

Planning Leadership Award: Chris Bendon, AICP

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In March of this year, BendonAdams was honored to (secretly) nominate Chris Bendon for this year's Planning Leadership Award. Chris is a seasoned planner who worked for the City of Aspen for 19 years, eleven of which as Director of Community Development Department, prior to opening BendonAdams. He and Sara Adams started BendonAdams, a land use consulting firm, in January 2016 assisting clients with residential and commercial redevelopments. While we may be biased, we think Chris is a pretty good planner. No really, he's like, super organized.

Jokes aside, we nominated Chris because he has not only illustrated tremendous leadership over the course of his career in both the public and private and sectors, but he also is a leader in our community. Chris is always willing to take a moment and listen to questions, walk through solutions, and provide clarity on complex processes. His approach to work is mirrored in his work in our community. Chris actively volunteers in local organizations and provides mentorship to rising leaders.

While at the City of Aspen, Chris facilitated the development of several policies and planning documents, including the 2012 Aspen Area Community Plan, the revision of Aspen's Commercial and Residential Design Guidelines, development of the Lodging Incentive Program, contribution to the Aspen Uphill Economy, and co-creation of the Aspen Affordable Housing Certificates Program, to name a few. As an aside, the Affordable Housing Credits program is the first of its kind in Colorado and has been utilized as a model for other cities interested in incentivizing the

development of affordable housing through the private sector. Pretty cool stuff.



As a private practitioner, Chris has been able to build on his extensive experience in municipal planning and share his expertise both locally and nationally. Chris has conducted infill policy development and process audits in other communities including Rochester NH, Bozeman MT, and Anchorage, AK. While in Aspen and Pitkin County Chris' focus is on complex projects, whether it be the development of affordable housing for the Aspen Fire Protection District, downtown commercial projects, or unique residential sites.

We would like to thank the APA Colorado Chapter for agreeing with us that Chris' work and achievements were worthy of recognition. We are delighted that Chris is this year's award recipient.

Congratulations Chris!