



# APA California 2015 Conference Host Committee Meeting

## MEETING REPORT

February 7, 2015 | 10am – Noon

AC Transit Board Room, 1600 Franklin Street, Oakland

### 1. Introductions

### 2. Conference Updates

#### a. Budget Updates

The co-chairs discussed the amendments to our September budget that was approved by the Chapter. We are finalizing registration fees and we plan to increase fees at all levels as it has been 5 years since the last increase. The APA member early registration rate will increase by \$45 to \$495. The difference between member and non-members will be greater as the non-member fees were low compared to national. As the Chapter experiences greater costs to process an on-site registration onsite fees will be higher.

On the expense side, based on a Chapter review of the contracts for conference contractors, it was determined that these were higher than initially forecast in our initial budget. We also now have a \$6,000 line item for the planner's guide. The chapter agreed that this would be important given our more urban setting as it would allow attendees to explore the local area. It will be a nice publication in keeping with our standards. Finally, we now have to budget for a drayage firm needed to layout booths.

#### b. Accommodations

We have finalized arrangements at 3 hotels: the City Center Oakland Marriott, Marriott Courtyard, and the Waterfront Hotel in Jack London Square. When asked, about 7 CHC staff indicated they would need a room at one of the hotels. The CHC was being notified prior to the larger public so members can reserve ASAP. If CHC makes a reservation they were asked to let Hing [later amended to Erik] so we can try and get you into better rooms. The discount rates include the night before and the rate at the main hotel will be \$159 at Marriott. A travel guide was also discussed as an addition to the Planner's Guide and Mobile Application.

### 3. Programs

Juan said that 319 presentations were submitted by the February 6, 2015 deadline. CHC members are reviewing sessions in teams of six people that are assigned to each conference

track. The sessions will be reviewed and ranked based on the final review criteria developed by the committee. About 100 sessions will be selected, of these some are by-right, which means that 80-90 sessions will ranked as “submitted presentations”. The committee is organizing everything with subcommittees to review applications, from now to April 1<sup>st</sup> in order to meet the publication deadline for the initial conference-at-a-glance.

Once sessions are selected, the group will work on site specifics such as coordinating rooms and recruiting from student volunteers. The initial notification to chosen sessions will occur in April though final session times and locations will not be known until June/July. These specifics will take longer to understand as they are related to room size. Experts in the fields will help the committee review the proposals to provide a good attendance estimate that can be used to assign appropriately sized spaces.

Initial conference at a glance materials must be sent to Dorina by April 24, so between April 1<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> the committee will figure out what time each session will be assigned. No guarantees about certain days, as all depends on final session selections. During review if two or more proposals are about the same topic, and have synergy, the committee will connect the two proposers to try and combine them. The goal is to provide the best professional development type presentations, engage membership as best as we can; Lots of depth, a lot for planners to get out of it

Everyone was trying to submit at end of the work day, the web portal went down, we will not extend the deadline since everyone seems to have been able to submit. During discussion, it was decided that as a courtesy, those who could provide documentation that they tried to submit but the website would not accept the session would be allowed to send their proposals directly to Juan to be included in the review process. In the future, the CHC wrap-up report will recommend that future conferences post a sample application, but encourage people to write it in word then paste it in.

#### **4. Mobile Workshops**

Mika started by noting that over 49 submissions were received before the deadline. The organizer of every proposal was sent an acknowledgement e-mail. The committee has made sure to upload each to Google Drive, as there was no online portal to submit. The Google drive system is not so much low-tech as cloud-tech. Eight volunteers will review the proposals over February. 25% will receive an automatic yes, the first part of March will be used to combine some of the proposals together and determine the remaining 75%. Mobile Workshops is also coordinating with the Programs using the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. 12 mobile workshops will be selected and include a variety of tours. If CHC members still want to volunteer, or if they're new to the CHC, they are encouraged to be a part of mobile workshops, work on itinerary, travel and snacks. CM credit applications may take more than a month so the committee will work closely with the Chapter and Section professional development directors to complete the needed documentation. Also it was noted that most workshops would be covered by the Chapter's insurance policy for the Conference

## 5. Keynote Speaker

Andrea reported that we are still seeking speakers for Sunday morning, Monday lunch, and Tuesday brunch. Directors of real estate and government affairs, tech companies (Salesforce, Sungevity, Google, etc.) will discuss the changes in communities due to tech at lunch on Sunday. We have reached out to Governor Brown or Barbara Lee, but they are unlikely to respond until the conference is closer. The CHC is still looking for some great folks. It would be great to find exciting speakers related to Law or Ethics for Tuesday to keep people there. **A higher profile speaker will attract people to a conference we hope will attract 1500-1900 individuals.**

The April 24<sup>th</sup> conference at a glance will include a keynote speaker advertisement. Visalia had a keynote no-show, so the CHC will continue to look at options for backup speakers Equate excitement with our speakers. Suggestions from CHC members included Jaime Lerner, the former mayor of Curitiba, Brazil, and Peter Calthorpe. If CHC members have personal connections to a speaker they were asked to talk with Andrea to begin the conversations.

## 6. Sponsorship

Jean listed off our sponsors to date: RRM Design, Lea + Elliott, Ascent Environmental, Michael Baker International, PMC, Fehr & Peers, Dudek, MIG. \$22,000 is in the bank, or 17.6% of our \$125,000 goal, but we also have about \$37,000 in soft commitments (basically people who said they are getting approval, but no check yet!).

The success of the entire conference will be primarily driven by our attendance and sponsorship. Due to contract changes, the costs of items in the convention center are adding up so we are focusing on sponsorship to help buffer and defray some of these expenses. It was also noted that we should recognize our “gold star” sponsors who have consistently donated to the conference for 5+ years.

## 7. Volunteers

Syd estimated we will need 100 volunteers. The registration table will need volunteers but they will be managed directly by the Chapter as opposed to the CHC. Other opportunities and events requiring volunteers include: mobile workshops, website, CPF auction, and the leadership institute. The committee will reach out to Young Professionals in Transportation to see if members want to volunteer. Angie Spearman, from HPN global our conference coordinator, will also work with the volunteers to ensure courtesy is consistent throughout.

Volunteers can be reimburse for up to 8 hours of time after the conference. Eight hours of volunteer time will defray the \$150 student registration fee to \$100. There is not going to be a registration portal for volunteers as at National APA. Time will be blocked in 4 hour intervals.

## **8. Planner's Guide**

Jackie said her committee has already posted 19 neighborhood profiles on the Section webpage as a preview to the printed guide. She asked CHC members to take a look and provide the committee with any comments and help them keep on top of a new restaurant or any that have closed. They are trying to be balanced in the profiles so if you see something that is missing send feedback to [oaklandplannersguide@gmail.com](mailto:oaklandplannersguide@gmail.com)

The group has also reached out to the RACs so the guide provides an overview of the outlying areas in the Section. Cindy will help with the mapping. Planner's Guide can use CHC help with photos, credit folks who are part of the committee, post it to the Google Drive.

## **9. Diversity**

Miroo said that the focus of the Diversity Summit will be on gentrification and asked the CHC to help the committee by recommending other individuals for the summit. There is no need to have them confirmed for the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. The Summit will use displacement studies similar those developed by Vikrat Sood at MTC to start a lively discussion. The summit will take the problem, provide examples of how people are addressing it and ask what are we going to do about it? It will be a thought provoking, great session to attend. The committee will also be applying for CM credit.

Miroo also noted that committee members are also involved in helping select the sessions that will be part of the Diversity track for the conference. An invitation was extended to CHC members to attend a capstone session on the regional prosperity plan, on April 13 -14, at the Asian Cultural Center.

## **10. Hospitality**

Florentina told the CHC the committee has contacted three caterers for the Opening Reception the Oakland Museum. They are talking to two for quotes and trying to stay in budget is more challenging than they originally believed. It I hoped connections will allow us to get wine and beer donated and save \$2,000.

The committee completed a space walkthrough after the contract was signed. It is an amazing space though we have to use one of the museum's preferred caterers. They are making sure the caterer's vision makes sense as we wants something really authentic to make our theme fit though types of food and décor that speak to Oakland. The menu will use seasonal items, but not necessarily local ones. We may find out where this food is from, and provide a map of that. The committee is working hard to ensure that we will not need a dollar store craft day for our decorations.

## **11. Publicity**

Brain said the committee would be working to get the Section website refocused on Oakland and ensure that all conference materials were placed on the Conference website in

the coming weeks. This is to clarify the difference between the two sites. The Northern Section can easily update information on its page though the conference website run by State chapter and we as the CHC had less direct control over it.

The committee did suggest changes to the Conference site by removing serif fonts, including a sponsors list, and updating some content. Registration and hotel information will be updated by the contractors. The committee is also continuing to post stories in the Northern News. They will look into adding logos into the Section page.

## **12. Merchandise**

Jonathan noted the committee is continuing to in discuss items to order.

## **13. Mobile Application**

The CHC had a discussion regarding the conference mobile app. The co-chairs noted that the contractors for the app were at state level and currently plan to start work on the app in August. We will work with them to start creating it earlier as it not as simple as if we could directly do it. HPN will link their registration system to mobile application. A lack of Wi-Fi hindered app use in the past. However, the convention center wants to charge \$18,000 for Wi-Fi so we are negotiating that fee and seeking sponsors.

## **14. Next Meeting**

April 4, 2015 at the MetroCenter Auditorium from 10am – noon.