

# PLANNING MATTERS



American Planning Association  
Colorado Chapter  
Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Colorado Chapter of the American Planning Association

February 2012

## New Congressional Districts Share Planning & Community Development Interests

### FEATURE ARTICLE

Colorado Congressional Districts 1-2

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Senior Associate

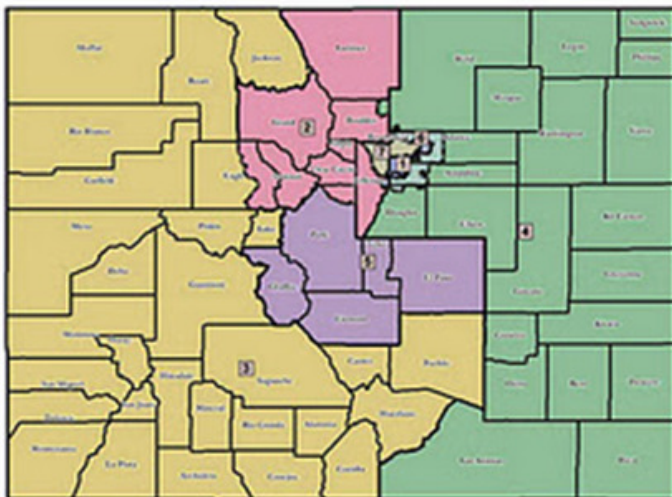
Progressive Urban Management Associates

For the first time in the history of the Colorado, community planning and development were fundamental to the prevailing rationale for shaping congressional districts. Colorado's new proposed congressional map was released by Denver District Judge Robert Hyatt in November, 2011 and recently confirmed.

Every ten years, states redraw congressional districts based upon changes in population. If a state grows significantly, it may add a seat, or if it loses ground, it needs to eliminate one. Colorado grew by about 700,000 persons over the past ten years, a significant change that requires redrawing boundaries in order to redistribute our population into equal districts. While it may sound like a simple numbers game, in our era of deepening partisan divides and close elections, the mapping exercise has become critical to both parties. Each tries to draw lines that divide voters up so as to create more districts where a majority of voters will support their party.

As in most states, the Colorado legislature was charged with developing a new redistricting map. As in the majority of states in 2011, they were unable to come up with a consensus solution. In Colorado, the task is then directed to the courts where a judge develops a new map based upon boundaries and testimony submitted by the political parties and other interest groups. More than a half dozen redistricting ideas were submitted for consideration.

In selecting between maps, a key criteria for the judge is whether the proposed new districts can be considered "communities of interest." Communities of interest are those that demonstrate shared needs and priorities that can be cogently represented in Washington. When competing maps are proposed, each group may call in expert witnesses to justify the reasons for their proposed boundaries. Historically, the expert witnesses have been sitting politicians and technocrats in areas



*continued, page 2*

## Redistricting, continued

such as agriculture or water rights. However, in October 2011, one of the map advocates called Brad Segal of Progressive Urban Management Associates as an expert witness in community development and planning. Segal was called by the advocates of a map supported by the Democratic Party, however, the community development and planning arguments Segal made were non-political. This approach to establishing like interests might sound quite logical to planners, but it was unprecedented in Colorado, and perhaps nationally. The arguments apparently resonated with the Court, as Segal's testimony was cited heavily in the final judgment.

Some of the themes that Segal advanced on the community development approach to defining communities of interest included:

- Larimer and Boulder counties, which are currently in separate districts, should now be joined since their economic foundations of education, health care and high technology are similar. Plus, both counties house major universities that will power economic expansion into the future.
- Suburban Denver congressional districts can logically be drawn by their similarities in urban development. First ring suburbs, found on the west and north, have similarities in infrastructure, dated shopping centers and corridors, and diversifying demographics. Exurbs, found to the east and largely shaped by the E-470 beltway, have lower densities and newer infrastructure and retail concepts.
- Land use and planning responses to the Niobrara oil play are creating common interests between once disparate counties such as agricultural Weld and suburban Douglas. All of these areas now share the challenge of accommodating the economic growth of oil and gas exploration with quality of life issues as this phenomenon emerges in urbanized areas along the Front Range.

This may well be the only time community planning and development expertise has been used in congressional redistricting. However, planners should take note: because it was so successful, it will not be surprising if members of our profession are called to do so again in the future in Colorado or elsewhere in the nation.

Interactive maps of the old and new congressional districts are available from the Denver Post at: [http://photos.denverpost.com/mediacenter/projects/new\\_zones/](http://photos.denverpost.com/mediacenter/projects/new_zones/)

A link to the judgment, or court order, can be found on the Colorado Congressional Redistricting website: <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CGA-ReDistrict/CBON/1251581558170>

### Jane Jacobs and the Death and Life of American Planning

Check out this article for it's critique of planning - <http://places.designobserver.com/feature/jane-jacobs-and-the-death-and-life-of-american-planning/25188/>

*Interesting food for thought about what role we planners have (even if I don't agree with all of it),* says Brad Mueller, AICP, Planning Manager, City of Greeley.

## President's Message: Changing Demographics

Susan Wood, AICP



Changes in population; shifts in age cohorts; and the dynamics of population growth and location both should, and generally are, determining factors in how we plan. Shifts in demographics, flavored with a sprinkle of politics, are the factors that determine district boundaries. Changes in the size, shape, and character of our urban and rural areas are major factors in redistricting, which is the subject of this newsletter.

Demographics, and the changing attributes of our population, affect not only redistricting, but many aspects of planning as well. It has been recognized by planners, APA National, and others that we are in the midst of a period of great demographic change. Our own, Bob Watkins, AICP, Planning Director, City of Aurora, approached me about this more than a year ago. At that time, Bob noted to me the importance of these changes to planning and the need to acknowledge and study them. Since that time, articles on this subject have appeared in numerous publications. Mitch Silver, AICP, National APA President, has traveled around the Country presenting a message of change, which he shared with us at the Four Corners Conference in Santa Fe this past September.

Further, the APA Divisions Council has two initiatives for further study and action. These are "Planning for a More Dynamic Population" and "Aging and Livable Communities." Learn more about this at <http://planning.org/divisions/>

Areas of population change observed and acknowledged in the initiatives include:

- Increasing diversity in America with minorities becoming the majority
- Aging population resulting in workforce changes
- Migration back to the cities resulting in re-urbanization
- Shrinking populations in some cities and suburbs resulting in permanent smaller populations in once-thriving areas

Issues associated with aging include a growing segment of our population who will face mobility issues with a need for services, such as access to transit, that are currently not available. With dollars in short supply, being able to meet these needs will likely prove to be difficult.

To further address these issues, APA National has formed a task force to explore ways that the Divisions Council and APA State Chapter Presidents can work together collaboratively to consider these emerging issues. These groups will be meeting together at the National Conference in Los Angeles in April both to form a better union, but also to brainstorm these concerns. The outcome of this meeting will yield collected thoughts and ideas, creative approaches, and plans for future efforts and study.

Other efforts are underway to explore these demographic changes and determine ways to plan for it. While the conversation is well underway, it is only the beginning. Stay tuned, since we will all certainly be hearing more about this and will be dealing with it both in our professional and personal lives. This shift will play a dominant role in our planning efforts for some time to come.

# The Legislative Committee

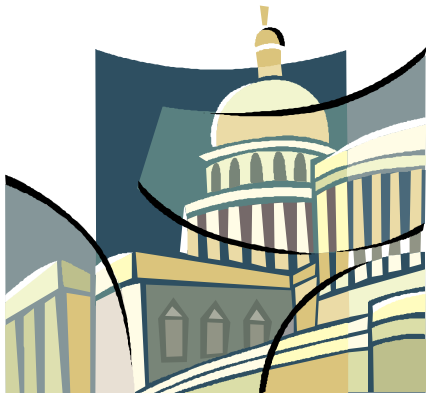
## 2011 Survey Results

THANK YOU to everyone who responded to the annual legislative survey! More than twice as many people responded this year as in 2010.

In order, here are the top 5 legislative issues ranked by APA Colorado members in December 2011:

1. Water Issues
2. Transportation
3. Economic Development
4. Sustainability/Healthy Communities
5. Regional Cooperative Planning

When the Legislative Committee and our Legislative Liaison represent APA Colorado at the State Capitol, we need to know what's important to our members. Though water and transportation are perennial top issues, economic development ranked higher than ever before. So this year, we've taken an active role on more economic development bills, especially when the bills involve regional and statewide planning. Your feedback makes a difference in the legislative efforts of APA. For more information on these bills and many other planning-related bills, sign up for the weekly legislative update on our webpage: [www.apacolorado.org/content/legislative-committee](http://www.apacolorado.org/content/legislative-committee).



## Planners Day at the Statehouse

**Wednesday, March 21, 2012, 8am - 2pm**

Attendees will watch and participate in Colorado's legislative process. This event includes a policy briefing on planning-related legislation, a chance to watch legislative sessions, meetings with your state legislators, and a tour of the Capitol Building. One credit of CM has been requested for the policy briefing portion of the event (starting at 8 a.m.).

The cost to register for this event is \$10.00, and you must be a member of APA Colorado to participate. Register on our website

at <http://www.apacolorado.org> by **Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>**. If you're not an APA Colorado member, [join today!](#) For more information about this event, contact Coral Cosway, Legislative Committee member, at [ccosway@comcast.net](mailto:ccosway@comcast.net).

## Committee Update

The Colorado General Assembly is back in session, and your all-volunteer APA Colorado Legislative Committee is hard at work protecting against attacks on planning. To date, we have reviewed more than 40 bills for their impacts on planners. We opposed two bills, which both have been successfully killed. The first bill, House Bill 1021, would have gutted the transportation planning process used throughout the state outside of metropolitan planning organizations. The second bill, Senate Bill 88, would have stripped local governments of their land use authority over oil & gas operations.

An expected bill dealing with accountability and transparency in tax-increment financing is drawing a lot of attention -- even though the bill is still being drafted and hasn't yet been introduced! The per-

## The Legislative Committee, continued

ennial issues of TIF and urban renewal are expected to draw at least one bill, perhaps two bills, this year. As of the writing of this newsletter in mid-February, APA has not taken a position and will not take a position until a bill is introduced. TIF is an important tool for redevelopment in Colorado, and APA has defended TIF against attacks in the past. APA has also worked to curb abuses of TIF, to ensure that it will continue to remain a viable tool for years to come.

The legislative session will continue through early May, so we may take an active role supporting or opposing additional bills over the coming months. Want to keep abreast of legislative developments as they happen? Sign up for the legislative email listserv or read the weekly updates at [www.apacolorado.org/content/legislative-committee](http://www.apacolorado.org/content/legislative-committee).

We always welcome your input! Join us for a legislative committee meeting in person or by conference call every other Monday during the legislative session. More information is available on our website. Or send a message to the committee co-chairs: Kyle A. Dalton, AICP ([kyleadalt@yaho.com](mailto:kyleadalt@yaho.com)) and Eric Heil, AICP ([ericheillaw@gmail.com](mailto:ericheillaw@gmail.com)).

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# Planning Out of Bounds

## APA COLORADO CHAPTER CONFERENCE SNOWMASS, COLORADO

October 3 - 6, 2012  
Viceroy Hotel



### CALL FOR SESSIONS

The Local Host Committee has started planning mobile tours and social events. Add your professional session to this year's conference! The call for sessions is available now at [www.apacolorado.org/content/annual-conference](http://www.apacolorado.org/content/annual-conference)  
The deadline is March 22.



### AWARDS APPLICATION

Celebrate the best of planning at the 2012 Awards Reception, Thursday, Oct 5, during the Conference  
The Awards Application is available now at [www.apacolorado.org/content/awards](http://www.apacolorado.org/content/awards)  
New this year - electronic submittal!  
The deadline is March 22.

## Students Break Bread with Planning Professionals

Carrie Murphy

*Master of Urban and Regional Planning Candidate - University of Colorado Denver  
President, Student Chapter of APA Colorado*

Last fall the APA Student Chapter hosted a fresh new event intended to bring practicing professionals in the planning field together with urban and regional planning graduate students from the University of Colorado Denver. The event, called *Breakfast with Professionals*, was an opportunity for students and professionals to sit down in small groups and discuss successes and challenges of their respective areas of expertise. The informal table conversation format made for a lively and fun morning for all in attendance.

Three professionals were generous with their time and agreed to host a table. They were: Carol MacLennan, Senior Environmental Health Policy Coordinator and Land Use Program Lead for Tri-County Health Department, who led a discussion about Health and the Built Environment; Cassie Milestone, Urban Planning and Sustainability Manager for the Downtown Denver Partnership, spoke about managing Public-Private Partnerships; and Kevin Puccio, Director of Community Development with New Town Builders, discussed urban housing development.

Here is some feedback from participants:

Planning student Ryan Sagar said, "it was such a good idea that I'm going to pass this on to my former undergraduate friends in APA at Ball State!"

Cassie Milestone said, "The APA student breakfast was a true delight! It is always a pleasure for me to speak with students about my professional experiences and hear from them about their future careers in a casual setting. I hope the student organization continues this tradition. I love hearing from passionate, interested students – they inspire me!"

Carol MacLennan added, "I thoroughly enjoyed *Breakfast with Professionals* because of its relaxed and intimate format. The students and I had a real conversation about their interests and the practical aspects of a professional focus on health and the built environment."

APA-S is currently in the midst of organizing another breakfast for the first week in April, and is looking for some dynamic, interested planning professionals to host our tables. If you are interested this opportunity to interact with the APA-Student Chapter, please contact the APA-S board at [apas.ucd.co@gmail.com](mailto:apas.ucd.co@gmail.com).

### Thank You Donors!

The student chapter would like to acknowledge and thank two generous supporters of APA-S.

Gil McNeish and Don Elliot in the name of Clarion & Associates

Donations such as these make professional development and networking events possible throughout the year. If you would like to support APA-S, please contact us at [apas.ucd.com@gmail.com](mailto:apas.ucd.com@gmail.com).



## CURRENT EVENTS



**FROM SOURCE TO TAP**

The Planner's Role in the Water Dialogue

\$10 APA Colorado Chapter members \$15 Non-members  
1.5 CE Credits, pending approval

FEB. 29.12

REGISTER ONLINE and see the complete details-  
**[www.apacolorado.org](http://www.apacolorado.org)**

\$10 members, \$15 non members

**February 29, 2012 3:30 - 5pm**

Followed by Networking Happy Hour at the Wynkoop Brewery - ALL are welcome, even if you weren't able to attend the session.

### THE ISSUE

Land use planners are not always sure where they belong in the water conversation. Planners serve in many capacities ranging from policy-makers, collaborators, facilitators, regulators, and designers. The disconnect between the interests of the water providers and the local land use planners presents a unique opportunity to work toward common goals and solutions.

The APA Colorado Chapter Sustainability Committee has assembled a panel of experts to share their perspectives and offer tools that local land use planners should consider when engaging the stakeholders to implement sustainable water planning practices in their communities.

### APA Colorado is a partner with Downtown Colorado, Inc.

Discuss the important issues impacting development and improvement districts at DID Forums.

**Mar 14: *Other Taxing Entities and the Bottom Line: How to Get to Yes for Redevelopment.*** The Bottom Line Series identifies techniques to better understand the bottom line of potential partner groups, what affects their decision-making, and how best to work with them -- not against them. In Colorado the relationship between urban renewal and other taxing entities has always held some tension and misunderstanding. This session will bring both sides to the table to share experiences highlighting how to partner for redevelopment. **Speakers:** Rick Kron, [Grimshaw & Harring](#); Ann Terry, [Special District Association of Colorado](#); and Matt Robenalt, [Fort Collins Downtown Development Authority](#)

**Date:** Wednesday, March 14, 2:00-4:00 PM (Mountain Time) **Location:** Colorado Municipal League, 1144 Sherman Street, Denver **Cost:** \$30

For information on future DCI program and events visit, [https://downtowncoloradoinc.site-ym.com/events/event\\_list.asp](https://downtowncoloradoinc.site-ym.com/events/event_list.asp)



### Planners Day at the Statehouse Wednesday, March 21, 2012, 8am - 2pm

The cost to register for this event is \$10.00, and you must be a member of APA Colorado to participate. Details on page 4. Registration at <http://www.apacolorado.org/> by **Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>**.

For more information about this event, contact Coral Cosway, at [ccosway@comcast.net](mailto:ccosway@comcast.net).

**For More Current Events/Workshops and Trainings  
go to [www.apacolorado.org](http://www.apacolorado.org)**



## A Systems-Thinking Approach to Sustainability Planning

Caitlyn Horose  
*Sustainability Committee Member*

Earlier this year, I picked up a popular business magazine and came across what I'm predicting to be the most popular buzzword of 2012: "ecosystem". You may be surprised that I came across this word in a business periodical, and admittedly, so was I. In fact, I couldn't quite gather what was meant by the "ipod ecosystems" and "digital ecosystems" referenced in the articles. Despite my difficulty in understanding the connection between natural ecosystems and smartphones, I do find comfort in analogies to nature when considering my own work.

Sustainability planning mirrors what we see in natural ecosystems, where organisms develop unique adaptations in response to various environmental influences. In nature, these adaptations are how animals occupy a niche within their community, and ultimately, how they survive. For planners, the ecosystem is still our community and the issue is still about how to be distinctive and competitive. But rather than evolving over generations like organisms, we as planners have the opportunity to affect widespread change within our lifetime.

For me, sustainability is about understanding the systems of our natural and built environments and finding innovative techniques to use and allocate resources efficiently. As an example, historic preservation captivates me with its ability to achieve sustainable goals simply by saving and reusing old buildings. Through historic preservation, a community can maintain unique aspects of its culture and heritage while simultaneously stimulating its economy. New reports demonstrate the significant environmental benefits of historic preservation – the idea that the greenest building is the one that already exists<sup>1</sup>. It is solutions like this that planners should be seeking when thinking about sustainability – those that are simple, practical, and systems-based. With a systemic approach, planners can be catalysts for new cultural and physical adaptations that promote sustainable practices by addressing issues that go beyond the saleable aspects of being "green". However, appropriate action cannot be taken without a full understanding of the systems in play.

The APA Colorado Chapter's Sustainability Committee is committed to helping planners in Colorado integrate sustainability practices into their work by providing relevant educational and outreach opportunities. Our first event of 2012 focuses on water allocation in the Front Range by bringing experts together for a panel discussion entitled "Source to Tap: The Planner's Role in the Water Dialogue". We hope that by understanding the water system and related stakeholders, planners in Colorado will be better equipped to address water-related issues in a sustainable and systemic way.

Join us Wednesday, February 29, 2012 from 3:30-5pm for Source to Tap: The Planner's Role in the Water Dialogue. Details and registration online at [www.apacolorado.org](http://www.apacolorado.org).

### <sup>1</sup>**The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse**

This recent report by the National Trust for Historic Preservation looks at the environmental impact of building reuse in comparison to new construction. The report can be viewed online at [http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/sustainability/green-lab/lca/The\\_Greenest\\_Building\\_lowres.pdf](http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/sustainability/green-lab/lca/The_Greenest_Building_lowres.pdf)

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Contact anyone on this list with your ideas to highlight planning as a profession or suggestions for the Chapter.

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