



Federal Planning Division Spring 2024 Newsletter

Vol. 27



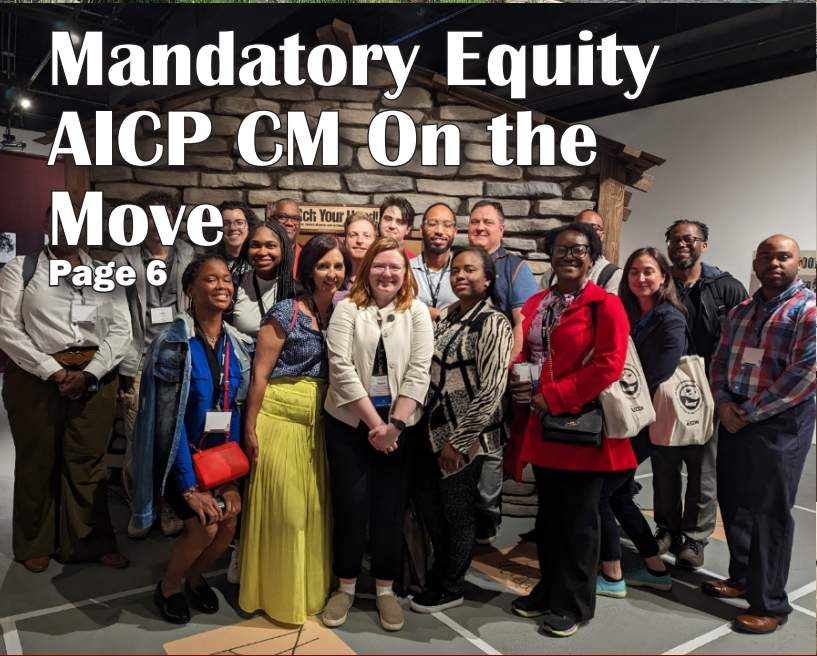
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A Centennial Celebration and Looking Forward!

FPD Chair Welcome

I am thrilled to welcome you to this edition of the Federal Planning Division newsletter! This year marks a significant milestone – the 100th anniversary of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)! To commemorate this occasion, we’re excited to host the Federal Planning Division Annual Training Workshop in Washington, D.C., from 13-16 May 2024. The workshop theme, “The Evolution of Planning,” promises insightful discussions and explorations of how our field has adapted and shaped the nation. We also look forward to recognizing exceptional projects and planners during the celebration.



Recap: FPD at the American Planning Association National Planning Conference!

The Federal Planning Division was represented well at the American Planning Association National Planning Conference in Minneapolis from 12-16 April 2024. I had the opportunity to connect with planners from NCPC, Naval Facilities, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. There was a cornucopia of sessions and opportunities to connect. I look forward to sharing insights from the Divisions Council and staff from APA during the upcoming Federal Planning Division business meeting.

A Heartfelt Thank You

Finally, I extend a sincere thank you to the dedicated members of the Federal Planning Division Executive Committee for their tireless efforts in planning these events and ensuring the Division thrives. Your contributions are invaluable.

We look forward to seeing you in Washington, D.C.!

Sincerely,

Shenita McConis, PE, PMP, AICP
FPD Chair 2024-2025

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Shenita McConis
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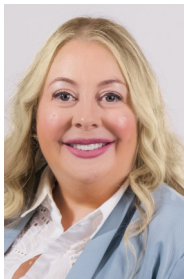
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Providing Excellence in Education

Greetings from your Professional Development Officers, Heather Mendenall and Ricqui Brager! FPD wants to wish the best of luck to those testing during the May session of the AICP exam!

1. AICP Spring Exam Window: May 1-30, 2024 and Transfer Deadline: Tuesday, May 28, 2024
2. AICP CM Grace Period: There is a 2024 grace period that ends on May 31, 2024 for all active AICP members who did not complete their CM credits at the end of December 2023.
3. AICP CM upcoming opportunities:
 - "The Relevancy Guidebook: How We Can Transform the Future of Preservation" May 3, 2024 | 1:00 - 2:30 PM (Eastern Time) CM #TBD Register here:
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WbmpPhbuT7K62uV23MDzrQ#/registration [us06web.zoom.us]
 - "Building Adaptive Trail Programming: Lessons from the Field" May 23, 2024 | 01:00 to 02:00 PM (Eastern Time) Register here:
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kN0Y2n7qQP2dRB-HyKVQJA#/registration [us06web.zoom.us]
 - "Communicate, Educate, and Inform Where Visitors are Planning Their Adventures" May 30, 2024 | 01:00 to 02:00 PM (Eastern Time) Register here:
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_LT4lClvPSqifkPLu4uvb5A#/registration [us06web.zoom.us]
 - "GIS Automation for Planners: Model Builder" July 12, 2024 | 1:00 - 2:30 PM ET CM # 9283419 Register here:
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_OI9Zs8ggTDObqKsy6RpULw#/registration [us06web.zoom.us]
 - "Grants for Trails: Finding, Applying, and Managing" July 18, 2024 | 01:00 to 02:00 PM (Eastern Time) Register here:
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_c0C_7Bk3T-OUIb-WEvgsQA#/registration [us06web.zoom.us]

FPD 2024 Workshop Preview

The Federal Planning Division (FPD) of the American Planning Association (APA) is excited to be heading back to our nation's capital this year for our Annual Training Workshop. The first federal plan ever developed was for the City of Washington, and federal planning continues to have a significant impact on the growth and character of the city and region today.

This year's Annual Training Workshop theme "The Evolution of Planning" is a nod to both this rich planning history and the National Capital Planning Commission's (NCPC) 100th anniversary. The federal government's central planning agency for the National Capital Region, NCPC helps guide federal planning and development and is collaborating with FPD to support this year's program. NCPC organized the opening and closing keynotes along with nine mobile tours and partnered on the opening reception at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library. We are grateful for NCPC's partnership in organizing the workshop; they are helping enhance our usual workshop offerings with their deep local knowledge and connections.

The sessions will be held at the National Housing Center and at the nearby Holiday Inn, located in the heart of the city within easy walking distance of some of the top federal public spaces in the country.

Schedule Highlights

We have three tracks this year for our sessions:

- Federal Planning in Action
- Shaping Federal Planners
- Training, Tools, and Technology

Learn about hot topics in the industry including changing federal regulations, community engagement, resiliency planning, electric vehicle integration, mobility, innovative ways to use technology, best practices that span federal agencies, and everyone's favorite, planning ethics.

Our opening keynote speaker on Wednesday morning is Sara C. Bronin, Chair of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, who will share some fresh takes on historic



Sara C. Bronin



preservation standards and how they can work alongside economic growth, housing, sustainability, and climate change.

The closing session on Thursday afternoon will focus on the impacts of federal planning on local jurisdictions and how these entities can work more collaboratively in the National Capital Region to tackle issues such as underutilized federal assets, resiliency, and transportation. We have four experts in the region who are doing this work daily:

- Elliot Doomes, public buildings service commission of the General Services Administration (GSA)
- Clark Mercer, executive director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
- Anita Cozart, director of the D.C. Office of Planning
- Norman Dong, partner at FD Stonewater and faculty at Georgetown University



Anita Cozart



Norman Dong



Clark Mercer



Elliot Doomes

Mobile Tours: Get out there!

NCPC has organized some outstanding mobile tours this year. Many of them tie in to the theme of “The Evolution of Planning” by sharing the history of significant federal places along with plans for the future.

Workshop participants can add mobile tours to an existing registration via the attendee portal. Hurry, spots are going fast! For more information about logistics and details about accessibility, check out

<https://fpdtrainingworkshop.com/for-attendees/>

Most tours are outside and involve at least some walking, so be sure to pack layers and comfortable walking shoes if you plan to take part! Metro cards will be provided for any tour that involves a longer commute.

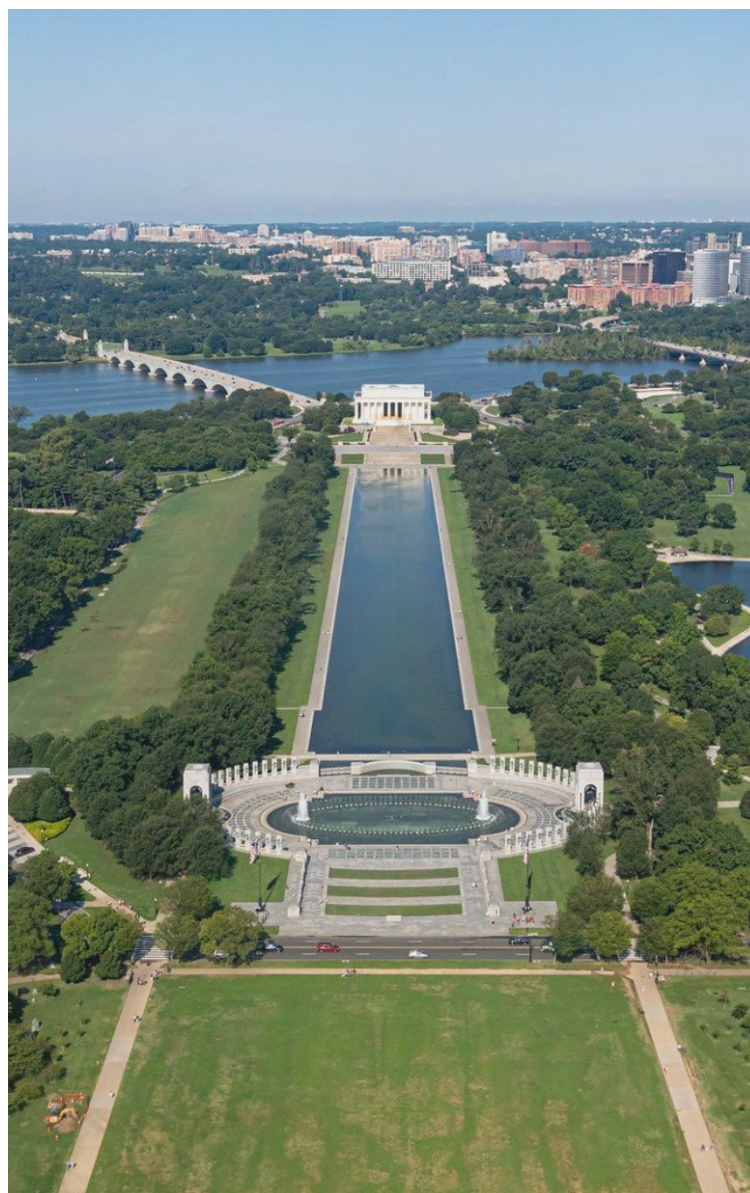
- Monday, May 13 – all tours from 1400 to 1600
 - Franklin Park – Tour the results of a year-long renovation of this historic federal park originally established in 1832.
 - Washington Navy Yard [SOLD OUT] – The Navy Yard is a vibrant and active urban neighborhood anchored a historic campus and enhanced by sports stadiums.
 - Kennedy Center [SOLD OUT]– This vibrant cultural hub hosts dozens of performing arts events for millions of people each year. Tour the center and hear about the plans for the surrounding area.
 - National Mall [SOLD OUT] – For more than 200 years, the National Mall has stood as a symbol for our nation as its premier civic and symbolic space. Learn about the history of this place along with some future plans.
- Thursday, May 16 – all tours are from 1400 to 1600 except the Terwilliger Place tour (0900 to 1200)
 - Arlington’s Terwilliger Place – This newly opened innovative affordable housing development spearheaded by the American Legion includes mixed uses and caters to mostly veterans. Note that this tour takes place Thursday morning from 0900 to 1200.
 - Union Station and the U.S. Capitol Grounds [SOLD OUT] – This tour will feature one of the busiest transportation hubs in the region, which is currently undergoing a huge transformation as it expands to increase capacity to serve the region for decades to come.
 - Federal Triangle and Tidal Basin Flooding [SOLD OUT]– Flooding is an ongoing threat in Washington, and many significant sites could be damaged or destroyed. Come learn about recent incidents and plans to mitigate flooding in the future.
 - Anacostia Riverwalk Trail – This trail, which follows the river on both sides for 12 miles, covers a wide variety of terrain and ecosystems, connecting with the rest of the city via five bridges.
 - Pennsylvania Avenue [SOLD OUT] – Explore one of the country’s most iconic boulevards with a vision to create an inviting, equitable, and adaptive gathering space.

After Hours

Monday night, join us for refreshments at the opening reception at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, about a mile away from the National Housing Center. Tickets are complimentary for workshop attendees. Emerging Federal Planners (those with less than 8 years of experience in the industry) are invited to a happy hour on Tuesday night at the Astro Beer Hall. And on Wednesday night, join us for the awards program and reception at the NHC – tickets are free for attendees.

Sponsor the Workshop

There are still sponsorship opportunities available – check out the remaining options and sign up at <https://fpdtrainingworkshop.com/for-sponsors.>



National Mall (Courtesy: nationalmall.org)

Mandatory Equity AICP CM On the Move

Although Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is a term that has been used since the 1960s, the intent for diversity education and training has evolved over time. DEI programming should aim to bring awareness to the history and contributions of people who have typically been and continue to be underrepresented and disenfranchised in both private and public sector entities.

APA introduced DEI Mobile Tours at the 2023 national conference to provide an in-person demonstration of the impacts of federal and local land use policies on disadvantaged and marginalized communities in San Diego, CA.

What does DEI mean to APA?

In 2019, the American Planning Association's AICP Commission initiated mandatory continuing education for "Equity," which covers DEI topics. To qualify for Equity CM, continuing education must address one of the DEI topics as described in the APA Equity Policy Guide:

Diversity – awareness, understanding, and appreciation of our differences; the value of different perspectives and experiences such as race, ethnicity, culture, age, generation, immigration status, household type, family composition, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and religious beliefs; identity and difference represented individually and collectively. Topics may include social justice, environmental justice, and integration of diverse populations in community outreach and decision-making processes.

Equity – just and fair treatment in society in which all can participate and reach their full potential. Just and fair distribution of resources and improvements so that all people and communities can prosper. Federal topics may include equitable allocation or capital investments for mobility and transportation, housing, and public spaces.

Inclusion – the outcome of Equity and Social Justice work for all people. To be included and not excluded. Plan spaces and places where all people feel welcome, welcoming and inviting everyone to contribute and participate. Federal topics may include planning for immigrants and refugees, public engagement that addresses access and language barriers, or planning for youth, the elderly, and those with special mental or physical needs (i.e., Americans with Disability Act requirements).

As a mandatory continuing education credit, "Equity" requires that members obtain a minimum of 1.5 CM credits every two-year reporting period to maintain their AICP credential. With Equity joining other mandatory credits, including Law, Ethics, and Sustainability, APA raises awareness and creates understanding and tools for members to successfully integrate equity within the planning practice.

Why DEI Mobile Tours?

At the San Diego Annual Training Workshop in 2023, the mobile tours were designed to bring awareness of the impact of discriminatory federal and local land use policies and laws affecting low income, minority, and LGBTQ populations, and to highlight where the impacts of these policies are still visible in the built environment today. This impact shaped the city planning of San Diego for better and for worse. Ultimately, the goal was to offer mobile tours that told the real stories of diverse historically disadvantaged groups and celebrated the impact they have had on San Diego communities.

To bring high-value DEI training to members, FPD partnered with non-profit organizations including the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), San Diego Chinese History Museum, and the San Diego History Center. DEI mobile tours offer informal environments for conversations to take place among participants and provide unique educational experiences by demonstrating how federal and local land use policies impact people and places. The following is an overview of the content of each tour.



LISC San Diego Executive Director, Ricardo Flores, speaking about the Midway District with mobile tour participants.

Then and Now: The Impacts of 1937 Redlining on San Diego Communities

In the 1930s, the Homeowners Loan Corporation (HOLC) developed a community appraising system that was referred to as “redlining.” It was a structure that systemically segregated communities based on race and social class. This practice intentionally restricted home ownership from people of color and isolated communities based on economic status. This appraisal practice of redlining along with other common prejudicial practices were implemented by both law and de facto application. Although the concept of redlining became an “illegal” practice due to the passage of the Fair Housing Act in 1968 and the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act in 1975, its impact has had an adverse effect to many communities across the United States. These impacts are not always visible since the intentional erasure of certain aspects of American history has left stories missing or misplaced.

In 2020, the LISC published an overview of the redlined communities specific to the city. The publication was generated from the work of the “Mapping Inequality” initiative in which LISC collaborated with four universities to provide a comprehensive overview of the redlining mapping system of the New Deal Era. Specifically for the city of San Diego, the publication shows the graded map area of 1935 highlighting the specific A, B, C and D grades designated to the various communities throughout the city. The areas graded as a “A” were considered the “best.” These areas were described as locations where residents were “100 percent white” having “No influx whatever of any inharmonious influences.” In contrast, areas graded as “D” were considered “hazardous.” These areas were described as communities of “...undesirable population or an infiltration of it.” One particular area referred to as La Jolla was described as being the location of “servant quarters” and was “set aside by common contest, for the colored population.” (Robert K. Nelson 2020)

Ricardo Flores, LISC San Diego Executive Director, led a group of FPD participants on a walking tour that consisted of visiting the La Jolla’s Bishops Academy, site of the old servants’ quarters, Midway district, and Barrio Logan. The tour guide explained the distinctive changes in the communities from the time of redlining to the present day. The community that houses the Bishops Academy is far removed from the days of servant’s quarters. The academy itself is a gated college preparatory school with a tuition of \$44,040 for the 2023-2024 academic year. (The Bishop’s School n.d.) The Midway district was once a bustling industrial area before it shifted into a more commercial part of the city with chain restaurants and clothing stores. The district also was home to about 15,000 people in the 1960s in what was known as the Frontier development. It was an integrated federal government housing development that was constructed to combat the housing shortage due to the influx of government jobs and residents. Unfortunately, this development was demolished, displacing the residents in order to build a sports arena and additional commercial

space. At present there are plans to revitalize the area with consideration of the impact of the current housing market. (Mohebbi n.d.)

Lastly, in 1935, the Barrio Logan community was graded as a “D.” Despite this, it was and currently is rich with Mexican culture. The tour concluded by standing under the highway overpass that was constructed after the community was established. This did not deter the community from celebrating their heritage. They built a park that is adorned with vibrant murals and named it Chicano Park. In 2016, the park was designated as a National Historic Landmark.



Mural in Chicano Park

Nathan Harrison-Born a Slave, Died a San Diego Legend

Another significant contributor to the San Diego community was Nathan Harrison. He was considered a legend in the San Diego area. Born into slavery, Nathan found refuge in the Palomar Mountain area where he would “entertain” visitors. He was considered one of the most photographed San Diego residents of the 19th Century.

As his story is told, Nathan was enslaved in Kentucky and made his way out west due to his travels during the Gold Rush with his owner with whom he shared a last name. It was common for those who were enslaved to have the same last name as their owner although there may have not been any biological relation. After the death of his owner, Nathan found himself to be a free man. After a couple of marriages and living in various locations, Nathan became a homesteader at the base of Palomar Mountain in an area called Rincon. He utilized his surrounding environment and land to build his home and harvest his food. With road expansion onto the mountain, Nathan became somewhat of a tourist attraction. Having been born into slavery and witnessing significant periods of American history such as the Gold Rush, one could only imagine the tales Nathan could share. Visitors would travel to the base of mountain to meet with Nathan, see his home and get the chance to hear any stories he was willing to tell. Nathan continued accommodating tourists until his final days. He passed away in 1920 in his eighties. (NATHAN HARRISON: BORN ENSLAVED, DIED A SAN DIEGO LEGEND. n.d.)

At the time of his death, Nathan Harrison was the most photographed black man in the United States. Ironically, he was not well-known as a San Diego local until Dr. Seth

Mallios, San Diego State University professor, began researching his history. For 20 years, Dr. Seth Mallios, dedicated his time uncovering the remains of Nathan’s cabin on Palomar Mountain. His findings uncovered the ways and means of how Nathan lived his life to include remnants from friends and loved ones who he may have shared space with during his lifetime. A replica of the cabin and some of the items found on site are on display at the San Diego History Center. The center displays the cabin as if one was at the base of Palomar Mountain standing at the excavation site highlighting items that were found within the excavation grid. There is a timeline showing the alignment of Nathan’s life along with significant periods in American history such as California being recognized as the 31st state in 1850 and the Plessy vs. Ferguson decision of “separate but equal” in 1896. A notable point that was highlighted by the center curators was the duality of Nathan’s public persona. Nathan could read and write, was skilled as a laborer, rancher, hunter, and cook, among other manual crafts. However, the interest from the public in visiting his homestead was attributed to the curiosity of the life of an enslaved person. It was thought that Nathan would “code switch” for visitors as a means of safety and protection. Instead of riding on horseback with a gun as he may have done when hunting in local woods, he dressed in old clothing and used a cane to make passersby comfortable that he was harmless. Although Nathan was considered a “free Black person,” that did not mean he would be treated with same equality and fairness as his white counterparts.

The history center also included an exhibit about other local African Americans who also had an impact on the development of the city of San Diego.



FPD attendees touring the Nathan Harrison exhibit at the San Diego History Center



Mural in the Hillcrest Community

LGBTQ+ History in Hillcrest

In the last mobile workshop in the series of tours that highlighted the diversity of the San Diego community, conference participants had the opportunity to explore the LGBTQ+ history of the Hillcrest community. Hillcrest was somewhat of a safe haven during a time where the patronage of people who identified as queer or LGBTQ+ was not accepted elsewhere. The community started to bustle with bars, clubs, and other establishments in the '60s and '70s, giving way not only to a sense of freedom but also to activism.

Various establishments in the community were featured in the Damron Travel Guide, which was a publication that identified "safe" and queer establishments. Although Hillcrest was a hub for LGBTQ+ culture, it could not escape the policing of self-expression and violence against members of the community. As the tour guide explained the joy and excitement that the community exudes during the Pride Parade that move along the main access street of Hillcrest, they also highlighted the consequences of the violent attacks on the community. Such attacks resulted in the death of John Robert Wear who was just 17 years old when he was fatally stabbed by assailants who seemingly orchestrated the attack. John was simply hanging out with his friends during the evening of the stabbing. A plaque is embedded in the sidewalk in remembrance of John Robert Wear and a reminder that the work of combating hate crimes is a continuous fight. Hillcrest continues to be the heartbeat of LGBTQ+ culture in San Diego.

Resilient Women in the San Diego Gaslamp District

FPD partnered with a nonprofit, the San Diego Chinese Historical Society, to share a walking tour of downtown locations that demonstrated the leadership roles women played in early development of the Gaslamp District. To better appreciate the stories of resilient women of the Gaslamp, it's important to understand the historical context of Asian immigration in the late 1800s and early 1900s in San Diego. The Asian immigrant community faced unique challenges that serve as an important backdrop for the achievements of the resilient women who supported Asian immigrants in San Diego.

Background

From the 1860s to 1950s, a growing community of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino immigrants lived and worked in the historic San Diego Gaslamp District. Chinese immigrants first came to San Diego in the 1860s for fishing opportunities. The Chinese fishing industry peaked in 1886 with 18 Chinese fishing boats. A series of discriminatory laws would soon devastate San Diego's growing Chinese community.

- In 1882 the Chinese Exclusion Act was the first national law that targeted a specific nationality. The Act forbade new Chinese laborers and citizenship. The Exclusion Act permitted certain work classifications including students and merchants. After the Act passed, many Chinese immigrants became business partners in stores, laundries, restaurants and hotels.
- In 1888, the Scott Act forbade Chinese workers from returning to the United States.
- In 1892, the Geary Act re-labeled fishermen as restricted laborers, which devastated the Chinese fishing industry in San Diego. By 1893, only one Chinese fishing boat was registered.

San Diego Chinese Historical Museum

The San Diego Chinese Historical Museum's goals are to educate, inspire, and preserve the history, art, and culture of China and the contributions of Chinese Americans. Notable women responsible for advocating for the well-being of the Asian community through their leadership of San Diego Historical Museum include Margaret Fanton, Delia Reinbold, Dorothy Hom, and Salley Avery Wong.

- Margaret Fanton served as Chinese Mission School superintendent from 1911 to 1935. Ms. Fanton was instrumental in efforts to raise funds for the new building, which was dedicated on November 22, 1927.
- Delia Reinbold served the community as superintendent from 1935 to 1956. During this time, the Mission became independent of the First Congregationalist Conference and outgrew the building. In 1960, the congregation purchased a new property in Southeastern San Diego.
- Dorothy Hom and Director of the Chinese Service Center, Sally Wong-Avery, were fierce advocates for preserving the mission of the Chinese Historical Society in the 1980s. During Gaslamp redevelopment, Dorothy and Salley saved the Mission building from demolition, giving way to the establishment of the Chinese Historical Society of Greater San Diego and Baja California.

Quin Produce is owned by the Quin family, descendants of Leong Sue Quin, and his wife, Ah Sue Quin, the first mother and "mayor" of San Diego's historic Chinatown.



Entrance of Quin Produce

After being rescued from servitude by the Presbyterian Mission Home in 1881, Ah Sue met and married Ah Quin. The Quins moved to San Diego and lived in a residence on J Street, where they raised 12 children. After Mr. Quin's death in 1914, his eldest son George and grandson Joseph managed the family business. Quin Produce still remains in the family as rental property and is managed by Joseph's daughter Madeline Quin Haas.



Entrance of the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum

Pacific Hotel

Madam Hada opened the Hotel Pacific at 5th Avenue and Island Avenue in 1914. The Japanese name is still written on the current signage for the Callan Hotel. Japanese businesses and the Japanese Association of San Diego used this building for office space until the FBI shut it down in 1942. After WWII, this building was operated as the Chinese American Market until 1978.



Exterior view of the former Hotel Pacific

Response to the DEI Mobile Tours

The 2023 FPD training workshop was the first year in which mobile tours centered around the mandatory Equity credit were introduced to participants. The level of participation during the tours and the feedback from the conference survey was a clear indication that the tours were a successful addition to the conference schedule.

In reference to the Nathan Harrison exhibit, community planner Brent Cunningham stated, “Before the tour, I had no prior knowledge of Nathan Harrison and his experience in the San Diego/Southern California area. The museum facilitators did an amazing job of describing Nathan Harrison and other important historical facts. I was also highly excited to learn about Willie Lee Morrow. Mr. Morrow is a native of my home state Alabama and was a self-taught barber and chemist. His ingenuity built a multi-million-dollar San Diego based haircare business and media empire. Mr. Morrow had a profound impact on the city and African American community. That was by far one of the biggest highlights of the tour. I will definitely attend future tours that will be a part of upcoming FPD Conference activities.”

The tours attracted 50 participants with “Then and Now-The Impacts of 1937 Redlining on San Diego Communities” being the most attended mobile tour. When asked during the conference survey if participants would attend a DEI-focused mobile tour again, 40 percent agreed, 23 percent strongly agreed, and 63 percent indicated they would like to see a continuation of the mobile tours for upcoming conferences. This year’s feedback has set the tone to continue the discussion of how DEI impacts federal planning.

Shawntesha Ingram
US Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District

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Challenges, Solutions, and Lessons Learned from PPI Planning

The Poland Provided Infrastructure (PPI) program is an element of the 2020 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) between the U.S. and Poland. Under EDCA, U.S. forces have legal status in Poland, can access authorized Polish military installations, and can expand infrastructure to accommodate the U.S. military.

“Poland is a very strategic partner for NATO,” said Nathan Kent-Harbor, AICP, chief at the Regional Planning Support Center for the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Europe District. “They are basically the linchpin in the Eastern Front security for Europe in NATO. The hope is that through this cooperation and infrastructure improvement program, there will be increased partnership and interoperability between the two nations’ military forces, and a strategic positioning of Poland that supports their role in NATO and in the security of the Eastern flank of Europe.”

While Poland leads the design and construction of PPI projects, USACE is responsible for executing the PPI initiative on the U.S. side. As such, USACE is tasked with ensuring infrastructure designed and built in Poland through the program meets requirements for U.S. forces’ use and operation. However, providing this infrastructure isn’t an easy feat.

Navigating Unknown Territory

The PPI program is one of a kind. As explained by U.S. Air Force Program Analyst Megan Rutell, “Partnership programs come in all varieties, but the PPI program is unlike anything I’ve ever worked on before. It’s really in a league of its own.”

USACE Europe District and U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) contracted the joint venture of Woolpert and Black & Veatch to provide master planning and programming services for PPI. The project team worked with U.S. and Polish stakeholders to deliver a real property vision plan and concept plan for multiple distinct facility types at locations across Poland. The project team also provided two area development plans (ADP), mission requirements analysis, and cost estimates for Łask Air Base and Wrocław Airport. These deliverables execute the planning portion of the project with the ADPs guiding future PPI development and investments.

The collaborative effort between USACE, USAFE, Woolpert, Black & Veatch, and U.S. and Polish stakeholders resulted in a successful project completion, though not without some unique challenges, solutions, and lessons learned.

Overcoming Challenges

Highly prepared for this initiative, the project team anticipated—and encountered—a variety of obstacles throughout the project. Keeping their eyes on the ultimate goal, the team committed to a posture of flexibility, communication, and willingness to learn, all necessary ingredients to generate solutions for three main challenges.



U.S. and Polish stakeholders review plans during a portion of the planning workshop held at the 12 TOL office in Warsaw. Image courtesy of Woolpert-Black & Veatch JV.

1. Language Barriers

Early in the project, it became apparent that the project team would have to rely solely on humans for written and verbal communication. Machine translators such as Google Translate were not sufficient in most scenarios; these programs couldn’t fully capture or relay the nuances and intricacies of the technical language and military jargon.

Without a sustainable machine translation solution, the project team turned to its Polish subcontractors and counterparts for help. Fluent in English and Polish, these technical subject matter experts with backgrounds in architecture and engineering could understand and communicate industry-specific knowledge and nuances intelligently. Using their language and technical expertise, they reviewed and edited materials needed by the project team. This workaround resulted in a better understanding of Poland’s capabilities and deeper levels of trust as conversations with Polish stakeholders progressed in the right direction.

2. Cultural Differences

Naturally, cultural differences were anticipated, and the project team didn’t walk into them blindly. Instead of ignoring varying approaches, the project team committed to adapting to and learning Polish customs. They researched cultural differences before traveling; sampled Polish food at meetings; scheduled workshops before the 3:00 p.m. Polish end of day; and most importantly, observed the room and behaved in accordance with others.

“All team members should be solution-oriented, open-minded, respectful, and open to learning about customs, culture, and habits. Communication is the key to mutual understanding, cooperation, and further partnership,” said Aleksandra Bugaj, RZI Wrocław, Real Property and Surveying, Allied Investment Branch.

Of course, navigating cultural differences was a process of trial and error. However, the willingness to learn and participate in Polish customs went a long way toward building trust with the host nation and producing a successful result.

“Even while working with an international group of people on very important projects, the atmosphere was very friendly and easygoing, and it helped a lot,” said Anna Dulaska, 12 Terenowy Oddział Lotniskowy (TOL), Allied Investment Branch.

3. Contrasting Approaches

The U.S. and Poland have different approaches to project execution, from planning to design to construction. Black & Veatch Senior Planner Jeremy Sewall explained, “The U.S. idea of planning and the Polish idea of planning are a little different. We think of planning as a distinct stage in the process, but in Poland, it is part of a continuum.”

Another difference in project execution encompasses design standard variances. Additionally, the countries approach cost estimations quite differently. These contrasting styles often complicate project execution. However, through communication and coordination, the project team and stakeholders arrived at an understanding and generated ways to move forward. To showcase this approach to design standards, Kent-Harbor said, “It was about going through the standards and identifying which ones were absolutes and which ones were flexible when approaching design and construction. As long as communication remains open and folks are willing to cooperate and work together, there are always opportunities for improvement. Working out the best mutual way forward helps both sides to accomplish the goal of delivering infrastructure so that Soldiers and Airmen can complete their mission and training.”

Andrew Etherington, AICP, Woolpert senior associate and planner, explained how the differences in cost estimation were overcome: “The project team produced a more conservative cost estimate than the Polish stakeholders, so we had to balance them. We communicated with the relevant parties to develop cost estimates that the host nation found feasible and liked.”

Overall, the differences in project execution and cost estimation didn’t prevent the completion or success of the project. In fact, effective communication and a desire for alignment prevailed and led to a greater appreciation for each other’s approaches.

“We had some differences, but the most important part was that we had common ground,” said Lt. Col. Tomasz Lechowicz, 12 TOL, Branch Chief, Allied Investment Brand. “The key factor was understanding the processes. Since I had an opportunity to be a part of this project, I learned a lot about the U.S.’s way of thinking and organizing a business. With some differences, like estimating the cost of infrastructure, I liked their attitude. It was structured and organized and went from a general view to the details.”

A Common Thread

For every challenge, Woolpert and Black & Veatch found an appropriate and unique solution—but the common thread in each one was collaboration and cooperation with the host nation. The Polish stakeholders, subcontractors, and subject matter experts were pleasant to work with and had a vested interest in overcoming any barriers to success.

They continuously offered assistance and support through ongoing communication.

“We were able to overcome a lot of differences because of good communication throughout the process,” said Ramon Gil Lopez, program manager for Poland USAFE Bases and Forces Division. “Sometimes, we weren’t able to understand decisions or certain positions, so we had to sit down and communicate to understand each other’s points. The outcome was a successful agreement throughout all areas of the process.”

Etherington also believes communication played a significant role in project completion. He praised the host nation for its collaboration and cooperation. “The host nation is a great partner,” Etherington said. “These projects aren’t successful without great host nation partners. They gave us the right information and access to the right folks to get the job done.”

“It is both exciting and an honor to be a part of the PPI program,” said Rick Kaiser, President, Black & Veatch Special Projects Corp. “As a key and critical member of NATO, Poland is an excellent partner across every spectrum. Given the current geo-political concerns in Eastern Europe, it is even more important to execute this program effectively and efficiently. PPI is a truly innovative way to organize, design, and ultimately construct world-class defense infrastructure. I applaud the USACE efforts and truly believe that the Woolpert & Black & Veatch team is the best team to execute their mission.”

Lessons Learned

The project team took home invaluable lessons, including how the nuance of language impacts understanding, the trust-building effect of participating in cultural customs, and using good communication with the host nation to overcome project barriers. Equally important is the lesson that an invitation to another country for a project means every outside team member is a guest of the host nation. Everything the team does, from planning to execution, must be filtered through that perspective.

“When we compare Poland to the way we do business at other OCONUS U.S. bases, a lot of other OCONUS U.S. bases have a U.S. military commander with far-reaching, base-wide, decision-making power. But that’s different in Poland,” Rutell said. “We don’t own the bases in Poland. For all intents and purposes, even in countries where we don’t own the base, a lot of times we run the base. In Poland, we don’t. The bases are Polish, the commanders are Polish, and we are guests. That means on the U.S. side, we have to adjust our approach because some of our processes assume that the U.S. is in charge. We have to make the right decisions for the correct leader on both the U.S. and Polish sides. We want to make sure our processes work with theirs. That was a big lesson learned for us.”

Chad Hartley, AICP, PMP, LEED AP ND
Woolpert Senior Associate and Project Manager

Steve Baird, AICP
Black & Veatch Federal Planning Studio Manager

The Future Is Now: Emerging Planners are the Present and Future of Federal Planning

Introduction

Federal planning is a rapidly growing field that encompasses a wide range of responsibilities, from infrastructure development and land use planning to environmental sustainability and community engagement for federal government agencies. As this field expands, Emerging Planners (defined as those with less than 8 years of experience in the industry) have a unique opportunity to showcase their expertise and demonstrate their value to leadership and teams. Their knowledge, skills, and variety of work experiences make them well-equipped to tackle the complex challenges that arise in federal planning.

Emerging Planners possess contemporary skills that enable them to bridge the gap between overarching urban and community planning principles and those guiding federal planning initiatives. These professionals are adept at synthesizing diverse planning methodologies, including those outlined in the DoD Master Planning Principles found in Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) 2-100-01, as just one example. By emphasizing their capacity for interdisciplinary integration, Emerging Planners can foster sustainable, inclusive, and healthy environments for military installations and beyond.

However, to become effective assets to their teams, Emerging Planners must navigate a variety of challenges in the professional planning world.

Challenges to Emerging Planners

Internally, the post-COVID work environment poses unique obstacles. The pandemic has radically transformed the workplace, with remote work becoming the new norm for many organizations. For Emerging Planners who joined the workforce during or after the pandemic, this means adapting to a hybrid or fully remote work environment. They have had to find innovative ways to establish their presence and make meaningful contributions despite not being physically present in the office. According to a 2021 survey conducted by LinkedIn, 78 percent of recent graduates coming into the workforce post-COVID report feeling anxious or uncertain about their career prospects. This is not surprising given that the job market has become increasingly competitive in recent years. The same survey also found that 74 percent of young professionals are concerned about their ability to find a job in their desired field.

Imposter syndrome, defined by Merriam-Webster's Dictionary as "a psychological condition that is characterized by persistent doubt concerning one's abilities or accomplishments accompanied by the fear of being exposed as a fraud despite evidence of one's ongoing success." It is a prevalent internal challenge among many Emerging Planners, stemming from persistent feelings of self-doubt and a belief that their achievements are undeserved. This phenomenon often arises due to the intense pressure to excel in a

competitive job market, where success is constantly demanded and benchmarked against peers and established professionals. Emerging Planners, lacking the experience and tenure of seasoned counterparts, may feel particularly vulnerable to these insecurities. The perceived disparity in experience levels can exacerbate feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt, hindering professional growth and confidence. Research indicates that while imposter syndrome affects 75 percent of all individuals at some point in their lives, Emerging Planners may confront it more acutely as they navigate the early stages of their careers.

Recognizing the prevalence of imposter syndrome among Emerging Planners, leadership and senior management can play a crucial role in combating it. By fostering supportive work environments, offering mentorship and guidance, providing diverse role models, and creating opportunities for professional development, leaders can help Emerging Planners overcome their self-doubt and realize their true potential. When Emerging Planners feel supported and valued, they become highly effective and valuable members of any project or team.

External challenges also present themselves to Emerging Planners as they navigate their roles and responsibilities. One significant challenge is the struggle to be proactive in seeking new opportunities and taking on additional responsibilities. Emerging Planners may feel hesitant to step outside their comfort zones, fearing failure or a lack of expertise. This hesitancy can limit their growth and potential. To address this challenge, leadership must actively encourage and empower Emerging Planners to embrace new challenges. By adopting an open-door policy, providing training opportunities, and offering one-on-one guidance, leaders can create an environment that nurtures growth and enables Emerging Planners to expand their skill sets confidently.

One of the primary challenges that Emerging Planners face is the need to balance work and personal life. While work-life balance is a concern for professionals at all stages, Emerging Planners often face unique pressures that intensify the need for vigilance in maintaining this balance. The drive to establish themselves in their careers



Mary Finnegan and Tara Pence Present Session Learning Objectives at FPD 2023 in San Diego

may lead to tendencies to overwork, amplifying the risk of burnout. Additionally, assumptions by employers regarding the availability and flexibility of younger employees can exacerbate these pressures. Recognizing the importance of mental and physical health, Emerging Planners must prioritize self-care practices such as taking breaks, regular exercise, and setting boundaries to safeguard their energy, focus, and productivity. According to a 2020 study conducted by Deloitte, 75 percent of millennials report that work-life balance is important to them. However, only 42 percent of those surveyed felt that their current employer supports this goal. This can lead to burnout and other negative impacts on employee well-being.

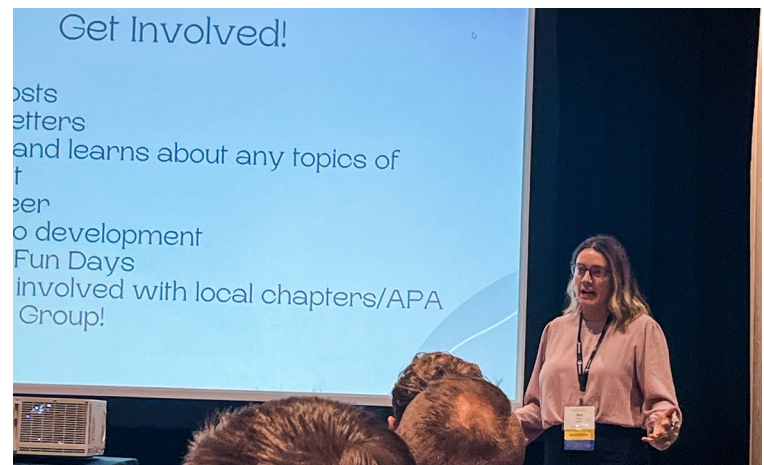
Effective communication is another external challenge faced by Emerging Planners. Engaging with leadership, co-workers, and clients require strong communication skills, and those new to the professional planning world may struggle to find their voices. To overcome this challenge, companies must strive to create open and welcoming spaces where Emerging Planners feel comfortable expressing their concerns, sharing their ideas, and seeking guidance. Establishing a culture of open dialogue and ensuring that Emerging Planners' voices are heard fosters collaboration and innovation within the organization. Clear communication is critical in any workplace, and Emerging Planners who can communicate effectively are better able to collaborate with colleagues, negotiate with clients, and articulate their ideas and opinions.

It is essential to recognize the eagerness, knowledge, and skills that Emerging Planners bring to the workforce. Their passion and fresh perspectives invigorate the federal planning field, pushing it forward. While federal planning may be a niche path within urban planning, the connections and similarities between the two fields are substantial. Emerging Planners, many of whom have recent education and research experience, can be quick to recognize these connections and can effectively leverage their knowledge to make meaningful contributions. Emerging Planners should be proactive in seeking out new opportunities and taking risks. They should be willing to step outside of their comfort zones and take on challenges that may seem daunting at first. By being proactive and taking calculated risks, Emerging Planners can gain valuable experience and demonstrate their potential to their superiors.

How to Help

Senior leaders in the workforce must recognize the value and potential of their Emerging Planners. By providing meaningful opportunities for Emerging Planners to contribute, offering feedback and guidance, fostering a culture of mentorship and support, involving Emerging Planners in strategic planning, and prioritizing diversity and inclusivity, senior leaders can better utilize their Emerging Planners and help them to thrive within the organization. Ultimately, this will benefit the organization, leading to greater success and sustainability in the long term.

Senior leaders should also actively work with their Emerging Planners to help them create a career development path. Moving forward in the Federal Planning world is not linear,



Tara Pence Urges the Audience to Get Involved!

and it is important that senior leaders do not put new planners in a box that prohibits their growth, as each new planner will have different goals they want to achieve. Raises and promotions should be looked at holistically by senior planners versus using a “checklist” type system. New planners bring a lot of knowledge and skills to the table when they join, and these can come in the form of hard and soft skills. Some planners may be stronger in using programs such as Microsoft Office, ArcGIS, or Adobe products, but lack the skills to communicate effectively, work well in a team setting, or manage their time and prioritize tasks. Senior leaders need to work with their new planners on both hard and soft skills to ensure they become well-rounded, effective members of the team. According to Forbes, 72 percent of employees felt their performance would improve if their managers provided corrective feedback.

Implementing reverse mentoring programs can be an effective way for senior professionals to leverage the skills and perspectives of emerging professionals. Younger employees can mentor senior professionals on emerging technologies, digital trends, and fresh ideas. According to a study by Deloitte, 75 percent of organizations that implemented reverse mentoring programs report increased productivity and improved knowledge sharing. IBM's Junior/Senior partnership program pairs senior executives with junior employees to exchange insights on topics such as social media, technology, and current trends. Reverse mentoring programs have been shown to yield numerous benefits for both Emerging Planners and the organizations that implement them. Here are some ways in which reverse mentoring programs are helping Emerging Planners:

- By participating in reverse mentoring, Emerging Planners can showcase their knowledge and skills to senior leaders within the organization. This increased visibility can lead to greater recognition and career advancement opportunities.
- Reverse mentoring programs allow Emerging Planners to develop essential skills such as leadership, communication, and relationship-building. As mentors, they must effectively convey their ideas and expertise to senior professionals, fostering their own growth and confidence in the process.
- Reverse mentoring allows Emerging Planners to



Presenters Mary Finnegan (Center Left) and Tara Pence (Center Right) Pose with FPD Emerging Professionals Ricqui Brager (Left) and Dana Orkin (Right)

introduce new technologies and computer programs to senior leaders that can provide valuable insights and ideas to improve workflow, generate out-of-the-box solutions, and greatly enhance projects.

- Through reverse mentoring, Emerging Planners have the chance to build relationships with senior leaders and other professionals they may not have otherwise interacted with. These connections can lead to mentorship opportunities, career guidance, and expanded professional networks.
- Reverse mentoring encourages a culture of continuous learning within organizations by exposing senior professionals to new technologies, trends, and perspectives, thus fostering innovation and adaptability.
- Through reverse mentoring, Emerging Planners can bring fresh perspectives and ideas to the table, challenge senior leaders on their assumptions, and allow young women to bring awareness to workplace culture and any issues they might be facing.

CALLING ALL EMERGING FEDERAL PLANNERS

Those of you attending the 2024 annual training workshop are invited to a mixer on Tuesday, 15 May, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Astro Beer Hall in Washington, D.C., sponsored by HB&A. We look forward to seeing you!

In Conclusion

Emerging Planners have a critical role to play in the evolving field of Federal Planning. Their knowledge, skills, and work experiences equip them to address the complex challenges faced by federal clients and the broader planning community. However, to fully harness their potential, Emerging Planners must overcome internal and external challenges such as navigating the post-COVID workforce, combatting Imposter Syndrome, being proactive, working outside their comfort zones, and effectively communicating. By investing in Emerging Planners and providing the necessary support and guidance, organizations can tap into their talents and ensure their valuable contributions to the field of federal planning. Together, Emerging Planners and experienced professionals can shape vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive communities that improve the quality of life for the communities and stakeholders served by federal planning.

Mary Finnegan, CCF, LEED GA

The Schreifer Group

Tara Pence

HB&A

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