



American Planning Association  
**Pennsylvania Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

**Development Plan  
2023 – 2026**

***“Promoting a Culture of Planning”***

**Approved by the APA-PA Board of Directors on December 8, 2022**

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## Table of Contents

<b>I.</b>	<b>Introduction and Background</b>	<i>page 3</i>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Mission</b>	<i>page 4</i>
<b>III.</b>	<b>Vision</b>	<i>page 4</i>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Values</b>	<i>page 4</i>
<b>V.</b>	<b>Organizational Narrative</b>	<i>page 5</i>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Organizational Priorities</b>	<i>page 7</i>
<b>VII.</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<i>page 8</i>
<b>VIII.</b>	<b>Priorities and Implementation</b>	<i>page 11</i>
<b>IX.</b>	<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<i>page 14</i>

## I. Introduction and Background

- The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA PA) is a nonprofit, non-partisan organization for the promotion of planning, and for professional planners and planning officials in the Commonwealth. The organization is one of 47 Chapters of the American Planning Association (APA). Approximately 2,300 members strong, with 1,500 professional planners of which 620 are AICP members, the APA PA works to promote planning at all levels of the Commonwealth through trainings, the annual conference, legislative monitoring, and public awareness efforts. APA PA members participate in various statewide and regional groups with shared values and goals.
- APA requires each Chapter to maintain a current development plan that provides direction for the organization's priorities and goals. Since the existing APA PA Development Plan concludes in December 2022, a new Plan is needed.
- During 2022, the Chapter Board of Directors prepared a new Development Plan. A retreat was held in June 2022. Invited attendees included members of the Board of Directors, section councils, committees and additional Chapter members.
- The Development Plan is a four-year plan, beginning in January 2023 and concluding in December 2026.
- The 2019-2022 Plan, which involved a rigorous strategic planning process, is the basis for this Plan.

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## **II. Mission**

The mission of the PA Chapter of APA is to provide leadership in fostering excellence in community planning.

## **III. Vision**

The PA Chapter of APA positively influences the provision of planning resources and the practice of planning at all levels of the public and private sectors.

## **IV. Values**

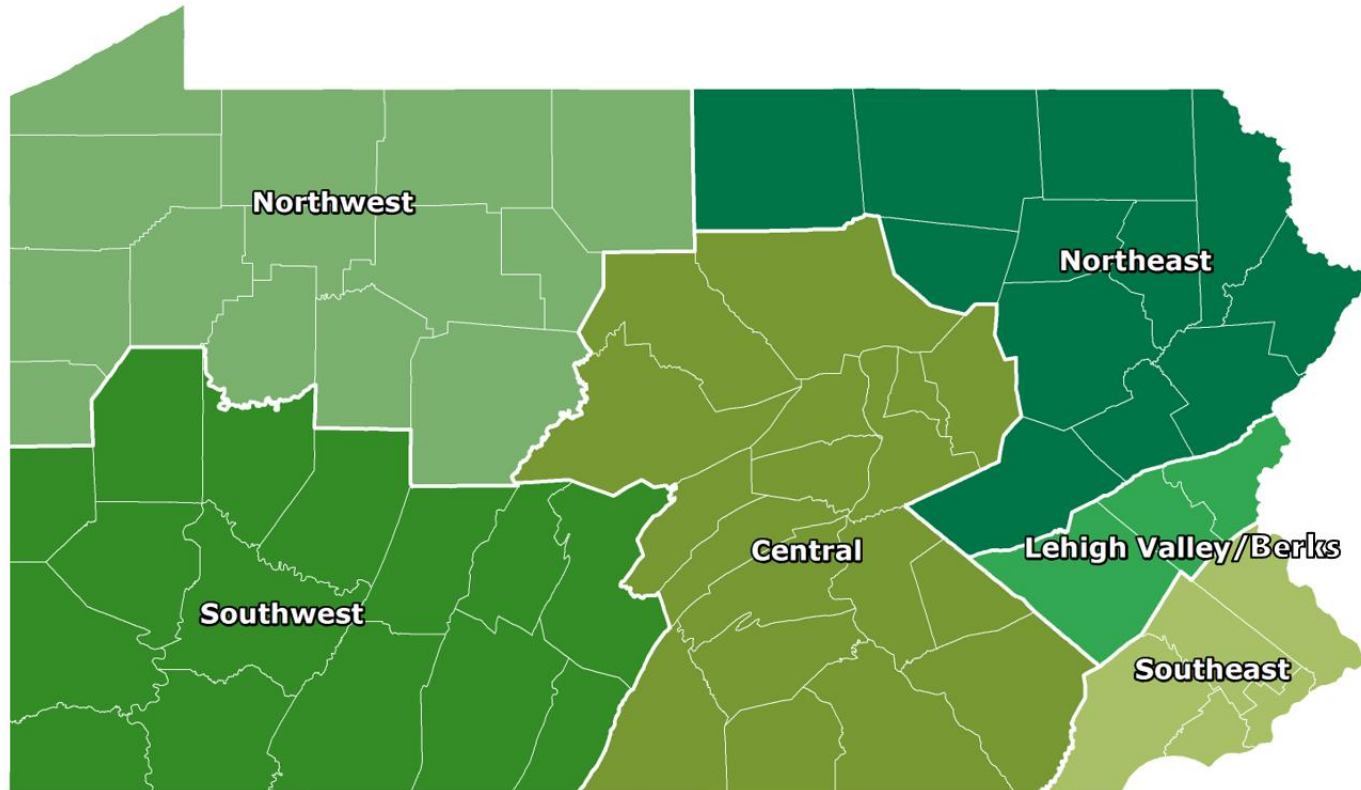
The PA Chapter of APA believes:

- Planning is an essential function in communities;
- Planning is comprehensive, inclusive, and serves the public interest;
- Planning incorporates the diversity of Pennsylvania's communities, cultures and places;
- Planning facilitates consensus by balancing varied interests and resources;
- Planning addresses existing and emerging community concerns; and
- Planning includes implementation actions that effect positive change.

## **V. Organizational Narrative**

The PA Chapter of APA (APA PA) is a nonprofit, non-partisan organization for the promotion of planning, and for professional planners and planning officials in the Commonwealth. The organization is a Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA). It was created in 1985 by the consolidation of three separate Chapters of the APA in Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Planning Association. Approximately 2,300 members strong, with 1,500 professional planners, of which 620 are AICP members, the PA Chapter of APA works to promote planning at all levels of the Commonwealth through trainings, the annual conference, legislative monitoring, and public awareness efforts. Since our founding in 1985, our Chapter has hosted an annual statewide conference, provided training to planning professionals and officials, and produced a newsletter. Since the mid-1990's, the Chapter has hosted a website, and more recently, various social media outlets. We also partnered with the Penn State University Cooperative Extension to create the PMPEI (Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute). The PMPEI provides training to planning commission members, zoning officers, and zoning hearing board members throughout Pennsylvania.

The Chapter is organized into six Sections, which provide local service to members and others through program meetings, local workshops, newsletters, email blasts, and announcements.



## **In addition to what we currently do:**

### **VI. Organizational Priorities for 2023-2026 are:**

1. Better Communication
2. Strengthen engagement with students and young professionals
3. Develop toolkit for planners

*\*The PA Chapter of APA promotes a culture in which planning is a practical and routine means for communities to stay on top of the realities of change, make tough decisions about priorities, invite innovation, and initiate actions to improve communities and make them more attractive for desired investment, growth, and development.*

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## VII. Strategies

### 1. Strengthen Engagement with Students and Young Professionals

Goal: To get students and young professionals more actively engaged with the PA Chapter of APA and Board

1a. Section Research: Complete an audit of planning related study programs available at PA colleges and universities and begin to partner and develop relationships with these schools and educators.

1b. Reinvigorate the Student Engagement Committee

1c. Create a template for a mentorship program

1d. Promote/offer networking and/or internship opportunities

1e. Identify student representatives to serve on section councils and on the board

### 2. Better Communication

Goal: Develop an overall communication strategy for the Chapter that builds/maintains an active, engaged community online and in-person.

2a. Analysis of website usage and social media engagement

2b. Survey membership on communication preferences

2c. Develop communication strategy feasible to staff and volunteers

2d. Reorganization of Chapter website

2e. Develop social media posting schedule



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2f. Increase overall usage and engagement on all platforms

**3. Develop Toolkit for Planners**

Goal: Develop a toolkit to build the case for planning and planning staff positions; as well as increase planner salaries in Pennsylvania.

3a. Develop a toolkit that would help communicate the value of planning and planning capacity. Its purpose would be to enable both public agencies and private companies to increase planner positions and salaries. It would illustrate the importance of planning through examples of “great places” and the built environment.

3b. Develop a toolkit that would include a written document, online tools, good and bad examples, and videos that tell a story.

3c. Find data that shows increase in planner jobs as well as an increase in salaries within the sector throughout the state.

3d. Develop a working group composed of APA PA members from the public, private and educational sectors. Working group needs to include planning partners, such as PSAB, PSATS, PSACS, and CCAP.

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## **VIII. Priorities and Implementation**

The PA Chapter of APA will implement all of these strategies over the next four years. Three of the strategies have been made priorities, including providing training, building coalitions, providing an orientation process, and developing a financial plan. Implementation for each of these is described below, with some implementation beginning in 2014. The financial plan strategy has been divided into two parts – financial stability and scholarship stability.

<b>Strengthen Engagement with Students and Young Professionals</b>			
<b>Action (Specific task or step)</b>	<b>Responsible Parties (Lead/Support Roles)</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Resources Needed (Est. cost, means of finance, time, etc.)</b>
1. Section Research: Complete an audit of planning related study programs available at PA colleges and universities and begin to partner and develop relationships with these schools and educators.	Board and Section Council	3-6 months	Time
2. Reinvigorate the Student Engagement Committee	Board and Section Council	3-6 months	Time
3. Identify student representatives to serve on section councils and on the board	Board, Section Council, and Student Engagement Committee	6-12 months	Time
4. Create a template for a mentorship program	Board, Section Council, and Student Engagement Committee	12-24 months	Time
5. Promote/offer networking and/or internship opportunities	Board, Section Council, Student Engagement Committee, and staff	12-24 months	Time

<b>Better Communication</b>			
<b>Action (Specific task or step)</b>	<b>Responsible Parties (Lead/Support Roles)</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Resources Needed (Est. cost, means of finance, time, etc.)</b>
1. Analysis of website usage and social media engagement	Communications & Membership Committee; staff	3-6 months	
2. Survey membership on communication preferences	Communications & Membership Committee; staff	3-6 months	Time
3. Develop social media posting schedule	Communications & Membership Committee; staff	Ongoing	Time
4. Develop communication strategy feasible to staff and volunteers	Communications & Membership Committee; staff	Ongoing	Time; possible cost
5. Reorganization of Chapter website	Board, Sections, all committees; staff	Ongoing	Time; possible cost
6. Increase overall usage and engagement on all platforms	Communications & Membership Committee; staff	Ongoing	Time

<b>Develop Toolkit for Planners</b>			
<b>Action (Specific task or step)</b>	<b>Responsible Parties (Lead/Support Roles)</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Resources Needed (Est. cost, means of finance, time, etc.)</b>
1. Develop a toolkit that would help communicate the value of planning and planning capacity. Its purpose would be to enable both public agencies and private companies to increase planner positions and salaries. It would illustrate the importance of planning through examples of "great places" and the built environment.	Working group (includes: Pattie Guttenplan, Zach Norwood, Ed LeClear, Rebecca Wetzler, and Peter Wulfhorst)	36-48 months	Time
2. Develop a toolkit that would include a written document, online tools, good and bad examples, and videos that tell a story.	Working group (includes: Pattie Guttenplan, Zach Norwood, Ed LeClear, Rebecca Wetzler, and Peter Wulfhorst)	36-48 months	Time
3. Find data that shows increase in planner jobs as well as an increase in salaries within the sector throughout the state.	Working group (includes: Pattie Guttenplan, Zach Norwood, Ed LeClear, Rebecca Wetzler, and Peter Wulfhorst)	36-48 months	Time
4. Develop a working group composed of APA PA members from the public, private and educational sectors. Working group needs to include planning partners, such as PSAB, PSATS, PSACS, and CCAP.	Working group (includes: Pattie Guttenplan, Zach Norwood, Ed LeClear, Rebecca Wetzler, and Peter Wulfhorst)	36-48 months	Time

## **IX. Acknowledgements:**

*Thank you to the following individuals who contributed to this Plan:*

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