

# PLANNING MINNESOTA



American Planning Association  
Minnesota Chapter

*Making Great Communities Happen*

A Publication of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Planning Association

Fall-Winter 2022



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Volume 41, Number 2

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# CHAPTER UPDATES

## PRESIDENT'S DESK

2022 was a year spent trying to reestablish old patterns and settle into a rhythm of normalcy. With the bulk of the disruptions caused by COVID behind us, planners across Minnesota attended Chapter events in person as well as took advantage of online tools to continue learning and engaging remotely.

The biggest event was, as usual, the fall State Planning Conference. Held in Duluth, it attracted over 300 planners to the DECC to listen to keynote speakers, learn from peers during sessions, and reconnect in person with friends and colleagues. Various organizations, municipalities, and individuals were recognized for their achievements over the past year (read more about them later in this newsletter). Planning for the 2023 conference, in St. Cloud, is already underway.

2023 will also see a new Executive Committee step up to lead the Chapter for the next two years. While Erin Perdu will remain as Treasurer, we will welcome a new President, Vice President, and Secretary. You can learn more about those who have volunteered their time to serve Minnesota planners on page 5.

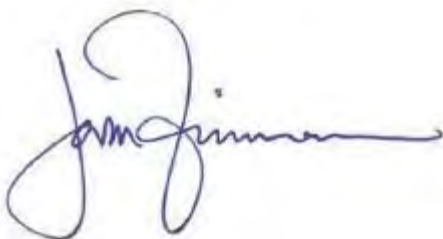
One thing that will remain a priority going forward is the Chapter's focus on equity. A pilot program to train planners, city attorneys, planning commissioners, and consultants on issues of equity in planning will kick off early next year. Following the first cohort, it is the intention of the Board to expand the pilot to support subsequent cohorts. In fact, training the trainers is one goal of the work, so that our pool of those ready to help advance the profession grows and strengthens.

In addition to this equity work, the Board will be drafting a new five-year Strategic Plan to guide the Chapter. If you have not yet done so, please respond to the survey sent out in November to provide feedback on how the Chapter can best serve you as well as to identify priority areas where the Board should be focusing time and energy.

Finally, watch your inboxes for information on the annual Winter Party, which will be held at a location in the metro on the evening of January 26.

December marks my final month on the APA Minnesota Board. After six years of serving in various capacities, it is time for a break. It has been a pleasure to support the membership and help keep the Chapter on an even keel. I look forward to seeing what the next few years bring.

Warmly,



# APA MN VICE PRESIDENT CHAPTER UPDATE

By PeggySue Imihy Bean

It's very fun to write my first, and last column in this newsletter as Vice President. I've been a member of the APA-MN board since 2018, and it's been a wild and rewarding five years. During my time on this board I've served as the co-chair of the Diversity and Equity Committee working alongside three amazing co-chairs over the years putting together engaging programming for our members. In this time, the board has also navigated how our chapter continues our work during the changes that come with a global pandemic, and how we fulfil our commitment to equity and justice in real time as racial equity is increasingly prioritized to communities all over Minnesota.

As I step into the role of President, I am so proud to have worked and continue to work alongside a group of talented, hardworking, and creative planners on this board. There are so many current and incoming members of this board who bring new ideas and fresh perspectives to the work we do, and I think a lot of fun as



well. The members of this board are integral to the success of APA-MN and the benefits you receive as members. I am constantly amazed by all the work that gets accomplished by these amazing volunteers. This year marks a transition, with many long time board members stepping back from the work and making room for new people to join us at the table. To our departing board members, thank you for all of the work you've done and your years of service to this organization.

This next year, I hope you consider filling one of our open spots on the board and joining us in the work we do. Looking ahead to 2025, our Minnesota Chapter will help host planners from across the nation for the national planning conference, and I can't think of a better group to show off some of the best planning and advocacy work happening in the U.S. If you're interested in serving your fellow planners through the networking, education, and advocacy this organization does, I hope you'll reach out to myself or our Executive Director, Andrea Jauli. Finally, to our current and incoming board, I can't wait to see what we can accomplish these next few years.





# APA MN BOARD

## MEET THE NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### PEGGYSUE IMIHY BEAN – INCOMING PRESIDENT

PeggySue is a Management Analyst for the City of Hopkins, where she works on sustainability, parks planning, and racial equity. She is passionate about turning plans into action and working with community to drive solutions. She lives in Minneapolis with her husband and their two cats, all of whom you can usually find piled on the couch under blankets with a good book.



### MICHAEL PALERMO – INCOMING VICE PRESIDENT

Mike is an Economic Development Analyst with the City of Bloomington. He has done a variety of projects in his career ranging from transportation, housing, and small area planning. He has a strong commitment to sustainability, active transportation, and healthy living and finds ways to incorporate these themes into each project. Mike has worked for two cities that have had revolving restaurants.



### CHLOE MCGUIRE BRIGL – INCOMING SECRETARY

Chloe is the Planning and Development Manager for the City of Plymouth, where she works daily on new redevelop-

ment projects and small area plans. She loves working with business owners, developers, and residents to get the best possible projects. She is passionate about professional development while supporting women and students in planning work. She is finishing up her term on the Minneapolis Planning Commission as Vice President, where she has enjoyed her time advocating for affordable housing, transit connections, sustainability, and equity. Chloe has an extensive collection of bags shaped like other objects, including a purse shaped like a Lay's chip bag and another shaped like a retro telephone that connects to your cell phone!



### ERIN PERDU – TREASURER

Erin is the Planning Group Leader for the Midwest Region at Stan- tec. In addition to serving on the APA MN Board, Erin also serves as our region's representative on the AICP Commission and the co-chair of the AICP Ethics Committee. In her 24-year career, she has worked with communities big and small across the Midwest and beyond. Her specialties are comprehensive planning, small area plans, and zoning ordinances. Erin works under the philosophy of "planner as partner," helping residents and community leaders articulate what they want and providing the tools to help them get there. Erin lives in a small downtown condo so she loves her condo-sized pets: her chinchillas!



# APA MN WOMEN IN PLANNING COMMITTEE

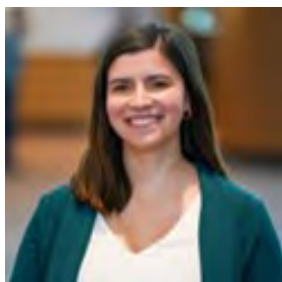
## CHAPTER UPDATE

By Lori Johnson and Reeve Needham

The purpose of APA Minnesota's Women in Planning Committee is to develop, connect and promote women working in the field of planning in the State of Minnesota. The Committee recently became a standing committee with the most recent update to the bylaws. This year, two new Co-Chairs, Lori Johnson and Reeve Needham, stepped up to serve the chapter!



Lori (she/her) works for WSB as a Senior Professional Community Planner. Previously, she worked for the City of Blaine as the City Planner for 24 years. She has a passion for helping women in the field with honing their leadership skills, as well as a passion for her son's 7th grade sports teams!



Reeve (she/her) works for the City of Northfield as the Assistant City Planner and is also a Master's student at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs. As a younger planner, she is excited to learn from and connect with others in the field.

To kickoff the year, the Women in Planning Committee held a happy hour event in August 2022 at Utepils Brewing. This informal networking opportunity drew about a dozen planners for casual conversations and a fun round of "Women in Planning Trivia."

At the Fall MN APA Conference in Duluth, the Women in Planning Committee hosted two sessions. The first session was a panel discussion entitled "Perspectives From All Ages." Lori Johnson moderated the discussion for the four panelists: Reeve Needham, Mikayla Schmidt, Regina Dean, and Kim Lindquist (pictured).

A few takeaways that the panelists shared:

- Speak up and advocate for yourself
- Find a mentor or join one of the APA's mentor programs
- Find allies within your organization



For the second session, the committee also held a "Walk and Talk" event. Planners met up at the convention center before splitting into groups and walking along the lakefront. Groups discussed challenges in the field and provided advice and mentorship to one another.

Stay tuned for more upcoming events in 2023!

*Do you have ideas for future topics or events? Would you like to be added to the email listserv to be notified about upcoming events? Reach out to [Lori](#) or [Reeve](#).*

## APA MN EMERGING PLANNERS CHAPTER UPDATE

By Ally de Alcuaz and Harry Davis

### APA MN CONFERENCE

At the APA MN Conference, the Emerging Planners Group partnered with Andrew Dresdner for a Planning Trivia Night. The event was originally scheduled to be in the conference center but was moved to a nearby location. Planner trivia was well attended by planners of all levels of experience and morphed into a networking opportunity at the conclusion of the event.

The Emerging Planner Co-chairs will consider having similar events corresponding with future APA MN events.

### 2022-2023 MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The 5th annual APA MN Mentorship Program kicked off late October with a virtual event focused on participants getting to know each other. Mentors and mentees broke out into small groups, appropriately named after some of Minnesota's great natural waterbodies, and were given time to introduce themselves and discuss what mentorship means to them. In early November, participants will be paired up based on their goals for mentorship, career alignments, and interests.

The mentorship program will host two more events - one focused on career development and lastly an education event with CM credits available.

EPG Co-chairs Harry Davis, Bolton & Menk –  
[harry.davis@bolton-menk.com](mailto:harry.davis@bolton-menk.com)  
Ally de Alcuaz, MnDOT –  
[Alexandra.deAlcuaz@state.mn.us](mailto:Alexandra.deAlcuaz@state.mn.us)

## NORTHWEST DISTRICT UPDATE DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

By Mitchell Berg, Northwest District Director

The APA MN conference was held in Duluth this year, and while I was unfortunately unable to come – I heard it was a success. So, I appreciate all the planners from our region that were able to attend the conference.

I had the opportunity to present at a Northwest Minnesota Housing workshop hosted by Minnesota Housing Partnership (MHP), with funding from the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund (GMFA) and Northwest Minnesota Foundation. I had the opportunity to share my thoughts to 50 housing advocates on how communities can help attract housing into their communities, and the importance of comprehensive planning. I also spoke about inclusionary zoning and provided concrete examples of how zoning can prevent redevelopment and new housing opportunities and can act as a barrier for inclusivity. The purpose of the housing workshop is to create a network of emerging developers to help to grow the region. The goal is to grow and expand the number of BIPOC contractors, to help address the workforce shortages and to expand the capacity of affordable and market rate housing in Greater Minnesota.

I know too we have other members that are helping to move the needle in our communities, and as the Northwest Regional Director I want to hear your stories. So please, share them with me at [berg0393@umn.edu](mailto:berg0393@umn.edu). Also, as winter approaches I'm looking to create a quarterly networking event either in-person or via zoom, as well as to look for new ways to grow our region's membership.

So, in the next few weeks, for those members that are located in the Northwest region, I'll be sending out a short survey monkey to solicit your interest and feedback.

# APA MN CONFERENCE 2022

## REVIEW AND HIGHLIGHTS

By Brian McCann and Jared Johnson,  
2022 Conference Co-Chairs



The 2022 Minnesota state “State of Resilience” Planning Conference occurred from September 21st through the 23rd at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center. The conference was attended by over 350 professionals in the Planning industry.

The last few years were difficult for many individuals, communities, and businesses who persevered through the Covid-19 pandemic. The Minnesota APA designated this year’s conference as a “State of Resilience” to honor Minnesota’s endurance through this strenuous time.

This year’s conference included a wide array of sessions related to resiliency throughout the state. Presentations included topics such as park dedication, zoning code updates, mixed-use, natural resources, energy efficiency, climate action, ethics, and many more!

Three (3) mobile tours were conducted during the conference that explored areas of Duluth. The “Lincoln Park

Craft District” mobile tour explored the economic growth pre-, during, and post-pandemic shutdowns. “Our Legacy of Redlining” mobile tour took a closer look at the lasting effects of redlining on modern-day Duluth. “Adaptive Reuse of Historic Structures” showcased historic buildings in Duluth that were repurposed and re-developed into multi-family housing

The Thursday lunch keynote speech was given by Karen Diver, Senior Advisor to the President for Native American Affairs for the University of Minnesota. Karen spoke about the resiliency of tribal communities related to climate change, rising temperatures, and other environmental factors that are affecting indigenous people, and the Planner’s responsibility.

The Awards Dinner speech was presented by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Commissioner, Sarah Strommen, and covered recent DNR projects, shoreland regulations, climate change, and other additional environmental issues. Congratulations to all the award winners listed on the following pages.

If you would like to get involved in the planning of the 2023 conference, please contact Andrea Jauli at [info@planningmn.org](mailto:info@planningmn.org).

We are grateful for the opportunity to meet and connect on a statewide platform for the first time in three years. Thank you to all who attended this year’s conference, and we look forward to getting together again in 2023!



# APA MN CONFERENCE 2022

THANKS TO ALL THAT CONTRIBUTED!

## CONFERENCE VOLUNTEERS

Micah Davison  
Brian McCann  
Jared Johnson  
Lori Johnson  
Michael Palermo  
Jason Zimmerman

## MOBILE TOUR VOLUNTEERS

Theresa Bajda  
Tom Church  
James Gittemeier  
Shannon Laing  
Jenn Moses  
Kathy Wilson

### APA MN 2022 Planning Conference

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Building Community-University Partnerships for Resilience



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tyler  
technologies

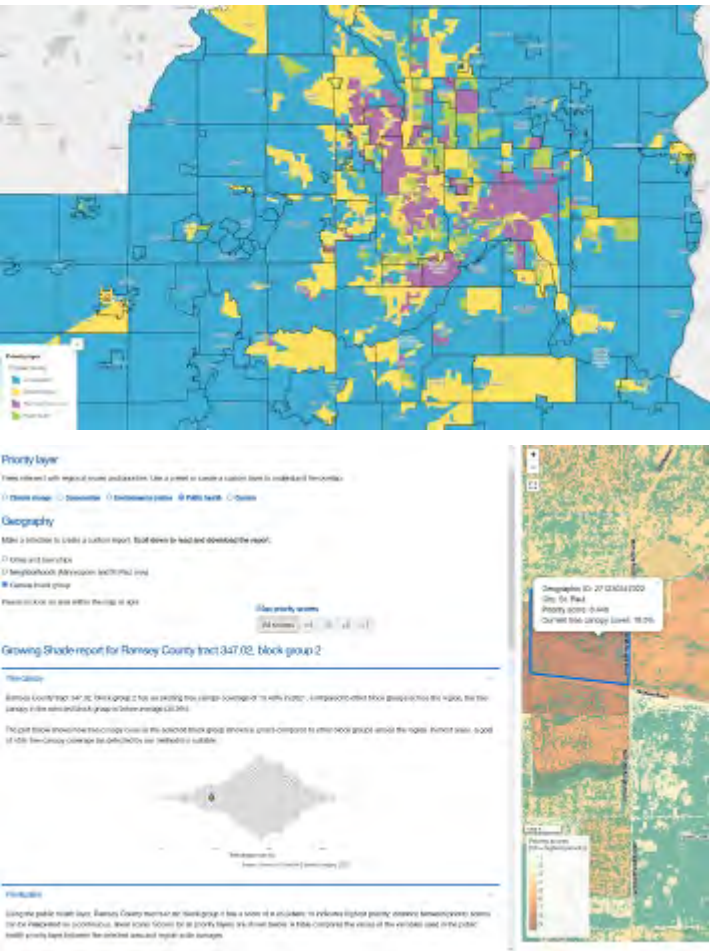


# APA MN 2022 PLANNING AWARDS

## INNOVATION IN PLANNING AWARD

### Growing Shade – Tree Enhancement Tool

Recipients: Metropolitan Council, Nature Conservancy, and Tree Trust



Growing Shade is a mapping utility that allows government agencies, non-profits and community members in the Twin Cities metro to see detailed, current tree canopy information about an area and compare it with other important considerations such as climate vulnerability, conservation, environmental justice and public health. A flexible range of geographies and criteria makes this a powerful tool for visualizing and quickly generating reports. This will undoubtedly become an invaluable tool for Metro area planners to foster better tree coverage in the places that most need it, and our awards committee felt this was an innovative solution toward equity and environmental goals.

Thank you to these organizations for this excellent work and congratulations on your award for innovation in planning!



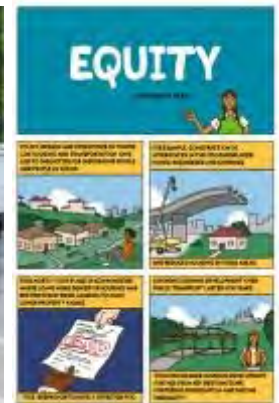


# APA MN 2022 PLANNING AWARDS

## EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD

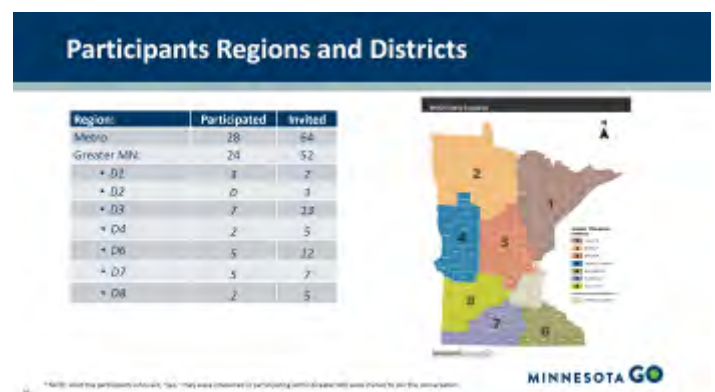
### 2022 Statewide Multimodal Transportation Update

### Recipient: Minnesota Department of Transportation



The Minnesota Department of Transportation engaged with residents across the state as part of the update process for its Multimodal Transportation Plan. MnDOT states that “by incorporating storytelling throughout engagement, [we] centered human experience in [our] messaging and materials to connect with people in a way that was less technical and more relatable.” Our awards committee felt that they succeeded with that approach. As a result, the public engagement component of this plan was well strategized to engage underheard voices, used a variety of methods to genuinely understand and implement public input, and achieved a high level of meaningful public participation.

Congratulations, MnDOT, on your award for excellence in community engagement!



# APA MN 2022 PLANNING AWARDS

## PARTNERSHIPS IN PLANNING AWARD

### Partnerships in Planning Award

#### Allen S. King Plant Reuse Advisory Panel

#### Recipients: City of Oak Park Heights and Washington County Community Development Association



Since its construction over 50 years ago, the Allen S. King coal-fired powerplant has loomed large in the local economy and land use of the City of Oak Park Heights. Its upcoming 2028 closure presents both great opportunity in redeveloping a large area of riverfront land and great challenge to replace a large portion of the employment and tax base. The City worked with Washington County economic development partners to create an advisory panel of diverse stakeholders ranging from Xcel Energy to the National Parks to local citizens. The awards committee felt that this project did an excellent job incorporating a diverse group of stakeholders into a coordinated visioning process.

Congratulations to Oak Park Heights and Washington County for your well-earned Partnerships in Planning Award!



# APA MN 2022 PLANNING AWARDS

## SUCCESS STORIES IN IMPLEMENTATION AWARD

### Success Stories in Implementation Award

#### Woodbury Urban Village Master Plan

Recipients: City of Woodbury and HKGI



The Woodbury Urban Village Master Plan, created for a fast-growing suburban area, provided guidance for developing a new town center in southern Woodbury. This plan considered the City's goals of land-use mix, multi-modal transportation options, and environmental preservation, and specified development and urban design guidelines that would ensure these goals were met. The awards committee felt that the plan's detailed development guidance for this important new area of Woodbury, and its subsequent buildout, was an excellent example of using the planning process to ensure successful implementation.

Congratulations to the City of Woodbury and HKGI on this award!





# APA MN 2022 PLANNING AWARDS

## PLANNING IN CONTEXT AWARD

### Planning in Context Award

#### Dundee Site Redevelopment

Recipients: City of Plymouth, Parkera,  
and Twin Cities Orthopedic



The Dundee Site Redevelopment is a Planned Unit Development on the site of a former plant nursery/retailer, where the agencies required a tailored redevelopment plan to provide the benefits the community as a whole needed. The City of Plymouth, developer Parkera, and commercial client Twin Cities Orthopedic worked in close partnership to create a multifamily housing and commercial development that not only provides new open space and transit amenities, but sensitively incorporates the overall site into the adjacent urban fabric.

Thank you to the partners of this project for submitting such a great example of planning in context, and congratulations on your award!





## APA MN 2022 PLANNING AWARDS

### FAICP INDUCTEES FROM MINNESOTA

#### Barbara Dacy (2022)



Barbara is a leader in planning, housing, and housing education with more than 40 years' experience leading city and county community development agencies. Barbara initiated municipal and county housing policies leading to the preservation and construction of hundreds of units for seniors and families. She also led a successful effort on behalf of statewide housing agencies for a new state policy to finance affordable senior housing. Finally, Barbara's leadership in a housing education non-profit has led to the creation of a new affordable housing leadership certificate program that will train future leaders in housing policy.

Congratulations, Barbara!

#### Peter Brown (2020)



Peter is a practitioner-academic who brings over 37 years of project leadership experience in architecture, government, and development to his career in planning. As a consultant, he has led the implementation of eight major urban public realm projects that have reshaped downtown Minneapolis. As a researcher and writer, Peter has brought his unique perspective to two critically acclaimed books as well as book chapters and reviews on the subject of urban redevelopment. And as an adjunct instructor at the University of Minnesota, Peter has educated and mentored a generation of planning students in urban design, development, and public realm planning.

Congratulations, Peter!

## APA MN 2022 PLANNING AWARDS

### VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR AWARD

#### Volunteer of the Year Awards:

**Chloe McGuire Brigl and Michael Palermo**



Chloe McGuire Brigl has a long history of serving APA-MN over the past six years. She joined the APA-MN Board first as Student Representative, then Student Director and finally served as a committee co-chair for four years from 2018-2021. She has also served as a metro district director and has been involved in the Women in Planning Committee. We are thrilled to recognize Chloe as a Volunteer of the Year.



Michael Palermo has been involved with APA-MN since 2014, and has co-chaired conferences in 2016, 2017, 2020, and 2021. This year, he has been invaluable as an advisor for this conference, using his wealth of knowledge in conference planning to consistently problem solve and plan for our first in-person conference in several years. Mike has also served as a metro district director and has been a staple at every conference as a presenter. In light of his contributions to our chapter, we are delighted to recognize Mike as a Volunteer of the Year.



## APA MN 2022 PLANNING AWARDS

### GUNNAR ISBERG STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

#### Gunnar Isberg Student Scholarship Award: Elena Fransen

This year's recipient of the Gunnar Isberg Student Scholarship is Elena Fransen. Elena is a master's student in the University of Minnesota Humphrey School's Urban and Regional Planning program. An active student member of APA Minnesota, Elena has taken the initiative to connect with planners in various roles across the Twin Cities area. She is also enthusiastic in her student leadership roles, organizing professional development events that have helped traditionally underrepresented planners. Finally, Elena has excelled both academically and in her

vocational roles, taking on any tasks requested of her in internships and demonstrating an excellent understanding of the interrelated tasks that go into running a municipal planning office. We're pleased to be able to offer this scholarship to such a deserving recipient, and we are confident that Elena's dedication to uplifting the profession as a whole means that this scholarship represents a great investment in the future of planning in Minnesota. Congratulations, Elena!



## APA MN 2022 PLANNING AWARDS

### PEG AND OTTO SCHMID AWARD

#### Peg and Otto Schmid Award:

#### Sam O'Connell

The Peg and Otto Schmid award is given to a mid-career planner who has demonstrated excellence in planning and a significant, positive contribution to the planning practice in Minnesota. Our awardee this year is Sam O'Connell.

Sam is the director of community relations for the metropolitan council. She has 20+ years of experience with stakeholder engagement, infrastructure development and transportation planning at the county, regional and statewide level. Her projects have included light, commuter, high-speed rail and bus rapid transit development. Sam serves as the Second Vice President of the

MN Chapter of Conference of Minority Transportation Professionals and has served as the Chair of the Minnesota Design Team and President of WTS Minnesota. Sam's work fostering equity-grounded decisions in transportation planning has been a constant throughout her career; a recent example of this is her outreach efforts on the Metro Blue Line extension that resulted in a realignment of the project to better serve North Minneapolis residents. This and many other of Sam's projects have contributed immensely to a more equitable built form throughout the Twin Cities. Congratulations, Sam, on this well-deserved award!





## APA MN 2022 PLANNING AWARDS

### LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

#### Lifetime Achievement Award: Ron Chicka

Our chapter gives this award to a member who has shown dedication and commitment to the field of planning, and who has impacted and advocated for planning throughout their career. This year, it is our great pleasure to present this award to Ron Chicka.

Ron is the director of the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council, which he joined in 1995. During his decades of service to the Twin Ports community, he has led a great diversity of planning processes, during which he has tirelessly advanced equitable, sustainable, and fiscally-responsible planning activities. Ron is also the president of the board of directors for the Association of

Metropolitan Planning Organizations, where he routinely provides guidance, assistance, and resources to over 400 MPOs nationwide. He has served as a teacher and mentor in the field, educating at professional events, contributing to the body of applied research, and serving as a listening ear and advisor to many young planners over his career. Ron's dedication as a planner to the Duluth-Superior region, and to the planning profession in this state and beyond, have undoubtedly helped to build stronger, more vibrant communities, better planners and a better planning discipline. Congratulations, Ron!



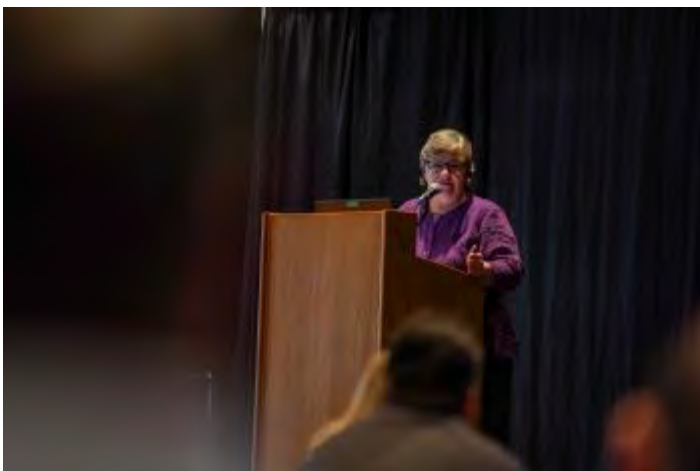
# APA MN 2022 PLANNING CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Credit: Patagonia Visual Solutions





## APA MN 2022 PLANNING CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



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## APA MN 2022 PLANNING CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



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**HIGHLIGHTS**





## APA MN 2022 PLANNING CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



# DISTRICT AND STATEWIDE NEWS

## SOUTHEAST UPDATE: INCREMENTAL INSPIRATION IN WINONA

By Luke Sims  
Southeast District Director

In the early hours of a typical September Friday in 2013 a fire swept through three downtown historic buildings in Winona. Eight hours after it began, the fire was contained leaving damage to one of the most prominent blocks of the Winona Commercial Historic District. Ultimately, a law office, the Islamic Center of Winona, and a boutique flower shop were husks of their former selves and subsequently razed.

And for the next eight years the parcels sat vacant, sand lots growing weeds. Some development proposals gained momentum and even approvals from the Winona Heritage Preservation Commission to fill the gap, but never got started. Slowly, the planning development pressure fizzled out and became the local eyesore. Where the community saw a disappointment, City Planner Carlos Espinosa saw opportunity. Back then it was “a wasteland, essentially,” recalls Espinosa.

After visiting a former vacant lot turned beer garden in San Francisco in 2019, Espinosa came back to Winona with an idea: a local community-accessible space that could draw people in with drinks and would be programmed for events, supporting, local organizations, and partnering with the community.

With support from the Small Business Development Center in Rochester, Espinosa pulled together a business plan and got to work on a small-scale, incremental project that would become a catalyst for downtown Winona. He researched previous beer gardens in Winona, pulled together a preliminary plan, secured local financing, and then flipped the typical planner script and brought his proposal to City Hall.

The best historic places are places that are active and loved and the Winona HPC approved the project after





## SOUTHEAST UPDATE

### (CONTINUED)

two rounds of review. With approvals in hand, Espinosa ordered two shipping containers, fencing, re-purposed athletic field turf, picnic benches, and started prepping the site. While a Colorado company supplied the container holding kegs and taps, the rest was all local. Espinosa stained and sealed the picnic tables himself, built pergolas, and partnered with two muralists to paint the shipping containers.

The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the plans, stretching out the timeline to six months of prep, but also revealed an increased need for outdoor community gathering space. By the time the space was ready in August 2021, the community's appetite for outdoor third places had outgrown the temporary measures put in place for COVID. A permanent place was needed.

Peter's Biergarten, named after Espinosa's grandfather-in-law, opened for the final months of summer in 2021 and the community immediately responded. The drinks brought people in, but the events and open space kept them coming back. What started as smaller partnerships grew as community organizations collaborated, visitors stopped to spend some time sipping drinks and looking at architecture, and residents of Winona had a new outdoor living room complete with activities. One year later and the Biergarten hosts 25 live music acts and over 70 community events from May through November. From book bingo and children's magic shows to square dancing in the street and hip-hop artists, the Biergarten quickly became an open and welcoming space for everyone. And when not actively programmed, the Biergarten is open for anyone to stop in.

And that's exactly how Espinosa wants it. As a planner, Espinosa notes, "you hear about the need to do something. And instead of having other people do it, you can just go out and do it. It makes you feel good." The Biergarten will continue to bring people together and Espinosa hopes it will be a space to help inspire the community. Going forward, he is partnering with a local nonprofit, Engage Winona, on a "Winona Together" campaign to host community conversations and put resources in the hands of residents.



# SOUTHWEST DISTRICT UPDATE

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

By Charles Androsky  
Southwest District Director

There are numerous exciting planning activities happening in the Southwest District. Touching on just a few: a culmination of decades of planning, interjurisdictional coordination, and local, state, and federal funding discussions, US Highway 14 is scheduled for expansion to a full 4-lane segment from New Ulm to Rochester. Scheduled for completion in 2023, the finalized corridor expansion will yield numerous safety and transportation efficiency benefits. [https://www.mankatofreepress.com/news/local\\_news/highway-14-expansion-nearly-at-hand/article\\_020f4aba-7a13-11ec-8f28-73f4b7101f14.html](https://www.mankatofreepress.com/news/local_news/highway-14-expansion-nearly-at-hand/article_020f4aba-7a13-11ec-8f28-73f4b7101f14.html)

The City of Mankato is leading a planning effort to convert a large privately owned former industrial quarry into a combination residential and commercial campus. The City is working with the landowner to rework aspects of the site for public use in exchange for using a

portion of a Brownfield Assessment Grant the city received to help fund the development. City residents, staff, and elected officials are nearing final stages of choosing between conceptual scenarios and choosing the final format and combinations of residential and commercial space. <https://everyvoice.mankatomn.gov/what-s-the-future-of-the-jefferson-quarry>

The City of Worthington is one of the district's most diverse, and one of the only cities in which English is spoken as a minority language. The city is leading a community visioning process for the reuse of a city-owned golf course.

The Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization (MAPO) is leading a range of new studies, notably an update to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan for the cities of Mankato, North Mankato, Eagle Lake, and Skyline. Blue Earth and Nicollet counties are also participating in the ADA Transition Plan update <https://mnmapo.org/>



**Source: City of Mankato. One of several redevelopment concepts under consideration.**



# METRO DISTRICT UPDATE

## MID-CYCLE SYSTEM STATEMENTS

The Metropolitan Council (Council) recently issued mid-cycle system statements to all 188 jurisdictions in the Twin Cities region to reflect changes to the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan* (TPP) and the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* (RPPP)

since the last issuance of system statements in 2015. Each system statement is individualized to identify how each community is affected by the Council's policy plans for regional systems.

The Council issues decennial system statements every ten years, too. The decennial system statements represent wholesale changes to Council plans whereas the mid-cycle system statements issued in September 2022, include minor system changes with a more limited geographic scope. Local governments are not required to respond to the mid-cycle system statements; however, will need to review their system statement and determine for themselves if a comprehensive plan amendment is necessary.

The 2022 System Statements reflect updates to the highway, transit, and aviation systems in the TPP, along with policy changes to the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) and new information identifying Regional Bicycle Barriers and Regional Truck Freight Corridors. Some examples include:

- Increased discussion of aging highway pavements and changes to roadway functional classifications
- Updated transit network plans, changes to planned transitways, and shifts between the Current or Increased Revenue Scenarios
- Completed long-term comprehensive plans for three regional airports
- Changes to corridors and alignments in the RBTN
- Identification of the most significant physical barriers to everyday bicycle travel
- Identification of corridors most heavily relied upon for freight delivery



The 2022 System Statements also reflect updates to policies and strategies, regional designations, and the regional system map in the RPPP. Some examples include:

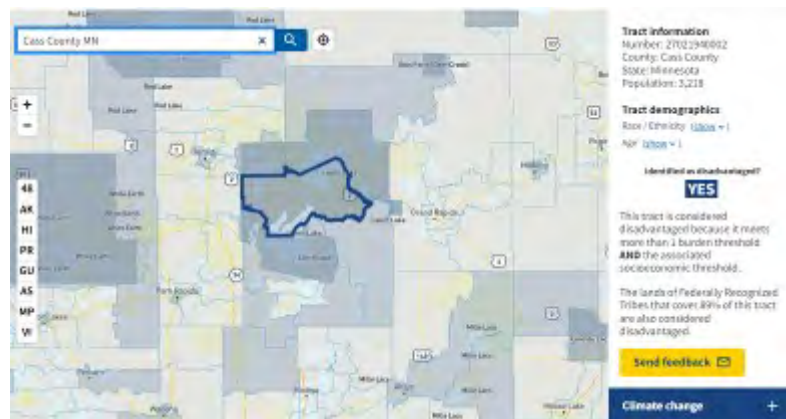
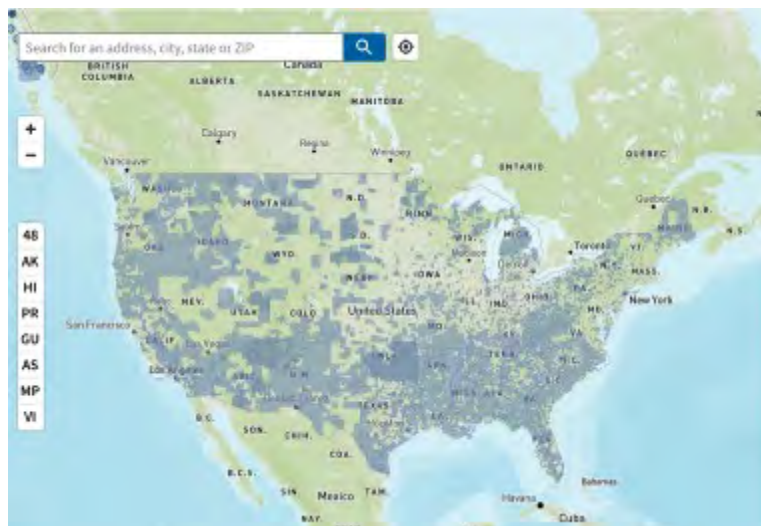
- 26 new regional designations including 17 regional trails, regional trail search corridors or search corridor extensions; one special recreation feature; and four park expansions
- Refined policy language for regional park and trail boundary adjustments
- An expanded description of the special recreation feature
- The Council-adopted master plan equity analysis requirement

The Council is starting to look beyond 2040 and envision the region in 2050. Shared challenges like climate change and growing racial disparities in the region will shape the development of a shared vision for the region's future. Conversations around shared values and vision for our future begin our work on regional policy development. If you'd like to participate, start by [telling us what values inform the Twin Cities region you imagine for future generations](#).

If you have any questions on system statements, please feel free to contact your [Sector Representative](#).

If you'd like to engage in the vision and values conversation, contact Michael Larson at [michael.larson@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:michael.larson@metc.state.mn.us) or Angela Torres at [angela.torres@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:angela.torres@metc.state.mn.us).

# RESOURCES AND REPORTS



Sample report for specific Census Tract

## CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING TOOL

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) recently released a new Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. This tool provides an interactive map identifying disadvantaged Census tracts. This is tied to the current administration's funding priorities.

This tool defines disadvantaged communities as having one or more burdens related to:

- Projected climate risks data that show flooding and wildfire risks
- Transportation barriers data, using a dataset from the U.S. Department of Transportation's own mapping tool

- Lack of greenspace data that helps to identify nature-deprived communities
- Lack of indoor plumbing data to better identify communities with low-income households that lack access to critical infrastructure
- Redlining data to identify communities that have faced historic underinvestment
- Legacy pollution data that show communities close to abandoned mines and formerly used defense sites
- Water pollution data based on information about underground storage tanks that may leak

[Click here](#) to access this tool.

Climate Planning & Consultation

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**Great Plains Institute** Better Energy. Better World.

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**Brian Ross, AICP, LEED**  
 bross@gpisd.net  
 612-767-7296

Learn more at:  
[BetterEnergy.org/four-services](http://BetterEnergy.org/four-services)

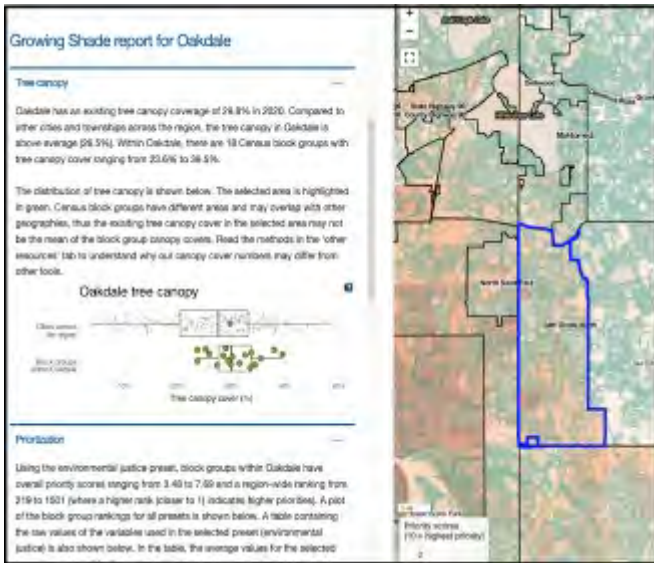
**wsb**

More is possible when we work together.

Community solutions for the spaces, places and systems that support our lives.



## Resources and Reports (continued)



[Click here](#) to access an introductory overview video of the Growing Shade tool.

## GROWING SHADE TOOL

Growing Shade is an interactive resource designed by the Metropolitan Council, Nature Conservancy, and Tree Trust to help inform tree canopy enhancement and preservation for the Twin Cities region.

This resource has two primary components:

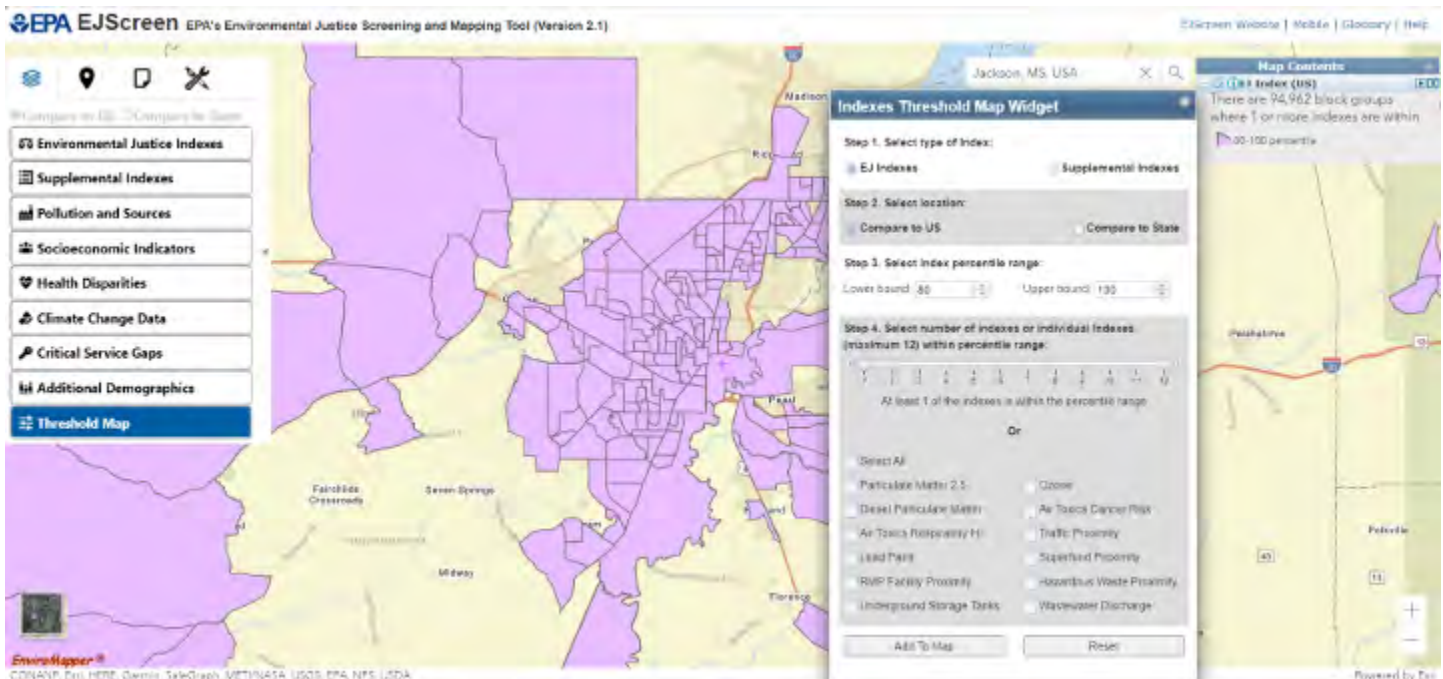
- Stories from around the Twin Cities region about the regional issues and priorities intersecting with the tree canopy. These stories address themes including equity, restoration, preservation, education, and maintenance.
- A mapping tool that allows users to create data-driven reports for communities across the Twin Cities region. This allows users to create custom maps

at the city, township, neighborhood, and/or Census block group levels. Variables available are organized by theme including climate change, conservation, environmental justice, public health, demographics, and socioeconomics. These can be compared against tree coverage to show how they relate.

The Growing Shade project recently won an APA MN Innovation in Planning award. For more information and a link to the tool, visit <https://metro council.org/Communities/Planning/Local-Planning-Assistance/Tree-Canopy.aspx>



## Resources and Reports (continued)



### EJSCREEN TOOL UPDATE

Recently, the US EPA has updated and added new capabilities to EJScreen, its environmental justice screening and mapping tool.

In addition to existing environmental indicators and corresponding EJ indexes, EJScreen 2.1 includes “supplemental indexes” as an additional method to highlight vulnerable populations that may be disproportionately impacted by pollution. This includes percent low-income, percent limited English-speaking,

percent less than high school education, percent unemployed, and low life expectancy.

EPA has also included threshold maps that allow users to look across all twelve indexes at once, providing a cumulative outlook on vulnerable populations facing higher pollution burdens. It also features updated Census and environmental data, and improved methodologies.

[Click here](#) to access this tool.





# JOB OPENINGS AND RFPS

Job openings and requests for proposals are available on the APA MN website:

[https://www.planningmn.org/view\\_job\\_postings](https://www.planningmn.org/view_job_postings)

[https://www.planningmn.org/view\\_rfp\\_postings](https://www.planningmn.org/view_rfp_postings)

Recent job postings include:

- Planner—HKGi, Minneapolis, MN
- Assistant Planner—McLean County Regional Planning Commission, Bloomington, IL
- County Planner—Cass County, Walker, MN
- Airport Development Section Supervisor—Minnesota Department of Transportation, Saint Paul, MN
- Senior Planner—City of Becker, Becker, MN

Recent RFP postings include:

- Housing Study—Winona County EDA
- Parks and Recreation Master Planning—City of West St. Paul
- Climate Action and Adaptation Plan—City of Minnetonka
- Cultural Riverfront Placemaking Signage—City of Cloquet
- Planning Services—Prairie Island Indian Community

