

A PLANNING PERSPECTIVE

APA-IOWA CHAPTER
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2020, ISSUE 1

CHAPTER UPDATE FROM THE APA IA PRESIDENT

SUBMITTED BY DYLAN MULLENIX, AICP
PRESIDENT, APA IOWA CHAPTER

Happy New Year Iowa Planners! Below are a few updates about the chapter's recent activities and items of interest.

In January of each year the APA Iowa Chapter must document its compliance with Chapter Performance Criteria set forth by APA. These criteria ensure that local chapters provide quality level of service to its members and communities. Among the mandatory elements required are current bylaws, organizational budget and financial procedures, strategic planning documents, and an annual report.

Over the last few months the chapter has worked to ensure it is compliant with these requirements. At its November meeting the APA Iowa board approved the 2020 budget and also held a strategic planning session, facilitated by Terry Berkbuegler with Confluence, to help refine the 2020 work plan. This work plan and the chapter's annual report will be voted on at the January 17th board meeting.

January also brings with it the start of the state legislative session. APA Iowa's Legislative and Policy Chair, Steven Van Steenhuyse of Mason City, leads the chapters legislative efforts. In December Steven attended a State Legislative Summit, organized by APA, in Richmond, VA. The summit brought legislative liaisons from 28 chapters to learn from each other about best practices in legislative advocacy and to learn more about legislative issues anticipated in 2020. The APA Iowa board will vote on the 2020 state legislative agenda at the January 17th board meeting.

APA Iowa will also participate in Design Day on the Hill on February 24th along with organizations such as the American Institute of Architects and the American Society of Landscape Architects. APA Iowa members are encouraged to attend. Additional information about the event will be provided in the coming weeks.

Finally, registration is open for the 2020 National Planning Conference to be held April 25-28th in Houston, TX. At the conference APA Iowa will once again join the planning programs at Iowa State University and the University of Iowa to host the All Iowa Reception. Additional details about the reception will be announced at a date closer to the conference.



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DUBUQUE IS A 2019 ALL-AMERICAN CITY

SUBMITTED BY LAURA CARSTENS, PLANNING SERVICES MANAGER, CITY OF DUBUQUE
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In June 2019, the National Civic League named Dubuque a 2019 All-America City! The award recognizes communities that leverage civic engagement, collaboration, inclusiveness, and innovation to successfully address local issues. This is the fifth time Dubuque has received this distinction since 2007. "This award recognizes communities that come together to improve their future," said Dubuque Mayor Roy D. Buol. "Being named an All-America City five times in just 12 years affirms that we are making progress and is a tribute to the work of so many people and groups. It also tells the world that Dubuque is a vibrant community that works together to address challenges."



The National Civic League said the 2019 All-America City Award celebrates examples of civic engagement practices that advance health equity in local communities. The competition sought projects that demonstrated inclusive decision-making processes to create healthy communities for all, and particularly for populations currently experiencing poorer health outcomes. As part of the competition for the award, a delegation of Dubuque residents traveled to Denver to participate in presentations and workshops at the 70th All-America City Awards & Conference, June 21-24. The Dubuque team included representatives from the City of Dubuque, Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, Crescent Community Health Center, Dubuque Community Schools, the Dubuque Dream Center, Dubuque Main Street/Dubuque Eats Well, the Fountain of Youth, Inclusive Dubuque, and the Multicultural Family Center.



"It has been a wonderful experience to be part of sharing Dubuque's story at the All-America City competition," said North End Neighborhood resident Audrey Morey. "Perhaps other cities can benefit from our success story, as we might benefit from theirs. Feeling blessed to be a Dubuquer!"

Dubuque's application focused on the civic infrastructure built on the Inclusive Dubuque network of over 60 partners working to advance justice and social equity, and Imagine Dubuque 2017: A Call to Action, the comprehensive planning process that collected input from 6,000 residents to identify a roadmap for Dubuque's future. The application and presentation also featured three projects demonstrating how partners are impacting health outcomes for all residents. "Health Care for All" highlights the progress Crescent Community Health Center has made, the impact of the Pacific Islander Health Project, and the recent work of the Brain Health Task Force. The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project was the second project highlighted and the collaborative work happening by the Dubuque Eats Well coalition to increase access to healthy local foods is the third.



Dubuque is one of 10 communities to be designated a 2019 All-America City: Battle Creek, Michigan; Cornelius, Oregon; Dubuque, Iowa; Gothenburg, Nebraska; Lancaster, Texas; Mission, Texas; Rancho Cordova, California; Rock Hill, South Carolina; West Hollywood, California; Wichita, Kansas. Applications for the 2020 round are due by February 19, 2020. For more information on the National Civic League and the All-America City Award, visit www.nationalcivicleague.org/america-city-award/



2020 IOWA SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL CONFERENCE

JARED MORFORD, SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS PROGRAM MANAGER, IOWA BICYCLE COALITION
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The Iowa Safe Routes to School conference will focus on successful Safe Routes to Schools programs.

Speakers include:

- Sierra Saunders - Discussing Alta Planning SRTS Best Practices
- Iowa Economic Development Authority - Discussing creating a volunteer base
- Healthy Hometown - Panel Discussion
- Pam Lee, IDOT - Discussing TAP Grant Funding

The conference will be held at the Des Moines area MPO offices January 23, 2020 from 10:00-3:00. Cost to attend is free but registration is required. Lunch will be available for purchase during registration (\$12), or maps will be provided for lunch on your own.



IOWA GREAT PLACES DESIGNATION APPLICATION NOW OPEN

If you live in a unique community with a strong vision for innovation, and enhancing vitality and quality of life, while staying true to what makes your community unique, the Iowa Great Places Program can recognize your efforts and help bring those visions to reality. The program provides designation and supports the development of new and existing infrastructure intended to cultivate the unique and authentic qualities of neighborhoods, communities and regions in Iowa.



If you are interested in a mentorship with a currently designated Iowa Great Place to prepare for designation, please contact veronica.ohern@iowa.gov

Who: Nonprofits, Communities

What: Designation, professional development and fall 2020 funding eligibility with an average award of \$205,000 with a required 1:1 match

When: Deadline to apply for designation is May 1, 2020

COMMUNITY CATALYST GRANT PROGRAM

Through the Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program, the Iowa Economic Development Authority provides grants to communities for the redevelopment, rehabilitation, or deconstruction of buildings to stimulate economic growth or reinvestment in the community. Strong applications will show the potential of catalytic economic growth in the community; improve appearances & safety; make use of underutilized property, exhibit appropriate design standards; and be well-funded. Economic growth may include the creation of additional jobs, growth of new or existing businesses, development of new housing units, increase property values, or potential population growth. Deadline for pre-application is January 31, 2020. Contact jim.thompson@iowaeda.com for more information.

2020 APA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

This year's APA National Conference is April 25-28 in Houston, Texas! General registration opens today, January 9, 2020. The conference includes 250+ learning opportunities, daily networking, and many interactive sessions. Sign up early to add high demand activities like mobile workshops and orientation tours to your conference experience before they sell out. Stay tuned for the APA Iowa Chapter reception taking place during the conference!



DART LAUNCHES FLEX CONNECT PILOT WITH UBER AND YELLOW CAB CO.

SUBMITTED BY TONY FILIPPINI, AICP, SENIOR TRANSIT PLANNER, DART
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Start your transit journey with one tap on your phone. Within seconds, Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) partners will be dispatched to pick up you up at your home and bring you directly to a nearby DART fixed route bus stop. In October, DART launched its first mobility-on-demand pilot with partners Uber and YellowCabCo. Branded as Flex Connect, this one-year pilot is designed to learn how technology may bring new efficiencies in serving suburban communities. The Flex Connect service is a first/last mile solution, connecting a 2.5 square mile area in Urbandale and NW Des Moines to nearby transit stops in areas where traditional fixed-route service has been less productive yet still has passenger demand.

Through the partnerships, DART staff use a variety of Uber platforms to schedule and monitor app-based customer trips and analytics. Trips are booked in real-time through the existing Uber app on their phone. Customers can also choose to schedule their ride by phone if they not have access to a smartphone, choose not to have an Uber account, or wish to schedule trips in advance. Flex Connect trips are available by Uber or taxi, according to the customer's preference. DART covers the full cost of the Flex Connect trip by using a pre-loaded DART voucher on the Uber app, yet pay their typical fare when they board a DART fixed-route bus to complete their journey.

During the pilot period, DART aims to learn more about providing services to suburban areas using new technology in areas where traditional fixed-route is less effective. Staff will evaluate customer preference of service provider, how people prefer to book a trip, on average how long people wait for pick-up, and where customers choose to connect with the DART fixed-route network, among other metrics.

DART Flex Connect is available Monday-Friday, from 5:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. More information on Flex Connect is available at: <https://www.ridedart.com/flex-connect-demand-service>



AICP EXAM FEE REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

SUBMITTED BY DAVID R. WILWERDING, AICP, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER,
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The American Institute of Certified Planners and the APA Iowa Chapter encourage those with financial hardships to become AICP members by taking advantage of the AICP Exam Fee Reimbursement Program. This program offers assistance to those individuals who may defer taking or are unable to take the AICP exam because of the high cost.

APA-Iowa is allotted one scholarship per year. Applicants must submit a letter explaining the financial hardship (including financial hardship caused by a budget cutback in a firm or agency), which necessitated the request. The letter should be no more than two (2) pages and need to include the applicant's APA membership identification number. Applicants must also verify if they are a traditional AICP Exam applicant or an AICP Candidate Pilot Program participant.

Preference is given to:

- Applicants who otherwise will be unlikely to take the exam without the reimbursement;
- Applicants whose employer will not subsidize the exam fee; or
- Members of ethnic or racial minorities.

Application letters should be submitted to David Wilwerding, AICP, Iowa APA Chapter PDO at dwilwerding@cityofjohnston.com by March 15, 2020 for the May testing window.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEWEST AICP AND AICP CANDIDATES!

SUBMITTED BY DAVID R. WILWERDING, AICP, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER,
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Below are the new AICP / AICP Candidates for the Iowa Chapter who passed the exam in November:

- Brandon Melton, AICP
- Kellen Gorman, AICP Candidate
- Danielle Propst, AICP Candidate
- Luke McClanahan, AICP Candidate
- Zhi Chen, AICP Candidate

Iowa's pass rate was 33% for AICP (1 of 3) national average was 62%, and 80% AICP Candidate (4 of 5) national average was 55%.

The next exam window is in May, applications were due in December 2019. For more information on AICP certification, visit <https://www.planning.org/certification/>



\$25 MILLION BUILD GRANT ANNOUNCED FOR CENTRAL IOWA WATER TRAILS

SUBMITTED BY GUNNAR OLSON, COMMUNICATIONS AND STRATEGY MANAGER, DES MOINES AREA MPO
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The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), together with its partners working to implement Central Iowa Water Trails, announced its receipt of a \$25 million grant from the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, or BUILD, grant program of the U.S. Department of Transportation in November, 2019.

The grant will significantly accelerate the implementation of the Central Iowa Water Trails initiative, which includes 86 projects throughout the region. Specifically, the grant will help to activate a five-mile stretch of the Des Moines River by mitigating the Scott Avenue Dam and making improvements at three neighborhood access points. The Scott Avenue dam will be replaced with two drop crests that, in addition to improving safety, will provide recreational whitewater amenities and improved fish passage. The Scott Avenue project also includes improved fishing amenities along the riverbanks. Additionally, the grant will help pay for better user access and boat launches, portage, trails, and signage at Prospect Park, Birdland Marina and Harriet Street. The total cost of these four projects is \$31.25 million, 80 percent of which will be covered by the BUILD grant.

"I've said it before and I'll keep saying it until we're done: This is happening," said Dan Houston, Chairman, President and CEO of Principal and Board Chair of the Central Iowa Water Trails Incubator. "I can say this with complete confidence because of the tremendous support and partnerships of the many individuals and organizations backing this transformational quality-of-life project. And today we are witness to the depth of that support, which reaches to the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Iowa congressional delegation, to whom we are so deeply grateful for this grant."

The successful grant application was developed and submitted by the Des Moines Area MPO, one of five regional organizations working collaboratively through Capital Crossroads to support the Central Iowa Water Trails Incubator, along with Catch Des Moines, Great Outdoors Foundation, Greater Des Moines Partnership, and Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines.

"This grant goes to show that water recreation is a unifying catalyst for investing in Iowa's rivers, which serves to strengthen our neighborhoods and improve water quality," T.M. Frank Cownie, Mayor of Des Moines and a member of the Incubator Board of Directors, said. "Specifically, this project will include streambank restoration and improved natural habitat that support clean water goals, as well as enhancements to neighborhood parks. That's a win-win."

Hannah Inman, CEO of the Great Outdoors Foundation, the lead fund-raising organization for Central Iowa Water Trails, says the \$25 million BUILD grant validates the public-private nature of the project.

"This is a great example of what this community does," Inman said. "We come together from the public and private sectors to make big things happen. This is a once-in-a-generation legacy project with hundreds of champions, and we are especially thankful for the support of our Incubator Board of Directors, our partner organizations, and our local, state and federal elected officials for making this happen."



IOWA PLANNER SPOTLIGHT: RAKIBUL AHASAN

Graduate Assistant, Texas A&M University
PhD Candidate
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Degree & School

Master of Community and Regional Planning (MCRP) & Master of Science in Transportation (MS Trans), Iowa State University

What are your areas of expertise?

Geospatial Analysis, Transportation Planning, Urban Change Modeling

What aspects of planning do you enjoy the most?

I like to communicate with people, get to know the problems they are facing and work as a mediator in solving the problem. Apart from that, the field is always dynamic. One cannot just be static at the same place for the entire life in planning. That is the challenge I like the most.

Why did you decide to become a planner?

I always liked to work with the dynamic field of transportation and congested streets in the Capital of Bangladesh always intrigued me. I later realized you cannot just solve the transportation issues just by building roads or introducing new modes of transportation. It requires proper planning and that is when I started to grow my inclination towards planning. Throughout my undergrad and Master's I get to familiarize with the planning techniques and grow my interest in using technologies as well in solving the planning problems. That is when I got interested in using GIS and up to date technologies in solving various contemporary planning issues, and that inspired me to pursue my graduate studies in the Department of Community and Regional Planning at Iowa State University (ISU).

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.

During my studies at Iowa State University, our whole class helped in preparing the Comprehensive Plan Update for the city of Huxley. I was responsible for the land use and zoning along with the mapping part. We analyzed the growth pattern of the city since the 1970s, assessed the growth directions, consider the transportation and sidewalk demands. We spoke to the people, city authority, surveyed via paper copies as well as the electronic medium. We came up with multiple scenarios and policy suggestions for the city and presented that at a public open house. That interaction with the people as well as the exposure to the real-world problem and solving it was something I feel important for any planning practitioner. The city has accepted our update earlier this year. The participatory planning practice instead of a traditional top-down approach appeared to me as one of the significant aspects of this project.

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 rapid growth of urban population and human led development is going to create an imbalance between the infrastructure and surrounding environment. Balancing between these two basic demand of urbanization and globalization will be a big challenge for the planners in the coming years (in 10 years, if not early).

Do you have a favorite book about planning?

"The Death and Life of Great American Cities" by Jane Jacobs.



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

JOB POSTINGS

Transportation Planner

Job Type: Full Time
Location: Ames, IA
Employer: City of Ames
Deadline: January 10, 2020

Regional Planning Director

Job Type: Full Time
Location: Sioux City, IA
Employer: Siouxland Interstate
Metropolitan Planning Council
(SIMPICO)
Deadline: January 17, 2020

Associate Planner

Job Type: Full Time
Location: Mt. Vernon, IA
Employer: City of Mt. Vernon
Deadline: February 14, 2020

Did You Know? You can now post jobs directly to the APA Iowa website for free! This is a feature of the new chapter website. To post a job, visit <https://iowa.planning.org/career-center/job-posting-instructions/>.

Please note that posting a job on APA Iowa does not automatically post the job on the national APA website. To do this, you will need to visit <https://planning.org/employers/>.

ISU CAREER FAIR: CALL FOR JOBS!

The APA- Iowa Chapter will be attending and manning a table at the Iowa State University Design Career Fair on February 20, 2020 from 12:00 – 5:00pm in the Scheman Building.

We will be highlighting the reasons to join APA- Iowa Chapter as well as sharing planning jobs from across the state. Please submit any open positions through our website.

GET INVOLVED IN APA-IOWA



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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jan. 17: Free Webinar - Lessons Learned from Walkable City and Human Transit
- Jan. 17: APA Iowa Chapter Board Meeting, Ames
- Jan. 23: Iowa Safe Routes to Schools Conference, Des Moines
- Jan. 31: Community Catalyst Grant Application Due
- Feb. 19: All-American City Application Due
- Feb. 20: ISU Design Career Fair
- Feb. 24: Design Day on the Hill
- Mar. 27: APA Iowa Chapter Board Meeting, Location TBD
- Apr 25-28: APA National Conference, Houston, TX
- May 1: Iowa Cultural & Entertainment Districts Designation Applications Due
- May 1: Iowa Great Places Designation Applications Due



May 1: Iowa Arts Council Grant Applications Due
Submit your community updates for April's newsletter by Friday, April 3rd.
Fill out the form to be featured in our Planner Spotlight.
Follow us on Facebook to stay up to date on events and happenings.