



## **2014 ALAPA Spring Professional Development Workshop**

*Alabama Chapter – American Planning Association  
May 16, 2014  
Prattville, Alabama*

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- 7:30 a.m                    ***Registration Opens/Continental Breakfast***
- 8:00 – 9:30 a.m        **Alabama Legislative Update (1.5 CM Law/Ethics)**  
Speaker:                    Lori Lein - Alabama League of Municipalities
- 9:45 – 10:45 a.m       **Main Street Alabama: ABCs of Downtown  
Development (1.0 CM)**  
Speaker:                    Mary Helmer - Alabama Main Street
- 11:00 – 1:00 p.m       ***Awards Presentations & Banquet***
- 1:15 – 2:15 p.m        **Alabama Green Growth Toolbox (1.0 CM)**  
Speakers:                    Charlene LeBleu, AICP, FALSA - Auburn University and  
   Christopher Anderson, Assistant Professor, Forestry and Wildlife  
   Sciences – Auburn University
- 2:30 – 3:30 p.m        **Sustainable Economic Development (1.0 CM)**  
Speaker:                    Ben Farmer - Farmer | Morgan
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### **Alabama Legislative Update Update**

8:00 am – 9:30 am

Speaker: Lori Lein - Alabama League of Municipalities

Every year the Alabama Legislature considers, and sometime passes, new laws affecting planning and zoning. In recent legislative sessions laws have been considered or passed easing publication requirements for zoning ordinances, allow for island annexation, pre-zoning of the police jurisdiction and proposing significant changes to subdivision laws and jurisdiction. Additionally, court decisions and opinions of the Alabama Attorney General impact the administration of planning and zoning for local government. This topic will update attendees on recent changes in Alabama planning and zoning laws as considered and passed by the Alabama Legislature as well as court decisions and attorney general opinions.

### **Main Street Alabama – ABCs of Downtown Development**

9:45 am – 10:45 am

Mary Helmer, President/State Coordinator Main Street Alabama, CMSM

Main Street Alabama is focused on bringing jobs, dollars and people back to Alabama's historic communities. Economic development is at the heart of this statewide organization's efforts to revitalize downtowns and neighborhoods across the state of Alabama. Main Street Alabama is affiliated with the National Main Street Center and utilizes the proven Main Street Four-Point Approach® to help communities organize themselves for success, improve the design of their neighborhoods, promote their districts, and enhance their economic base.

- **Design:** Enhancing the visual quality of downtown through attention to all elements of the physical environment. An inviting atmosphere created through window displays, parking areas, signs, sidewalks, street lights, landscaping and the buildings themselves, convey a visual message of what main street is and what it has to offer.
- **Organization:** Everyone working toward the same goal. The work of building consensus and cooperation among groups that have an important stake in the district can be eased by using the common-sense formula of a volunteer-driven program, an organizational structure of a board of directors and committees and a financially strong organization.
- **Promotion:** Selling the image and promise of downtown to all prospects. By marketing the district's unique characteristics to shoppers, investors and visitors, an effective promotional strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity and special events carried out by local volunteers.
- **Economic Restructuring:** Strengthening the existing economic assets of the business district while diversifying its economic base. By helping existing businesses expand and recruiting new ones to respond to today's market, main street programs help convert unused space into productive property and sharpen the competitiveness of business enterprises.

#### Session Learning Objectives

- Understanding the economic ribbon that ties all four points together
- Capitalizing on built infrastructure in the downtown districts
- Codes, Zoning, Lot Lines and more that can positively impact downtown districts

### **Alabama Green Growth Toolbox**

1:15 pm - 2:15 pm

Speaker: Charlene M. LeBleu, AICP, FASLA - Auburn University

Charlene LeBleu is an Associate Professor of the Landscape Architecture Program at Auburn University, Auburn, AL. Her primary areas of interest and research have been focused on green building and water quality issues in Alabama, especially issues related to low impact development and design. She is a member of the American Planning Association and the American Institute of Certified Planners, and Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA).

Professor LeBleu has shown exceptional public/community service and leadership especially in the field of Outreach Scholarship working with regional partners and city planning commissions on projects such as, the Mobile, Alabama Green Streets Initiative, and the State of Alabama Low Impact Development Handbook (sponsored by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM)). Professor LeBleu has a B.S. Forest Resources and Conservation from the University of Florida, and a Master of Community Planning, and a Master of Landscape Architecture from Auburn University. Charlene LeBleu can be reached at 334.844.0192 or leblecm@auburn.edu.

Speaker: Dr. Christopher Anderson - Auburn University

Chris Anderson is an assistant professor of Forestry and Wildlife Science at Auburn

University. He is also the Associate Director for the Auburn University Center for Forest Sustainability (CFS). The CFS supports interdisciplinary research, outreach, and education related to the urban-rural interface. His research examines the effects of human activities on a wide range of aquatic and riparian ecosystems particularly how these disturbances change ecosystem condition/function and how they influence regulations, environmental models, and planning which guide land use and natural resource policy. Anderson holds a Ph.D in Natural Resources (Wetland Ecology) from Ohio State University, a M.S., Botany, University of South Florida and a B.S., Forestry and Wildlife Science, Virginia Tech. Christopher Anderson can be reached at 334-844-1033 or [andercj@auburn.edu](mailto:andercj@auburn.edu).

### **Sustainable Economic Development**

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Speaker: Benjamin Farmer - Farmer | Morgan

The proposed session will explore, through case studies, local sustainable economic development in several rural towns in Alabama and Tennessee. Through investigation of local environmental, social and historical resources, a set of goals and objectives for promoting sustainable economic development are crafted. By engaging the community through a dynamic public participation process, known as the charrette, citizens and local stakeholders embrace a collective sense of identity by sharing, publicly, the role their town has played in defining their "sense of place." Once an identity, or vision, is determined, catalyst projects are identified and funding for design and construction is pursued. Relationships developed during the planning process prove to be the most crucial factor in moving the project from a conceptual idea to a built reality.