AICP Exam Prep

Functional Areas of Practice

Sacramento Valley Section, California Chapter - APA
May and November 2020 Exams
Understand the history, legislative background, terminology, and implementation tools for these topics—and how to plan for them!
Functional Areas of Practice
Comprehensive Planning vs Policy Planning

Comprehensive Planning
- Geographic Scope
- Longer Time Frames
- Substantive (Topical) Scope

Policy Planning
- Development and Review
- Short Time Frames
- Specific Topic (or closely related topics)
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Land Use

- Zoning ordinances (Euclidean, Cumulative, Noncumulative, Form-based, Performance, Spot)
- SLDO
- Exactions (dedication of land, construction or installation of infrastructure, or fees to finance these improvements - fees in lieu of or impact fees)
- Types of development (TOD, mixed-use, brownfield, greenfield, infill, leapfrog, homogeneous)
- APA Policy Guides: Smart Growth, Agricultural Lands Preservation, Sustainability
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Growth Management

- Methodologies and Techniques
- Annexation and ETJ
- Community Identity
- APA Policy Guides: Impact Fees, Smart Growth, Sustainability
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Community Development

- Economic, social, and infrastructure components
- Main Street Models
- Housing and Urban Development
- Grassroots Success
- APA Policy Guides: Public Redevelopment, Neighborhood Collaborative Planning
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Urban Design

- Major Traditions of Urban Design (Monumental City Design, Garden Suburb and Garden Cities, Modernism, Megastructure)
- Social Aspects of Urban Design
- Neotraditional Movement/New Urbanism
- People and places are critical – 1929 Regional Plan for New York City and Its Environs and its explanation of the neighborhood unit concept by Clarence Perry for example
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Sample Question

Which of the following are characteristics of New Urbanism:

I. Higher Density and Mixing of Uses
II. Variety of Housing Choices and Grid Street Patterns
III. Economies of Scale and Euclidean Zoning
IV. Pedestrian Scale and Multi-Modal Transportation Systems

A. I and IV only  
B. I, II, and IV only  
C. I, III, and IV only  
D. All of the Above

Answer: B. Note the question format, you will see this on the exam.

Source: Planning Institute of Colorado.
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Housing

- New York City
- Federal Involvements
- State and Local Government Roles
- The “Rural Slum” Phenomenon
- Senior, Affordable, Multi-Family, Mixed Use Housing...issues and opportunities
- APA Policy Guides: Housing, Factory Built Housing, Community Residences, and Homelessness
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Energy Policy

- Energy Policies (National, State, and Local)
- Fossil fuels versus Renewables
- APA Policy Guides: Energy, Climate Change

What are the implications of the different energy sources?
- Infrastructure required?
- Land use?
- Transmission lines?
- Pollution?
- Wildlife impact?
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Food System Planning

- What is the food system? What is a foodshed?

- Implications on land use as well as: public health, energy, pollution, economic development, labor force

- APA Policy Guides: Food Planning and Agricultural Lands Preservation
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Hazard Mitigation & Disaster Planning

- Prepare, Respond, Recover
- Agency coordination
- Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000
- APA Policy Guide: Security

The language of disaster planning and response:
- National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- Incident Command System (ICS)
- National Response Framework (NRF)
- National Response Plan (NRP)
- Emergency Support Function (ESF)
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Historic Preservation

- Tax Reform Act of 1986
- Local preservation efforts
- APA Policy Guide: Historic & Cultural Resources

Link back to:
First historic preservation efforts
(commission: New Orleans 1921, ordinance: Charleston 1931)
Case law (Penn Central v New York, 1978 for example)
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Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

- Inventory of Facilities and Needs
  - Types of parks: community, neighborhood, pocket, tot lots, gardens, greenways

- Consider costs versus benefits, active versus passive recreation, public versus private open space, what the community’s demographics call for, linkages, etc.

Link back to:
Case law (Overton Park v Volpe, 1971 for example)
Legislation (Section 4(f) of the Dept of Transportation Act)
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Natural Resources & Environment

- 1960s/70s legislation: NEPA, Clean Air, Clean Water, ESA, RCRA, CERCLA; EPA established

- The entire spectrum of natural resources: ground and surface water, wetlands, forests, endangered species, coastal areas, floodplains...

HOW DOES PLANNING DIFFER BY RESOURCE TYPE?


Link back to:
Case law (TVA v Hill, 1978; Rapanos v US, 2006 as examples)
People & books (Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring, Ian McHarg’s Design with Nature)
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Sample Question

An urban municipality has received grant funding to restore riparian buffers in order to improve the untreated water quality of the municipality's public water, which is drawn partially from surface waters. Which of the following steps is not necessary to get the project underway?

A. Research existing databases for information on water quality within the source waters' watershed.
B. Determine ownership of parcels along all surface waters within the municipality.
C. Review aerial photography to assess conditions adjacent to waterways within the source waters' watershed.
D. Research the most effective riparian buffer restoration methods for water quality improvement (such as differing buffer widths and vegetation type).
E. Contact adjacent municipalities that contain any of the source waters' watershed.

Answer: B. This exact step is not needed. Determining ownership for certain parcels in the source watershed will likely be needed later in the process.
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Sample Question

Between 1986 and 1997, which of the following activity accounts for the highest percentage of wetlands losses?

A. Silvicultural
B. Urban development
C. Rural development
D. Agriculture

Answer: B. The percentages are 23%, 30%, 21%, and 26%, from the 2002 APA Policy Guide on Wetlands.

Source: Colorado PDO.
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Infrastructure

- Pipes (water, sewer, gas, etc.)
- Wires (electricity, communications, etc.)
- Trash (collection, disposal, reuse)

Consider demand, types of systems, funding to construct and maintain, and contamination potential
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Infrastructure

- Transportation (cars, buses, trains, planes, pedestrian, bicycle)
  - Think multi-modal!
  - Consider the energy and growth management implications
  - Consider the spatial planning – who plans for what areas?
  - APA Policy Guide: Surface Transportation
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Sample Question

Which of the following is not true about a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)?

A. They are federally mandated for urbanized areas with a population over 250,000.
B. They channel federal funds for transportation projects.
C. They maintain a long-range transportation plan for a region.
D. Their decision-making committees can be comprised of a mix of local, state, and federal representatives.

Answer: A. UZA population requirement is 50,000.
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Institutional Facilities

- Schools (primary, secondary, and tertiary)
- Correctional institutions
- Military installations (including Base Closure and Reuse – BRAC)

Consider impacts on education levels, labor force skill sets, employment, income levels, stability (or lack) of the labor force, demographics, etc.
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Economic Development

- Business Attraction and Retention
- Work Force Attraction and Retention
- Quantitative Functions
- Revitalization
- Tools: Business Improvement District (BID), business incubators, Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
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Economic Analysis & Forecasts

- Always question the data
- Economic Base Analyses
- Fiscal Impact Analyses
- Know Location Quotient (LQ), Floor Area Ratio (FAR), economic base multiplier

- Know differences in terminology: neighborhood shopping center versus a community or regional shopping center
The total area of permitted floor space expressed as a proportion of the site is known as the:

A. Gross Leasable Area
B. Location Quotient
C. Floor Area Ratio
D. NAICS

Answer: C.
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Labor Force and Employment

- Data Sources for Analysis
- Skills of the Community
- Workforce Characteristics
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Social and Health Services

- Federal and State Programs and Funds
- Local or Local-Regional Administration
- Health Systems Planning
- APA Policy Guides: Child Care and Homelessness
- Estimating and serving needs (health, social, mobility, recreation...)
  - Libraries
  - Schools
  - Medical facilities
  - Childcare facilities
  - Grocery stores
  - Senior living facilities
  - Sidewalks and paths
  - Safe routes to school
  - Parks and playgrounds
  - Secure bicycle lanes

Interrelatedness of these needs and areas of transportation, environment, neighborhood planning, etc.