



MOBILIZING SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING

APA Conference, Chicago – April 14, 2013

Agenda

- Welcome & Purpose
- State APA Chapters
 - ▣ Research Overview
 - ▣ Sustainability Committees
- New Sustainable Communities Division
- Discussion
- Summary & Next Steps



Challenge & Purpose

- **Challenge:** Mobilizing state APA Chapter sustainability.
- **Purpose:** Explore how state chapters and the new national APA Sustainable Communities Division can collaborate to advance sustainability planning.



State APA Chapters – Research

- Research project led to article and session
- Involved a website review & email to presidents
- 35 state chapters responded
 - 4 interested in how to start a sustainability committee
 - Some chapters have limited capacity, limited public interest, or face anti-sustainability sentiment
 - 5 states have sustainability committees
 - CA, CO, FL, MA, NJ
- Other long-standing initiatives:
 - OR has sustainability toolkit & strategic initiative
 - OR & WA collaborate on “Game Changing Initiatives”

State APA Chapters – Research

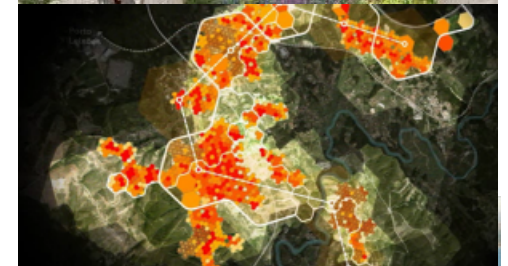
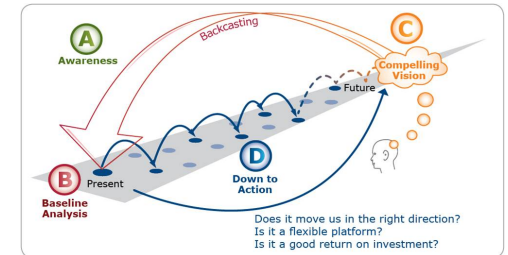
- Assessment--State Chapters Face Following Challenges:
 - ▣ Resources, education, and capacity for complexity of challenge
 - ▣ A constructively engaged public
 - ▣ Best practices tools
 - ▣ Committee start-up capacity
 - ▣ Clear strategic framework focused on end-game, net-zero/
positive impacts
 - ▣ On-going innovation to invent/achieve sustainability
- Conclusion:
 - ▣ Best way to predict the future is to invent it.
 - ▣ Being less bad is not being good (McDonough). Getting to good is our challenge.



-N

Sustainability Committee

- **Genesis (2010)/Focus**
 - ▣ Strategic sustainability
 - ▣ Urgent need/growing receptivity
 - ▣ Learning-practice network
- **Successes/Tips**
 - ▣ Web site, newsletter, workshops
 - ▣ Collaborative research with SFSU
 - ▣ Create double value
 - ▣ Set Bold goals – innovate – net zero
- **Challenges/Barriers**
 - ▣ Limited time & resources
 - ▣ Effective engagement





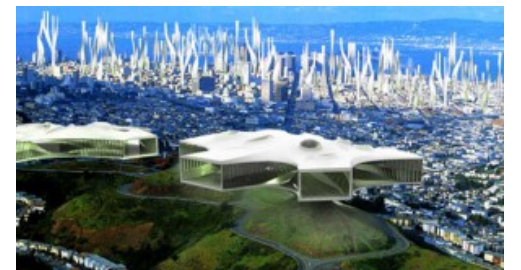
-N Sustainability Committee

□ **Future Goals**

- Expand engagement of planners
- Develop more resources & services
- Training & legislative initiatives

□ **Role of New Division**

- National advocate
- Authoritative resource
- Champion message nationally
- Convene national discourse





Sustainability Committee

- **Genesis/Focus**
 - Formed 2004
 - Focus has evolved to be event oriented
- **Successes/Tips**
 - Partnerships & opportunities
 - “Hot topics”
 - Chapter Board support
- **Challenges/Barriers**
 - Limited time availability
 - Other priorities of chapter
 - “Thinkers” & “Doers”
 - Competing organizations



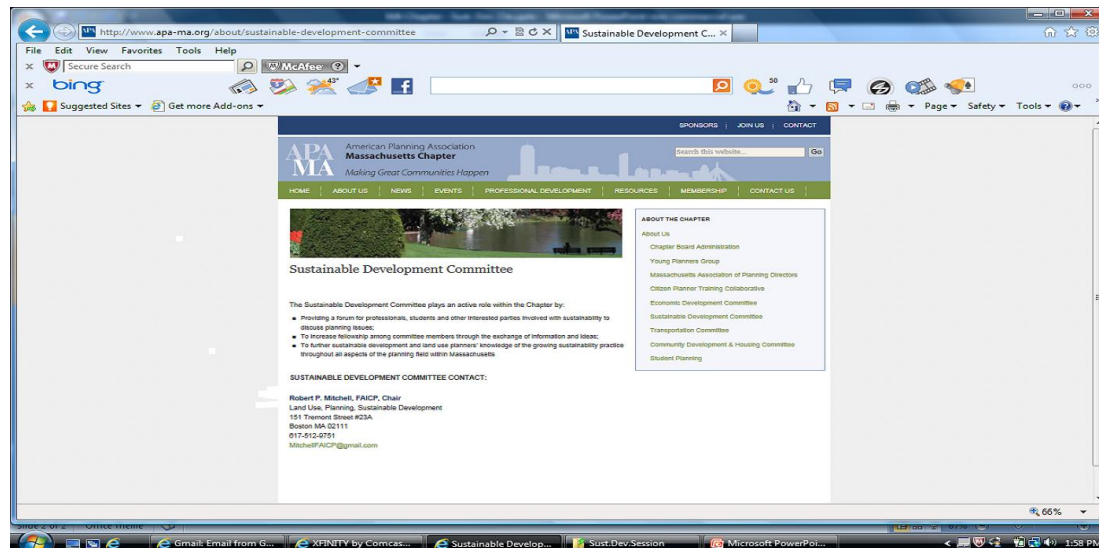
Sustainability Committee

□ Future Goals

- Regional conference
- Work program
- Web site presence

□ Role of New Division

- National APA voice
- Assistance to Chapters
 - Conference sessions
 - Webinars





Sustainability Committee

- **Genesis/Focus**
 - ▣ Chapter determined the need for Committee
 - ▣ Support from Chapter staff
 - ▣ Committee convenes by conference call
- **Successes/Tips**
 - ▣ Define purpose and definition of sustainability
 - ▣ Establish priorities with a 2 year perspective
- **Challenges/Barriers**
 - ▣ Volunteer time constraints and Chapter resources
 - ▣ Maintaining a core group



Sustainability Committee

□ **Future Goals**

- Establish website presence with toolkit and link to other resource sites
- Outreach to other professional organizations to coordinate resources and activities

□ **Role of New Division**

- Outreach and resources
- Work with State Chapters



Sustainability Committee

□ **Genesis/Focus**

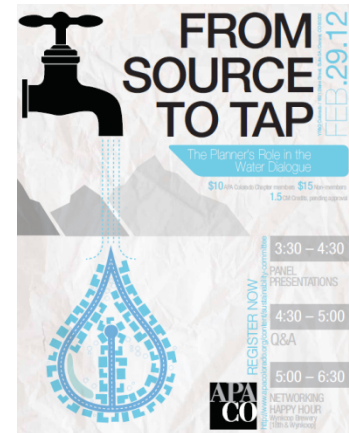
- ▣ Started in 2009
- ▣ Training focus – quarterly events

□ **Successes/Tips**

- ▣ Tapped into broad interest
- ▣ Support from leadership

□ **Challenges/Barriers**

- ▣ Need for integrated strategic approach
- ▣ Limited resources





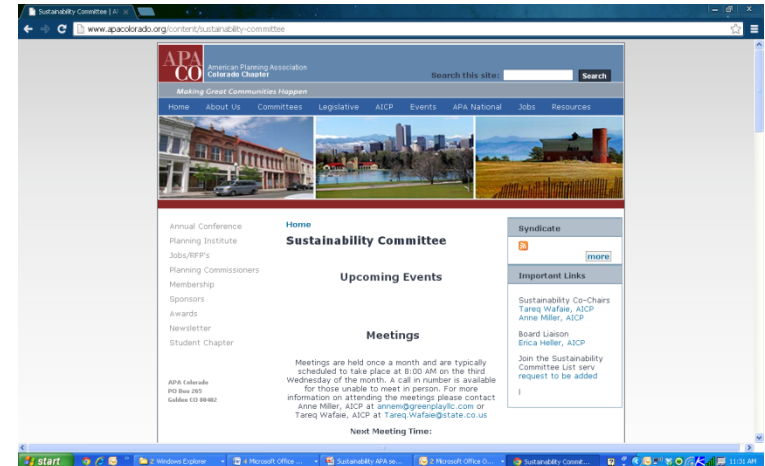
Sustainability Committee

□ Future Goals

- Enhance web-based resources & communication
- Expand statewide outreach

□ Role of New Division

- Clearinghouse of resources & best practices
- Facilitate national dialogue & action
- Monitor federal legislation





American Planning Association

Sustainable Communities Division



- We are APA members who want to bring sustainability to the forefront of the APA agenda.
- **MISSION: Showcase. Advocate. Communicate.**
- ~200 APA members; 2,500+ on LinkedIn.com
- **sustainableplanning.net**

Lessons & Challenges

- Varied Current Chapter Response
 - ▣ From limited to extensive initiatives
 - ▣ Few committees building capacity and on-going programs
 - ▣ Challenges – limited resources, volunteer time constraints, leadership, effective engagement, best practice tools, shared strategic framework
- Urgency of challenge requires
 - ▣ Effectiveness
 - ▣ Innovation
 - ▣ An end-game focus
 - ▣ Effective professional and stakeholder engagement
- Need for collaboration & leveraging resources

Discussion Questions

1. What would it take to mobilize sustainability planning in your state APA chapter?
2. What are the ways for state APA chapters to collaborate on sustainability planning for mutual benefit?
3. What are the best ways that the new Division can promote innovative sustainable planning and support state chapter planning efforts?
4. Your action commitments?

Thanks!

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