



CONNECTICUT CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

STRATEGIC PLAN

ADOPTED - JULY 12, 2002

MISSION

Leadership in Planning

The mission of the CCAPA is to provide leadership in planning, land use and development in order to build strong communities and improve the quality of life in Connecticut.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Help Planners Plan

Advance the art and science of planning by providing opportunities for professional development.

Help Connecticut Plan

Promote sound planning and decision making in Connecticut.

Make Planners Matter

Promote the value and enhance the credibility of our members among elected and appointed officials and the public.

Build Better Planners

Offer services that help our members advance their individual career.

Get Planners Involved

Engage all segments of our membership in CCAPA activities.

CCAPA Mission Statement: Leadership in Planning

Strategic Objective: Help Planners Plan

Advance the art and science of planning by providing opportunities for professional development.

Suggested Actions

- Organize and develop training programs that will enhance the knowledge and skills of our members. Topics could include:
 - Practical skills such as communication, dealing with the media, handling difficult situations, troubleshooting legal issues, etc.
 - How to participate in the legislative process.
 - How to prepare plans of conservation and development or special area plans.
 - Connecticut planning development law and practice, and a review of regional and state organizations involved in planning.

- Provide information on emerging trends or issues relevant to the membership through such means as:
 - The CCAPA newsletter.
 - Special bulletins via fax, email or direct mail.
 - Discussion groups organized around articles in the Journal of the American Planning Association or books relevant to the profession.
 - Periodic planners luncheons, breakfasts or other informal networking opportunities focused on a specific topic.

- Develop and use a variety of delivery systems for training programs to reach the largest number of members:
 - Programs offered at various locations around the state.
 - Teleconferences or distance learning arrangements.
 - Online access to conference sessions; summaries of papers, etc.
 - Co-sponsor training or professional development seminars with allied organizations.
 - Programs designed around regional subgroups.

Strategic Objective: Help Planners Plan

- Provide reference and resource materials and make them easily available to members:
 - An online library of Connecticut zoning, subdivision and inland wetlands regulations.
 - A Connecticut Planners Reference Book; a combination bibliography and reference source for information on planning practice and processes; people and organizations involved in planning; etc. Utilize online resources more efficiently, in part by seeking useful and timely information and then linking to the CCAPA homepage.
- Provide peer assistance and support by creating a “buddy” system or an experts list available to members, and provide new planners with mentor partners.
- Develop a planners exchange program whereby planners at various levels can interact with planners with common interests, with planners in other disciplines and/or with members of the development community.
- Promote graduate level planning courses at Connecticut colleges and universities.

CCAPA Mission Statement: Leadership in Planning

Strategic Objective: Help Connecticut Plan

Promote sound land use planning and decision making in Connecticut.

Suggested Actions

- Develop and/or support educational programs that share information on planning techniques, practices and issues with governments and citizens:
 - Create a planning handbook for the community, as opposed to the professional membership, to help people understand the principles and practice of planning and land use management and the role of the planner.
 - Introduce planning into the elementary, middle and high school curriculum by developing or adapting existing programs and promoting them to school districts.
 - Provide case studies of planning and development activities that provide analysis and draw lessons for the membership and for communities, and distribute the studies to the membership and to a broader audience.
 - Promote efforts to make land use education mandatory for officials who serve on planning and zoning commissions and other planning-related boards / commissions.
 - Organize and conduct an annual statewide conference on planning and development issues for local officials as opposed to the membership.
 - Promote a chapter-only membership for land use board and commission members.
 - Offer topical workshops specific to a town's issues.
 - Promote long-term, visionary and civic-minded approaches to land use decision making.

- Pursue legislative mechanisms to improve planning capacity and capabilities:
 - Actively seek to build a more responsive and effective statewide planning agency.
 - Take the initiative to review and overhaul the planning enabling statutes to be more efficient, effective, and consistent.
 - Monitor legislation, provide testimony or introduce legislation, which would support the objective.

- Promote critical analysis of planning issues, programs and projects:
 - Expand the CCAPA awards program to recognize good examples of planning programs, developments, etc.
 - Designate a Connecticut Planning Day and promote it throughout the state.

Strategic Objective: Help Connecticut Plan

- Advocate for an accredited planning program in Connecticut.
- Develop and distribute CCAPA position papers on planning and development issues through press releases, op-ed pieces and other mass media channels.
- Create a speaker's bureau and a spokesperson's list for planning issues and make it available to the public, media contacts, and allied organizations.
- Identify municipalities that do not have planners and work to convince them of the value of professional planning at the municipal level.
- Provide pro bono planning services for non-governmental organizations dealing with planning or development issues in their communities.

CCAPA Mission Statement: Leadership in Planning

Strategic Objective: Make Planners Matter

Promote the value and enhance the credibility of our members among elected and appointed officials and the public.

Suggested Actions

- Provide contacts for allied organizations on planning and development issues.
- Create or seek out opportunities for planners to speak to groups or organizations:
 - Sponsor and facilitate conversations on land use and development issues at the local or regional level involving planners, the general public, and elected and appointed officials.
 - Have the chapter recognize planners at their place of employment.
 - Solicit testimonials from the public or other local officials that recognize the contribution of the planner to the community.
- Help planners recognize the value of community involvement outside of their professional responsibility, and encourage them to be active not only on their local planning and zoning commissions or zoning boards but also other organizations in the community involved in planning, land use or development issues.
- Arrange brief meetings at town council meetings, before PZC's and ZBA's, and with state legislators to introduce the chapter, its members and its services.
- Develop a CCAPA public access television program, perhaps a talk show or discussion format, on current issues to be broadcast over various cable systems.
- Distribute the CCAPA newsletter more broadly to PZC/ZBA members, chief elected officials and others.
- Provide a planning primer for citizens on such issues as how to testify at a public hearing, how to work with staff, procedural and legal requirements associated with development approvals, etc.

Strategic Objective: Make Planners Matter

- Participate in other organizations' conferences or seminars, home shows, trade shows, etc.
- Get news about the chapter members, such as awards, member activities, member promotions, hobbies, etc. into the newsletter and to the general media through press releases, advertisements, or other means.
- Adopt guidelines and/or a code of ethics for CCAPA.
- Support planners who have abided by the guidelines and/or code and have been treated unfairly by their employer or the public.

CCAPA Mission Statement: Leadership in Planning

Strategic Objective: Build Better Planners

Offer services that help our members advance their individual careers.

Suggested Actions

- Provide training and skill development related to career advancement and employment for all CCAPA members for all stages of their careers:
 - How to prepare for a job interview, including mock interviews and performance evaluations.
 - How to negotiate salary and benefits packages.
 - How to write a resume.
 - Sponsor or co-sponsor career fairs.
 - Information on retirement planning.
 - How to create and manage consulting firms.
- Provide mentoring for young planners or people new to the profession.
- Promote and/or provide AICP exam training.
- Provide job postings on the web site and offer the web site as a place to seek employees.
- Provide profiles of career tracks of members in the newsletter.
- Provide scholarships for practicing planners for continuing education/professional development.
- Provide internships and forge alliances with community colleges and other higher education institutions.

CCAPA Mission Statement: Leadership in Planning

Strategic Objective: Get Planners Involved

Engage all segments of our membership in CCAPA activities.

Actions

- Provide breakfast, lunch, or other networking sessions on a regular day and time and a regular schedule. These could be statewide or regional sessions. Representatives of the CCAPA executive committee should attend all sessions as a way to network and get feedback on chapter activities, issues of interest to members, etc.
- Implement incentives and mechanisms to increase participation on the executive committee:
 - Survey members for their interests and willingness to serve.
 - Establish term limits for executive committee members.
 - Make committee chairs responsible for maintaining minimum committee membership levels and providing succession to the chair.
 - Provide incentives/rewards for service such as paid attendance at CCAPA functions or entering committee members' names in a raffle based upon meeting attendance.
- Launch a membership drive.
- Improve the production quality of promotional material such as program fliers, meeting announcements, etc. to project a more professional image.
- Make direct contacts with planners and ask them to write articles on local issues or general interest stories.
- Invite individual planners to be on a panel at a conference or seminar. Encourage participation from members who may not be participating, such as planners working in larger cities, planners from certain regions of the state that seem to be underrepresented at CCAPA functions, or private sector planners or planning consultants.
- Invite new members to be a guest at a planning function as a welcoming membership incentive.
- Provide one free meeting, conference, or social event for all CCAPA members each year.

Strategic Objective: Get Planners Involved

- Conduct exit interviews or program evaluations for all CCAPA programs or events.
- Organize focus groups as a survey technique to determine members' interest by discipline, community type, career development stage, or other membership characteristic to gather feedback on CCAPA programs, current planning issues, etc.

CCAPA Mission Statement: Leadership in Planning

CCAPA Philosophy and Structure

In order to achieve our strategic objectives CCAPA will be organized and operated in a manner that makes it easier and more attractive for our members to become involved in and contribute to the organization and the profession. The CCAPA executive committee's overriding goal is to enable our members to use their skills and talents, and share their energy and ideas, in the context of the mission of CCAPA. Toward that end we have re-examined the roles and responsibilities of the executive committee and standing committees and recommend the following:

Executive Committee

Role: Coordinate the progress of the CCAPA in achieving its mission and objectives.

Main Responsibilities:

- Set general policy.
- Adopt the annual work program and budget.
- Manage the organization's finances.
- Ensure CCAPA meets all national APA requirements and provides liaison to APA.
- Review the subcommittee's missions, roles and activities to ensure they reflect the mission of the CCAPA.

Standing Committee

The executive committee wishes to establish standing committees and give those committees autonomy, within the overall mission of the organization, to choose activities and carry them out. The executive committee believes the organizational structure and philosophy should provide an environment that allows all CCAPA members interested in working on a committee or a project to be creative and to have influence and impact on their particular area of interest. The committees' work should be intellectually stimulating, interesting, and bigger than the committee or the organization itself in its affect. The committee should provide leadership in their area of responsibility, have the freedom to select activities and tasks, and have the responsibility to carry them out. The committees, through their chair, will be represented on the executive committee and will help set the CCAPA agenda.

Program Committee

Role: Develop or assist in the development and delivery of programs to CCAPA members and external constituents.

Main Responsibilities:

- Incorporate the position and responsibilities of the chapter of professional development officer.
- Provide logistical support for setting up program venues, schedules, and related matters.
- Generate program ideas and solicit program ideas from other committees and the membership.
- Establish an annual “program of programs”.

Primary Related Strategic Objectives: Help Planners Plan – Help Connecticut Plan – Build Better Planners.

Member Services Committee

Role: Maintain contact with CCAPA members and gather information on their needs, interests, and suggestions for improving the organization.

Main Responsibilities:

- Maintain membership rosters and information.
- Develop mechanisms whereby members can contact CCAPA executive committee and each other.
- Develop mechanisms to gather information from CCAPA members to provide internal market research and analysis on our membership’s composition, interest, and ideas.
- Provide information on CCAPA membership to existing and prospective members.
- Recruit new members.

Primary Related Strategic Objectives: Get Planners Involved – Build Better Planners

Publicity and Communications Committee

Role: To get information on planning issues and CCAPA positions or activities to the membership and the public.

Main Responsibilities:

- Decide on the content of stories or related information, and the method of their delivery (media) to the public and elected and appointed officials.
- Incorporate the responsibilities of the public information officer.
- Take responsibility for the APA newsletter, web site, and awards program, again with an emphasis on both content and delivery.

Primary Related Strategic Objectives: Make Planners Matter – Help Connecticut Plan.

Government Relations Committee

Role: To actively participate in the legislative process and in public policy making as these issues affect planning practice and community development.

Main Responsibilities:

- Review, evaluate and develop positions on planning-related legislative and policy issues.
- Provide testimony on legislation, or lobby for or against legislation, of particular interest to planning, planners and CCAPA.
- Monitor legislative trends and identify emerging issues of interest to CCAPA and the profession.
- Actively participate in legislation to promote and advocate for sound planning and development.

Primary Related Strategic Objectives – Help Connecticut Plan – Make Planners Matter.