend a meeting with the three member site visit team on Monday, September 23 from 3:30 to 5:00 pm. The meeting will take place in Room B-5 (in the basement) of Jessup Hall. The meeting is open to alumni, employers, and APA chapter members and will feature an opportunity to speak to the degree to which the School of Urban and Regional Planning succeeds in preparing professional planners.

The meeting will be teleconferenced. If you wish to attend, please contact Gina Davis at [gina-davis@uiowa.edu](mailto:gina-davis@uiowa.edu) and let her know if you will be at the meeting in person or via Zoom teleconferencing. If you wish a copy of the Self Study, please contact Chuck Connerly, School Director, at [charles-connerly@uiowa.edu](mailto:charles-connerly@uiowa.edu)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

July 11 - Central Iowa APA Meetup at Saylorville Lake Marina, Polk City

July 11 - Nebraska APA Meetup at Nebraska Brewing Company, all planners welcome to attend, La Vista

July 11-20 - Iowa State Students Showcase Pilot Urban Design Projects to Improve Recovery from Future Hurricanes in Puerto Rico, Ames

July 19- APA Iowa Chapter Board Meeting, Des Moines

July 25 - Form Based Zoning: How to Apply Des Moines' New Proposed Code. Co-hosted by ULI & APA Iowa, Des Moines

August 1- Iowa State University workshop on "Developing a Convergence SUS (Sustainable Urban Systems) Agenda for Redesigning the Urban-Rural Interface along the Mississippi River Watershed (Register by July 22), Ames



Oct. 9-11 - 2019 APA-Iowa Chapter Planning Conference, Iowa City

Follow us on Facebook to stay up to date on events and happenings.

Submit your community updates for October's newsletter by Friday, October 4th.

Fill out the form to be featured in our Planner Spotlight.