In December 2017, the City of Los Angeles adopted a comprehensive regulatory framework for commercial cannabis activity, including a program designed to promote social equity by extending opportunities to historically marginalized communities.

Over the course of more than nine months of hearings, workshops and City Council meetings, multiple City agencies worked to create an all-encompassing system for regulating both medical and adult-use cannabis businesses for the first time in LA’s history. This effort was in response to LA voters’ approval of Proposition M, which called for the repeal of the City’s prior moratorium on cannabis dispensaries.

Under State law, cities can enact their own regulations on commercial cannabis activity and grant local authorization to businesses seeking a State license. The City’s framework puts the new Department of Cannabis Regulation in charge of the approval process for local authorizations, with oversight from a five-member Cannabis Regulation Commission. All authorized businesses must comply with location restrictions, operating requirements, and other regulations.

One of the major components of LA’s regulatory system is a Social Equity Program (SEP) intentionally designed to ensure the cannabis industry provides economic benefits to people and communities affected by past law enforcement and incarceration for cannabis-related offenses. The SEP, which was recognized by APA’s LA Section in June 2018 with a Social Change and Diversity Award, offers priority processing to qualified applicants and provides for business, licensing, and compliance assistance.

The office of City Council President Herb Wesson developed the SEP in collaboration with the Department of Cannabis Regulation and the office of the Chief Legislative Analyst. To gather input, the City reached out to interested community members through a variety of channels, including panel discussions and open public comments at City Council and committee meetings.

LA’s Cannabis Social Equity Program drew participation from approximately 600 residents. “Source: Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions, Inc.”
California City Moves Toward Innovation Zone for Marijuana

As pot has marched steadily toward legalization in California since the approval of medicinal use, the drug has ostensibly provided relief for countless ailing residents. Even so, marijuana has created headaches for many California cities.

Most debates have centered on whether, and where, to allow dispensaries to operate. Many cities forbid them entirely and other cities, like Los Angeles, have had to figure out how to rein in as many as 450 un-permitted, quasi-legal facilities.

It’s a different story in the state’s northwest corner, along a woody coastal stretch known as the Emerald Triangle. There, the city of Arcata is addressing a different side of the marijuana economy. It has just become the first jurisdiction in the country to embrace not just the distribution of medicinal cannabis but also its production.

“A huge share of Arcata’s economy is directly related to marijuana, with countless businesses—from hardware stores to law offices—as secondary beneficiaries.”

In May, the Arcata City Council tentatively approved, on a 5-0 vote, the creation of a “Medical Marijuana Innovation Zone,” pending further study and the drafting of a zoning ordinance by the city’s planning commission. City officials believe it would be the country’s first-ever land use designation specifically meant to promote and regulate the production of marijuana and cannabis-related products. The city has identified several parcels in an abandoned lumber processing facility may soon provide a city-sanctioned home for marijuana producers. The logic behind the zone hearkens back to the very origin of U.S. zoning when noxious industries were first segregated from residential areas.

In Arcata’s case, the nuisance isn’t from toxic smoke or noise but rather the sickly pungent aroma of some of the world’s most potent bud.

“The trial of this first site will be to control the smells,” says Arcata City Council Member Susan Ornelas. “We’ve all associated that smell with illegal activity for 70-something years.” The city has long been something of a pot destination thanks to its isolation, hippie spirit, and live-and-let-live attitude.

City officials say the power of zoning offers its best, and perhaps only, tool for regulating the marijuana industry, which otherwise depends on decisions at the state level. Arcata-based attorney Mark Harris, advisor to the National Organization for Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) says he considers the zone an “overwhelmingly positive” development. He sees this approach as a model not only for cities throughout California but also for those in other pot-friendly states.

“I think it’s the only thing [cities can do to control marijuana],” says Harris. “Court case after court case established that these larger decisions about legality relate to the state, but in terms of land use … health and safety and public good relate to the local jurisdictions.”

“We made some of the first land-use rules about [growing] and the dispensaries,” says Ornelas. “And we also controlled individuals’ growth through land use rather than control it as a drug.”

A huge share of Arcata’s economy is directly related to marijuana, with countless businesses—from hardware stores to law offices—as secondary beneficiaries. A 2011 report estimated that $415 million of Humboldt County’s $1.6 billion economy related to marijuana.

That number is sure to rise if the state legalizes (and taxes) recreational use. A group called ReformCA recently announced its intentions to get a legalization measure on the 2016 statewide ballot.

“It’s refreshing to see local authorities recognizing that their communities will benefit economically by welcoming the transition of this already lucrative cash crop from criminal hands to tax-paying, job-creating, law-abiding businesses,” says “Radical” Russ Belville, a Portland, Oregon-based radio host and marijuana activist.

Ornelas calls the marijuana boom the region’s “next green rush.”

“Our area has a highly skilled workforce that has many years of experience in this industry,” says Arcata Community Development Director Larry Oetker. “Because of that, we believe that we are uniquely qualified to expand our businesses in this area.”

Even as marijuana remains firmly in the gray market nationally, public officials in Arcata talk about marijuana the way their counterparts in Iowa talk about corn. They acknowledge the industry’s economic benefits, and they would prefer to regulate it sensibly rather than let the underground economy run amok. Ornelas says that even the police chief supports a version of the zone.

“If we do not have a place where people can do their business legitimately, then they will have no choice but to do it in an unregulated areas,” says Oetker.

Not that there hasn’t been tension between the city and growers. For the past few years, growers, particularly those who are new to the area, have been invading residential neighborhoods and setting up grows in single-family homes, much to the distress of residents. To encourage growers to move to industrial areas, the local utility instituted a surcharge on homes that were using 400 percent or more electricity than their neighbors (an amount thought to signal clandestine indoor growing). City officials say the number of houses guzzling electricity...
Creating Great Communities Mean More than Ever Before

This is my last Chapter President’s column before turning over the reins to APA California President-elect, Julia Lave Johnston. It has been an honor to serve as your Chapter president for these past two years.

I hope those of you who were at our Chapter conference last month in San Diego enjoyed it as much as I did. The setting and venue were fantastic and the opening reception on the USS Midway was a unique and fascinating experience. We had close to 1,700 registered attendees at the conference, a new record (or darn close). Special thanks are due to some key folks: Our Chapter Vice-president for Conferences, Hanson Hom, AICP, our conference host committee chairs, Brooke Peterson, AICP, Carey Fernandes, AICP and Betsy McCullough, FAICP, and our awesome conference manager, Deene Alongi. Every one of these professionals gave countless hours to ensuring that you could avail yourselves of top-notch professional development opportunities in a setting that was as practical as it was beautiful. Thank you!

One of the issues that has inspired and animated me as Chapter President is our commitment (and our duty) to diversity and inclusion. For over ten years now, the California Chapter has presented a Diversity Summit at our annual conference and I make a point of attending every year, because I always learn something new and come away with a widened perspective. The annual Diversity Summit is one way to keep this crucial conversation alive and moving forward, but it’s not enough by itself. Yes, we need to ensure that our work as professional planners is inclusive and honors the diversity of our whole communities. But we also need to ensure that our membership and our Chapter leadership reflects and embraces the diversity of our communities. At the Chapter Board meeting in early 2018, we recognized that we, as a leadership group, needed to walk our talk when it comes to diversity and inclusion; we can’t be an organization that truly values diversity without carrying that concept through to our leadership. So, when the Chapter Board met at the conference in early October, we approved amending our bylaws to add a new voting member to the Board: a Vice-president for Diversity and Inclusion. As a full member of the Board, this new VP will help ensure that diversity is not a “check-box” or an after-thought, but fully embedded in the work we do as an organization.

When I started my term as Chapter President, our country had just undergone one of the greatest political shocks in our history, the magnitude of which only seems to grow every week. The divisiveness unsettling our nation didn’t start in 2016, but it has reached fever pitch in volume and intensity. It is a difficult, incredibly challenging time, but this is where being a planner comes in handy. Because what is planning about anyway? It’s about how, despite our differences and our amazing diversity, we can live together in a place. As the tag line goes, planning is about “making great communities happen.” And all of this is underlain by our values as planners: values expressed in our code of ethics and in our everyday work.

We know that planning is fundamentally a values-based profession. We are constantly asking: how do we thrive? how do we innovate? how to we rebound from catastrophe? and how do we include? And especially how we include those who have been and continue to be excluded and marginalized for far too long. And we know that creating great communities means finding ways to come together across dividing lines—whatever those might be—in other words, we got this planners!
California Releases Final Cannabis Regulations

CALIFORNIA CONSUMERS MAY GET SEAMLESS LEGAL ACCESS TO CANNABIS STATEWIDE INSTEAD OF A PATCHWORK OF LOCAL DELIVERY BANS, UNDER RULES SET TO BE MADE FINAL THIS FALL.

State officials on Friday presented a final draft of permanent rules governing the cannabis industry. The most controversial element: a rule continuing to allow legal cannabis deliveries in cities that ban retail sales.

The Bureau of Cannabis Control, the state Department of Food and Agriculture, and the state Department of Public Health issued the revised rules Friday. They will have wide-ranging effects on issues including packaging, events, testing, and more. The public has 15 days to weigh in with comments before they are finalized in December.

The delivery rule draws praise from consumers and the industry, but a judge may make the final decision.

While many in the cannabis industry have applauded the delivery rule, plenty still complain about the permanent rules overall. The hundreds of pages of regulations confuse operators and sometime conflict with other rules. The rules add to the regulatory burden on cannabis businesses, a cost that many businesses pass down to consumers. Industry insiders are still going through the hundreds of pages of rules trying to digest them.

There are “so many regulations in there that are just oppressive and difficult,” Debby Goldsberry, executive director of the cannabis shop Magnolia Oakland wrote on her Facebook page. “It’s confusing, over-complicated, overbearing, and ultimately unenforceable.”

In general, though, it’s new cannabis business that will be affected more than existing ones, according to Hezekiah Allen, former executive director of the California Growers Association. “For businesses that have not yet been able to obtain a license,” he said, “the target seems to be getting further away, and the prospects for success more elusive. This is problematic, as a vast majority of businesses in the state have not yet been licensed.”

DELIVERY DESTINED FOR LEGAL DEBATE

The delivery rule draws praise from consumers and the industry, but state courts could make the final decision. Police and cities have said they may sue state agencies to delete legal delivery access for consumers. In the meantime, though, Allen says the Bureau of Cannabis Control “has taken a strong stand for access, which is much needed as patients have been hurt by limited access and consumers turn to unregulated sales when left with no other option.”

Even though 57% of California voters enacted legalization in 2016, just 25% of cities and counties allow cannabis retail. Most cities and counties lack the regulatory experience or willpower to do so.

The League of California Cities and the California Police Chiefs Association strongly oppose allowing licensed delivery rules. They say cities banned retail sales because of safety concerns and allowing legal deliveries in those communities would undercut home rule. State law disallows local governments from banning deliveries, however, and the rules reflect that reality.

In issuing the rules, the BCC “decided to ignore the concerns of a broad coalition of local government, labor, and law enforcement,” Carolyn Coleman, the League of Cities’ executive director, said in a statement. “By removing local governments’ reasonable regulatory authority on cannabis deliveries, the BCC is imposing a ‘one size fits all’ form of cannabis regulation. We will continue to fight for cities’ ability to determine whether cannabis is right for their communities.”

Cities and counties can still control the time, place and manner of legal cannabis deliveries, as well as institute other rules like courier inventory and cash limits. Licensed delivery services also have to follow multiple pages of state rules that include checking customer ID, vehicle tracking and anti-robbery measures.

Dan Mitchell has written for The New York Times, Fortune, the San Francisco Chronicle, Wired, and other publications. He is based in Oakland, California.

The rules add to the regulatory burden on cannabis businesses, a cost that many businesses pass down to consumers.
LA City Council President Herb Wesson speaks to participants in a September 2017 workshop held to gather input on LA’s Cannabis Social Equity Program. Source: Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions, Inc.

LA Adopts Comprehensive Commercial CannabisRegs

with Social Equity Ethics

In addition, the City held a community workshop on the SEP attended by approximately 600 residents. Common themes from the September 2017 workshop included community experience with cannabis enforcement, questions regarding the cannabis industry and licensing structure, and suggested improvements to the program.

The program was informed by an analysis report prepared with assistance from Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions, Inc. (formerly Amec Foster Wheeler Environment & Infrastructure, Inc.), which also provided environmental services for the overall package of regulations. The analysis report combined law enforcement data on cannabis arrests and U.S. Census data on household income to identify communities that were disproportionately harmed by cannabis prohibition and enforcement. These communities were termed “disproportionately impacted areas” (DIAs).

The report’s recommendations were used to inform the program’s eligibility criteria and its various tiers of priority for the processing of authorizations. The SEP categorizes applicants into three groups, having varying performance requirements and program benefits.

Applicants in Tiers 1 and 2 must have a specified minimum equity share in the business and be low-income with either a prior California cannabis conviction or residency in a DIA. Tier 3 applicants are those that provide capital, leased space, and other assistance to Tier 1 or Tier 2 applicants. Additionally, all SEP applicants must make a good-faith effort to employ individuals who are low income, have a past cannabis-related conviction, or reside in a DIA.

Another major feature of the regulatory framework is a set of location restrictions that allow businesses in certain zones, identify areas where they are explicitly prohibited, and require them to observe a minimum distance from specified sensitive sites, depending on the type of business.

Developed by the Department of City Planning, the location restrictions seek to balance business opportunities with neighborhood protections. Staff released a draft ordinance for public review and comment, including a June 2017 hearing that attracted more than 200 attendees and 60 spoken comments.

Comments generally supported keeping cannabis sales separate from places where children and individuals susceptible to substance abuse are likely to congregate, as well as from other sites where cannabis is sold. Accordingly, the ordinance requires on-site cannabis retail businesses (as opposed those that only deliver off-site) to observe a minimum distance from schools, public parks, public libraries, licensed day care centers, licensed alcoholism and drug recovery and treatment facilities, as well as from other on-site retail locations.

Since non-retail and delivery-only cannabis businesses generally do not permit members of the public to enter, no distancing requirement was initially recommended for them; however, the City Council later added a provision requiring non-retail and delivery-only cannabis activity to observe a minimum distance from schools.

In setting the minimum distance, a key consideration was the anticipated visibility from cannabis retail businesses to sensitive sites, as well as preventing two or more retail businesses from locating on the same block. To analyze the effects of different radii, staff prepared a series of GIS visualizations overlaying the anticipated available locations with jurisdictional boundaries such as City Council districts.

Ultimately, staff recommended a radius of 800 feet to provide an additional buffer beyond the typical LA block length of 600 feet. The City Council later reduced the distance to 700 feet, and specified the non-retail and delivery-only radius as 600 feet from schools.

In general, staff identified zones for each business type based on which of the City’s existing zones permit the business’ underlying generic activities—retail, manufacturing, etc. As a result, cannabis retail is generally eligible to locate in commercial zones, while cultivators, manufacturers, distributors and testing labs are generally limited to industrial zones. Cannabis businesses are prohibited altogether, regardless of zoning, in areas that serve a particular specialized purpose, such as the Port of LA and LA International Airport.

As of July 2018, LA’s Department of Cannabis Regulation had issued local authorizations to 155 pre-existing dispensaries (i.e., businesses formerly engaged in medical cannabis retail sales). Authorization for pre-existing non-retail businesses was scheduled to begin in August 2018, while the opening date for social equity and general public processing had yet to be announced.

The City’s framework is still evolving, and staff currently are working to respond to the City Council’s requests for proposed amendments. Among the topics to be addressed are possible regulations allowing for greenhouse cultivation, on-site consumption, and temporary events. Additionally, with regard to the SEP, the Council has asked for more analysis to inform possible modifications to how DIAs are defined.

The proposed amendments could come before the Council in late 2018 or early 2019. For more information: http://cannabis.lacity.org

Niall H. Huffman is a City Planning Associate with the LA Department of City Planning, coordinating the preparation of zoning code amendments and other land use ordinances. His prior work includes consulting on General Plan updates and grant writing for active transportation projects.
For over 25 years, the APA CA Central Section has been hosting a three-day, family-friendly, summer weekend retreat at the YMCA Camp at Lake Sequoia near Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Parks. Every year, the Central Valley planners generously invite colleagues from around California to join in. This year, a few San Diego and Sacramento area planners decided to join in.

Our extraordinary planning camp weekend involved meeting about 20 planners and their families from the Central Valley, including planners from the Fresno Council of Governments; Tulare County; the Tulare County Association of Governments; the Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO); Caltrans; several consulting firms; and various small cities throughout the Central Valley.

The educational component of the retreat provided us a history on the formation of Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs), focused on the Fresno LAFCO. The presentation was titled “Beyond LAFCO 101.”

LAFCO Executive Officer David Fey educated, enthralled, and entertained us as he described the multi-faceted role of LAFCOs in California. We learned that there is a local agency formation commission in each county, some of which are departments within county government, while others are independent of the county. We also learned that LAFCOs were created by the State Legislature in 1963 as planning and regulatory agencies managing the boundaries of cities and special districts, but have grown to include governance audits of these local agencies. In his in-depth and entertaining presentation, David Fey covered the following timelines:

1. 1945-1963–The past is prelude: In the beginning there was chaos
2. 1963-2000–Growing pains: A star is born, well, sort of, maybe, maybe not…
4. 2017 +–Everything you know is wrong: LAFCO in an age of change and social justice

Prior to joining LAFCO in 2013, David Fey worked in local agency land use, utility planning, public outreach, CEQA, and emergency response planning since 1986 as both a city planner in the Fresno-Clovis area and working for consulting firms serving the central California market.

In addition to learning about the changing role of LAFCOs and receiving CM credits, we enjoyed campfires, laughing and singing around the campfires, kayaking and canoeing on the beautiful blue lake, hiking, fishing, swimming, playing a competitive game of BINGO (with prizes and all), getting to know the Central Valley planners, eating great food—including meals prepared by the fabulous chef, hearing about the Central Valley planning issues—especially high speed rail, and best of all, having a lot of fun and getting to know colleagues outside of our area!

Next year, be on the lookout so you can attend, too. Planning camp generally happens the weekend before Labor Day. It’s the place to be to learn about the major planning issues facing the Central Valley. This retreat has always been a great way to end your summer relaxing (no cooking) and connecting with fellow planners from around the state in our beautiful Sierra Nevada Mountains; just minutes from two National Parks – Kings Canyon and Sequoia.

Please join us next year, bring your family, invite a friend, and you’ll be hooked for life! To see what you missed this year, click here: http://img.gg/ZJ9iWlV

For more information or to reserve a spot for next year, contact Karl Schoettler, Retreat Coordinator, Central California Section, American Planning Association, Collins & Schoettler, 1002 W. Main Street, Visalia, CA 93291, (559) 734-8737, karl@weplancities.com, www.weplancities.com.

Carolina Ilic, who grew up in Fresno, is a Senior Regional Planner at SANDAG, and has worked on a variety of land use and transportation plans and programs during her 20+ year career at SANDAG. Eric VonBerg manages planning services for Rincon’s Fresno Office, is a member of the Central Section CA APA Board, and has been attending the Sierra Retreat across two decades as a practicing planner in the San Joaquin Valley and throughout California.
Ruminations from San Diego

I am fortunate to finish my term as your Commission and Board (C&B) representative with the annual planning conference in my own backyard, it doesn’t get any better than that! The conference committee did a masterful job of managing registration AND the first day of sessions without missing a beat. As was done in Sacramento last year, scheduling all the C&B sessions on Sunday was again a successful strategy to attract our appointed officials with a focused tract of sessions. This year seemed a bit easier. As I had the benefit of the experience from last year’s conference, I was able to use my local connections for the panels, and I got to sleep in my bed. Thanks to all who participated to make this another success day for C&B.

The kickoff breakfast featured Mayor Mary Casillas Salas from the City of Chula Vista, the second largest city in San Diego County. Mayor Salas began her public service on the Chula Vista Civil Service Commission, moving on to the Planning Commission until elected to the City Council in 1996. In 2006 Mayor Salas was elected to the State Assembly before returning to Chula Vista in 2012 and being elected as the first Latina mayor in 2014. The Mayor shared her life story and that of her family who moved to Chula Vista over 100 years ago.

The morning’s opening session explored the question: “So you want to be a Planning Commissioner?” Our moderator Gabriel Gutierrez (community relations) led the discussion with a diverse panel which included Kelly Koldus (real estate appraiser), Kinikia Gardner (city planner), and Michael Edwards (attorney). Each brought their perspective, motives and insights on the evolution of the public process and the challenges faced by our decision makers.

The afternoon began with Jacob Bell’s stimulated the conversation on “How to run an effective public meeting”. Joining Jacob were Kelly Koldus, Trevor Macenski, and yours truly. There are differences in running a public meeting from the legal framework to the expectation of an open, transparent, and fair process for the various participants. It was agreed a major goal is to ensure the best possible environment for decision making, which can be a challenge when emotions are in play. This includes the need for a high level of respect among the fellow commissioners to maintain the professional relationship necessary over the long term to be an effective decision-making body deserving of the public’s trust.

I moderated the final session for our C&B members: “Using the General Plan, Policies and Findings to Improve Communities.” The use of discretion is powerful leverage to evaluate the degree to which a project achieves the many planning goals and policies adopted by cities and counties. With the help of current planning commission chair Julia Malisos and two colleagues and former City of San Diego commission chairs Barry Schultz and William Anderson, we explored beyond the rules of the zoning ordinance to the aspirations of the vision of the city articulated by the General Plan.

I hope Sunday continues to be a special day for our appointed officials. Many do not hail from the public sector planning realm and are not afforded the support and time to participate more fully in the American Planning Association. Most, like myself, are not paid other than a lunch or dinner when the public hearing makes for a long day. While not a thankless job, the thank yous are at times few and far between. I have had the privilege to work in both worlds, public and private, and had I known then what I know now, I would have expressed my appreciation more often. For those that have the opportunity to work with appointed and elected officials, I offer my thoughts:

• Do your best to walk in the shoes of your decision-makers. Be courageous to ask thoughtful questions to understand the perspective of others.
• The intersection of planning and politics may at times be messy. Accept the outcome and continue to work to further the good planning principles.
• Be understanding of the challenge for the decision-maker to know everything about your project. Anticipate the issues and use the time to further understanding and knowledge.

Let’s never forget planning is in it for the long haul! My congratulations go to Jay Higgins, AICP, your incoming C&B representative. Thank you for your support over the past two years and my very best to a brighter future.

Take care – SMH

Do your best to walk in the shoes of your decision-makers. Be courageous to ask thoughtful questions to understand the perspective of others.

California City Moves Toward Innovation Zone for Marijuana

has fallen from around 400 to fewer than 100. By giving growers and producers a designated, approved place to go, the Medical Marijuana Innovation Zone is the next step. The Arcata Planning Commission met recently to begin discussing its implementation and regulations. Of particular concern is that the zone not be confined to a single area. Ornelas said that it would be “undemocratic” for the zone to comprise the properties of only a single landlord, so the city is already looking at extending to additional parcels.

Oetker says that the zoning regulations should be in place within six months. Thereafter, the city will expand or contract as it sees fit. However, the city’s planning commission recently voted to slow down the process to clarify the goals of the zone and review the geographic areas that it might include.

Many in the Emerald Triangle feel that 2016 will be a watershed year. Arcata wants to be ready to take advantage of yet another pot boom and make sure that it is ready to handle the pressure of increased production by producers both underground and aboveboard.

“The elephant in the room is what’s going to happen with respect to cannabis generally,” says Harris. “That is when I think innovation areas are going to be plug-and-play,” referring to the ease with which Arcata and other cities could expand and adopt innovation zones.

“We want to get some experience under our belts before we get into mid-2016,” says Ornelas. “We want to make sure we have experience managing this business.”

Authors Update: After implementing the pilot program three years ago, the City of Arcata adopted its permanent Commercial Cannabis Retail Sales and Service this year. It went into effect in July and includes a comprehensive ordinance governing cannabis sales and production citywide.

Josh Stephens is a freelance writer based in Los Angeles. His work has appeared in the Los Angeles Times, Planning Magazine, Sierra Magazine, the Huffington Post and the Los Angeles Review of Books. He is a contributing editor to the California Planning & Development Report and Planetizen.
APA California Legislative Update
October 2018

End of Session
The 2018 legislative session ended on August 31. All bills that successfully passed both houses were either signed or vetoed by the Governor, as noted below. APA California is pleased that many bills of concern were worked out with amendments suggested by APA California, and many other bills worthy of support are awaiting the Governor’s consideration. 2018 proved to be another busy year. APA lobbied hundreds of planning-related bills, from those related to generating more housing, reforming the RHNA allocation process, wildfire planning and prevention and permitting changes, to those continuing to make changes to ADU law and CEQA.

2018 Legislative Update at the Conference
The 2018 Legislative Update session at the APA California Conference was well attended. Many have asked for the PowerPoint used during the conference, which can be found on APA California’s website at www.apacalifornia.org under the Legislation tab.

How You Can Get Involved in Shaping APA California’s Legislative Positions
We encourage you to participate in APA California’s Legislative Review Team, whose members advise APA California on legislative positions, potential amendments and key planning policies. Information on the Review Team and sign up information are located on the APA California website legislation page. To find APA’s positions on all of the major planning-related bills, and to review APA’s letters on those bills, please go to the APA California website at www.apacalifornia.org. All position letters are posted on the APA California website Legislation page, which can be found here: https://www.apacalifornia.org/legislation/legislative-review-teams/position-letters/.

Quick Update of High Priority 2018 Legislation
Below is a list of the top high priority bills APA California lobbied this session. Position letters with more information on all of these bills are posted on the APA California website, as noted above.

AB 686 (Santiago)
Adds federal “affirmatively further fair housing” requirements to California law.
Position: Support as amended
Signed by the Governor

AB 1771 (Bloom)
Provides RHNA allocation reform.
Position: Neutral as amended
Signed by the Governor

AB 1804 (Berman)
Provides a CEQA infill exemption for counties.
Position: Support
Signed by the Governor

AB 1905 (Grayson)
Prohibits staying or enjoining transportation projects under CEQA that are included in an SCS.
Position: Oppose
Died in committee

AB 2162 (Chiu)
Provides a “by right” process and expedited review for supportive housing.
Position: Support as amended
Signed by the Governor

AB 2263 (Friedman)
Limits parking requirements for historical reuse projects.
Position: Support as amended
Signed by the Governor

AB 2341 (Mathis)
Eliminates consideration of aesthetic effects of projects in CEQA in some circumstances.
Position: Support as amended
Signed by the Governor

AB 2372 (Gloria)
Authorizes a floor area ratio bonus in lieu of a density bonus.
Position: Support as amended
Signed by the Governor

AB 2447 (Reyes)
Establishes additional notice and hearing requirements under CEQA for classes of industrial or similar projects located within one-half mile of a disadvantaged community.
Position: Neutral as amended
Vetoed by the Governor

AB 2631 (Allen)
Provides for a new “by right” process for housing separate from SB 35.
Position: Oppose
Died in committee

AB 2753 (Friedman)
Requires new notification of density bonus status to applicant when application is deemed complete.
Position: Support as amended
Signed by the Governor
AB 2797 (Bloom)  
Requires density bonus, waivers and concessions to be permitted in a manner that is consistent with that law and the California Coastal Act.  
Position: Neutral as amended  
Signed by the Governor

AB 2856 (Melendez)  
Prohibits a court in a CEQA challenge related to housing project from staying the siting, construction or operation of the project.  
Position: Oppose  
Died in committee

AB 2890 (Ting)  
One of three bills this year that make another round of major ADU changes. The bills have some similar and many conflicting provisions.  
Position: Oppose  
Died in rules committee

AB 2913 (Wood)  
Extends the original life of a building permit from 6 months to one year for housing projects statewide.  
Position: Neutral as amended  
Signed by the Governor

AB 2923 (Chiu)  
Requires zoning around specified BART stations to be consistent with BART zoning plan, granting BART land use authority over parking, density, height, and floor area ratio for projects on BART parking lots.  
Position: Oppose unless amended  
Signed by the Governor

AB 2973 (Gray)  
Allows a 24-month extension for unexpired subdivision maps for construction of single or multifamily housing in Central Valley jurisdictions that meet certain criteria.  
Position: Neutral  
Signed by the Governor

AB 3037 (Chiu)  
Reinstates the redevelopment process for housing and infrastructure projects.  
Position: Support in concept  
Died in committee

AB 3147 (Caballero)  
Freezes mitigation and other impact fees for 2 years for housing projects from date application is deemed “substantially complete”.  
Position: Support if amended  
Died in committee

AB 3171 (Ting)  
Provides funding for local homelessness programs.  
Position: Support  
Died in committee

AB 3194 (Daly)  
Provides that a proposed project is not inconsistent with applicable zoning standards and criteria, and shall not require a rezoning, if the proposed project is consistent with objective general plan standards and criteria but the local agency’s adopted zoning for the project site is inconsistent with the general plan.  
Position: Neutral as amended  
Signed by the Governor

SB 765 (Wiener)  
Makes a number of changes to the SB 35 approval process.  
Position: Neutral as amended  
Signed by the Governor

SB 827 (Wiener)  
Overrides local zoning authority near transit.  
Position: Oppose  
Died in committee

SB 828 (Wiener)  
Requires various RHNA allocation reforms and states intent that cities and counties should take reasonable actions to ensure that future housing production meet at a minimum their RHNA allocation.  
Position: Oppose unless amended  
Signed by the Governor

SB 831 (Wieckowski)  
One of three bills this year that make another round of major ADU changes. The bills have some similar and many conflicting provisions.  
Position: Oppose as amended  
Died in committee

SB 1333 (Wieckowski)  
Applies specified provisions in the Government Code pertaining to local planning and zoning requirements to charter cities.  
Position: Neutral  
Signed by the Governor

SB 1469 (Skinner)  
One of three bills this year that make another round of major ADU changes. The bills have some similar and many conflicting provisions.  
Position: Oppose as amended  
Died in committee

All Hot Bills  
To view the full list of hot planning bills, copies of the measures, up-to-the minute status and APA California letters and positions, please continue to visit the legislative page on APA California’s website at www.apacalifornia.org.
APA California Releases New Conference Session Videos

Immediate CM Credit Opportunities Available

This year’s APA California Chapter Conference in San Diego was a great success and we’d like to share a small slice of the educational experience with all APA members. Please accept our invitation to view and enjoy, at your own pace, any of twelve new 2018 conference session videos covering some of the most trending topics in planning today.

Titles include: Development without Displacement; Regional Planning from the Public Health Lens; Short-Term Rentals (Airbnb) and the Sharing Economy; Deliberate Moves to Turn Around Suburban Shopping Centers; Disaster Recovery on the Planning Side; and Shaping a Comprehensive and Effective Cannabis Policy.

All videos offer high quality audio, views of speakers, PowerPoints, audience Q&A and full CM credits. Previews of all recorded sessions are accessible from the APA California website link above. You can also access previews from the APA California Youtube Channel. Under “Playlists” select “Currently Available for CM Credits.” Registration links are located in the YouTube descriptions and on the APA California website. Registration is required before reporting CM credits.

The videos are truly engaging—the closest experience you can have without being at the conference. Enjoy them on your smartphone, tablet, or laptop wherever you go. But don’t overlook the large screen experience! Chromecasting enhances the live feel. Discounts are available for group showings.

For questions regarding the videos or the registration process please contact Greg Konar, AICP, APA California, Distance Education Coordinator at gregok@cox.net or 619-840-5601.

John Bliss delivers presentation:
Everything You Need to Know for a Successful Cannabis Implementation
Watch It Now!

Implementation

1. Community Research and Outreach (Meetings & Surveys)
2. Health and Safety & Land Use Regulations (Ordinance(s))
3. Full Cost Recovery (Application, CUP & Regulatory Fees)
4. Revenue (Taxation ballot Measure)
5. Local Industry Selections (Application process)
6. Monitoring and Compliance (As Defined by Ordinance)

Congratulations to the California Members Who Passed the AICP Exam in May

Svetha Ambati
Nicholas Bleich
Sean Calvin
Michael Cornfield
Emily Foley
Justin Guan
Jaime Guthrie
Xue Jin
Olivia Joncich
Corinne Jones
Hannah Kornfeld
Huy Ly
Paige Peltzer
Mladen Popovic
Tanner Shelton
Alysandra Smith
Reanna Tong
Zachary Tusinger
Anne Wong
Noemi Wyss

Your APA California Election Results

Please join the APA California Board of Directors in welcoming our newly elected colleagues. Their terms begin this January and run until December 2020. The Board looks forward to working with them in our continued efforts to support our members and further planing excellent in the State of California.

...A BIG Thanks to our Outgoing Board Members

The Board would like to thank our outgoing members for their commitment to the APA and the profession of planning. The only compensation for being on the Board is the reward of giving back and the pleasure of working with others who are dedicated to the planning profession. It is with much appreciation and admiration that we say goodbye to:

VP Policy and Legislation
Eric Phillips (Northern Section)

VP Professional Development
Sharon Grewal, AICP (Northern Section)

Commissioner and Board Rep
Jay Higgins, AICP (Central Coast Section)

VP Conferences
Hanson Hom, AICP, ASLA (Northern Section)

Calling for 2019 Nominations

If you are interested in being part of the APA California Chapter Board, nominations will be due February 2019. The following positions will be open:

President-Elect
(Must have served as a voting APA California Board Member)

Vice President of Administration

Vice President of Marketing and Membership

Vice President of Public Information
APA California Awards of Excellence

Opportunity and Empowerment Award

Airzona Street Development and North Park Seniors
Community Housing Works

In the heart of San Diego’s North Park, Community Housing Works’ (CHW) Airzona Street Development & North Park Seniors was designed and approved as part of a sustainable, transit-oriented, mixed-income, 194 unit development. 118 market-rate apartments are being constructed, while CHW has built 76 senior apartments. The 76 unit apartment project is one of the first to address housing needs of LGBT seniors.

Comprehensive Plan Award, Large Jurisdiction

The South Los Angeles & Southeast Los Angeles Community Plans
City of Los Angeles, Department of Planning

Adopted together in November 2017, the South and Southeast Los Angeles Community Plans are comprehensive land use plans for a 30 square mile region with a population of over 500,000.

Comprehensive Plan Award, Small Jurisdiction

2035 General Plan, Belmont Village Specific Plan and Climate Action Plan
City of Belmont, Dyett & Bhatia Urban and Regional Planners

With its General Plan not having been comprehensively updated since 1982, in 2014 the City of Belmont embarked on an ambitious process not only to update its General Plan, but also to create a Specific Plan for Belmont Village and a complementary Climate Action Plan.

Implementation Award, Large Jurisdiction

Willow Springs Wetlands Restoration Project
City of Long Beach

The Willow Springs Wetland Restoration Project restored 11.5 acres of open space in Willow Springs Park, and adds 11.5 acres of public open space where 60% of the population are disadvantaged and inadequately served by open space compared with the citywide average.

Innovation in Green Community Planning Award

Butte County Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Strategy
Butte County

Representing a visionary new approach to promote sustainable farming and ranching, the Butte County Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Strategy was designed to help meet the State’s key sustainability goals of carbon sequestration, greenhouse gas emissions reductions, water conservation, and groundwater recharge through agriculture.

Economic Planning and Development Award

Central City Specific Plan
City of Sacramento

The Sacramento Central City Specific Plan builds on recent growth and trends that have begun to enhance the urban core of Sacramento. Adopted in April 2018, the goal of the Plan is to facilitate and streamline development in the Central City, specifically housing, and paves the way for at least 10,000 new housing units in the next 10 years.

Transportation Planning Award

West Contra Costa High-Capacity Transit Study
West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee

In 2015, the West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee initiated the West County High-Capacity Transit Study, to evaluate multimodal transit improvements that could enhance transit capacity, connectivity and accessibility in West County; accommodate existing needs and future growth; and improve access to jobs and housing.

Best Practices Award

Metro Transfers Design Guide
LA Metro

LA Metro serves approximately 1.3 million transit riders a day on bus and rail, and almost two-thirds of riders transfer at least once during their trip. The Guide serves as a useful resource to a variety of audiences by providing guidance on what riders need to quickly and easily make decisions, safely move between transit options, and comfortably wait for their next bus or train.

Grassroots Initiative Award

Pop-Up Care Village
SITELAB urban studio

The Pop-Up Care Village is a collaboration between Lava Mae and SITELAB urban studio that began in 2015. Using the food truck festival model, these villages feature multiple homeless service stations, including mobile showers, food, music, and social spaces, providing compassionate assistance for those in need. Lava Mae and SITELAB have also created a DIY Mobile Hygiene Tool Kit to share learnings and increase capacity for services around the world.
APA California Awards of Excellence

Public Outreach Award
Go Human Tactical Urbanism Demonstration Projects
Southern California Association of Governments
Go Human is an Active Transportation Safety and Encouragement Campaign of the Southern California Association of Governments. Go Human’s goal is to reduce traffic collisions in Southern California and encourage people to walk and bike more.

Urban Design Award
West Los Angeles VA Campus Master Plan Framework
Adopted by the Veterans Administration in January 2016, the VA Campus Master Plan Framework is a step toward repositioning the 388-acre campus property as originally intended, as a home for veterans. The Master Plan re-focuses the site as a veterans’ community with housing, services and amenities, restores its historic resources, conserves and repairs its natural setting, and facilitates reintegration of veterans into civilian life.

Planning Advocate Award
David Salazar
Over the past thirty-three years, David Salazar has promoted, created and implemented ideas and plans that have helped shape the intersection of higher education campus planning and city planning. Mr. Salazar has extended the practice of good planning to disenfranchised populations. David has made a concerted effort to give back to the communities that he has worked in and understands that planners are an integral part of the community and that their contribution does not end at the work place.

Planning Agency Award
Los Angeles Department of City Planning
The Los Angeles Department of City Planning, with nearly 400 employees, is one of the largest planning departments in the nation. In the past year, the Department accomplished several noteworthy milestones. The Department is on track to have all 35 Community Plans updated by 2024, and key policies that incentivize affordable housing development and address the homelessness crisis were also recently adopted.

Emerging Planning and Design Firm Award
SITELAB urban studio
In five years of practice, SITELAB has built a strong reputation and has designed and led the entitlement processes for many notable Bay Area projects and remain committed to creating a model of urban design as a social practice. Their landmark projects have been pivotal in influencing larger transformations.

Advancing Diversity & Social Change in Honor of Paul Davidoff
Cannabis Social Equity Program
City of Los Angeles
The Cannabis Social Equity Program was adopted and integrated into two ordinances in December 2017 as part of a comprehensive legislative package regulating commercial cannabis activity in the City of Los Angeles. It addresses a key challenge concerning the newly regulated California cannabis industry: namely, how to ensure that new business and employment opportunities in the industry are distributed in an equitable manner in order to decrease disparities in life outcomes for marginalized communities and to address the disproportionate impact of past cannabis law enforcement in those communities.

Academic Award
Old Town Urban Design Concept Plan
City and Regional Planning Department, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
This project by Cal Poly City and Regional Planning students offered urban design visions for Old Town, Newark, the former historic city center. The study provided concepts for each of five blocks of Thornton Avenue that formerly served as Main Street but currently challenged by lack of vibrancy, disconnected development, and poor public facilities.

Communications Initiative Award
The View from Here: Place and Privilege
Capital Public Radio
To raise awareness of Sacramento’s housing shortage and engage residents in community problem-solving, Capital Public Radio produced The View From Here: Place And Privilege. The multimedia documentary explores the history, politics and economics of housing affordability in Sacramento, illuminating the crisis through the personal stories of neighbors who are hit the hardest.

Hard Won Victories Award
Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Update
City of Palo Alto
Adopted in November 2017, Our Palo Alto 2030, the Comprehensive Plan, was the product of a multi-year effort that involved hundreds of Palo Alto residents and other interested parties to preserve the longstanding vision and values unique to Palo Alto, while tackling challenging issues of housing affordability, job growth, multimodal transportation, and sustainability.
Are you energized to help Shape Our Future after attending the APA California Conference in San Diego in October?

Thank you from the Conference Host Committee and APA California for being one of the 1,665 attendees at this year’s Chapter conference. We hope you arrived in time on Sunday to attend the always thought-provoking Diversity Summit before you headed over to fully enjoy the Opening Reception aboard the USS Midway.
Monday morning was full of welcomes to San Diego! Pete Parkinson, APA California President, welcomed us to the conference as did Michael Zucchet from the San Diego Port District. Cynthia Bowen, APA National President, recognized California’s new members of FAICP and spoke about APA Learn. We are sure you were motivated by the issues that Assembly Member Todd Gloria promised to give his attention to in the next legislative session.
Mobile Workshops

Did you get outside in the sunshine to do yoga or eat on the Bayview Lawn overlooking San Diego Bay? Or did you go on a mobile workshop to North San Diego County or Tijuana Mexico? Maybe on a bike ride? There were 11 mobile workshops where over 350 of you learned transferable concepts while having fun and exercise.

APA Learn

Then, did you visit with Kimberley Jacques, the APA National Education Director, to learn about APA Learn and tools that planners will have to enhance our learning as mentioned by APA President Cynthia Bowen on Monday morning?

Awards

Our Awards event that evening informed us about the projects and people that are setting the standard for forward-thinking planning in California.
2018 CPF Auction and Raffle Recap - Thank You for Your Generosity!

The California Planning Foundation (CPF) Annual Auction and Raffle takes place each year at the APA California Conference. CPF was established in 1971 as APA California’s nonprofit foundation. If you are a member of APA California, you are already a member of CPF. Relying on your donations and fund-raising activities like the auction and raffle, CPF annually awards approximately $50,000 in student scholarships to university students in financial need, who have demonstrated academic excellence at planning programs throughout California.

A huge thank you to everyone who donated, volunteered, or participated in some way in the CPF Auction and Raffle at the 2018 APA-California Conference in San Diego October 7-10, 2018. Thanks to the generosity of Planners across the state, we raised over $20,000 to support CPF scholarships for planning students across California! Many thanks to our planner/auctioneers Julia Lave-Johnston and Mark Teague, and our guest auctioneer Mike Boswell, AICP. They each brought enthusiastic support and fun to the auction, and we truly appreciate their important role in helping us raise funds for CPF scholarships. We also want to give a big thank you to our auction event sponsors - California Housing and Community Development, Goldfarb Lipman Attorneys, GPA Consulting, and Mintier Harnish.

This year marked many changes within CPF as we focus on strategic planning to ensure sustainable scholarship funding into the future. As we look to diversify our fundraising activities and seek new ways to support students, we are grateful for all of the support and ideas that our planning community has to offer. Some of the big things that happened this year include the creation of a second CPF Diversity Scholarship to enhance our ongoing efforts to foster diversity and inclusion in the planning profession and be responsive to the increasing needs of California’s planning students. We also had the Inland Empire Section commit to the development of an endowed Scholarship for section students.

With all this great news, there is still more time to support students this year. If you would like to donate, please go to https://californiaplanningfoundation.org/donations/to make a donation. If you would like to donate to next year’s auction, please contact Auction Co-Chair Alison Spindler at calplanningauction@gmail.com.

Thanks to the generosity of Planners across the state, we raised over $20,000 to support CPF scholarships for planning students across California!
Thank You Sponsors and Exhibitors

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Sponsors
Did you have a chance to visit our sponsors’ booths? Close to 50 sponsors had booths or tables or sponsored events at the conference. Our sincere thanks to them ALL!

Photographic sources: Sabrina Alonso, Dudek; Amy Steele, Dudek; Greg Mattson AICP; Hing Wong AICP; Dan Amsden AICP; Betsy McCullough FAICP; and the attendees of the 2018 APA California Conference.
Chapter Historians

Did you check out Steve Preston and Larry Mintier at the Chapter Historians’ Table? What a great display to celebrate APA California’s 70th birthday and to help us understand how we can contribute to the documentation of California’s planning history through the Chapter Archives.

Closing Keynote

We hope you stayed for the Wednesday morning sessions and then attended the closing keynote address from Dr. Mary Walshok who reminded us that an important part of Shaping Our Future is creating a strong partnership between academia and the professional world to allow our bright young students emerge from their universities with their fresh knowledge and evolve into contributing professional planners.

Thank You Again from the 2018 APA California Conference Host Committee

You have participated in the 2018 APA California Annual Conference in San Diego. We are the largest Chapter in APA with the most comprehensive conference learning environment second only, perhaps, to the APA National Planning Conference. Our conference attracts planners from other Chapters as well as nationally-renown speakers. You make this conference happen, so see you in Santa Barbara September 15-18, 2019!
Seeking New Sponsorship Strategies

Now that the new editorial format for the CalPlanner has been established, we are seeking suggestions from APA California’s partners and sponsors on ways to better reach the Chapter membership. This means rethinking the traditional calling card ads for example, as well as all ad placement and associated links. So we need to hear from you on innovative ideas that would complement the new design and format while offering a more effective way to generate awareness for your business or service. We hope you will continue to support the CalPlanner and encourage your comments and ideas by contacting Marc Yeber at myplanning@live.com.
For additional contact information, please go to www.apacalifornia.org

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