



STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022

MINNESOTA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

ABOUT US

The Minnesota Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-MN) is a non-profit statewide organization of over 900 planning professionals, educators, local officials and planning commissioners who are involved in planning-related activities on behalf of state and regional agencies, counties, cities, towns, educational institutions and the private sector. APA Minnesota is a chapter of the American Planning Association (APA), a non-profit public interest and research organization whose origins date back to 1917.

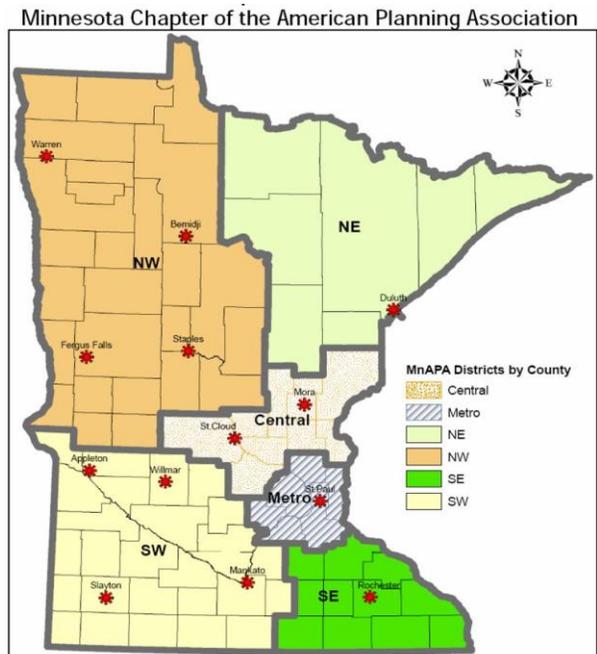
The APA-MN Board of Directors consists of 13 voting members, student and faculty liaisons, committee and special group chairs, and professional development officers. The organization is managed by an executive director and supported subcontractors specializing in communications and legislative platforms.

STRATEGIC PLAN

This strategic plan will serve as the organization's mid-range guiding document from 2018 to 2022. The document is necessary for the organization to strategically plan for its future and systematically tackle realistic action items, with limited resources, while remaining aspirational. The strategic plan is intended to be a living document, which should be updated as necessary, while serving as a consistent institutional guide.

The strategic plan was created at the Board of Director's 2018 annual retreat and adopted following input of the Board and other stakeholders at the May 18, 2018 board meeting.

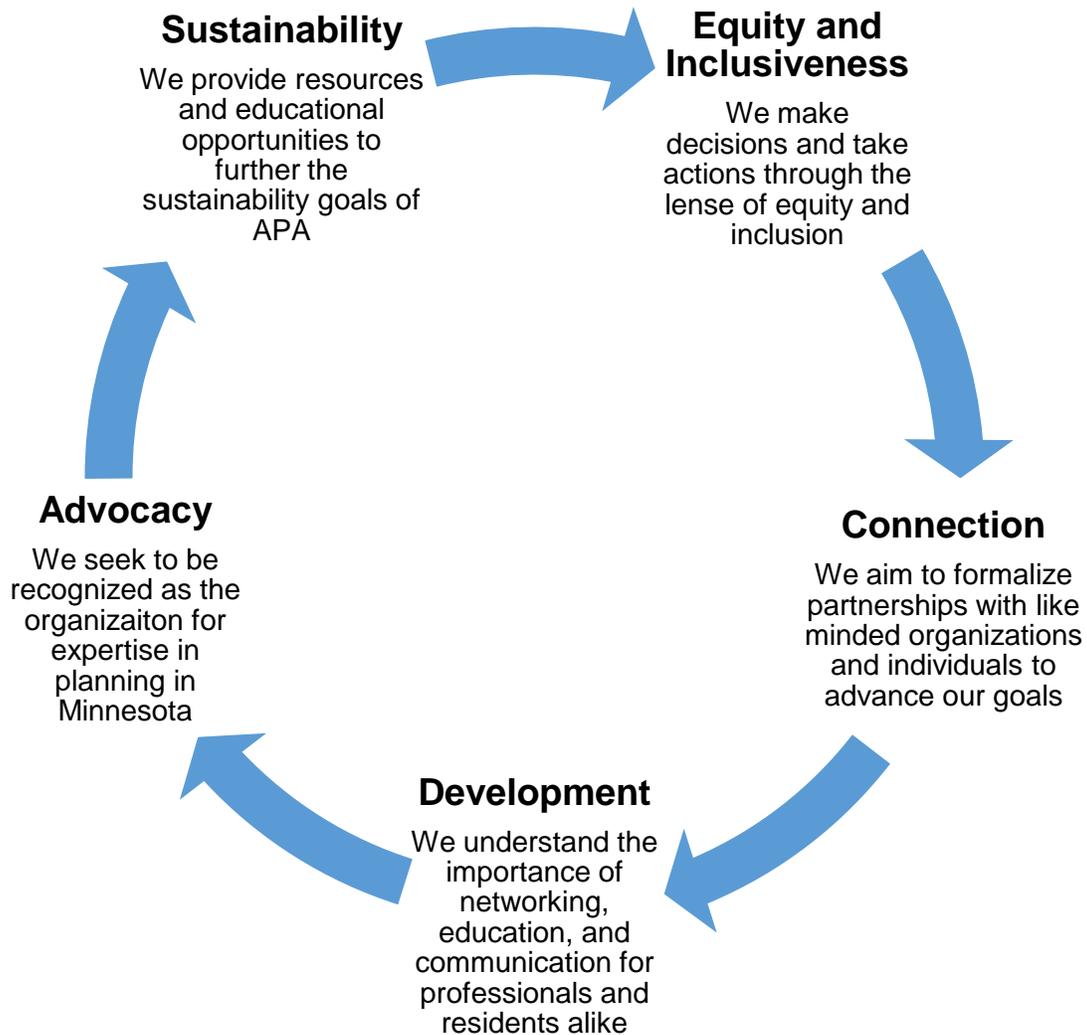
APA Minnesota will use this document to guide the growth of the organization into 2022, each year adopting a work plan to focus efforts, guide work, and strategically address issues considering resources, sequence, and the overall landscape. The Board shall conduct a strategic planning process every five years with incremental and annual updates as needed. An annual review of the document will allow the Board to assess progress made towards goals and achievement of the mission. The Board shall approve an Annual Report to celebrate success, identify future resource needs, and honor transparency and accountability to the membership.



MISSION

The mission of APA Minnesota is to advocate for equitable and sustainable planning practices across the state by supporting professional planners and engaging with those who live and work in our communities.

CORE VALUES



FOCUS AREAS & GOAL STATEMENTS

Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish and formalize partnerships with like-minded organizations to expand organizational reach and accomplish shared goals
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leverage the knowledge of the association's membership to enact change in Minnesota
Community Planners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grow the field of community leaders advocating for good planning
Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a variety of education and networking opportunities to increase member involvement and enrichment
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Utilize a combination of communication tools to reach all members and stakeholders
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All decisions and actions are made through the lens of equity and inclusion
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retain members and expand membership base by meeting members' evolving needs
Internal Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update and improve internal operations to better serve as stewards of the organization's resources and maximize efficiency and effectiveness while prioritizing equity

*This list is not presented in a prioritized fashion

FOCUS AREA	PARTNERSHIPS	
GOAL STATEMENT	Establish and formalize partnerships with like-minded organizations to expand organizational reach and accomplish shared goals	
Assets	Strategies and Tactics	Success Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-existing overlap in membership w/ other organizations • Informal relationships w/ other organizations • Joint Call to Action for Healthy Communities at the national level • Members' relationship with other organizations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where no relationship exists, establish and grow relationships with local and state organizations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Identify potential organizations or audiences where a relationship would benefit both parties, including professional-, community-, and equity-focused organizations 1.2. Develop APA-MN marketing materials to easily and quickly build awareness of our organization with others 1.3. Host 1:1 meetings with other organizations to discuss each other's work, explore potential relationship 2. Where informal partnerships exist, formalize partnership relationship with local and state organizations with similar missions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Inventory existing informal partnerships 2.2. Define partnership expectations from the perspective of APA-MN, understanding partnerships must be flexible, natural, and equitable 2.3. Create regional networks of like-minded organizations, especially in Greater MN where population density and opportunities for networking are lower 2.4. Co-host events, board meetings, and/or conferences and workshops with partners 3. Build a coalition for healthy and equitable communities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Follow the lead of the national Joint Call to Action 3.2. Host convening(s) of like-minded organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of formalized partnerships • Build informal partnerships/relationships • Collaboration w/ other organizations on programs and events • Be viewed as an expert in planning by others • Build awareness of our organization • An equity lens is consistently used when building partnerships • New relationships help to increase memberships • Creation of regional networks • Increase in participation in local events
Barriers	Resource Needs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of time and resources to build new partnerships • Awareness of our organization and its work • Receptiveness of other organizations in building relationship • Lack of clarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Volunteers • Volunteer outreach committee • Consistent messaging • Formalized partnership structure • Guidance from APA National and Joint Call to Action • Financial support for convening 	

FOCUS AREA	LEADERSHIP	
GOAL STATEMENT	Leverage the knowledge of the association's membership to enact change in Minnesota	
Assets	Strategies and Tactics	Success Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of membership • Legislative and Law Committee • Policy Platform • Policy Coordinator 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use communication outlets to expand awareness of our organization <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Implement external communications and relations plan 1.2. 2. Serve as experts in the field of planning <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Proactively offer to share the organization's perspective on topics being considered by governing bodies 2.2 Develop a bench of experts for advocacy 2.3 Develop a process by which legislative and law requests are thoroughly and properly vetted 2.4 Provide guidance to members and allies on effective communication, outreach, organizing, and advocacy 3. Proactively share the organization's perspective on a wide-range of planning- related topics. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Regularly update Policy Platform 1.2. Share Policy Platform with state and local leaders, allied organizations, League of MN Cities 1.3. Create white papers on a number of planning-related topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APA-MN is contacted to serve as subject matter experts on local and state legislation • APA-MN is viewed as the go-to organization for expertise in planning • APA-MN is contacted to provide comments, present, or testify
Barriers		Resource Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited advocacy role as nonprofit • New role/arena for APA-MN • Time • Polarized political landscape • Lack of awareness of APA-MN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Volunteers • Coordination with Communications and Partnership teams • Policy Coordinator 	

FOCUS AREA	COMMUNITY PLANNERS	
GOAL STATEMENT	Grow the field of community leaders advocating for good planning	
Assets	Strategies and Tactics	Success Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing community planner/citizen planner handbook • Existing community connections • Website and social media • Knowledge and expertise of members 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide resources to build the knowledge, skills, and abilities of community planners <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Define and clarify who is considered to be a community planner, define target audience 1.2. Update community planner handbook and training materials 1.3. Create process by which APA-MN offers community planner training; explore potential partnerships to provide such training 1.4. Officially recognize those trained by APA-MN through certificate program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in community planner membership and involvement • Adopted and updated curriculum/handbook • Increase number of training sessions • Increased awareness of APA-MN and its resources amongst community planners • Policy advocacy toolkit created
Barriers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Recruit community planners to be members of APA-MN <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Design and implement marketing campaign geared towards community planners 2.2. Create new board position for community planner 3. Increase community planner participation in the organization <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Market annual conference to community planners 3.2. Invite community planners to attend other trainings and networking opportunities 3.3. Create toolkit for policy advocacy geared towards community planners 	Resource Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Awareness of APA-MN • Resources and logistics of hosting and facilitating training • No database of community planner contact information • Recognition of value of community planner training • A number of other existing training platforms 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Volunteers • Financial support • Logistical support • Communications

FOCUS AREA	INVOLVEMENT	
GOAL STATEMENT	Provide a variety of education and networking opportunities to increase member involvement and enrichment	
Assets	Strategies and Tactics	Success Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership knowledge and talent • District Directors • Professional Development Officers • Executive Director • Technology • Support from APA National 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Connect with members outside of the fall conference <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Establish regular brown bag series 1.2. Bi-monthly book club rotating around the state 1.3. Special, annual Greater Minnesota events 1.4. Host and support webinars 1.5. Purchase webinar software 2. Provide a mix of networking opportunities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Foster networking with planners of all ages, backgrounds, experiences, races, and geography 2.2. Foster and support networking building in Greater Minnesota which expands beyond the field of planning and invites members of like-minded organizations and community planners 2.3. Provide a number of informal, fun networking opportunities 3. Increase opportunities for involvement of membership <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Provide opportunities for involvement on committees, user groups, and task forces 3.2. Explore opportunities for involvement of members in Greater Minnesota 4. Build knowledge, skills, and abilities of members to serve as planners <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Continue to provide annual state conference 4.2. Provide ample opportunities for members to earn CM credits 4.3. Develop a list of ongoing programs and speakers to draw upon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host at least 3 webinars annually • Create calendar of events • Better balance of Greater Minnesota and Metro events • Increased participation and involvement • Additional educational and networking opportunities, formal and informal • New program leaders • At least 1 event held annually in each district • Host at least 3 brown bag events
Barriers		Resource Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography and distance • Lack of technical experience and expertise • Funding • APA National limitations and rules • Availability of time • Commitment to education and networking • Finding program leaders and volunteers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Volunteers • Financial support • Logistical support • Communications • Professional Development Officers

FOCUS AREA	COMMUNICATION	
GOAL STATEMENT	Utilize a combination of communication tools to reach all members and stakeholders	
Assets	Strategies and Tactics	Success Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter has existing Facebook and Twitter social media accounts Existing social media calendar Communication staff member Existing newsletter Multitude of resources and information from APA, APA-MN, and other sources 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish internal communications plan and calendar <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Consider updates and changes to newsletter and electronic communications which balance content value, regularity, transparency, and importance of timing 1.2. Produce annual calendar so that internal communications are consistent, regular, and proactive 1.3. Clearly define staff roles 2. Create and implement external communications plan that will build awareness <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Create talking points and printed collateral for easy explanation of the organization to outside groups 2.2. Use strong and consistent branding in all communications 2.3. All external communication materials should be reviewed by the communications consultant, executive director, and/or executive committee for brand and messaging consistency 3. Social media presence is coordinated and consistent <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Consider using Instagram and other social media platforms 3.2. Build a list of other organizations to follow, post on, send posts to 3.3. Clarify our social media role and which issues APA-MN supports, shares, and educates 3.4. Create more robust social media calendar with more articles, legislative action, current events, etc. 3.5. Create portal for social media submissions 3.6. Build a list of other organizations to follow, post on, send post to 4. Update website <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Website reflects changing organization and membership 4.2. Provides an online forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong social media engagement numbers Increased use of the online forum Increase in newsletter readership rates Increased website traffic and access to information Increase in followers on social media Creation of communications collateral
Barriers	Resource Needs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not everyone uses the same platforms Website is outdated Unclear direction of what APA-MN uses social media for/what to advocate for Time to search for content, coordinate with others, and to craft and post/share content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time Volunteers Financial support Communications Coordinator Website consultant 	

	<p>4.3. Provides other tools, resources, and information</p> <p>4.4. Is reviewed and updated on a regular basis to keep information fresh and up-to-date</p>	
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FOCUS AREA	EQUITY	
GOAL STATEMENT	All decisions and actions are made through the lens of equity and inclusion	
Assets	Strategies and Tactics	Success Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Planners Day at School APA-MN Women in Planning group Multiple user groups (LGBTQ, People of Color, etc.) at national APA level Support and resources available from national APA Grassroots movement mobilizing and changing and expanding the dialogue in Minnesota 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish committee focused on diversity in planning <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Review opportunities to engage and encourage youth from diverse backgrounds to enter the field of planning 1.2. Work with Minnesota colleges to support students of color 1.3. Consider financial support to assist the committee in its work 1.4. Expand 'Planners Day in School' program to reach more youth 1.5. Connect with the equity and community-based organizations that are leading efforts to address inequities, seek advice and support 2. Review all organization practices and procedures through an equity and inclusion lens <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Establish committee/task force to review 2.2. Consider financial support to assist the committee in its work 2.3. Implement recommendations of the committee 2.4. Establish a cultural competency program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity is automatically considered in all board actions Creation and support of new and existing user groups Creation of cultural competency program Make-up of the board is more diverse and representative The field of planning in Minnesota becomes more racially/ethnically diverse 'Planners Day in the School' is expanded to a number of schools with majority non-white student populations
Barriers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Establish and support user groups focused on diversity and inclusion in planning <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Women in Planning 3.2. People of Color in Planning 3.3. LGBTQ in Planning 	Resource Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of diversity on the Board Equity can be viewed as polarizing by some in the field Historical and Institutionalized racism Constrained human and financial resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time Volunteers Financial support Outside knowledge and support 	

FOCUS AREA	MEMBERSHIP	
GOAL STATEMENT	Retain members and expand membership base by meeting members' evolving needs	
Assets	Strategies and Tactics	Success Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historically high membership rates • Membership data from National APA • Two student board members • Strong relationship with Humphrey School • District Directors 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grow overall membership of the organization <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Analyze membership data, identify gaps and needs 1.2. Membership survey 1.3. Retain retired planners 2. Retain student members as they transition to professionals <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Focus group or online survey with students and young professionals to identify areas of concern, needs assessment 2.2. Targeted outreach to this population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall growth in membership • Increase retention rates as students transition to full membership
Barriers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Grow business and corporate membership <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Define business and corporate membership 3.2. Targeted outreach 4. Grow government and nonprofit membership <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Define government and nonprofit membership 4.2. Targeted outreach 	Resource Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weaker relationship with Mankato and St. Cloud programs • Turnover in student director position • Inconsistent employer support of membership • Membership rates tied to the overall economy • Increasing number of job/career transitions • In/out migration of planners 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director • Time • Volunteers

FOCUS AREA	INTERNAL OPERATIONS	
GOAL STATEMENT	Update and improve internal operations to better serve as stewards of the organization's resources and maximize efficiency and effectiveness while prioritizing equity	
Assets	Strategies and Tactics	Success Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Director Good financial standing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review financial operations and procedures <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Explore board of director term cycles Update bylaws for efficiency, effectiveness, and equity Maintain a strong and sustainable organizational budget Adopt staffing model which meets the needs of the organization <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Committee shall conduct review with each staff member Board shall review staffing model on an annual basis and implement changes as needed Conduct regular organizational planning and development <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct strategic planning process every 5 years with incremental and annual updates as needed Complete annual review and report Provide space for board member and staff to get to know each other Support ongoing and institutionalized board training, development, and culture work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balanced budget Updated bylaws
Barriers		Resource Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time to research and update documents Ease of communication among members 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time Volunteers