

UTAH PLANNER



American Planning Association
Utah Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Utah Chapter of the American Planning Association

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2010

VOLUME 37 NUMBER 11



Utah Consortium Receives Major Planning Grant

by Alan Matheson

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The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development has awarded a \$5 million Sustainable Communities grant to a Wasatch Front partnership consisting of the Wasatch Front Regional Council, Envision Utah, Salt Lake County, Mountainland Association of Governments, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah Department of Transportation, Utah Transit Authority, and the American Planning Association, collectively known as the "Utah Consortium." With the funding, the partnership will begin a four part innovative program to create the relationships and tools necessary to implement *The Wasatch Choices 2040*—the adopted land-use and transportation "Vision" for Weber, Davis, Salt Lake and Utah Counties developed by elected officials and the public to improve our quality of life as our region experiences dramatic growth. Implementing the Vision will fuel our economy, protect our beautiful natural areas, provide more choices for how we live and travel, save money and energy, and improve our air quality and health.

From 2011 through 2013, the partnership will advance the Vision through four programs:

1. Developing the world's foremost analytical tool for evaluating the long-term impacts of different land-use and transportation decisions. The computer model, "Envision Tomorrow Plus" (ET+), will reside at the University of Utah as an open-source tool available to anyone. ET+ will help all those involved in development decisions to understand the quality-of-life impact and market viability of different development patterns, promoting sound decisions.

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President's Message

by Aric Jensen

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As I look out my window to the east, the very tips of the Wasatch Mountains are lit in a fiery pink and orange by the setting sun. But too fast the light is gone, and the headlights of the cars passing beneath my window sill glow like the lanterns of lost travelers. It reminds me of a hymn entitled, the *Wintry Day Descending To Its Close*. For those who aren't familiar with it, I've included a selection that particularly touches me:

The wintry day, descending to its close,
Invites all wearied nature to repose,
And shades of night are falling dense and fast,
Like sable curtains closing o'er the past.

Pale through the gloom the newly fallen snow
Wraps in a shroud the silent earth below
As tho 'twere mercy's hand had spread the pall,
A symbol of forgiveness unto all.

I cannot go to rest, but linger still
In meditation at my windowsill,
While, like the twinkling stars in heaven's dome,
Come one by one sweet memories of home.

(Orson F. Whitney, 1855–1931)

I would hope that at this time of year, as we gather together with friends and family to celebrate the holidays, that we might focus on how blessed we are to live in such a great place. While I was born in southern California, Utah is now my home. And the worst day in Utah is better than the best day in war torn Afghanistan and many other places in the world. So my message this month is brief—be happy, be thankful, enjoy the season. Help others with a smile. Life is short—so make the most of it.





When There Are No Planning Jobs

by Christina Ratcliffe, AICP
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Article reprinted with permission from the author. Article originally published in the September 2010 issue of Northern News—a monthly publication of the Northern Section of the California Chapter of APA.

In these recessionary times, many planners have found themselves without a job as a planner.

Traditionally, planners have relied on their job level (Planner 1, 2, 3, etc.) within a government agency or a consulting firm as proof of their experience and skills, and this has helped them advance in an orderly fashion up the professional ladder.

With budget cuts and stalled development, planning jobs in California are few and far between. Competition for the few jobs available is intense. A recent advertisement for an Associate Planner had over 500 applicants.

Our current situation has changed both the way we look for jobs and what types of jobs we seek. Networking has become more important than ever, as has flexibility in the type of job you are seeking. That requires a focus on the skills you bring, rather than the job title.

Although we cover a wide variety of specializations, as a profession we have many transferable skills. In general, we are good writers and can interpret policy. We have experience dealing with the public and communicating information to a wide range of individuals. We are skilled in different software programs. We know how to read and interpret maps and plans. Are there other jobs (fields) that can use our skills?

I spoke to planners who are in transition to get some ideas to share. We also scanned ads online to find fields and job titles that fit planners' skills. Those fields include government (other than planning), nonprofit organizations, business management, office administration, education, real estate, and writing/editing.

Job titles we found that call for a planner's skill set include political/campaign aide, property/community association manager, real estate appraiser, leasing consultant, public outreach assistant, program/project manager, researcher, analyst, project coordinator, tutor, environmental health specialist, training coordinator, climate information management assistant, and proposal/ grant writer.

In transitioning to another career—temporarily or permanently—the important things to remember are:

- focus on your skills;
- be flexible;
- look for positions where you can use your skills;
- be open to looking for something new.

For more tips on finding work in a tight economy, see "Networking to the hidden job market," by career consultant Steve Piazzale (on page four).

Christina Ratcliffe, AICP, is Northern Section's Co-Professional Development Director, and is Senior Planner with Neal Martin & Associates. If this article was helpful, or if you have other ideas, please contact her at Christina@Ratcliffe.net.



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Networking to the Hidden Job Market

by Steve Piazzale, Ph.D.
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Article reprinted with permission from the author. Article originally published in the September 2010 issue of Northern News—a monthly publication of the Northern Section of the California Chapter of APA.

"It's who you know." You've heard that one before, right?

Research tells us that 80 percent of jobs are obtained through personal contacts, yet most job hunters spend 80 percent of their time answering computer job board ads. So what can you do to get that job you want and deserve?

All job seekers or changers need to get out and meet people. Start by making a list of everybody you know who might even remotely help you find out about a job or career in which you're interested. This includes former co-workers, employers, family members, friends, customers, suppliers, vendors, professionals (such as your doctor, lawyer, or accountant), members of your church and alumni—the list is almost infinite.

Once you've made this list and are clear about the kind of work you're pursuing, start contacting these folks and clearly and succinctly tell them what you're looking for. Ask them if they have some time to chat about what they do and your search strategy. It's best not to directly ask for a job because most likely they'll just say they have no openings. Instead ask for information—how to improve your résumé, any additional training you need, specifics about current industry trends, other people you could contact, what meetings you should attend, and what you should be keeping up to date with.

Not everyone will give you new contacts, but slowly and surely you'll build a large network of folks with whom you can stay in touch. The beauty of this is that none of your calls will be cold calls—you're always contacting people using the name of someone they know. This network then becomes your eyes to the "hidden" or emerging job market. By staying in touch with these new contacts, you'll hear about opportunities as they emerge and before they're listed on job boards, giving you first crack at them! Plus your contacts are now beginning to know you and can speak to your qualifications, in essence serving as a reference.

Bottom-line, get out and interact with people, attend professional association and alumni functions as well as other get-togethers. This might be a bit outside your comfort zone, but give it a try even if it's a bit at a time. I think you'll find it's well worth the effort. And remember as Woody Allen once said: "80 percent of success is just showing up."

"Being able to do the job well will not necessarily get you hired; the person who gets hired is often the one who knows the most about how to get hired." — Richard Lathrop, author of "Who's Hiring Who?" (1989, Ten Speed Press)

Steve Piazzale has a Stanford University Ph.D. in sociology with extensive training in psychology, and is a career/life coach. If you are in need of career counseling services, Steve is offering California APA members one hour of coaching at a 50 percent discount. Contact him at Steve@BayAreaCareerCoach.com. His website is www.BayAreaCareerCoach.com.



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GRANT (continued from first page)


2. Working with stakeholders to overcome barriers and facilitate Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) projects at six key “centers” identified in the Vision. In close collaboration with local governments, the partners will conduct a stakeholder process at each site, tailored to the particular needs of each community. The stakeholders will help create a series of viable future development options, or “scenarios.” Using ET+, stakeholders will analyze each scenario to identify which best advances our collective goals. The local jurisdiction can then select its preferred scenario and incorporate it into its master plans and begin implementation.
3. Creating a regional affordable housing plan to provide choices and opportunities for all residents. The partners will team with local governments, draw on existing housing plans, assess the current and projected supply of and demand for affordable housing, and recommend how some of the affordable housing needed in our region can be provided in areas with multiple transportation options.
4. Compiling the tools, approaches and lessons learned during the process into a “Toolbox” and working with local communities on the Wasatch Front to aid them in implementing the Vision within their own communities. The partners will share the Toolbox locally and nationally at conferences, educational forums, meetings with elected officials, and through a public education campaign. They will develop and share financing strategies and model codes (including a form based code) tailored to individual communities. This project will unite the robust research, investment, and capacity of the partners, in close collaboration with elected officials and residents, to create a brighter future for our region. It will be replicable and transferable, allowing regions nationwide to create more sustainable and livable communities.

As part of the project, the Utah Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-Utah) will be involved in the development of a model form based code. Form based codes are a relatively new zoning tool that emphasize creating place and the mixing of uses as opposed to more traditional codes that seek to separate uses and focus on the actual land use. Form based codes are generally considered a stronger tool to implement how the community wants an area to function and appear. The model code will be made available to all communities and include a workbook to calibrate the code to the local community. The intent of the model code is to provide a new zoning template that will facilitate development around transit stations and other higher intensity locations through expedited permit processes when a proposed development is willing to meet the local goals. These goals will be identified from an existing plan or via a new planning process. The ordinance template will provide mechanisms to implement those goals so that the zoning will clearly achieve the community vision.

Once the model code and workbook are complete and the planning process is underway, the model code will be applied to six sites. The code may be initially presented as optional but with strong incentives to help assure it is used. It is the intent of this section to achieve adoption of a new code at each site.

APA-Utah will oversee this portion of the grant, from RFP development to adoption of a code at each site. Consultants will be used extensively throughout this portion of the project.

John M. Janson, AICP contributed to this article.



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Upcoming Events for Planners



Are you aware of an event of interest to Utah planners?

Please submit ideas to utah-apa@utah-apa.org or call Judi Pickell, Chapter Administrator, at (801) 450-2659.

Contact APA-Utah:
WEB

www.utah-apa.org

E-MAIL

utah-apa@utah-apa.org

POST

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Utah Governor's Mansion Holiday Tours—Utah Heritage Foundation

December 7, 9, 14, and 16, 2011
603 East South Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah
Tours run from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Last tour begins at 3:30 PM.
Each tour is approximately 40 minutes long.
For more information: www.utahheritagefoundation.com
No charge for event.



Supporting a Diverse Local Agricultural Economy—APA Monthly Webcast

December 10, 2010 from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM MDT
Registration information: www.utah-apa.org
No charge for registration. 1.5 AICP CM credits.



Fiscal Sustainability—APA Monthly Webcast

December 17, 2010 from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM MDT
Registration information: www.utah-apa.org
No charge for registration. 1.5 AICP CM credits.

Mark your calendars now...



Retrofitting Corridors—APA Audio Conference

January 19, 2011 from 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM MDT
Location to be determined.
Registration information: e-mail RSVP to Lani.Eggertsen-Goff@jacobs.com
No charge for registration. 1.5 AICP CM credits.



2011 National Planning Conference—APA

April 9-12, 2011
Hynes Convention Center, 900 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts
Registration information: www.planning.org/conference/registration.htm



2011 Spring Conference—APA-Utah

May 5-6, 2011
Richfield, Utah
Registration information: e-mail Judi Pickell at utah-apa@utah-apa.org



Fifth Annual Utah Preservation Conference—Utah Heritage Foundation

May 12-14, 2011
Salt Lake City, Utah
For more information: e-mail Alison Flanders at alison@utahheritagefoundation.org



2011 ACSP 52nd Annual Conference—The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning

October 13-16, 2011
Salt Lake City, Utah
For more information: www.acsp.org or e-mail Stephen Goldsmith at stgoldsmith@gmail.com

