



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Chapter Board Members

President

Julia Koster, AICP

President-elect

Renee Miller, AICP

Professional Development Officer

Shannon Yadsko, AICP

Professional Development Officer-elect

Robyn Eason, AICP, LEED AP

Secretary

Arlova Jackson, AICP

Treasurer

Carol Truppi, AICP, LEED AP

Vice-President, Communications

Alan Hachey, AICP

Vice President, Diversity and Community Outreach

Bill Washburn

Student Representative

Lily Shoup

Directors At-Large

Malaika Abernathy

Laine Cidlowski, LEED AP

Harold Foster, AICP

Daniel Goodman, AICP, LEED AP

Anna Bentley

Robert Mandel

I've had the opportunity in the last few weeks to attend both the national conference in Minneapolis and the centennial event for APA at the National Building Museum. Many of our chapter members were in attendance for these events, and I hope that you found them thought-provoking and even inspirational. Minneapolis is a great city and particularly appealing to planners. It is a fascinating place to simply get around, with an expanding light-rail system, all of those second floor skyways, and a seriously well-connected and well-used (even in the rain) bike and ped system.

While our region has certainly been facing challenges, it was sobering to listen to the concerns and issues planners in other chapters were facing, where the economic downturn has hit harder and longer. In addition to job security concerns, it is also causing planners - and their communities - to grapple with a whole new set of issues and priorities. One of the things anticipated is that membership, which has grown steadily over the last decade, is anticipated to dip; interestingly, AICP membership is still growing, which appears to reflect the value newer planners are taking from the certification.

One of the continuing themes the new national chairman, Bruce McKnight, is bringing forward is the role of planners as leaders. This topic came up again at the APA centennial celebration of APA where panelists reflected on the past, present and future role of planning. Planners have evolved from the turn of the century big picture visionaries that initiated the movement, through the technicians and community facilitators that defined the profession mid-century. The panelists provided a clear message of the increasingly important need and opportunity for planners today to bring their expertise in comprehensive, long-range analyses to tackle complex problems, and to use their expertise to provide leadership within their communities. The closing address, from Adolpho Carrion, the head of the White House Office of Urban Affairs, signaled the enormous interest and awareness on the part of this new Administration in the skills that planning has to offer. Given the nature of the issues facing our communities and our nation, there are no shortages of challenges and opportunities. Now it's up to us to deliver.

Our chapter board is continuing to work hard to develop networking and continuing education events. Over the spring, we've co-hosted a number of different events around the region, including a great lecture series out in Montgomery County. We've been focused on partnering with different organizations to have lectures and forums qualify as CM eligible events. This included a forum, co-sponsored with the Coalition for Smarter Growth, on the continuing work by the T4America coalition to help shape the upcoming transportation bill reauthorization. Check in with Daniel Goodman on our Board, at dangoodman@yahoo.com if you are interested in following along



Stay informed about **local** events, Certification Maintenance (CM) and **employment** opportunities in the region by visiting the Chapter website at <http://www.ncac-apa.org/index.php>

Continued from Page 1.

with this, or go check out their website at www.T4America.org.

We were impressed by how many people from this region presented at the national conference. So, we are planning a mini-Minneapolis (we'll call it the Mini-mi – sorry, couldn't resist!) tentatively set for Saturday, July 18, that will offer a day-long opportunity to hear some of these presentations. Plus, we'll include law and ethics courses, all providing CM credits. The

Maryland chapter is going to be taking the same approach in June, so you'll have two summertime options to choose from.

Keep an eye out this summer for some fun networking events, too!

Julia

Julia Koster, AICP

UPCOMING CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE (CM) EVENTS

2009 Planning Law and Ethics

Wednesday, June 24, 2009
3:30pm – 8:00pm
Sheraton Dover Hotel, Dover, DE

Free CM Credit Opportunities

Planning for Healthy Places with Health Impact Assessments
Available through June 30, 2010
Up to 6 CM credits online at:
<http://professional.captus.com/Planning/hia/default.aspx>

Free podcast: The 2008 AICP Symposium

Available until September 30, 2009
2.5 CM credits online at:
<https://www.planning.org/aicp/symposium/2008/>

Eastern Shore Symposium

Friday, October 16, 2009: 9am to 5pm
Saturday, October 17, 2009: 9am to 12noon
Hampton Inn and Suites,
Chincoteague, VA
<http://apavirginia.org/events/2009/eastern-shore-symposium/view>

Free Podcasts of "Tuesdays at APA"

CM credits (varied)
Browse distance education listing on CM Activities page at:
<http://www.planning.org>

CAPITAL NEWS

A Publication of the NCAC Chapter of
the American Planning Association

summer 2009

NOVEMBER 2009 AICP EXAM SCHEDULE

- **June 1, 2009** -- Application window opens
- **July 9, 2009** -- Final Application Deadline
- **July 23, 2009** -- Final Verification Deadline
- **November 9-23, 2009** -- Exam Window

The application window for the November 2009 AICP exam will be Monday, June 1 – Thursday, July 9, 2009. All employment and education verifications must be received by mail in APA's Washington, DC office no later than 2 weeks after application submission or else the application will be marked as incomplete. The final day that we will accept employment and education verifications for the November 2009 exam is Thursday, July 23, 2009.

New this Year: Early-Bird Application Window

- **June 14, 2009** -- Early-Bird Application Deadline
- **June 28, 2009** -- Early-Bird Verification Deadline
- **August 10, 2009** -- Early-Bird Notification Deadline

In an effort to encourage early application, applicants who participate in the Early-Bird Application Window (see above) will receive their approval or denial notice in advance of other applicants, giving them more time to study for the exam. Any applicant who

submits his or her online application by Sunday, June 14, 2009 and whose employment and education verifications are received by Sunday, June 28, 2009 (2 weeks after the Early-Bird application deadline) will receive their approval or denial notice by Monday, August 10, 2009. Any applicant who submits during the Early-Bird Application Window who does not receive an approval or denial notice by this date will be notified that their application is still under review and that their application will be given priority over other applicants to make sure that they receive their approval or denial notice as soon as possible.

Notifications

Applicants for the AICP exam will typically be notified of application approval or denial approximately 8 weeks after a complete application is submitted (application + verification documents). It is our goal to notify all applicants no later than Monday, September 21, 2009. Any applicant who does not receive an approval or denial notice by this date will be contacted to inform them that their application is still under review and that they will receive a final status update shortly. Please note that applications submitted on or near the application deadline may take longer to process and review due to high volume.

Did you know you can receive **free** sample copies of printed planning publications such as **JAPA, PEL, The Commissioner, or Zoning Practice?**

Find out more at www.planning.org/publications/

Did you know there's a TV sitcom that features a town planner?



The show is called Parks and Recreation. The planner role, Tom Haverford is played by Aziz Ansari.

The show is a mockumentary examining the mundane but necessary ways that people interact with their government, and asks why its so frequently complicated.



FAICP NOMINATIONS

Do you know a planner who has made contributions to the profession and community that have made a significant difference?

The National Capital Area Chapter is seeking nominations for the 2010 College of Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners (FAICP). Those eligible for nomination must meet the following requirements:

- Member of AICP for at least 15 consecutive years
- Current AICP member in good standing, and
- Outstanding contribution to the profession over an extended period of time.

In addition to meeting the criteria in the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, nominees should exhibit: exceptional leadership, innovation and excellence, providing a legacy for the profession, community and society, risk-taking, exceptional accomplishments in planning over an extended period of time. Qualified individuals may be elected to the AICP College of Fellows under one of four nomination categories:

- Professional practice;
- Teaching and mentoring
- Research
- Public/community service and leadership.

To learn more about the College of Fellows and the 2009 nomination process, go to the Fellow's web site at <http://www.planning.org/faicp/index.htm>.

Please submit the name of anyone who you believe meets the qualifications stated above along with a brief statement of the reasons for your selection by June 30, 2009. The chapter board will be working over the summer to nominate chapter members, and your input will help us identify those chapter members to move forward through the process. Submit this information by email to the chapter secretary, Arlova Jackson, at Arlova.Jackson@dc.gov If you'd like to help out with the nomination process itself, please let Arlova know.



HIGH-SPEED RAIL: The Missing Link?

By Harold Foster, AAG, AICP

Anyone who has seen the last twenty minutes-odd of the first Mission Impossible movie already has at least superficial familiarity with high-speed rail.

The movie ends with a harrowing high-speed chase scene involving Tom Cruise, a helicopter and the 188 mile an hour TGV (Trés le Gran Vitesse or “Very High-speed”), the high-speed intercity rail line between Paris and Lyon. For some of us who are a tad older, there is also the brief glimpse we get of the 175 mile an hour Shinkansen (Bullet Train) that operates between Tokyo and Osaka in *The Yakuza* and *Gung Ho!*

High-speed intercity rail has recently begun to make a rather surprising return from the public policy dead in the United States. This is interesting for a number of reasons. First, the US is not a country known for having a particularly 21st century-class national rail policy, never mind national rail system. Some rankings of national railway systems have placed the US as low as 26th in the world, behind developing countries such as Morocco, Paraguay, and South Africa.

Second, intercity rail, especially passenger service, has been the orphaned mode in the national discussion of how to modernize this nation’s transportation infrastructure at the same time that we make it a “green” and far more fuel-efficient one. Finally, intercity rail,

whether high-speed or not, has never been the beneficiary of the largesse that the federal government has accorded to the national highway system, or even the nation’s airports and ports. The national rail system, such as it is, has pretty much been left to fend for itself, especially when it came to passenger rail.

Rail suffered from the perception of being too slow to compete with short-route air travel and not “scalable” enough to complement intra-regional surface travel. Some otherwise-astute observers even saw, in the arrival of the national interstate highway system in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the ultimate death of all intercity passenger rail —what was not covered by the family auto would be absorbed by the Greyhound bus or the short-trunk airline. Even intra-regional rapid transit rail, such as Metrorail, has been more welcome at the national transportation policy table than any ideas about the role that intercity rail might play in stitching metropolitan America together.

It turns out, though, that, to paraphrase Mark Twain, reports of the death of intercity rail may well have been greatly exaggerated. That is, if the Obama administration has anything to do with it.

All of this said, for high-speed rail to make a genuine return from the dead the pieces of a rather complicated new transportation policy puzzle will have

to fit together. The largest and most immediate of those pieces are:

- The Obama administration economic stimulus package,
- The multi-trillion dollar, 10-year Obama administration spending plan, and
- Congressional reauthorization of the legislation that provides federal financial support for all transportation modes.

The real challenge, however, will be in fashioning a vision that will glue those pieces together into something that the US has arguably not had since Abraham Lincoln and Congress decreed the construction of a transcontinental railroad in 1862: an agreed-upon national policy on what this country’s rail system should be when it grows up.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provides up to \$8 billion for “high-speed rail” but then leaves that term tantalizingly under-defined. The transportation secretary is directed by the ARRA to develop both criteria for dispensing the \$8 billion for high-speed rail, and a national vision for high-speed rail. As much as another \$5 billion is being requested over five years for high-speed rail service and rail corridor development projects in the ten-year Obama budget. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has also indicated that he will recommend that, for the first time, the federal transportation reauthorization include a formal mechanism for evaluating and funding selected high-speed rail projects similar



HIGH-SPEED RAIL: The Missing Link?

Continued from Page 5.

to the process the federal government already uses to fund highway, airport, port facility, and (some) transit projects.

Secretary LaHood has just released a draft National High-speed Rail Vision. The Vision builds on a number of previous, abortive, federal efforts to (1) define high-speed rail corridors in the US and (2) recommend broad criteria for determining which projects in which corridors merit federal financial assistance. Most of these earlier efforts and plans never went very far because there was no funding set aside in previous federal authorizations specifically for high-speed rail.

AMTRAK, the national passenger rail service, twice requested funding for a truly national high-speed passenger rail “skeleton network” that could be expanded in the future. The only concrete result of that effort was the Acela passenger rail service in the northeast corridor. Congress declined to fully fund either national project. Further, at least three major high-speed freight rail initiatives have been proposed in the past 20 years by private railroads, but neither the private nor public sector was willing to invest in them. Both President Obama and Secretary LaHood now acknowledge that, in the current economic downturn, any truly national high-speed rail initiative will have to be jump-started by a major

up-front federal investment, as was the case with the interstate highway system in 1958.

The National High-speed Rail Vision is the first in a three-step process that the Obama administration hopes will change, perhaps even shape, the national debate on the future of the nation’s transportation infrastructure. This is particularly true for determining what role a national high-speed rail construction program could play in the energy-efficient, (less) carbon-dependent, “green” economy that the President envisions for the country.

Step two will be interim program and project funding guidelines, to be released this month, for “ready to go” projects in selected high-speed rail corridors. This second step will also include specific procedures by which states, private railroads, or combinations of the two, can complete any preliminary engineering and environmental impact studies required to advance a high-speed rail project from the “study”—or project planning—stage to the “ready to go” stage.

Step three will be Secretary LaHood’s specific recommendations to revise the next federal transportation authorization to:

- provide a stable, secure, and predictable source of federal financial support for high-speed rail, and rail corridor development projects, and

- establish permanent program funding and selection criteria for high-speed rail projects similar to those the federal government uses to evaluate highway, transit, airport and port projects now. Both the Obama administration and the key authorizing committees in Congress are expected to pretty significantly revise all program eligibility and project funding criteria for future transportation infrastructure projects, especially fixed guideway surface transportation projects such as bus and rail rapid transit and high-speed intercity rail.

As planners, we clearly have a rather large dog in this fight. Secretary LaHood’s draft Vision makes fairly regular mention of the environmental, congestion relief, land use and economic development benefits of a coherent national high-speed rail network. That is a commendable start but, as always, both God and the devil will be in the programmatic, policy and planning details.

Here in the metropolitan Washington, DC area, high-speed rail could conceivably play a much larger role than it does in relieving commuter congestion. Increasing numbers of workers in this region commute to their jobs from well beyond the cost-effective “reach” of the Metrorail system. There are specific, finite limits on how far and how much regional rapid transit rail such as Metrorail can expand and remain, well, rapid transit. Even expanded moder-



HIGH-SPEED RAIL: The Missing Link?

Continued from Page 6.

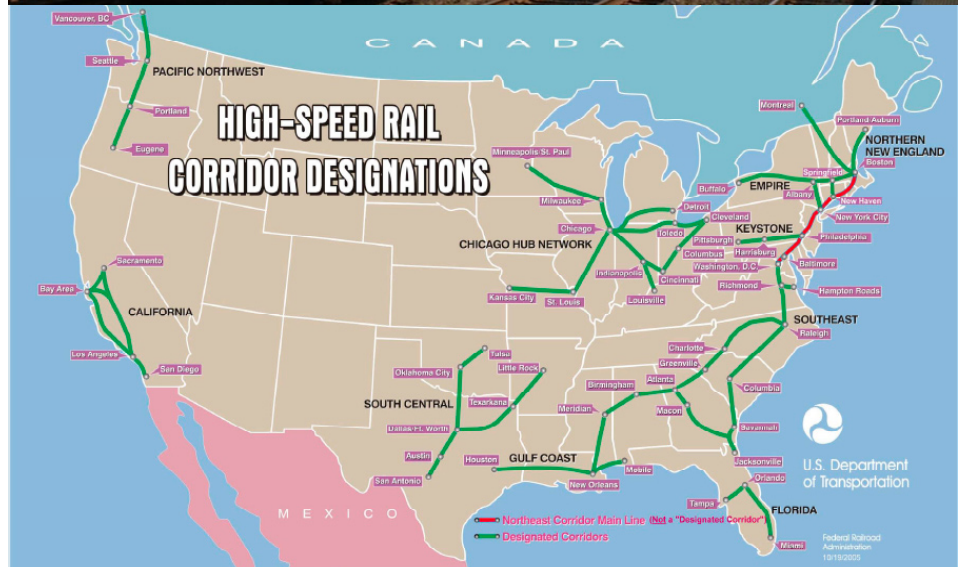
ate-speed commuter rail service in this region could reduce peak hour congestion by as much as 14 percent. Given our continued unwillingness to really contain, never mind reverse, suburban and exurban sprawl, high-speed passenger rail may be the only operationally viable option for accommodating the exurban segment of the commuter spectrum.

Further, there are some still undeveloped corridors within this region where high-speed rail has the potential for becoming an additional attraction—a developmental “overlay” let’s call it—for more rational, intense and integrated land use. This updated approach could reduce the wasteful, energy-inefficient sprawl that President Obama and his urban policy team say this nation can no longer afford and the federal government will—or should—no longer subsidize. (More on that in the next article.)

The next two to four months will reveal a lot more of the Obama administration’s interest in and priorities for high-speed rail, particularly the relationship between high-speed passenger and freight rail service, on the one hand, and development and revitalization of communities in high-speed rail corridors on the other. The upcoming congressional hearings and debates on reauthorizing federal transportation legislation will likely feature a very lively discussion of

just what kind of role high-speed rail can and should play in “smartening” up and greening metropolitan America and its core infrastructure. It could play a major, perhaps defining role. However, the groundwork for such a role has yet to be laid.

This will be a debate that, no matter what our professional specialization as planners, will bear following.



Designated High-Speed Rail Corridors Map; Source: US Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration



NCAC HAPPY HOUR

This past year's survey of Chapter members indicated that you would like more opportunities to network with other NCAC-APA members. In response, the Chapter will be holding a series of quarterly networking events that will range from informal happy hours to more structured, topic based events. The first of these networking events will be a June 29th Happy Hour co-sponsored with YIPPS. The Happy hour will be held at Panache on Monday June 29th from 5:30-8:00pm. Panache restaurant is located at

1725 DeSales St NW

Washington DC

202.293.7760

www.panacherestaurant.com/downtown/

YIPPS (Young Innovative Professional Planning Superstars) is an informal group of city planners and friends in the Washington, D.C. Metro Area and beyond that holds semi-regular happy hours. This event will be a happy hour with light appetizers where NCAC-APA chapter members can mix and mingle with YIPPS members. NCAC Board members will be attending and available to field issues and questions from Chapter members. More information can be found about YIPPS at <http://groups.google.com/group/yipps>.

EDITORIAL INFORMATION

Articles, announcements, letters, and advertising from readers are welcome. Material should be submitted via email, in an MS Word or rich text format. The submittal must include a name and telephone number. Materials submitted may be edited to conform to space or other requirements.

Submit the newsletter material to Alan Hachey at alan.hachey@hdrinc.com

ADDRESS CHANGES

Send address changes to APA, Member Services Coordinator, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1600, Chicago, Illinois 60603; fax (312) 431-9985; or visit www.planning.org

Send email addresses or corrections to Alan Hachey at alan.hachey@hdrinc.com

SAVE THE DATE: UPCOMING CM CREDITS

The National Capital Area Chapter of the American Planning Association presents:

CM One-Day Conference

Catholic University

July 18, 2009 | 9 AM to 4 PM

Earn 7 CM credits, including mandatory ethics and law credits, in this one-day conference co-sponsored by Catholic University's School of Architecture and Planning. Two tracks of four sessions featuring local planners will be presented, in addition to a 1-credit lunch-time seminar.

Keep an eye on www.ncac-apa.org for details as they become available.



CM | 7 | Ethics/Law