

Planning Partners: Building Multi-Disciplinary Collaboration in Colorado



The 2017 APA Colorado Chapter President's Award was awarded to the Planning Partners

Conference, which was developed, organized, and hosted by Adams County. Michelle Stephens, Chapter President,

awarded the Planning Partners Conference the President's Award due to its exceptional focus on multi-disciplinary collaboration. The first annual Planning Partners Conference was held on December 2, 2016, and the second conference was held on September 22, 2017. While professional planning conferences are not a new thing, Adams County has shown great leadership and innovation by hosting a conference for the partners Adams County works with within the Denver Metro. This includes professional staff from the cities and towns within the County, agencies, non-profits, the development community, DRCOG, state agencies and private consultants. The Planning Partners Conference brings together not just planners, but the multi-disciplinary partners they work with on a day to day basis to create a high quality of life for residents, and to push the region forward in terms of innovative, sustainable and regional planning practices.

The 2016 Planning Partners Conference focused on collaboration building, idea exchanges, and networking in the allied fields including long range planning, current planning, health, equity, parks and recreation, transportation, CIP engineering, sustainability, economic development, hazard mitigation, health and environment, housing, and innovation and community outreach. Demonstrating its multi-discipline focus, the Planning Partners conference also attracts members of the development community, advocacy agencies, and elected officials. Attendees included approximately 100 representatives from various jurisdictions, consulting firms, and organizations throughout the region. The 2016 Planning Partners Conference was highly successful, especially for a first event, and attendees have stated the value in bringing together all the partners which work together in the larger community we share



throughout the region.

The following are quotes from the post-conference feedback survey responses by attendees:

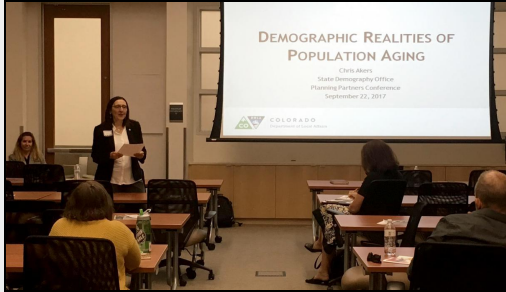
- "Great job Adams County! You are setting a standard for other counties across the region to do similar things in bringing together their municipalities."
- "Thanks for providing this opportunity for interagency discussions! We appreciate being invited to attend."
- "It was great to have the opportunity to bring forward-thinking ideas to a crucial group of decision makers in the region. Thank you!"

The 2017 Planning Partners Conference built on the success of the 2016 conference and also provided a full-day line-up of educational sessions and networking events designed to nurture the flow of ideas across agencies, jurisdictions, and professions.

Another exceptional component of this event is the steering committee who supports Rachel Bacon, Abel Montoya, Rebecca Zamora to organize and host the event. This event would not be as successful without its multi-disciplinary steering committee!

Planning Partners Conference Steering Committee 2016:

Rachel Bacon, Adams County, Lori Wisner, Adams County, Rebecca Zamora, Adams County, Carolina Van Horn, Adams County, Abel Montoya, Adams County, Brian Dearth, Adams County, Jeanne Shreve, Adams County, Nana Appiah, Adams County, Emily Collins, Adams County, Becky Smith, City of Northglenn, Martin Postma, City of Thornton, Tricia Allen, Adams County Economic Development, Mike Tylka, City of Brighton, Will Lindsey, City of Federal Heights, Anna Garcia, DRCOG.



Planning Partners Conference Steering Committee 2017:

Rachel Bacon, Adams County, Daniel Jennings, Brad Calvert, DRCOG, Daniel Kryzanowski, City of Aurora, Gabriella Arismendi, City of Westminster, Julianna Nelson, Adams County, Logan Sand, Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Michelle Stephens, Colorado Chapter of the American Planning Association, Robin Kerns, Commerce City, Sam Piper, Alta Planning + Design, Sarah Franklin, Urban Land Institute, Sarah Vogl, Adams County Housing Authority, Shannon McDowell, Adams County, Sue Bozinovski, Adams County, Adams County, Rebecca Zamora, Adams County, Abel Montoya, Adams County, Brian Dearth, Adams County, Nana Appiah, Adams County, Emily Collins, Adams County, Joelle Greenland, Adams County, Becky Smith, City of Northglenn, Martin Postma, City of Thornton, Tricia Allen, Adams County Economic Development, Mike Tylka, City of Brighton, Will Lindsey, City of Federal Heights, Kevin Priestley, DRCOG.

“I hope the innovation demonstrated by Adams County is contagious and that others will be inspired to create their own local planning partners events throughout the state!” said Michelle Stephens, President of the Colorado Chapter of the APA while presenting Adams County with the President’s Award. She also noted that the Chapter has resources available to support additional local events.