



## Director's note: Nearing the end of the longest year

By Jonathan Schuppert, AICP, December 8, 2020



As what feels like one of the longest years of my life winds down and I near the end of my term as Section Director, I can't help but think — *what a year this has been!* I started 2020 — what was supposed to be my second year as Director-Elect — with news that our then Section Director, James Castañeda, AICP, was stepping down and moving out of the region.

My expedited transition into the role of Section Director was quickly followed by the growing concerns of Covid-19 and a life of sheltering-in-place. This change-on-top-of-change reminds me of the need to be flexible and to follow through on what I stated in my first Director's note: "Commit to being a little terrified every day."

I have indeed been "a little terrified every day," but I have also been thankful for, and amazed at, the willingness of folks to help, come together, and find meaningful solutions. I saw that in the world around me, including with our amazing board members.

I feel honored to serve (virtually, of course) with board members who consistently rise to the challenge and push the envelope to serve our members and advance our profession. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated and creative group, and I couldn't be prouder of the resilience they showed in these challenging times.

While we've had to change the format of our events and how we communicate with each other, we've adapted. We continue to provide quality programming and we've expanded our reach.



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We paused some events — or course-corrected — to adapt to the “new normal”: We helped plan the Chapter's first virtual conference, which highlighted issues around diversity, housing, and the future of our profession. And we're planning our first virtual holiday party, celebrating #PlanningPositivity to focus on the many great things that happened this year.

Our incoming Section Director, **Florentina Craciun, AICP**, has served on the Board since 2012 in a number of capacities, including Membership Director, East Bay Regional Activities Coordinator, and Awards Program Co-Director. She has big things planned for our Section in the coming two years and will guide us into our “newer normal” post-pandemic. Joining her are incoming Director-Elect **Michael Cass**, and continuing Administrative Director **Veronica Flores**, who were elected to two-year terms beginning January 1, 2021. All will serve through December 31, 2022, as will I, as Immediate Past Director.

### **We want YOU to join the Board**

Do you want to be more involved with APA in the coming year? Are you ready to use your skills to benefit our Northern Section? Consider joining the Board. We need a treasurer to serve out the remainder of Michael's term (through 2021). We also have several vacant board and committee positions waiting for you. For additional information on these positions and how to apply, please contact Florentina Craciun, AICP, at [directorelect@norcalapa.org](mailto:directorelect@norcalapa.org).

### **Happy Holidays!**

I hope to see you at our first [virtual holiday celebration](#), where you can reconnect with your peers and have some fun as we embrace #PlanningPositivity!

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