



Oklahoma Planner

President's Notes

Although it's still fairly hot outside, a change of season is just around the corner. With change comes new challenges and opportunities for improvements.

My oldest child started kindergarten last month. We are faced with new issues everyday and must find new and innovative solutions to daily problems. I told my son a few days ago that school makes him better, so he must go.

Just as in my personal life, the Oklahoma Chapter is in constant change as well. This is our first digital newsletter or "e-letter". Our website is seeing more hits as it becomes a better resource for planners and planning officials across the state. At the August luncheon at OU, we announced the chapter will sponsor an

award granted to the top planning student and will give \$500 as part of the award. Dean Philpot told the crowd that this is the first gift of it's kind to the Planning Program. The Executive Committee decided to honor Professor Charles Robert Goins, AICP, by naming the award after him. We are not making these changes for the sake of change, but to build a stronger and better chapter.

We too must embrace change as professionals to make better communities. Innovative ideas must be uncovered and inclusive partnerships with allied organizations must be formed to strategically target problems in our communities. The chapter website would like to showcase the best practices or innovative programs throughout the

state. Other cities can always learn from the actions of others and, possibly, apply the information to their own community.

An initiative that I hope will become the legacy of planners in Oklahoma will be designed over the next few months. Bob Wolfram is working with faculty from OU to develop two planning commissioner training programs: classroom style and an on-line version. We invite your input and participation.

Mike



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Upcoming Events:

- *OKAPA Creating the Future Downtown, September 9th and 10th in OKC*
- *OML/OKAPA Conference, September 19th in Tulsa*
- *Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association Conference September 23—25 at Quartz Mountain Lodge*
- *Complete Management Course for Planning Directors December 2 and 3 in Dallas, Tx*

Building Community Tool Kit



The Innovation Center for Community & Youth Development has created the Building Community Tool Kit with detailed activities, tips, stories, handouts and resources to plan for positive community change and build partnerships between young people and adults. It is designed to be accessible to teens and adults and involves youth not just as data collectors but also as analysts, publicists, coordinators and designers. It includes sections on Core Principles, Building Readiness, Visioning and Planning, Moving to Action and Change and Sustainability.

The Tool Kit is based on a model that has

been implemented in more than 20 diverse communities by neighborhood coalitions, local and tribal governments and youth groups. Outcomes of the Building Community process include the creation of shared community visions that are translated into strategic action; new awareness and use of unique community resources; increased youth participation and leadership; new funding to implement priority projects; and increased collaboration among community-based organizations and groups.

The Innovation Center for Community & Youth Development seeks,

tests and promotes innovative concepts and practices, providing cutting edge tools for youth workers in diverse settings. Formerly a division of National 4-H Council, the Innovation Center is now an independent organization that operates as a project of the Tides Center. To download free excerpts of the Building Community Tool Kit and to find out how to order the complete kit, visit

www.theinnovationcenter.org

AICP Helps a Community Shape its Future

AICP sponsored its 2nd Annual Community Planning Team Charrette in Chicago's West Humboldt Park neighborhood during the APA 2002 National Planning Conference. Designed to help the community's residents gain a better understanding of the elements that make a strong community, the charrette brought together over 50 enthusiastic planners and 75 community members. Participants spent a day in West Humboldt Park actively working to "make great communities happen."

Drawing on individual ideas and experiences from urban and rural cities across 26 states, Canada and Crete, the planners helped community members shape a future vision for their community. One planner eloquently stated that the charrette gave him an opportunity to become "reacquainted with my planning soul."

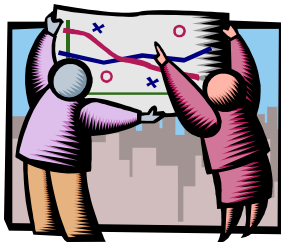
AICP is planning to continue the AICP charrette at future National Conferences. In addition to the APA

National Conference in Denver in 2003, AICP is working to develop a Community Assistance Program, which would make technical assistance teams available to communities.

For more information contact the Community Planning Team Task Force Chair, **Sue Schwartz** at sue.schwartz@ci.greensboro.nc.us or **Megan Valdiserri** at mvaldiserri@planning.org

Land Use Decisions Made by Choice Not Chance

The National League of Cities' recent publication, "Building Quality Communities," is a guide for local officials and citizens on how to make local land use decisions by choice and not chance. One section, called "Watch Your Language," identifies terms such as sprawl and density that can pose problems because they are either unclear or poorly understood. The report also contains analyses of the



ways that race and racism affect and are affected by land-use patterns; talking points for dealing constructively with the private property/interest debate; and the need for area-wide perspectives and solutions. The full

report is available in PDF format at www.nlc.org/nlc_org/site/files/reports/futrpt01.pdf

New APA Interact

APA has launched a new monthly e-newsletter, *Interact*, which will provide new information for APA national, divisions, and chapters; opportunities to participate in APA programs and activities; and guides to helpful resources. Check it out!

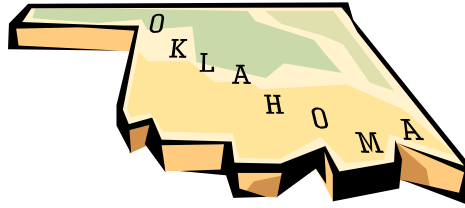
www.planning.org

Planning for Smart Growth: 2002 State of States

In 2000, a proposal was made to form a planning and land-use legislative study commission. The study commission was to be charged with evaluating the effectiveness of current state, regional and local planning and land-use laws, and proposing innovative and cooperative planning and land-use approaches in order to effectively guide growth and development. The bill, however, was not approved. Since then, no major planning reform proposals or smart growth legislation have been introduced in the state legislature, nor have there been any related initiatives or actions by Gov. Frank Keating. Nonetheless, there are numerous indications such proposals could benefit the state.

A 1997 American Farmland Trust study identifying those areas nationwide where prime agricultural land is most vulnerable to loss from development included all 77 counties in Oklahoma on the list. Currently the state has a right-to-farm law and differential tax assessment rates for agricultural land, but no state or local authorizing statutes to protect farmland through transfer of development rights, agricultural protection zoning or other methods. Development to date, however, does not appear to be threatening in any way the federal funds the agricultural industry in the state receives. Between 1996 and 2000, 70,000-plus farm operations received more than \$1.7 billion in federal subsidies. The majority of the subsidies went to larger landowners: just

6 percent of the farm operations in the state received 50 percent of the monies. Most of the payments were made as part of the 1996 Freedom to Farm bill that was actually aimed at weaning farmers off of federal subsidies. Since payments were made based on a farmer's previous history, landowners were paid whether they planted a crop or not.



There also appears to be little change underway in order to provide alternative methods of transportation in the state. A report by the Surface Transportation Policy Project, Changing Direction: Federal Transportation Spending in the 1990s, ranked Oklahoma among 14 states in the country showing "a weak commitment" to expanding transportation choices. Between 1990 and 1999, for instance, the state spent less than \$5 per capita of its federal funds to expand bicycle, pedestrian and transit-oriented transportation options. The national average for the same period was \$17.26 per capita.

There also appears to be a need for

more affordable housing, another important planning issue, in the state. Recent studies show 40 percent of renters in the state pay more than 30 percent of their total annual income in housing costs. Planners point out that it is in the long-term interest of Oklahoma's cities, suburbs, small towns and rural communities to be able to support healthy development patterns and direct growth in a way that minimizes damage to the environment, reduces "sprawl" in urban centers and scattered development in outlying areas, and improves the livability of towns and cities.

Reforming the state's comprehensive planning authorizing statutes is the first step to be able to steer growth and development in that direction. Oklahoma is one of about a dozen states that have yet to modernize their statutes that enable local governments to do comprehensive planning.

<http://www.planning.org/growingsmart/pdf/stateSummaries.pdf>

Labor Unions Support Smart Growth

Columnist Neil Peirce writes that labor unions have begun lending support to the smart growth agenda. The AFL-CIO approved a resolution to "actively engage in the emerging public and political debates surrounding urban sprawl and smart growth," asserting the labor's rightful role in the national debate about the future of America's cities for the benefit of all working families. The

resolution notes that big box retailers undermine unionized neighborhood retailers, that sprawling development creates jobs out of reach of public transit, and that unions have suffered as a result of disinvestments, corporate flight, and tax-base erosion.

It must be remembered that there is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage, than the creation of a new system. For the initiator has the enmity of all who would profit by the preservation of the old institutions and merely lukewarm defenders in those who would gain by the new ones. - Machiavelli

It Happened in Norman...

The new and existing planning students were welcomed by thirty, or so, faculty, professionals and guests on August 30th in the Student Union. This was the inaugural event sponsored by the OKAPA chapter to build stronger relations between the chapter, professional planners, planning students and the OU faculty. Bob Hunter, FAICP, APA Region 3 Board of Director, spoke to the group on "Opportunities for Planners in Today's Market." The chapter announced two new initiatives that will benefit the planning students. Each student will be given a "chapter-only" membership from OKAPA. The chapter also announced that an annual award will be given to the top planning student. The award will honor Professor Charles Robert Goins, AICP, for his long term commitment to the planning profession and to the students at the OU Planning School. It will be presented each spring at the OU COA Awards Banquet.



Professor Charles Robert Goins, AICP, speaks of his two passions (Planning and OU Football) after the announcement of the top student planning award in his name.



Above: Dr. Richard Marshment, AICP, and Jim Duncan, FAICP, discuss the OU Planning Program.

Right: Bob Hunter, FAICP, APA Region 3 Board member, spoke to the group on the Opportunities for Planners in Today's Market.

Lower Right: Professor Rodgers speaking with Pat Copeland, AICP of Norman, and Paul Fisher, AICP of Lawton.

Below: Professor J. Lee Rodgers, FAICP (first graduate of the OU Planning school)



Lack of Affordable Housing Rivals Health Care

A new study released by the Fannie Mae Foundation finds that working families consider the lack of affordable housing to be as big a problem as the lack of affordable health care, a benchmark concern that has dominated public policy discussions over the past several years. Roughly the same percentage of working Americans (41 percent) believe the lack of affordable homes is a very or fairly big problem compared with the lack of affordable health care (39 percent), and more believe it is a very or fairly big problem

than high unemployment (34 percent) or crime (20 percent).

The study also revealed regional differences in Americans' concern about the lack of affordable homes. Half of Americans living in the West (55 percent living specifically on the Pacific Coast) and 40 percent of those living in the Northeast think the lack of affordable homes is a big problem, compared with 34 percent in the South and 28 percent in the Midwest. Meanwhile, 48 percent of Americans who say they reside in a large

city believe it's a very or fairly big problem compared to only 37 percent of those who describe themselves as residing in a medium city and 30 percent of those in small towns or rural areas. The full report is available at www.fanniemae.foundation.org/news/pr/ResultsFMFSurvey02.shtml.



Updated State of the Cities Data

The Historical Census Data system, part of HUD USER's State of the Cities Data Systems (SOCDS) portal, now includes 2000 Census statistics, culled from the Census Bureau's Demographic Profiles Sample Data. The update covers such topics as: Poverty and income; Rent and house value; Educational attainment; and Industry and occupation of employed residents.

The updated data are provided for all 331 metropolitan areas, their 542 central cities, and 11,397 suburban places. To access the data, visit HUD USER's Web site at: socds.huduser.org/Census/Census_Home.htm. Established and maintained by HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research since 1998,

the SOCDS provides data on the social and economic conditions of metropolitan areas, cities, and suburbs throughout the United States. In addition to the Historical Census Data, the SOCDS includes the following information:

- Current Labor Force Data - labor force statistics for individual cities collected from the Local Area Unemployment data by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. http://socds.huduser.org/Bls_la/us/BLS_LAUS_Home.htm
- Country Business Patterns Special Data Extract - information from special tabulations of the Standard Statistical Establishment List

(SSEL) provided by the US Census Bureau. http://socds.huduser.org/CBPSE/CBPSE_Home.htm

- FBI Crime Data - statistics for 542 metropolitan cities in 1992, 1997, 1998 and 1999. http://socds.user.org/FBI/FBI_Home.htm
- Building Permits Database - data on permits for residential construction at the permit-issuing jurisdiction level from the Census Bureau's Building Permits Survey. <http://socds.huduser.org/permits/index.html>

To access the main SOCDS page, visit <http://socds.huduser.org>

It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see. ~Henry David Thoreau

National Housing Agenda Released

The US Conference of Mayors released a comprehensive set of recommendations to address the country's affordable housing crisis. The mayors' recommendations, to be presented to HUD Secretary Mel Martinez and members of Congress, include: creating a new national homeownership tax credit to make buy-

ing a home more affordable for those with low and moderate incomes; establishing a national affordable housing trust fund to provide a reliable and dedicated stream of funding to address the housing needs of primarily those with very low incomes; working with Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to pro-

mote a vast expansion of employer-assisted housing programs for working families. The full report is available in PDF format at

usmayors.org/uscm/news/press_releases/documents/housingreport_052202.pdf.



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***Making Great Communities
Happen.***



We Want You

The Chapter elections are scheduled for this fall. The three positions that are up for election are VP/PDO, Secretary/Newsletter Editor and a Board of Director. So far, at least one candidate has agreed to run for every eligible position except for Vice-President/PDO. This officer must be a certified planner and will work closely with the American Institute of Certified Planners through continuing education pro-



grams and preparing individuals to take the certification exam. If you are interested in any of the positions, please contact Mike Southard by the end of September. If elections are needed, ballots will be mailed in early October. The new officers take office on December 1st.

Upcoming Course for Planning Directors

Zucker Systems of San Diego, CA is offering a course in Dallas, Texas on December 2nd and 3rd. Registration can be made by phone, fax or email. The two-day course, *The Complete Management Course for Planning Directors*, costs only \$375 and is designed to respond directly to the needs and challenges of today's planning and community development departments. The seminar is presented by West Coast Publishers and co-sponsored by the American Planning Association and the Texas APA Chapter.

www.zuckersystems.com Phone: 1(800) 870-6306 Fax: 1(619) 260-1138

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