

APA Webinar Series on Cross-border Regional Planning

*Presented through a partnership of
APA's Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division and Latinos and Planning Division*

The next webinar, entitled “***Dialogo on the Border: A Unique Experience***” will be held on Tuesday, October 29, 2013 from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM (Pacific Time)

Proposed AICP Certification Maintenance Credits – 1.5 credits

Cost: \$40 per registrant (APA member or non-member)
\$20 per member of either the RIP or LAP Divisions (this \$20 discount from the full \$40 cost may also be obtained by joining either Division at the time of registration)
\$10 per student (full-time or part-time)

Description of Webinar Subject Matter:

This webinar, co-sponsored by the APA Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division and Latinos and Planning Division, is the second in a series that will provide training to urban planners and professionals in related fields on best practices in cross-border regional planning along the U.S. / Mexico border. This second webinar will focus on an initiative of the Latinos and Planning Division called *Dialogos* and specifically on the first *dialogo* on the border. This event was held on April 19-20, 2013 in Brownsville, a border city in Texas. Speakers in this webinar will include the Chair of the Latinos and Planning Division and *dialogo* organizers and speakers.

The webinar will present lessons learned in the community engagement effort resulting from the *dialogo* in a border area: demographic realities, perceptions about poverty and isolation in border towns, and economic and development strategies in the planning of border areas.

Specific topics to be covered include:

- Defining *Dialogos*: a brief history of these community engagement efforts around the US and specifically the event in Brownsville
- Overview of the border area in terms of economic and social variables. Examples of successful city planning efforts to recover economic activity and the use of public spaces in border cities in Texas.
- Discussion on social equity in a cross-border context; education opportunities and job availability
- Using arts and cultural expressions to inspire the planning process; an example in a Dialogo setting

Through real examples discussed during the *Dialogo*, the experiences of the City of Brownsville, the City of Harlingen, the Community Development Corporation of Brownsville, and the University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College have engaged in creative and successful projects to improve living conditions in this border region were shared.

Speakers will share “lessons learned” and discuss emerging issues that are now being addressed through collaborative planning efforts. One example coming from UT-Brownsville are “los abuelitos”

projects, which are designed to raise awareness of the rich history of Latinos in border areas. The social implications of such efforts have been positive making local populations re-value their heritage. Equally, through the use of the arts and cultural expression techniques, webinar participants will learn unique ways to engage local communities. The webinar will emphasize the ways in which this was done during the *dialogo* with the objective to make evident the relevance of promoting collaboration among municipalities, community-based organizations, and academia.

Speaker Biographies:

EDELMIRO ESCAMILLA

Dr. Edelmiro F. Escamilla is an Assistant Professor of Construction Science in the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University since 2010. He teaches construction project management and materials and methods. Dr. Escamilla is currently a member and previously served as the president of the Hispanic Professional Network (PHN). He is also a member of the Mexican American Latino Faculty Association (MALFA). He also is a fellow of the Center for Heritage Conservation and a fellow of the Center for Housing and Urban Development. Dr. Escamilla's research interests include project management, capacity generation for global workforce, facility management, and historical preservation focusing on marginalized populations.

CECILIA GIUSTI

Cecilia H. Giusti is Associate Dean for Outreach and Diversity in the College of Architecture and Associate Professor in the department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning at Texas A&M University. Dr. Giusti's research has focused on Colonias along the Texas-Mexico border region and on the many aspects of planning in low income communities; she has published on issues of land tenure, microfinancing, housing improvements and local economic development and planning in Colonias. She teaches courses on economic development and planning, international development and land uses. In 2008 Dr. Giusti led the first Dialogo in Texas and in 2013 the first Dialogo on the Border that took place in Brownsville, Texas.

JAMES ROJAS

James Rojas is an urban planner, and artist. He is one of the few nationally recognized urban planners to examine U.S. Latino cultural influences on urban design. He holds a Master of City Planning and a Master of Science of Architecture Studies from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Mr. Rojas founded the Latino Urban Forum (LUF), a volunteer advocacy group, dedicated to understanding and improving the built environment of Los Angeles' Latino communities. Mr. Rojas developed a process that improves community participation through engagement, creative thinking and celebration, but most importantly raises people's consciousness of the built environment around them and how it impacts their experience of place. He has facilitated over 250 interactive workshops and created over 50 interactive urban dioramas across the country. He has collaborated with municipalities, non-profits, health and educational institutions, museums and galleries to educate the public on urban planning

MONICA VILLALOBOS

Monica Villalobos is a Senior Project Manager for AECOM, where she works on transportation planning and public engagement initiatives. She is also pursuing a PhD at UC Berkeley in the department of City and Regional Planning. Ms. Villalobos is the Chair of the Latinos and Planning (LAP) Division of the American Planning Association (APA), and has served on the National APA Diversity Task Force for the past 3 years. She was previously appointed to the APA National Leadership Development and Young Planners Group task forces in 2009.