

American Planning Association, Alaska Chapter

Alaska Planning Journal

APA Alaska update—Message from the President

Quote of the Quarter

"The method of the enterprising is to plan with audacity and execute with vigor."

- Christian Nevell Bovee

John McPherson, AICP

A lot of things are happening around the Chapter. It is encouraging to see such strong interest toward fulfilling the mission of our Chapter and the planning profession. Some of the encouraging signs include the continued interest in the Southcentral lunch meeting. This past month we had a discussion by Jon Spring with the Municipality of Anchorage covering the Midtown District Plan. That planning effort is intended to facilitate the

transition of this rapidly growing business district into a compact, mixed use employment center consistent with the vision of the Anchorage Comprehensive Plan. The city's project will:

1. Create a vision, goals, and objectives to guide Midtown's future development.
2. Create a new land use map and propose zoning and design standards.
3. Develop a transportation improvement plan designed to support the land use plan.
4. Develop a capital improvement plan and associated financial framework that will encourage and support new Midtown development.



Anchorage's Midtown District is home to many new businesses and is full of possibilities...as well as some wilder characters.

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Elections—Vote before the end of February!

Suzanne Taylor, editor

Chapter elections are currently ongoing and your vote is important. The APA Alaska board consists of eight seats—President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, Professional Development Officer, three Regional Vice Presidents, and one Planning Commis-

sioner Representative. Each year, four of these positions is up for election and each office is for a two-year term. The immediate Past President is also a board member.

This year, we are voting for Vice President, Professional Development Officer, Southcentral Vice President, and Planning Commissioner Representative.

You can access the ballot from the Chapter website at www.alaskaplanning.org and click on "Chapter Elections." Your member number is required for voting verification. This is printed on your Planning magazine label, or you may contact me at smtaylor@ascg.com and I will provide it to you.

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If you are interested in finding out more about that planning effort visit www.midtownplan.com.

On March 2nd, we will be holding our annual planning commissioner training. Building off of our success last year we will be offering 50 training slots. Volunteers, including Toni Jones and Angela Chambers, are helping to pull together an invigorating agenda of topics which will include a panel discussion, a planning legal

primer, and topical small group discussions. If you are interested in the training visit the chapter's web site at www.alaskaplanning.org.

The elections are in full swing, and as testament to the interest in the chapter, we had no trouble filling all of the board seats which are up for grabs. In fact two of the seats actually have two candidates running, so voting in the chapter election is more important than ever. The

election is open through the end of February if you are a member and were not sent a ballot, it may be because we do not have your email address. Contact Suzanne Taylor at smtaylor@ascg.com for more information.

As always, there are lots of opportunities to get involved and network with your fellow planners, just drop and email to one of the board members.



John McPherson, President APA Alaska Chapter

Congratulations Peter Serrano on Passing the AICP

Laurie Cummings, AICP

Congratulations to the following Alaska planners who passed the May 2006 AICP exam: Peter Serrano.

In the planning field, AICP certification is the accepted credential for professional competence and ethical practice. To become a certified planner, a candidate must belong to the American Planning Association, fulfill education and work experience requirements, and pass a computer based AICP exam. The State of Alaska had a 50% pass rate on the May 2006 exam. The national pass rate for the May 2006 exam was 66%. These new AICP members join over 14,000 APA members who have made this extra

commitment and joined APA's professional institute.

The AICP test covers a variety of planning topics, both old and new, including: history, theory, law, emerging issues and trends (such as 2000 census information and new urbanism), plan making methods and strategies, functional topics (i.e., transportation, public services, land use, economic development, housing, rural and small town planning, urban design, historic preservation, energy, etc.), plan implementation (i.e. regulations, legal principles, growth management techniques, budgets, program evaluation, public presentation, intergovernmental relations,

project and program management, etc.), and ethics, public interest and social justice (i.e. multicultural issues, public participation, and coalition building).

The planners who pass the AICP exam are well versed in these areas, as well as other management issues that arise in the typical planning office on a daily basis. Every one of them earned these credentials through study and good practice of our planning discipline. Congratulations!

For more information on the AICP exam, please visit <http://www.planning.org/aicp/> or <http://www.alaskaplanning.org/aicp.htm>



Peter has over 25 years of transportation planning and engineering experience. Over the last 5 years he has served as the transportation planner for the Federal Highway Administration in the Alaska Division Office.

Northern Region Report

Earl Finkler, VP Northern Region

BARROW ----As the winter solstice passed by Barrow on December, it had been over a month since we last saw the sun on November 18. And we were not to see it again till January 23, 2007. But there are a couple of hours of twilight around the lunch hour each day.

That is when I try to take our two Greenland Huskies – Nuna and Avu –out for a run on the edge of town. They look forward to it as soon as we get in the car. And so do I, unless the weather is really nasty.

I'm finding that one of the best ways to keep fit in Alaska during the long winter is to have one or more dogs. Unlike any artificial fitness program where a person and start and stop and skip a few days, dogs are there every day. Huskies know what they want and they think they are entitled to it. So we go out together a couple times a day. And the walking and strain on my arms when I have them on leads helps me keep fit.

Even in the midst of the cold, dark winter, planning seems to be breaking out

all over. I've been running into it now and then during my 10-minute morning live interview slot on KBRW.

In October, I enjoyed interviewing fellow APA Alaska Board member Barb Sheinberg by phone about the Chapter's Sustainable Development and Affordable Housing seminar that took place in Juneau in November. Even at 7:30 a.m., she was energetic and responsive. A number of our listeners said they enjoyed hearing her and learning about the issues.

Early in December, I had a phone interview with veteran APA and AICP Board member Carol Thomas from Boston. She still is active in local and international consulting, including China, and has also moved close to venerable Fenway Park, home of the Boston Red Sox.

"I can see the park and the stands from the front window of my apartment," she said, "but not the actual field itself." But being a good planner, she has that covered with season tickets to all the home games.

Thomas said there is continuing emphasis in Boston on historic and neighbor-

hood preservation, including preservation of Fenway Park. Also, various efforts to broaden transportation options beyond individually owned automobiles.

She said she does not own a car, relying on walking and public transit. Now and then, when she needs a car, she goes to a "Zipcar," which is a car-sharing operation.

"I can reserve a car online, and later walk downstairs and find it close by, and drive away," she said. When she is done, she leaves the car in an appropriate place.

It is advertised as "car sharing – a utility as valuable as electricity, heat and hot water."

I've e-mailed the company to see if something like that might be possible in a small rural community like Barrow. Will be interesting to see what they say.

We do have reasonable flat-rate taxi service, with the basic cost between five and six dollars. But we have lost our city busses due to budget cutbacks.

Have a great 2007 everyone! And keep those exciting planning ideas coming!



Finkler family Christmas photo, 2006.



Our house near the edge of Barrow shortly after lunch hour in early December



Last view of sun for 2006 on November 18

Regional Transportation Plan being developed for Interior Alaska

Suzanne Taylor

In October 2006, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) began the process of creating a regional transportation plan for interior Alaska. The study area stretches from the Canadian border on the east to the Dalton Highway on the west and from north of Arctic Village to south of McCarthy.

The Interior Alaska Transportation Plan (IATP) is one of six other multi-modal transportation plans across the state. Regional transportation plans are designed to address movement between communities in a particular region and from that region to points beyond. They do not address individual community projects.

ASCG Incorporated of Alaska, a subsidiary of NANA Development Corporation, was hired to complete the study. The plan will include an inventory of transportation modes, a review of potential resource development, forecasts based on existing conditions and future trends, an analysis of the transportation network, and recommendations to

guide future investments in area transportation projects.

Planners from ASCG and the DOT&PF have met with stakeholders in Fairbanks, Nenana, Healy, Glennallen, and Delta Junction. In addition, Nicole McCullough of ASCG gave a presentation on the IATP at the Stevens Village Annual Meeting in January and is on the agenda to present it to the Tanana Chiefs Conference in March.

Input is being solicited at general public meetings and open houses, at meetings of specific user groups such as the Fairbanks Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Copper Center and Delta Junction Chambers of Commerce, as well as through interviews with groups like the Bureau of Land Management, local economic development groups, and the National Park Service.

Each regional transportation plan has a different emphasis depending on the modes of transportation that are most relevant in that region. For example, the Prince William Sound Area Transportation Plan focused largely on the Marine Highway, while the Yukon-Kuskokwim

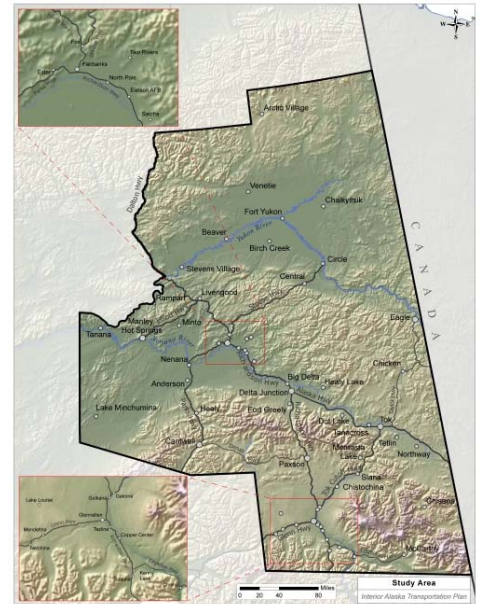
Delta Transportation Plan emphasized air and river travel, as well as winter trail staking.

Because the Interior region contains the majority of highways in the state, special attention will be paid in the IATP to road travel.

Issues that have been identified as important to transportation in the Interior include:

- Gas Pipeline Impacts
- Potential Mineral Development
- Military Training Exercises and Travel
- Railroad Expansion
- Tourism
- Aviation

If all goes according to schedule, the IATP should be finalized in December 2008.



IATP Study Area



IATP Planning Meeting with the Copper Center Chamber of Commerce at the Tonsina River Lodge



The Taylor Highway is one of several major routes through the project area.

Continuing Professional Development

*Laurie Cummings,
Professional Development
Officer*

How many CPD credits have you earned this year?

All members of AICP are encouraged to participate in continuing education. The principle of maintaining currency is set forth in the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. The AICP Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program provides the mechanism to meet this professional obligation on a voluntary basis. The

CPD Program uses the honor system.

A minimum of 60 professional development hours obtained within a three-year period is the principal requirement for earning a CPD certificate. Professional development hours are earned by completing course work or training that is related to the practice of planning, that is designed to meet specific planning related training objectives, and that is led by experts. CPD hours equal the number of contact hours or actual classroom time. Courses may be sponsored by

APA, PAB programs or other organizations such as professional organizations, governmental agencies, or universities. At least 50 percent of the CPD credits in the log must be from APA sources or from PAB accredited university planning programs. If less than 50 percent of CPD hours are from one of these, a certificate cannot be issued.

To log CPD hours, please go to <http://www.planning.org/cdp/>

For more information, please contact Laurie Cummings at laurie.cummings@hdrinc.com



Laurie Cummings, Professional Development Officer, APA Alaska Chapter

A letter from AICP on CPDs

The AICP Commission is considering mandating certification maintenance through a program of continuing education. The following letter from AICP President Sue Schwartz, FAICP and AICP President-Elect Graham Billingsley, AICP outlines the issue of certification maintenance and how the Commission will move forward on the matter.

“The AICP Commission is convinced that it is time to take the next step toward certification maintenance. The goal is to make AICP more meaningful and the practice of planning more professional. Education is the core of this goal. Professional

development and continuing education have been the responsibility of AICP since its inception in 1978. This has been a continuation of the work AIP, one of APA’s two predecessor organizations. The Commission has encouraged certified planners to continue building their skills, expanding their planning knowledge throughout their careers. Over the last several years we have expanded educational offerings through CD packages on planning topics, reinstated the Planners Training Service, and we are currently developing online education products.

The Commission thinks the time has come to more than just encourage and develop

educational products. The AICP Commission is evaluating taking a major step forward by considering requiring continuing education of the members of our Professional Institute to maintain their certification.

The issue of requiring continuing education has been debated throughout the organization for many years. It is not an easy decision to make but the Commission feels strongly that it is time to bring the professional standards of AICP on par with other professional organizations and mandate continuing education. This position is supported by the chapter leadership and many of AICP members.

Before a final decision is made

about the introduction of new certification maintenance standards, the Commission would like to hear from AICP members on their views of this proposed program. Please expect to see a report outlining the details of the proposed certification program before the end of the year. If you have not received an e-mail by December 15th, you can log on the AICP section of the website and download the proposal. All AICP members will have the opportunity and be encouraged to submit their feedback. We anticipate two public review opportunities with a final decision to be made at the Commission meeting prior to the APA national conference in April 2007.”

Municipality of Anchorage Hillside District Planning Process

Angela Chambers, AICP

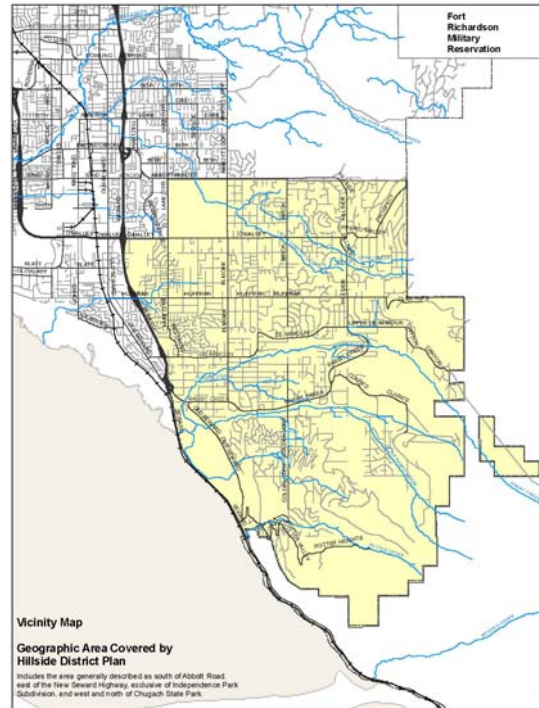
The planning process for the Hillside District Plan (HDP) is underway.

The goal of the HDP is to establish a plan, consistent with good public policy and the views of Hillside landowners and residents, to guide the future development of the Hillside area. Specific plan issues will include policies on residential densities, water and sewer service, drainage, roads, trails and open space. MWH, an engineering and planning firm with offices in

Anchorage, is the lead project consultant. Agnew::Beck has the lead on public participation and drafting the plan.

Five sub-contractors are being hired by the Municipality of Anchorage to work on specific issues: a resident mail survey, drainage, water and sewer, transportation and trail access, and on-site services.

For more information, go to the project web page at <http://www.agnebeck.com/pages-portfolio/anch/anch-hillside-district.htm>.



Canelos speaks at Southcentral Luncheon

Suzanne Taylor

George Canelos, Federal Co-chair of the Denali Commission, spoke this week to a group of about 15 interested planners from the southcentral region. The presentation topic was George's Top Ten Requirements for Sustainable Rural Communities, which he conceived after an overnight stay in Galena.

1. **Leadership.** Great leaders are needed to head viable communities. Poor leaders should be

replaced and average leaders should be trained and mentored to grow to greatness. The state would benefit from a systematic program to train community leaders.

2. **Vision.** As Joel Barker said, "Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world."

3. **Cooperation and Collaboration.** This must be based on trust.

Take time to build relationships —with youth through seniors. Don't forget to include the Alaska Native perspective.

4. **Economic Reason for Existence.** Why is the community located where it is? It could be for subsistence or it could have been a summer fish camp that was brought to permanence through infrastructure development by missionaries or the government. Alaska communities should



George Canelos, AICP, Denali Commission Federal Co-chair

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Southcentral lunch recap, continued from p6

consider becoming globally competitive. Public/private partnerships offer one avenue of development.

5. **Adequate Government Revenues.** Money may come in from other sources, but local governments need to contribute as much as they possibly can. It may be through bonding; it may be through bingo.
6. **Community Infrastructure.** The focus has been on the basics—sanitation, clinics, etc. Now it

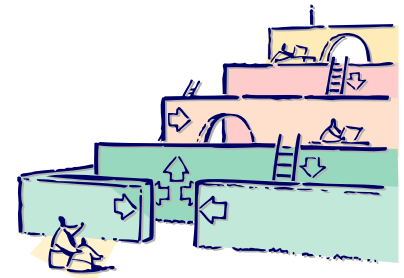
continues to be on the basics, but also on innovative solutions such as renewable energy and sustainability.

7. **Affordable Renewal Energy**—speaking of those innovative solutions.
8. **Marketing/Branding.** Things don't happen unless people are aware. Tell the story of the community!
9. **Environmentally Safe Location.** Issues of erosion and global warming are prevalent now.
10. **In-state Expertise.** It

is no longer necessary to look Outside for resources such as planning, design and engineering.

The challenge faced by Alaska's Villages, the Denali Commission and other entities that work with Alaskan villages to find ways of making these critical elements of viability a reality in Alaska's communities.

Southcentral luncheons are held on the third Wednesday of each month at Doriola's restaurant. Contact Lance Wilber for further information at wilberlr@muni.org.



Planning Commissioner Training

A good planning commissioner takes the future seriously, works hard, and is patient, and willing and able to make decisions. This training will provide an overview to help you understand the legal and policy framework for planning in Alaska's communities. It will also provide you with information on the powers and duties of the planning commission. The training will be based on the Alaska Planning Commission Handbook. This handbook was updated in 2003 by the Department of Community and Economic Development in cooperation with the Alaska Chapter of the American Planning Association. The training covers aspects associated with:

1. Comprehensive and other types of planning
2. Zoning and platting
3. How a planning commission operates
4. The authority and duties of the commission and standards for commission decision-making .

The meeting will be held at the HDR 4th Floor Conference Room in Anchorage (Directions) from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Friday March 2, 2007. The cost of the training is \$50 for non-APA members and \$25 for APA members. Space for the APA training is limited to 50.

To register, please go to our Chapter website at www.alaskaplanning.org and click on the Planning Commissioner Training link. For more information, contact John McPherson at John.McPherson@hdrinc.com or (907) 644-2013.

Join the Small Town and Rural Planning Division of APA—Be a STaR!!

*Dale Powers, AICP, STaR
Division Chair, &*

*Paul Bednar, AICP, STaR
Membership Coordinator*

Every year when you get your invoice for renewing your APA membership, you are also renewing your dues for membership in your State Chapter. Down on the bottom of the invoice, you are also given the option of joining one or more of the Divisions of APA. Unlike Chapters that are geographically based, Divisions are based on some aspect of planning and are nationwide in scope.

By far the most dynamic of APA's Divisions is the Small Town and Rural (STaR) Division. STaR is dedicated to planners in small town and rural areas of the USA and Canada. While many of you could not imagine working as the only planner in your agency, many of STaR's members are solo practitioners and are called upon by their agency's Planning Commission and City Council to provide professional guidance on planning issues. Further, these planners typically have less experience than metropolitan-area planners. Consequently, these planners look to

STaR for answers to general planning and zoning matters that come before them.

Another set of planners that look to STaR for guidance are county planners. STaR is nationally known for its work in agricultural land preservation and has recognized experts in conservation subdivision among its members.

Finally, many private practitioners located in metropolitan areas are STaR members due to their client base in rural areas. Planning outside major metropolitan areas is quite different than what metropolitan planners experience, and the STaR connection has proved invaluable to these planners when working with small town elected officials and staff.

What are the benefits of joining STaR? The following list is just a sampling:

- Access to our quarterly newsletter that is an eclectic mix of planning information, planner profiles, columns on planning management and technical planning, as well as the most fascinating photography of small town and rural America of any Division newsletter.
- Access to the STaR

message board where questions to your planning questions can be posted and responses received from throughout the country.

- 24-hour "rapid response" to any questions posed directly to the Division Chair, Dale Powers of Pine County, Minnesota.

Qualification for the STaR Awards programs for best small town plan, small town planner, and student awards.

STaR is also working on an initiative to subsidize a portion of the cost of AICP certification maintenance for those STaR AICP members whose income falls below the state median.

STaR is excited about the menu of services offered to it's over 750 members nationwide (including 7 here in Alaska), and we would like you to consider joining our Division. We believe the \$25.00 annual dues are returned to you and your agency several times over in service.

For more information about joining STaR, contact Division Chair Dale Powers at drpowers@co.pine.mn.us or Membership Coordinator Paul Bednar at paul@paulbednar.com





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Making great communities happen

Learn more about APA Alaska Chapter
at our website:

www.alaskaplanning.org



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Southcentral—Caren Mathis

Southeastern—Barbara
Sheinberg

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Representative—Toni Jones

Announcements

ASCG Incorporated

Job Title: *Planner I or II*

Job Summary: ASCG has a unique opportunity for an entry level planner to assist with the development of comprehensive, economic development, transportation and airport planning projects in rural Alaska. Includes development of public involvement programs and may involve overnight travel.

Education and/or Experience

- Bachelor's Degree in planning or related field.
- Sub-professional or technical planning experience (e.g., drafting, cartography, research) may be substituted for the required college education on a year-for-year basis.
- Special considerations will be given to candidates whose experi-

ence was in Alaska with exposure to the Alaska Native culture and community/village processes and contacts.

Job Knowledge and/or Experience

- Demonstrated knowledge and skills in the following areas:
- Principles and techniques of professional planning processes
- Forecasting methodologies, statistical principles and methods, data gathering techniques and procedures, research objectives and impacts
- Specific area of planning, i.e., urban, regional, transportation, economic development, land capability and suitability analysis, local land use control and land use planning
- Project management, including work program development, contract administration, and scheduling

- Skilled at various computerized programs and processes used in managing and analyzing planning data.
- Skilled in the use of word processing, spreadsheets and graphics.
- Skilled at gathering and analyzing data, reasoning logically, evaluating trends, identifying key issues and relationships, drawing conclusions and making appropriate decisions based on facts.
- Ability to communicate effectively, both in writing and orally.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with governmental officials at all levels, employees, private groups, the press and the general public.

For more information e-mail smtaylor@ascg.com.

