

Regional and Intergovernmental Planning

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THE SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT'S SMART GROWTH REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

By: Robert A. Leiter, AICP, Director of Land Use and Transportation Planning, San Diego Association of Governments

More than three million people now make their homes in the 18 cities and numerous unincorporated communities that comprise the San Diego region. During the next 25 years, the region will add another million residents, 300,000 housing units, and 440,000 jobs. So what's the plan to handle this growth?

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) adopted a Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) in 2004, a plan that relies heavily on Smart Growth principles and implementation strategies. This article outlines the planning and policy framework utilized in the RCP, and provides some initial results of planning and programming activities that have been undertaken by SANDAG since the adoption of the RCP.

PLANNING AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The RCP is based upon a *planning framework* that parallels those used by cities and counties in their local general plans, in order to improve the coordination of local and regional plans and programs.

By way of background, each California city and county is required to prepare and adopt a *general plan* that provides a blueprint for future land conservation, development, and public facilities in the community, based on a long-range vision and goals. This plan must contain several mandatory elements, including land use, circulation, housing, open space and

conservation, scenic highways, safety, and seismic safety. Once the general plan is adopted, all zoning and development regulations and local public facility plans must be consistent with the plan. In addition, many cities and counties have adopted growth management programs that provide guidance as to how general plan goals and policies should be addressed as development and redevelopment occurs in the community.

The RCP contains chapters which parallel the mandatory elements of local general plans, and includes guidance as to how local plans can address regional goals and policy objectives. In addition, the RCP includes implementation strategies that are similar in scope to the growth management programs that many local jurisdictions in the San Diego region have already adopted.

The *policy framework* in the RCP relies on three themes discussed below:

Connecting Land Use and Transportation:

The first major theme of the RCP focuses on *improving connections between land use and transportation plans*. In this vein, a key recommendation of the RCP is to identify "Smart Growth Opportunity Areas" —



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areas where compact, mixed use, pedestrian-oriented developments either exist now, are currently planned, or have the potential for future inclusion in local land use plans — and place a higher priority on directing transportation improvements and other infrastructure resources toward those areas. The first step in this process is to determine the location of existing and potential smart growth areas according to seven “place types:” *metropolitan center* (i.e., Downtown San Diego), *urban centers*, *town centers*, *community centers*, *transit-oriented corridors*, *special use centers* (e.g., colleges, regional medical complexes); and *village centers in rural communities*.

These seven categories provide a basis for identifying Smart Growth Opportunity Areas throughout the region. Through a collaborative process, SANDAG and the local agencies will designate these areas on a Smart Growth Concept Map. The concept map will be used as a planning tool to communicate with local jurisdictions and infrastructure providers about where smart growth will happen, and as a basis for making better land use and transportation connections during the next update of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Using Land Use and Transportation Plans to Guide Other Plans: The second major theme in the RCP involves *using*

land use and transportation plans to guide other plans. As discussed above, the RCP provides guidance to local governments and property owners on where smart growth development should occur from a regional perspective, and will hopefully lead to inclusion of smart growth land use designations in local general plans. At the same time, the RCP can provide valuable information regarding future regional growth patterns to service providers, in areas such as energy, water supply, wastewater treatment, and solid waste management. The RCP encourages these service providers to use this information when they update their facility master plans.

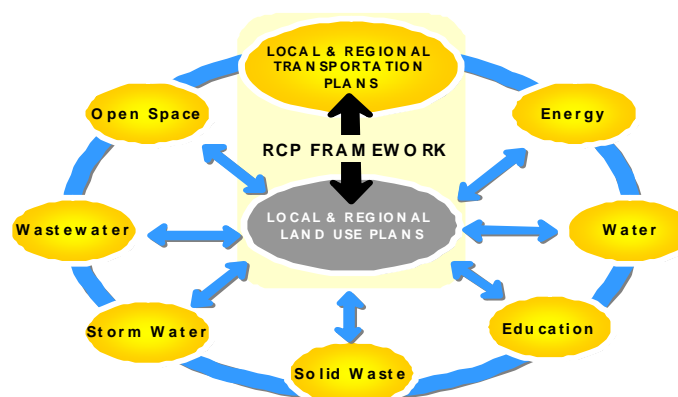
In addition, the smart growth strategies in the RCP are compatible with adopted regional habitat conservation plans that are designed to preserve over 300,000 acres of sensitive habitat as permanent open space. By coordinating our planning in this manner, we will ensure that public and private investments in local and regional infrastructure and environmental programs are consistent with the overall goals and policy objectives of the RCP.

Using Incentives and Collaboration to Implement the Plan: The third major theme of the RCP is “making it happen through incentives and collaboration.” Some of the key implementation strategies include:

- Providing regional funding and other incentives for smart growth development in key areas throughout the region;
- Providing guidance as to how local plans and programs, and

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“The second major theme in the RCP involves using land use and transportation plans to guide other plans.”



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regional goals and policy objectives can be better aligned;

- Placing a greater emphasis on subregional planning and implementation programs that bring together Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and stakeholders to solve problems within specific communities in our region; and,
- Improving collaboration with our three neighboring counties, the 17 tribal governments within our region, and northern Baja California, Mexico in order to mutually benefit from our varied resources and international location.

While the RCP is a long-range comprehensive plan, it also includes a five-year strategic action plan, setting priorities and identifying those agencies and other stakeholders who can make them happen. In addition, the RCP includes a performance monitoring program, identifying specific performance indicators that will be monitored on an annual basis to determine whether the region is making progress in achieving its quality of life goals.

INITIAL RESULTS

Since the adoption of the RCP last year, SANDAG and its member agencies have begun to see the influence of the RCP on local plans and programs:

Transportation Sales Tax Program: In November 2004, SANDAG was successful in convincing 67 percent of the voters to extend *TransNet*, its half-cent regional transportation sales tax program, for 40 years. The extension will generate \$14.4 billion starting in 2009. Revenues from this program will be used to fund a wide variety of transportation construction projects, operations, and other related activities. The expenditure plan for the *Trans-*

Net Extension included long-term funding for two programs that were included in the RCP:

- The *Smart Growth Incentive Program*, which provides \$7 million in annual funding for needed infrastructure in smart growth opportunity areas; and,
- The Transportation Project *Environmental Mitigation Program*, which provides nearly \$880 million for acquisition, management, and monitoring of sensitive land, designated in regional habitat conservation plans.

In addition, the Mobility Element of the RCP, which is SANDAG's Regional Transportation Plan, provided guidance in formulating the expenditure plan for the *TransNet Extension* ballot measure. This plan places great emphasis on construction of "managed lanes" (also known as "high occupancy toll" lanes or "HOT lanes") in major travel corridors that can be used flexibly for regional transit service, high-occupancy vehicles, and paying solo drivers. The plan also provides substantial funding for improved transit service to existing and planned smart growth areas. SANDAG worked closely with the State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in developing this plan to maximize the cost-effectiveness of major corridor transportation investments, and to allow SANDAG and Caltrans to jointly manage these facilities in ways that will maximize their overall benefit to the citizens of the region.

Regional Housing Needs Plan: In February 2005, SANDAG adopted its latest five-year Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). This plan, which

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is required by State law, sets forth a five-year target for the number of housing units that each local jurisdiction in the region must plan for in its Housing Element, including a breakdown by income category. The process of developing and adopting RHNA's has become more difficult as local land inventories for housing have been reduced and housing prices have continued to escalate. However, in the formulation of the recently adopted RHNA, SANDAG was able to incorporate some of the policy concepts contained in the RCP, including the concept that jurisdictions that take greater responsibility for accommodating housing in their plans should be given priority in the allocation of smart growth incentive funds. As a result, SANDAG was successful in adopting an ambitious five-year housing target which will guide the update of local housing plans.

Pilot Smart Growth Incentive Program:

In September 2005 SANDAG allocated \$19.1 million to 14 projects throughout the region as part of a "pilot" Smart Growth Incentive Program. Recognizing that the Smart Growth Incentive Program funded by the *TransNet Extension* would not begin until 2009, the SANDAG Board of Directors decided to allocate available federal "Transportation Enhancement" funding to jump-start smart growth projects that were already planned, but required additional funding in order to proceed. Program guidelines were developed that emphasized funding of projects that illustrated smart growth in accordance with the various "place types" contained in the RCP.

A total of 34 projects were submitted in response to a call for projects. The

approved projects included a pedestrian bridge project in Downtown San Diego, streetscape and pedestrian improvements in "town center" projects in suburban downtowns, and enhancement projects at mixed-use "community centers" planned near existing light-rail transit stations in several different locations throughout the region. Starting in 2009, at least \$7 million per year will be available from the *TransNet Extension* to support this program, and SANDAG will be seeking other funding sources to further enhance this program.

Smart Growth Concept Map:

Since adoption of the RCP in July 2004, SANDAG staff has been working with the planning directors of the 18 cities and county government as well as elected officials and other regional stakeholders, to prepare its first regional "Smart Growth Concept Map." As described earlier, this map will designate specific locations throughout the region where smart growth is either already planned or could potentially be planned as local communities update their local plans. This map will be used in formulating land use and transportation scenarios that will be evaluated in the process of updating SANDAG's Regional Transportation Plan.

Because there is a strong connection between regional transit service and smart growth land use planning in the RCP, this approach will lead to revisions to the RTP that will further refine the "Regional Transit Vision" contained in the existing RTP. It also will, hopefully, lead to practical financing strategies for improving transit service in the San Diego region. SANDAG is being aided in this effort

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by a peer review panel made up of several internationally recognized experts in the fields of regional transit planning and urban planning.

CONCLUSIONS

While it is too early to reach any final conclusions regarding the effects of the RCP on regional and local decision-making in the San Diego region, there are several indications that the Plan is leading to better decisions:

- The \$14 billion *TransNet Extension*, Regional Housing Needs Assessment, and Pilot Smart Growth Incentive Program were all positively influenced by the RCP.
- Steady progress is being made in developing the Smart Growth Concept Map to refine the policy concepts contained in the Plan.
- Many of SANDAG's other planning efforts such as its Regional Energy Planning Pro-

gram and Transportation Project Environmental Mitigation Program have also been influenced by the integrated planning approach contained in the RCP.

- Recently updated draft general plans for the cities of San Diego and Chula Vista, as well as the County of San Diego, have included RCP-related policies.
- Policy makers at the state level have recognized the RCP as a model for effective regional land use and transportation planning. Funding is now being provided to Metropolitan Planning Organizations throughout the State to pursue "regional blueprint plans" such as the SANDAG RCP and Sacramento's Regional Blueprint Planning Program.

You can get more information about the RCP by visiting our website at www.sandag.org/rcp.

"Policy makers at the state level have recognized the RCP as a model for effective regional land use and transportation planning."

American Planning Association 2006 National Planning Conference

April 22-26, 2006

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San Antonio captures the spirit of Texas. Now the eighth largest city in the United States, the city has retained its sense of history and tradition, while building exciting new development. The city has always been a crossroads and a meeting place. Sounds, flavors, and traditions of Native Americans, Old Mexico, Germans, the Wild West, African Americans, and the Deep South merge with contemporary planning. Delight in the discovery of San Antonio's charms and experience a city proud of its architectural heritage and its robust future. For more information, visit the APA website at www.planning.org.

REGIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLANNING DIVISION PANELS AT THE APRIL, 2006 SAN ANTONIO APA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division will be sponsoring three panels at the San Antonio Conference. Two will be typical panel sessions lasting one and one quarter hours. The third will be a so-called Salon session. Descriptions of each of these sessions follow:

BIG REGIONS, GRAND VISIONS, AND REGIONAL PLANNING INNOVATION:

**TIME AND PLACE: TUESDAY,
April 25, 4:00 to 5:15 PM, CONVENTION CENTER**

This panel examines the long-range visioning processes that are underway in various phases in the Austin, Dallas-Ft Worth, and Houston regions. The moderator, the three panelists, and a summary of their presentations follow:

Moderator: Fernando Costa, AICP, Director of Planning, Fort Worth, Texas. Mr. Costa is also the Chair of the Vision North Texas Regional Visioning Committee: At the outset, he will give a very brief overview of the regions, their local communities, and the context for planning in Texas. After the three panelists have made their presentations, he will then lead a panel discussion involving the panel and the audience.

Austin Region (Envision Central Texas): Sally Campbell, the Executive Director of Envision Central Texas will describe this organization which was created in 2001 to assist the public in the development and implementation of a regional vision addressing growth in the five-county Central Texas region. After describing the process that led to the development of this vision and planning effort, she will then summarize the outcomes of the visioning phase, and the feedback and themes that emerged throughout

the Central Texas Region. As this regional effort is the farthest along of the three regional visioning processes, she will describe the organizational transition from the vision phase to the implementation phase including selected key issues that will receive particular attention.

Dallas-Ft Worth Region (Vision North Texas): Karen Walz, AICP, Project Manager for Vision North Texas will describe this visioning project initiated across 10 counties in 2004. She will highlight Vision North Texas efforts to raise awareness of future population growth and the possibilities the region's leaders and populace have to make future courses of action which best ensure the region's success and sustainability. Much of her presentation will focus on the major regional visioning event held in April of 2005. Also discussed will be a review of several alternative regional scenarios including the varying effects on the region growing out of each alternative.

Houston Region (Envision Houston): Jeff Taebel, AICP, Director of Community and Environmental Planning for the Houston Area's Council of Governments will give this presentation. He will discuss growth issues facing the Houston/Galveston area, the process for community outreach and involvement including the development of partnerships to facilitate this process, the results of a series of workshops, and future plans for regional visioning in the Houston, Galveston area.

SALON SESSION: APA POLICIES FOR REGIONAL PLANNING

**TIME AND PLACE: TUESDAY,
APRIL 25, 5:30-7:00 PM, CONVENTION CENTER**

The APA is experimenting with a new

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"The Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division will be sponsoring three panels at the San Antonio Conference."

“The APA is experimenting with a new type of session at this year’s conference in San Antonio. They are called Salon sessions and their format is one that allows for considerable participation from the audience.”

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type of session at this year’s conference in San Antonio. They are called Salon sessions and their format is one that allows for considerable participation from the audience.

To allow such open participation, a Salon session does not consist of a full panel, but rather a moderator and perhaps one panelist. This type of format is almost tailor-made for the airing of discussions on development of an APA Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Policy Guide that the APA Board of Directors has asked our Division to evolve.

Moderator: Robert A. Leiter, AICP,

Director of Land Use and Transportation Planning for the San Diego Association of Governments, will lead this Salon. He will, initially, give a brief overview of his agency’s regional planning programs and some of the other regional planning initiatives that our happening in California, including those at the state level. This introduction will serve as a backdrop for the discussion of the development of an APA Policy Guide on Regional and Intergovernmental Planning. In addition to Mr. Leiter, it is possible that a member of APA Board of Directors may also give some opening remarks. Some of the possible subject matter for discussion at this Salon follows:

Reasons for Such a Guide: This particular consideration would look at the various needs for such a policy guide, APA Board and Legislative and Policy Committee direction, and how such a policy guide might be related to other APA policy guides and other APA legislative and policy priorities.

Possible Basic Substance of a Policy Guide On Regional and Intergovernmental Planning:

This guide could cover a broad range of program substance. In the August newsletter, it was very tentatively suggested that the subject matter be divided into five program areas: (1) metropolitan governmental regional plan-

ning, (2) non-metropolitan governmental regional planning, (3) alliances and partnerships of private/nonprofit/citizen/governmental agencies to carry out regional planning, (4) county and inter-jurisdictional planning, and (5), state and federal roles in enabling, guiding, and assisting regional and inter-jurisdictional planning. These and other considerations such as APA programs to carry out such policies, and important federal and state legislation that would influence the substance and direction of this policy guide will be explored.

What Comes Next: This Salon will lay out the next steps over the course of the next year to 18 months. In doing so, it will also provide means by which members of the Division and other APA members can get involved in the development of this Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Policy Guide.

Immediate Follow-On Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division Program and Business Meeting:

The Salon is scheduled to go to 7:00 PM, but it could lapse over that time, given that it is programmed to be in the same Convention Center meeting room as the follow-on Division Program and Business meeting. And all those attending the Salon session, whether they are members of the Division or not, are most certainly welcome to attend the Division’s Program and Business meeting.

URBAN CORRIDOR LAND-USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

TIME AND PLACE: SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 2:30 -3:45 PM, CONVENTION CENTER

It is difficult to plan for land use/transportation corridors spanning multiple jurisdictions, especially when individual governmental jurisdictions and or-

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“This discussion of corridors in the Dallas, Ft Worth, and Kansas City areas will provide an understanding of how to overcome these challenges in order to have a meaningful planning process and useful plan.”

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ganization pursue diverse and often conflicting sets of objectives. This discussion of corridors in the Dallas, Ft Worth, and Kansas City areas will provide an understanding of how to overcome these challenges in order to have a meaningful planning process and useful plan. The moderator, and the panelists and a summary of their discussion follow:

Moderator, Thomas Dow, AICP, Urban Planning Manager for the Kansas Department of Transportation, will moderate the session, including introducing the speakers and leading a question and answer session between the panel and the audience following the presentations.

The K-10 Corridor in Johnson County, Kansas: Thomas Dow and Dean Palos, Director of Planning, Development & Codes for Johnson County, Kansas will discuss the combined land use and transportation planning issues occurring in this 23-mile corridor. The study was a joint undertaking of the Kansas Department of Transportation, the Mid-American Regional Council, and the Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission. Mr. Dow will describe some of the unique features of the study. Mr. Palos will focus his remarks on the land use and development conditions in Johnson County (population about 500,000), the fastest growing county in the Kansas City metropolitan area. Included will be population and employment factors, inter-jurisdiction planning of various local governments and with state government, and anticipated land use objectives.

The Southwest Parkway in Fort Worth, Texas: Douglas Mann, a Vice-President for HNTB, will describe this 15-mile, six-lane toll way between downtown Fort Worth and other parts of Ft Worth and environs. This is a joint undertaking of the City of Fort Worth, the State of Texas, the North Texas Tollway Authority, and other governmental agencies. This project will cost about 825 million dollars, including the

development of a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) zone that is expected to generate about 50 million dollars to be used for the project. In turn, enhanced economic development, job creation, and increased local property tax revenue are expected to result from this TIF funding. An important Citizen Advisory Group working through the City of Fort Worth and the North Texas Tollway Authority has developed the Southwest Parkway Master Plan, which provides guidance to ensure that the roadway fits the context of the City and that adjacent neighborhoods benefit from the construction of the Southwest Parkway.

The Trinity Parkway in Dallas, Texas: Jeffrey Neal, Principal Transportation Planner for the North Central Texas Council of Governments will describe this billion dollar plus ten-mile, six-lane toll way in central Dallas that is a joint undertaking of the City of Dallas, the State of Texas, the North Texas Tollway Authority, and other governmental agencies. From a transportation point of view this will allow for improvements to various Interstate and state highways that serve Dallas and its surrounding area, including substantially increased access to downtown Dallas. In addition to transportation improvements, the project also includes many other features and benefits to the City of Dallas and its environs. Included are the building of levees, wetlands, lakes, trails, equestrian centers and an interpretive center, and the expansion and preservation of the Great Trinity Forest by 3,500 acres.

Have a Story to Share in an Upcoming Newsletter?

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MEMBERSHIP GROWTH, AND POLICY GUIDE ON REGIONAL PLANNING

DIVISION MEMBERSHIP IS GROWING:

At the end of November, 2005, our membership had grown to 158, the highest figure in over five years. (Almost all of the then 18 APA Divisions lost membership in 2001-02, coinciding with the dot. com bust.) This figure of 158 also represents a growth of 16-22 percent over the last nine to ten months as membership during all of 2004 and the first two months of 2005 ranged between 130 and 136. Two basic factors are probably responsible for this growth. First, the APA Board of Directors granted our request to change our name to the Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division at their meeting at the APA National Conference in March of 2005. Second, over the last 12-18 months, the Chicago APA staff and others have been aggressively promoting general APA membership growth, especially among younger planners and planning students. This membership push is now having its general effects, including benefits to the Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division. We hope to continue to grow and will be taking aggressive steps in this regard. From a budget point of view, to be totally self sufficient with some reasonable cushion, we believe we eventually need a membership upwards of 225. Therefore, we encourage all of you to promote mem-

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bership in the Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division. We still most definitely need further growth.

APA POLICY GUIDE ON REGIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLANNING:

Since the APA Board of Directors directed us to evolve this guide, we have put together a work program and are basically on-target in terms of the schedule. In early December of 2005, in a teleconference of the APA Legislative and Policy Committee, it was decided to put this matter before the Delegate Assembly at the 2006 APA National Conference in San Antonio, probably as an issue paper. If past practice is then followed, that means it will be developed as a full draft policy guide for the Delegate Assembly at the APA National Conference in Philadelphia in 2007. Most of the development activity would take place between April 2006 and the April, 2007 conference in Philadelphia. We genuinely solicit the interest of our members in participating in the development of this guide. Let any of the officers know of your interest, and as this matter takes on more seriousness, we will be using our list serve and web site to solicit inputs and participation.

UPCOMING DIVISION ELECTIONS

Reasons for Six Elected Positions: We have candidates for each of six positions under our by-laws. Over the last ten to fifteen years, because of Division size, it chose to have only three officers, and thus, consolidated the duties of six by-law positions into three positions. However, this year we have gone back to the extant by-laws and have put into play six elected positions from those by-laws. We have made this change for several reasons, two of which are basic. First, last March, the APA Board, at our request, voted to change our name to the “Regional and In-

tergovernmental Planning Division.” Then, at the same meeting and at their own volition, the APA Board also directed we evolve an APA Policy Guide for Regional and Intergovernmental Planning. In addition, over the last few months, Division Council leadership has suggested our Division might want to become more involved in the development of disaster mitigation, planning, and recovery procedures.

Second, over the last few years, APA has

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mandated all 19 Divisions do more than they have been in the past. As but one example, each Division now has to put together an annual written performance report subject to review by both the Division Council Executive Committee and national APA staff. Thus, with the development of a new APA policy guide on regional planning, possible work on developing intergovernmental planning processes for disaster planning, and greater APA demands on the Divisions, it has become increasingly difficult for the Division to function with just three officers.

Election Process to Date: We initially announced we would be running the elections at the end of 2005 in our newsletter of August, 2005, though conducting such elections has been in our work program for a good year. In late September, though our e-mail list serve, we sent out a call for interested candidates, providing about 45 days for people to respond. About half way through this 45-day period, we sent out another such notice.

A half dozen people, including two of the three incumbents responded. After further inquiries from these candidates, three

people stayed on as candidates, each for separate offices. However, three of the six offices remained open. Thus, as we indicated we might have to do in our August newsletter, we recruited for the three positions where no potential candidates had come forward.

Basic Procedures for Voting in the Upcoming Election: In the very near future, we intend to send out an e-mail with detailed instructions for voting. The most direct way of voting will be electronically. The e-mail voting instructions will provide a link to a web site outside of the Division in which you can vote, including a write in vote. If you prefer to vote by hard copy, the e-mail voting instructions will also provide a link to an Adobe Acrobat voting ballot form that you can either fax or put in the U.S. mails. Whether voting electronically or by hard-copy, you will be asked to input your APA membership number which is located on the mailing address slip for *Planning* magazine. All votes will be counted outside of the Division. The voting instruction e-mail will also contain the biographies of the six candidates as does the following newsletter article.

This year the division has gone back to the extant by-laws and have put into play six elected positions from those by-laws.

THE CANDIDATES FOR THE ELECTION

LEE SCHOENECKER, AICP CHAIRPERSON

Lee Schoenecker holds a Master Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is the incumbent Chair of the APA Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division. He is also active in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, having served or presently serving on its standing citizen advisory committees for either transportation, air quality, or metropolitan development.

Mr. Schoenecker has collectively worked for local and state government, either as a direct public employee or as a contractor, for ten years. Included was planning and

development work with the Brookline, Massachusetts Planning Board, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and Model Cities work in Washington, DC, Baltimore, and Connecticut. He also served as Staff Director of the Wisconsin Governor's Office of the Upper Great Lakes Regional Commission.

Lee is a retired federal employee, serving similar periods of time in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in Washington, DC and the U.S. Air Force at the Pentagon. At OMB he worked on state, local, and regional planning policy. In the Air Force he worked on base expansions and closures, and also adminis-

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tered financial planning assistance to states and local governments affected by base expansions.

**ROCKY PIRO, Ph.D., AICP
CHAIRPERSON-ELECT**

Rocky Piro earned a masters' in community development and planning from the University of Colorado at Denver. He also holds a doctorate in urban design and planning from the University of Washington. He is the incumbent Vice-Chair for Metropolitan and Regional Planning of the APA Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division.

He is a principal with the Growth Management Planning Department at the four-county Puget Sound Regional Council out of Seattle. He manages a program for formal regional review and certification of local comprehensive plans and is currently overseeing policy development for a major update to VISION 2020, the central Puget Sound region's growth, economic, and transportation strategy. Previously, he managed the growth strategies work for the *Destination 2030* regional transportation plan, a national APA award winner in 2003.

Mr. Piro is the Vice-Chair for the City of Shoreline Planning Commission in suburban Seattle. He is also on the board of directors for the International Urban Planning and Environment Association. Rocky has published articles on regional growth management planning and is a frequent presenter at the national American Planning Association conference and other venues. He regularly teaches land use planning at universities in the Seattle area.

**ROBERT A. LEITER, AICP
VICE-CHAIR FOR METROPOLITAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING**

Bob Leiter received a B.A. in Political Science and an M.A. in Economics from the University of California at Santa Barbara. In 1974, he began his professional career with the City of Ventura, serving

both as City Planner and Redevelopment Administrator. In 1987, Bob became Community Development Director for the City of Escondido, and in 1989 he became Director of Planning for the City of Chula Vista.

In 2003 Mr. Leiter was appointed Director of Land Use and Transportation Planning for the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG). He has been responsible for leading the preparation and adoption of the Regional Comprehensive Plan, a pioneering effort that recently received the Comprehensive Planning Award from the San Diego Section of the American Planning Association.

He also led the preparation and adoption of the *TransNet* Environmental Mitigation Program, an \$850 million habitat acquisition and management program that was part of a 40-year, \$14 billion transportation sales tax measure for the San Diego region passed by the voters by a two to one margin. In 2003 he received the Distinguished Service Award from the APA San Diego Section for regional planning leadership.

**DEBBIE ALAIMO LAWLER, NJPP/
AICP; VICE-CHAIRN FOR STATE
PLANNING**

Debbie Lawlor holds a Bachelors degree in Environmental Planning and Design from Rutgers University-Cook College and a Masters in Geography from Rutgers University-Graduate School, both located in New Jersey.

Ms. Lawlor is Chief Planner for the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC), a state planning agency with regional planning and zoning authority, where she has been employed since 1984. Several major undertakings in recent years include supervising the preparation of a brand new regional master plan for the 30 square mile Meadowlands District located just outside of New York City, preparing a long-range transportation plan known as *Meadowlands Mobility*

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**Regional and Intergovernmental
Planning Division of APA**
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2030, and reviewing conceptual plans and environmental impact statements related to the extensive redevelopment of New Jersey's Meadowlands Sports Complex.

Debbie has served on the Executive Board of the New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association in several positions in the capacity of Northeast Area Representative and as 2nd Vice Chair. She currently is 1st Vice President. Ms. Lawlor has been an invited speaker at local, regional, and national conferences and training classes and she has also been a guest lecturer for several New Jersey and New York college planning and architecture departments.

**PATRICIA S. ATKINS, Ph.D. APA
VICE-CHAIR FOR NATIONAL
PLANNING**

Patricia Atkins is a Research Professor at the George Washington University's Institute of Public Policy. She has a B.A. from the University of Michigan and M. A. from the University of Maryland, both in Urban Studies. Her Ph.d., also from Maryland, is in Government. Her GWU projects have included analysis of fiscal disparities in six U.S. metropolitan areas, research focused on management and planning tools used in 37 of the country fastest growing counties.

Dr. Atkins was previously Consulting Director of the Institute for The Regional Community (ITRC) at the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), and Project Director of the Division of Regional Policy and Analysis at the Schaefer Center for Public Policy, University of Baltimore. While at NARC's Institute for the Regional Community, she completed the first-ever *State of the Regions 2000* encompassing the approximately 600 U.S. regions. Her work at the Schaefer Center work included Co-Managing Editor of the quarterly journal, *The Regionalist*. This journal was a source of scholarly work on regionalism, including articles by several urban and regional planners.

She is the Chair of the Section on Intergovernmental Administration and Management for the American Society for Public Administration, and has memberships in the American Planning Association, Urban Affairs Association, American Society for Public Administration, and American Political Science Association.

**ROBERT A. KULL, NJPP, AICP
SECRETARY-TREASURER**
**(This position will also take the lead for
Katrina impact assistance and related
subjects.)**

Bob Kull has a BA in Environmental Science and Policy from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master of City and Regional Planning from Rutgers University. Bob is the Principal of Planegy, LLC in West Trenton, NJ, the Regional Planning Coordinator for Burlington County, NJ and Vice-Chair of the Ewing Township (NJ) Redevelopment Agency.

At Planegy, which he established in 2002, Bob prepared the New Jersey State Hazard Mitigation Plan and Wayne Township Hazard Mitigation Plan. He also manages the development of Burlington County's regional strategic plan for revitalizing the 12-municipality Route 130 "River Route" corridor and for revitalizing rural towns and ensuring economic viability of agriculture in 13 northern Burlington County municipalities. Prior experience includes 15 years at the New Jersey Office of State Planning, most as Assistant Director, helping to design and implement New Jersey's cross-acceptance process, preparing both the 1992 and 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plans.

Active in various APA divisions, in 2004 he received the New Jersey APA Chapter's Budd Chavoosian Award for an Outstanding Professional Planner. He has been a part time graduate school and continuing education faculty member at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Rutgers University.