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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Written by: Allison Mouch, AICP



WCC APA Executive Board

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Professional Development Officer:

Randy Johnson, AICP

Western Planner Representative:

Brandon Cammarata, AICP

Newsletter Editor:

Ashley Kaisershot

Webmaster:

vacant

Greetings Western Central Chapter Members,

Hard to believe the holiday season is in full swing and 2016 is nearly upon us. With this second installment of the Western Central Chapter newsletter, we wanted to bring you updates on some exciting opportunities happening in our region. Earlier this summer, the Chapter assisted five communities throughout Montana, North and South Dakota in submitting applications for grant funds through APA and the American Public Health Association's Plan4Health competition. This was the 2nd round of applications accepted for this grant, and I am pleased to say one of the five WCC communities that applied was successful in securing \$125,000 in grant funding. Read on to find out more about this exciting project – we'll provide additional updates as the project progresses in upcoming newsletter editions. In this installment you'll also read about the APA's CPAT program and how it has assisted communities in our area as well as nationally tackle complex planning issues and projects. As with the first installment of this newsletter, we strive to bring you interesting and relevant articles, information and updates on regional conference and professional development opportunities, and hope you'll consider

contributing to future editions to share the valuable work you're doing in your communities!

Lastly, many of you participated in the consolidated election process earlier this fall and I am excited to announce that Bethany Brandt-Sargent will be joining the Board as Vice President in January 2016. This change of course means that our current Vice President, Allyson Brekke, will be leaving the Board after two successful terms serving in that role. A heartfelt thank you to Allyson for her service to the Western Central Chapter these past four years, and best of luck in future endeavors!

I hope you all had a warm and happy holiday - wishing you a prosperous start to the New Year!

Allison

Webmaster Position

The Western Central Chapter is looking for a webmaster to assist the Chapter in general updates to our website. Interested candidates should have experience working in WordPress. Additional responsibilities would include:

- semi-frequent posting of job announcements
- posting newsletter editions
- posting workshops and conference information
- posting professional development opportunities
- and general website maintenance

If interested please contact Allison Mouch at mouchag@gmail.com.

Newsletter Information

This newsletter is published by the Western Central Chapter of the American Planning Association on a quarterly basis. Circulation is to the APA members of the Western Central Chapter (WCC). The WCC Executive Committee welcomes submissions of original articles, editorial letters, project profiles, planners on the move items, calendar items, and any other information of interest to both professional and citizen planners. Submissions should be made to:

Ashley Kaisershot
Newsletter Editor
e: ashley.kaisershot@gmail.com

WCC Disclaimer: The views expressed in the articles published on the website or in the newsletter are those of the authors. They do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the WCC APA. Any questions or comments may be directed to the newsletter editor of the president of the WCC.

2016 AICP Exam Scholarship Announcement

APA has announced the 2016 reduced exam fee scholarship program for the Western Central Chapter. This program has been established to assist individuals who may defer taking or are unable to take the AICP exam because of the cost. First time exam applicants receive the reduced rate of \$145 (combined \$70 application and \$75 exam fee) and previously approved AICP applicants receive the rate of \$75 (exam fee only).

Reduced AICP Exam Fee Scholarship Selection Guidelines:

Applicants planning on taking the May 2016 AICP Exam can submit a written explanation of financial hardship (including financial hardship caused by a budget cutback in a firm or agency), which necessitates the request.

- Members of minorities are given preference.
- The applicant selected will be otherwise unlikely to take the exam without the reduced fee.
- The applicant's employer will not subsidize the exam fee.

Requests for the reduced exam fee must be submitted no later than **January 22, 2016**, to the address provided below:

W. Randall Johnson, AICP
WCC Professional Development Officer
Gallatin County Department of Planning and Community Development
311 West Main Street, Rm. 108
Bozeman, MT 59718

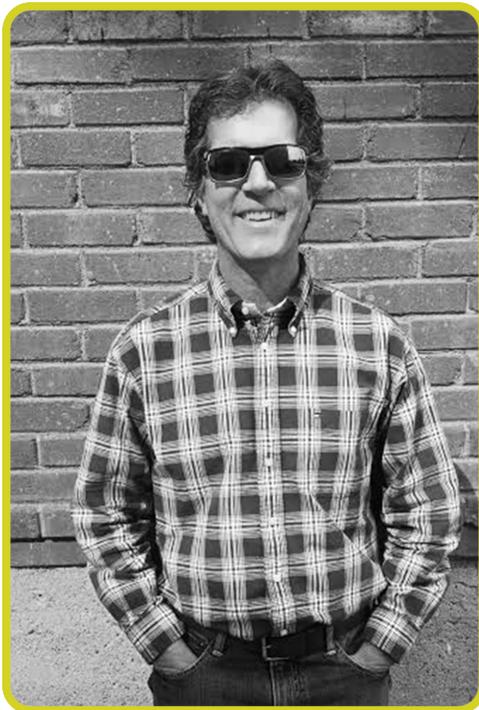


Invitation to Submit

As with the first installment of this newsletter, we strive to bring you interesting and relevant articles, information and updates on regional conference and professional development opportunities.

**WE HOPE
YOU'LL
CONSIDER**

contributing to future editions to share the valuable work you're doing in your communities!



Professional Development Officer
 Randy Johnson, AICP
Manager, Subdivision and Zoning
 Gallatin County, MT
 Bozeman, MT

Randy has worked for the Gallatin County Planning Department for over 25 years. Randy's principal duties include development review and regulation maintenance. Originally from Madison, Wisconsin, Randy moved to Bozeman in the late 1970's to attend Montana State University, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Earth Sciences, Randy then obtained his Master of Science degree in Rural, Town, and Regional Planning from the University of Montana in 1988. Randy is a past president of the Western Central Chapter of the American Planning Association.



Western Planner Representative
 Brandon Cammarata, AICP
Planning and Development Director
 City of Cheyenne, WY

Brandon is the Planning and Development Director for the City of Cheyenne and began his career with the City of Cheyenne in 2003. Brandon has been involved with a wide range of projects ranging from annexations, site plan reviews, the County Pocket Water and Sewer Project, code writing and long range planning processes. As the Planning and Development Director Brandon manages both the long range planning division and the current planning division with a staff of 8 – 10 professionals. He holds an undergraduate degree in Business and Administration and a Masters Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Colorado.



South Dakota State Director

Lysann Zeller
*Community Development Planner/
 GIS Technician*
 Black Hills Council of Local
 Government
 Rapid City, SD

My name is Lysann Zeller and I work as a Community Development Planner/ GIS Technician for Black Hills Council of Local Governments, which is one of six planning districts in South Dakota, located in Rapid City. Previously, I worked as a Planner for the Pennington County Planning Department for nearly eight years. My undergraduate degrees are in geography and outdoor recreation management and I am currently pursuing a master's degree in sustainability from Black Hills State University.

Outside of work, I enjoy traveling, playing soccer, and the many outdoor activities available in the surrounding Black Hills, including hiking, cycling, and skiing. I am new to the West Central Chapter Board, but am looking forward to serving as the South Dakota State Director and learning more about APA and the other states in this chapter.



North Dakota State Director

Donna Bye
*Minot City Planner/Chief Resilience
 Officer*
 City of Minot, ND

Donna is the City Planner and Chief Resilience Officer for the City of Minot, and has worked for the city since 2001. She is responsible for advising land developers and property owners on planning, zoning and subdivision issues, procedures and policies. She is also the Planning Commission Secretary, preparing all agendas and recommendations to the City Council. Ms. Bye also handles zoning enforcement issues as well as Administrator for the City of Minot Renaissance Zone. Donna previously worked on the Planning staffs of Sheboygan (WI), and Rapid City (SD). She currently holds memberships in the American Society of Landscape Architects, the American Planners Association, and the ND Historic Preservation and Planners Association. She sits on the Boards for the International Peace Gardens and Dakota Bark Park. She holds degrees in Landscape Architecture and Environmental Design from the North Dakota State University.

THE WCC IS EXCITED TO
 ANNOUNCE...

**BETHANY BRANDT-
 SARGENT**

will be joining the Board as
**VICE PRESIDENT
 IN JANUARY 2016!**

This change of course means that our current Vice President, Allyson Brekke, will be leaving the Board after

**TWO SUCCESSFUL
 TERMS**

...serving in that role.

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU
 to **Allyson** for her service to the
 WCC these past four years,

**WATCH FOR BETHANY'S BIO
 IN THE UPCOMING
 NEWSLETTER!**

APA Western Central Chapter and APHA Affiliate – Montana Public Health Association Team Up

Written by: Karen Lane, Preventions Program Manager, Lewis and Clark County Public Health Department



The Healthy Communities Coalition of the Greater Helena Area, Montana, is a recipient of a second-cohort Plan4Health grant. The president of the Western Central Chapter of the APA and an executive board member of the Montana Public Health Association are members of the coalition.

The \$125,000 award will be used to hire a consultant to design an Active Living Wayfinding System and communication plan for the community. By providing uniform signage and supporting material, the coalition hopes to increase participation in physical activity and improve access to nutritious food programs. Currently, neither the city nor the county has trail and park access signage or supporting outreach materials to help users know how to access

the community’s many parks and connecting trails to key areas for accessing services and neighborhoods. There is an opportunity to increase health equity by guiding people to places that offer opportunities for exercise and nutritious food.

The Greater Helena Area is poised to establish essential physical activity and nutrition linkages to create a healthier, more vibrant community. The community has been working diligently to implement the Complete Streets Policy through revision of the City Subdivision Regulations and Engineering Standards. The community recently completed revisions of the Greater Helena Area Transportation Plan, the City of Helena Growth Policy and the Lewis and Clark County Growth Policy. A Downtown

Master Plan is currently being developed. A wayfinding system and communication plan will help tie it all together, encouraging all citizens to use and benefit from active living and healthy eating.

We will provide additional updates as the project progresses in upcoming newsletter editions!



WHY I VOLUNTEER
FOR THE WCC-APA

anonymous

- 1 TO LEARN
- 2 TO TEACH
- 3 TO GET CONNECTED
- 4 TO BE INSPIRED
- 5 TO MEET OTHER PLANNERS
- 6 TO GIVE BACK

WHY I VOLUNTEER
FOR THE WCC-APA

anonymous

I believe at the heart of the planning profession is a desire to build community, and by volunteering I get to play an active role in making my community a better place to work, live and play!

WHY I VOLUNTEER
FOR THE WCC-APA

anonymous

- 1 To give back to my community
- 2 To mentor young planners; and to learn, myself
- 3 To educate myself on how other communities are implementing projects
- 4 To use ND, SD, WY, and MT as case studies for the communities I work in
- 5 To network
- 6 To be the best planner I can be

JANET CORNISH AND LANETTE G. WINDEMAKER FEATURED IN PLANNING MAGAZINE

Janet Cornish and Lanette G. Windemaker were featured in the December issue of *Planning*, the official magazine of the American Planning Association. Teaming up to author their article entitled *Montana Embraces TIF*, the duo goes on to write that, “Small towns are seeing results from a typically urban tool.” The two go on to write, “In Montana, TIF has been used to finance both public and private activities, including construction of transportation infrastructure and parking facilities, improvements to water and sewer systems, streetscape and park upgrades, improvements to public buildings, housing development, historic preservation, and facilitation of arts and cultural activities.”

Janet Cornish, owner and principal of Community Development Services of Montana, is the author of *Tax Increment Financing in Montana, A Manual for Local Governments and Economic and Community Development Agencies*. Lanette G. Windemaker is a consultant to local governments. As a planner, she has worked on projects throughout Montana and in Wyoming, Alaska, Kansas, and Colorado. An earlier version of this story appeared in APA’s Small Town and Rural Planning Division newsletter.

Head to <https://www.planning.org/planning/> and LOG IN to read their entire article.

GREAT ARTICLE, JANET AND LANETTE!

APA OFFERS COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSISTANCE

Written by: Ken Markert, AICP and Ryan Scherzinger of APA



Not all cities, towns, or counties have the capacity or resources to tackle many of their planning challenges. Many don't have a planner on staff; and others, if they're lucky, have one, maybe two. Budgets are tight, issues don't disappear and build up over time, and the need for planning solutions is often urgent. Know of community like that? Perhaps live in one? Enter APA's Community Planning Assistance Teams program or "CPAT," for short.

CPAT is a pro bono technical assistance program for communities faced with limited resources. APA forms a team of volunteer planners from around the country, selected specifically for the skills and experience needed to address a focused project in a community. CPATs strive to fill gaps in expertise, deliver an unbiased perspective, effectively engage communities to uncover and organize their vision, build momentum, and deliver productive recommendations, strategies, and design solutions to implement.

CPATs have worked in communities across the country, from the Pine Hills neighborhood in Orange County, Florida to the City of Unalaska in the Aleutian Islands of Alaska. Teams assist at different scales. Past teams helped counties with regional economic development strategies and smart growth initiatives, small downtowns with redevelopment, historic preservation, and marketing, and neighborhoods with revitalization and community image-building.

In February 2015, a CPAT visited Helena, Montana. Lewis and Clark County, in association with the City of Helena, submitted an application to APA to obtain the services of a CPAT. Population in Lewis and Clark County grew 10 percent over the last decade, with 65 percent of that increase occurring in unincorporated areas. Some 8,000 residential lots were added to the Helena Valley region, a majority of them outside city

limits, bringing with them a host of issues associated by sprawling development.

The CPAT project centered on the County and the City's 2009 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU was adopted in order to better manage growth in the City, the Urban Standards Boundary on the city's edges, and the more rural Helena Valley. The City and County have implemented a number of the tasks outlined in the MOU while several other important tasks remain incomplete. A key component of the team's role included facilitating a day-long workshop of stakeholders to learn what those individuals viewed as the issues, goals, and the tools that can be used to achieve a better development pattern.

Upon completion of the workshop and after reflecting on its week-long immersion in area planning, the CPAT developed a set of recommended actions for consideration by Lewis and Clark County and the City of Helena.

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Some of the recommendations build upon the feedback received at the stakeholder workshop, and others are based on the team’s professional expertise and experience in working with local governments on growth management. Both the City and County felt the CPAT gave them useful perspectives and new ideas to help complete the needed planning, regulations, infrastructure that will promote better growth in the region (less of future growth happening in the valley and more in the urban growth areas).

Communities that need the most help often aren’t aware of APA, let alone its CPAT program. APA is looking to its members to help spread the word about the opportunity that CPAT offers. Let communities know! Help them with developing their project and a proposal. APA staff is available to discuss projects and answer questions. Steve Brewer, the mayor of La Feria, Texas, said following a CPAT project in his

small town: “This was an incredible opportunity for La Feria to have so many highly qualified professionals provide their expertise to our small community... We could never have afforded to bring this much talent without the CPAT program.”

Ideal communities for CPAT assistance are those facing large planning challenges and lacking the resources and experience for dealing with them. Within the APA Western Central Chapter region, such communities might include smaller towns and counties that have been caught unprepared for rapid growth associated with new energy development. Other possibilities include poorer communities looking to improve their economic outlook through better planning. If CPAT sounds like a program that could help your community or some other community that needs help, you can learn more by contacting the CPAT program.

CPAT webpage:
[https://www.planning.org/
communityassistance/teams/](https://www.planning.org/communityassistance/teams/)

CPAT Email Contact:
CPAT@planning.org

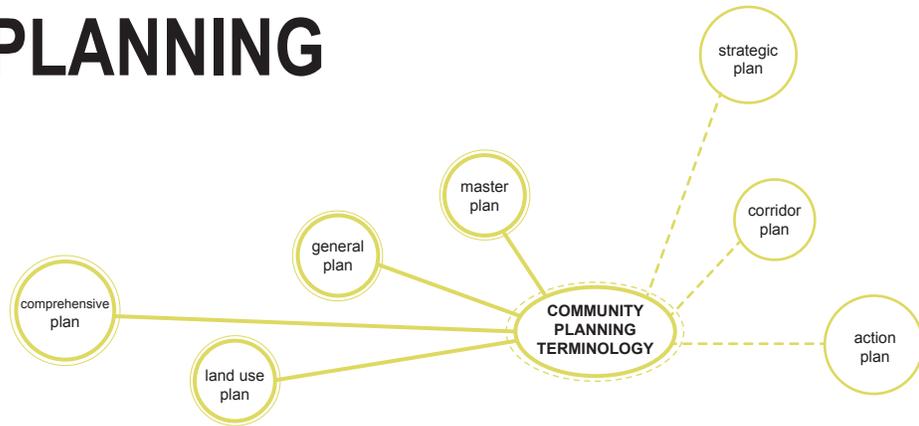
CPAT phone number:
312-786-6359

Ken Markert, AICP, is a consulting planner with MMI Planning in Cody, WY. He is past-president of the Western Central Chapter.

Ryan Scherzinger is on the APA staff in Chicago and runs the CPAT program.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING REVISITED

Written by: Larry M. Weil - Planning Director of West Fargo, North Dakota



A number of years ago, I wrote much of this article for publication in *The Western Planner*. Over the past several years there has been a renewed interest in community planning in North Dakota due to a number of issues facing communities. Many communities are not sure what to do or where to turn. They have many questions relating to planning and are desirous of having more to say about what is happening to their community. I thought it would be appropriate to revisit this article and provide some additional insights.

The importance of communities adopting a community plan (comprehensive plan), as well as regularly reviewing and updating their plan, cannot be over-emphasized. The comprehensive plan provides the legal basis for a community to engage in land use regulation. Also, the comprehensive plan expresses a community’s vision for the foreseeable future. The plan may provide implementation strategies which projects what short-term action plans will be undertaken to help accomplish the community

vision. The comprehensive plan provides valuable information to the public on the community’s development policy and helps the staff, as well as appointed and elected officials in the development review process.

Community plan terminology may be somewhat confusing to many. Terms such as strategic plan, corridor plan, and action plan are used at times, though these terms suggest that the plan is narrowly focused. More commonly utilized are terms such as master plan, comprehensive plan, general plan, and land use plan. Do these terms mean the same thing, or do they refer to different types of plans? If one examines the evolution of plan development historically, master plans have evolved into general plans and/or comprehensive plans. According to William I. Goodman in his book *Principles and Practice of Urban Planning*, in the late 1920’s consultants were generally employed by planning commissions to prepare a “Master Plan” which was anticipated to include sections on streets, transit and transportation, parks and recreation, civic appearance,

and zoning (Goodman, 1968 pg. 24). In the 1960’s T. J. Kent, Jr. was a leading proponent of the comprehensive planning concept in what he termed “The General Plan” which was the “official statement of a municipal legislative body which sets forth its major policies concerning desirable future physical development” (Goodman, pg. 349). Goodman indicates that the term “general plan” and “comprehensive plan” are used interchangeably, and the term “city plan” is also used by communities. However, the term “master plan” was no longer respected by planners because of misuse in the past to describe plans which were not general and comprehensive, i.e. “master street plan” or “master park plan” (Goodman, pg. 349). A community plan is to be comprehensive, general and long range (Goodman, pg. 349). The state establishes enabling legislation which provides for community planning and the framework, or required elements for the plan. The enabling legislation may require, as the North Dakota Century Code does, that the plan establishes

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“explicit goals, objectives, policies and standards of the jurisdiction to guide public and private development within its control.” Goals, objectives and policies are the heart of the plan which provides the legal basis for approving or denying development applications. The plan will generally focus on physical development aspects such as land use, transportation system, parks and open space, and public facilities. Often additional emphasis is given in the plan for the environment, affordable housing, economic development, architectural and site design characteristics, and other significant community issues.

The complete plan may represent the vision of the community. However, some plans will contain a specific section that outlines the vision of the community through statements and/or visual images. Vision statements provide insight into the current values of the community, articulate a vision for how the community sees itself in the future, and outline a policy framework for on-going planning efforts.

The comprehensive plan should provide implementation strategies to be utilized to ensure that the vision of the community can be accomplished. The strategies take full advantage of the regulatory and fiscal tools available to the community such as the official development controls, capital improvements program and other community programs and actions. Actions to correct deficiencies in the development codes may be

spelled out, as well as adoption of new ordinances. Project-specific strategies might be suggested to address issues identified in the plan. By providing implementation strategies, one can evaluate from time to time how much progress is being made.

The longevity of a comprehensive plan is a common question of many communities. A number of communities in North Dakota have had a plan developed for them in the 1970s and have had little change to the community until recently. The Department of Housing and Urban Development had planning funds available then which were accessed by communities who had consultants develop their community plan. Unfortunately many of the communities did not have the knowledge or capacity to implement the plan together with land use controls, and eventually the plan found its place on a shelf. With increased development pressure brought on by energy development in the state, communities have been taking the plan off the shelf and wondering if the plan is still relevant and what their next step might be. Even now during the energy development slowdown, communities have the opportunity to take a breath and be prepared prior to the resurgence of activity. Other communities may find that the slowdown in the west is affecting the migration of people to their communities for employment opportunities.

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**“GOALS,
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DEVELOPMENT
APPLICATIONS.”**



“ COMMUNITY PLANNERS TEND TO HAVE A BROAD PLANNING PERSPECTIVE WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO MULTIPLE FACETS OF PLANNING ”

The relevancy of a comprehensive plan has much to do with the vision of the community, but may also be impacted by changes in state statutes. Many things might influence the community's vision such as growth or the lack of growth, deterioration of buildings and infrastructure, availability of housing, transportation systems, environmental conditions, changes in technology, inadequate park facilities, changes in the makeup of the citizens, i.e. aging population or changes in ethnic groups, or any number of other things.

Shared community values and a shared vision for the community should be expressed within the comprehensive plan. If the values and vision of the community have changed, it is time to refine or redo a comprehensive plan. At times a community's values and vision may not change for ten or 15 years. On the other hand, the values and vision may change significantly within a five year period. Periodic evaluation of the plan goals, objectives, policies and implementation strategies together with community feedback should provide essential information to

determine if the time is right to update the plan.

Understanding the values and vision of a community, greatly enhances the ability to achieve the vision through the goals, objectives, policies and implementation strategies expressed in the comprehensive plan. Also, having the knowledge or capacity to implement the plan and other land use controls is essential. If the community does not have adequate or knowledgeable staff, other resources are available. Most states have professional planning associations, similar to the Western Central Chapter and North Dakota Planning Association, whose mission is not only to promote the interchange of thoughts among those engaged and interested in planning, but also to assist in furthering public understanding of the objectives and functions of the planning process. Some states, unlike North Dakota, have a department charged to assist or guide communities in planning functions. There may be some regional planning agencies that can assist communities. Also, there are many consulting firms with professional planners who can

assist the community.

Community planning professionals are a very important consideration in the development of a comprehensive plan. Community planners tend to have a broad planning perspective which contributes to multiple facets of planning, i.e. transportation, land use, parks, public facilities, community/economic development, etc. Planners understand the importance of working together with all departments and involving community stakeholders and citizens in the development of the plan.

Communities can have an influence on the development of their community through the adoption of a comprehensive plan. The vision of the community is expressed in vision statements and/or within the goals, objectives and policies of the comprehensive plan. It is essential for a community to have the knowledge or capacity to implement the plan and other land use controls.

RESPONDING TO THE BAS IS EASY!

The Census Bureau provides multiple free, user-friendly methods for responding.

1 PAPER OPTION
BAS participants can request free paper maps from the BAS website

2 BASIC DIGITAL OPTION
The Geographic Update Partnership Software (GUPS) is a free, customized GIS tool that will be available during the 2016 BAS. It was specifically developed for people who do not have GIS training or are not experienced GIS users

3 ADVANCED DIGITAL OPTION
Experienced GIS users can update boundaries in their own GIS. The Census Bureau provides free GIS files in shapefile format on its website, along with digital update guidelines.

Find forms, information, and materials about the BAS online at:

www.census.gov/geo/partnerships/bas.html

U.S. Census Bureau conducts Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS)

WHAT IS THE BOUNDARY AND ANNEXATION SURVEY?

The Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS) is the primary way that local, county, and tribal governments ensure that their legal boundaries – and consequently, their official population counts – are correctly recorded with the federal government. Every year, governments use the BAS to update their legal boundaries and official names.

In the BAS, governments report official name changes, (dis)incorporations, and (de)annexations. Governments can also update boundaries, features, and landmarks for:

- Cities, town, boroughs, and villages (incorporated places)
- Townships and towns (minor civil divisions)
- Counties (or county equivalents)
- Consolidated cities
- Roads and other applicable linear features

This **voluntary** survey is an important opportunity for you to ensure that the U.S. Census Bureau has the correct boundary and legal name for your government. The Census Bureau will use the boundary information you provide to report data from the:

Population Estimates Program (PEP)

American Community Survey (ACS)

And other Census Programs and surveys

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U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov

HOW DOES THE BAS BENEFIT YOU?

Legal Boundaries determine your government's population count every year in the American Community Survey and the Population Estimates Program. Many government agencies and other groups use population counts to determine the allocation of funds. Responding to the BAS ensures that your local government has the best data available for its decision-making processes, and that it receives all the of the funds for which it is entitled.

In addition, the boundary records are publicly available and used

by many other federal agencies, researchers, and the public. Because the U.S. Census Bureau is responsible for tracking America's legal boundaries and population data, geographic updates that you provide ripple out in numerous important ways.

Accurate boundary records directly affect the quality of life in your community.

WHEN WILL YOU BE CONTACTED?

The Census Bureau is e-mailing an annual response letter to all federally recognized American Indian tribes with reservations

or off-reservation trust land, governmental counties (and equivalent), incorporated places, consolidated cities, and governmental Minor Civil Divisions (MCD's) in December of 2015 and January of 2016.

All BAS respondents that wish to submit boundary changes, corrections, or feature updates must follow respondent guidelines. The Census Bureau must receive responses to the 2016 BAS before **March 1, 2016** to be included in the Population Estimates Program and the American Community Survey.

Boundary and Annexation Survey Schedule:

DECEMBER:

The Census Bureau e-mails annual response information to BAS contacts with instructions for participation.

MARCH 1:

(FIRST DEADLINE). Legal boundary updates (not including nonlegal boundary corrections) sent by this date are included in the next Population Estimates Program and American Community Survey shapefiles and population estimates.

MAY 31:

(FINAL DEADLINE). Boundary updates sent by this date will appear in the next year's BAS shapefiles.



Invitation to Submit

Photo Submission

The WCC Executive Committee welcomes and encourages photograph submissions of supporting project graphics such as GIS maps, master plans and renderings as well as photographs that depict our region to be included in the upcoming quarterly newsletters. Images can be submitted by both professional and citizen planners, as well as associated professions.

Submissions should be made to:

Ashley Kaisershot

Newsletter Editor

e: ashley.kaisershot@gmail.com

