

# ALABAMA PLANNER



American Planning Association  
Alabama Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Alabama Chapter of the American Planning Association

SPRING 2009

*The purpose of the Alabama Chapter of the American Planning Association is to help residents of the State improve the quality of their lives through rational and comprehensive approaches to physical, economic, and human resource planning.*

*This mission is achieved by: **Promoting** planning approaches in response to developmental and social opportunities and challenges facing the State; **Increasing** awareness of the planning process, the planning profession and the benefits that both can bring to the State of Alabama; **Supporting** planning education and fostering the growth of professional planners' knowledge and skills; **Encouraging** the exchange of planning information and experience in Alabama; and **Working** with other organizations in the State to foster common goals.*

## ALAPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

2008 - 2010

**Johnny Blizzard, AICP** - President

**Diane Burnett** - Vice-President

**Gina Romine** - Secretary

**Kimberly Hammond** - Treasurer

**Joey Hester, AICP** - Immediate Past President

**James Moore** - North Section Rep.

**Jason Fondren, AICP** - Central Section Rep.

**Kindell Anderson** - South Section Rep.

**Andy Bauer, AICP** - Gulf Coast Section Rep.



## CONFERENCE HONORS TOP PLANNERS

*Tom Magee, AICP, Awards Committee Chairperson*

The 2009 Alabama APA Awards Committee would like to extend our congratulations to all award recipients of this year's Chapter Awards. The awards were presented by the Chapter during its Annual Awards Program in Orange Beach in March, 2009. Each year the Chapter, through its Awards Program, seeks to recognize the notable contributions and achievements of our state's outstanding planning professionals, elected or lay persons, students or the media as well as the outstanding planning efforts of local governments, private consultants, and other local organizations and agencies.

At this year's Awards Program, awards were presented in 11 of the 12 award categories available to nominators. We once again had a great response to our request for nominations with a total of 27 nominations submitted. In addition to the recognition that we give to all the recipients of the awards, we also want to extend our utmost appreciation to all of those who took the time to prepare the nominations. All of the nominations that were received were excellent and of high quality and represented a great deal of time, thought and expense in their preparation.

The Committee believes that the Awards Program is our opportunity to recognize the "best" of who we are and what we



*Council President Virginia Smith (Mountain Brook) receives leadership award with Dana Hazen (left) and Tom Magee (right)*

do as well as those who support what we do. We hope that each and every one of you will start thinking about next year's Awards Program now. The Committee looks forward to receiving nominations for awards in every category.

#### 2009 Awards Committee

Todd McDonald, Dothan

Cathy Cooper, Auburn

Chris Baker, Daphne

Tom Magee, Birmingham

## 2009 Awards

### *Distinguished Leadership Awards:*

Professional Planner: Michelle Gilliam Jordan, AICP, City of Decatur (now City of Huntsville)

Elected Public Official: Honorable Virginia Carruthers Smith, City Council President, City of Mountain Brook

Appointed Public Official: Cary Sadler, Fire Marshall, City of Madison

Planning Student/Student Team: Joshua Lamberth, Auburn University Landscape Architecture.  
Project report: "Promoting Sustainable Economic Growth, Foley, Alabama: Planning for Community Revitalization in the Downtown Area".

Friend of Planning: Shirley Flora, Board of Zoning Adjustment, City of Opelika

Distinguished Contribution Award: Gina Romine, City of Madison

Richard L. Platt Career Achievement Award: Dean Y. Matthews, Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (retired)

### *Outstanding Planning Awards:*

Comprehensive Plan: Springville Comprehensive Plan, City of Springville

Plan: 2008 Downtown & Riverfront Plan, City of Northport

Project/Program/Tool: Auburn Interactive Growth Model (AIGM), City of Auburn

Franklin M. Setzer Outstanding Urban Design Project: University of Alabama Campus Master Plan and Design Guide

## MONTH IN ALABAMA HISTORY

2009 is the Year of Alabama History according to the state's tourism department. In keeping with the campaign, the Alabama Planner will highlight historic Alabama events in each 2009 issue:

May 5, 1799

U.S. Army takes possession of Fort St. Stephens from the Spanish. The United States flag is raised for first time in area that will later become Alabama.

May 21, 1861

The Confederate Congress meets for the last time in Montgomery. Montgomery served as the confederate capital for only three months, before it was moved to Richmond.

May 4, 1865

The last major Confederate force east of the Mississippi River surrenders at Citronelle, three and a half weeks after General Robert E. Lee surrenders at Appomattox.

May 21, 1901

The Constitutional Convention assembles in Montgomery to write Alabama's sixth constitution.

May 25, 1910

The first-ever nighttime airplane flight is made at Orville Wright's flying school near Montgomery. The site of the school eventually became Maxwell Air Force Base.

May 18, 1933

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) established by Congress.

May 1, 1961

Monroeville native Harper Lee wins the Pulitzer Prize for her first, and only, novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

May 20, 1961

The Freedom Riders arrive in Montgomery, where they are attacked by a mob.

May 3, 1963

Peaceful civil rights protestors are beaten back by fire hoses and police dogs in Birmingham, tactics ordered by police commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor.

May 19, 1963

Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letters from Birmingham Jail" is issued in a press release. King's letter, addressed to eight local clergymen, urged continuation of mass civil rights demonstrations.

May 15, 1972

Governor George C. Wallace is shot in Maryland while campaigning for president. The assassination attempt by Arthur Bremer left Wallace paralyzed from the waist down.

## FUELING ALABAMA

*Jason Fondren, AICP*

Earlier this Spring, Hoover became the first US city to use wood waste to fuel a part of its police car fleet. Hoover accepted the first shipment on Thursday April 16th. U.S. Senator Jeff Sessions and Congressman Artur Davis attended the ceremony in April when the shipment from Gulf Coast Energy, Inc. arrived.

For several years now, Hoover has been using alternative fuels to power cars and other municipal equipment. In 2007, the city started collecting used cooking oil from area businesses to make bio-diesel. A portion of the city's police car fleet has been running on ethanol since 2005.

Mark Warner and Scott Hazen established Gulf Coast Energy to manufacture bio-fuels and reduce dependence on fossil fuels for energy production. The company manufactures the wood waste fuel it now supplies to the City of Hoover at its demonstration plant in Livingston, Alabama. Ironically, Warner and Hazen located the plant in an abandoned lumber mill. In an interview earlier this year with Thicket magazine, Gulf Coast Energy CEO Warner stated "[In] Alabama, there is enough wood waste to fuel the state's needs—and then some." Warner estimated that Gulf Coast's gasification process is 500 percent more efficient and produces 80 percent less greenhouse gas pollution than petroleum.

Efforts in the state to produce and use cleaner, more renewable energy sources are growing. The cities of Gadsden and Montgomery, as well as Auburn University, have adopted alternative fuel programs similar to Hoover's. Daphne, Florence and other Alabama cities are building programs to collect and convert cooking oil to fuel. Vestavia Hills' school buses may all soon be running on bio-diesel. Private industries, such as pulp and paper company Boise Cascade in Washington County, are utilizing alternative fuels for their own energy needs.

At the state and regional levels, Alabama has purchased 168 vehicles designed to run on bio-fuels. Already, a biofuel corridor has been created along I-65 from Alabama to Indiana. Along the corridor E-85 Ethanol and B20 bio-diesel can be purchased at gas pumps. And, the Alabama Public Service Commission is launching educational programs to encourage and promote conservation, energy-efficiency and renewable energy use.

## A & M STUDENT SELECTED FOR APA TOUR, SCHOLARSHIP

**L**ynda Jordan, a graduate student from Alabama A & M University's Department of Community Planning and Urban Studies, was selected as one of six students from across the nation to receive a scholarship from the National American Planning Association for the APA China Study Tour, October 2008. Ms. Jordan was able to gain an international perspective on planning issues and explore over 2,200 years of China's urban civilization through exhibitions, lectures, and forums concerning China's enormous planning challenges in housing, transportation, infrastructure, historic preservation and the environment.

While in China Jordan visited Beijing, Xi'an, Hangzhou, Nanjing, and Zhenjiang, where she attended the Global Planners Network Congress. The conference focused on planning topics such as poverty, urbanization, cultural conservation, sustainability and "green practices". The last city she visited was Shanghai. When asked about the lessons learned from the study tour, Jordan said that the monuments and architecture provided insight into the history and cultural landscape of the Chinese people. She was intrigued by the outstanding archival collections that spoke to the Chinese sense of space. Jordan noted the cities she visited were abundant in natural resources, highly urbanized, with picturesque landscapes and major transportation hubs. Jordan felt that China's imperial past gave planning students an opportunity to see planning in an entirely different context. Jordan also remarked that APA's Study Tour programs gives students interested in international planning a priceless introduction into the field.





## CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM AND...ANOTHER LEGISLATIVE SESSION

*Larry Watts, FAICP, Chair, Legislative Committee*

The APA Legislative Committee has monitored the current session of the state legislature together with the League of Municipalities, Scenic Alabama and concerned organizations. If you have not done so, you might want to review the League web site, [www.alalm.org](http://www.alalm.org), for information on the ALM Legislative Agenda or Bills of Relevance to ALM.

In the meantime, Bob Attalo, AICP, with no help from the Legislative Committee, except maybe some of Bob's self-inspiration - not so much committee perspiration, presented to the Spring Conference an excellent summary of the legislative tools available to us in Alabama. I hope we can use Bob's inspiration and work in this area to publish something along the lines of beginning with what we have as a basis for future APA legislative action.

At the Executive Committee meeting in Orange Beach, chapter members Bill McAllister, AICP, and Fred Peterson, AICP, encouraged the organization to consider

partnering with Constitutional Reform efforts to improve Alabama APA's legislative position—more to come on that, as well as holding a regular session on APA Legislative Initiatives as part of the Annual Conference. The Legislative Committee will discuss these issues at its next meeting. Recommendations of the Legislative Committee will be provided to chapter members later this year.

## CASH-STRAPPED JEFFCO

*Jason Fondren, AICP*

On Friday June 5 Jefferson County officials announced proposals to make massive cuts to its budget. The cuts would reduce the county budget by over \$50 million to survive the loss of the county's occupational tax, which accounts for about ten percent of the county budget. Proposed cuts include eliminating jobs; closing satellite courthouses; halting road maintenance in all cities in Jefferson County; ending building inspections and zoning regulation programs; terminating business contracts and closing the doors of the Jefferson Health and Rehabilitation Center.

The cuts, identified and proposed to commissioners by the County Attorney and Finance Director, have been



real vision  
**Inspiring reality**

Can you see it?

The community where people live, work, and play – without cars ... a park where a landfill once operated ... a bike trail on an abandoned railroad?

PBS&J turns visions like these into reality every day. And while the talent and experience of our team are important, it's how we do business – listening to our clients and collaborating with respect and trust – that elevates our projects from just good ... to inspired.

Visualize the future. Then call PBS&J.

Offices throughout the US **PBS&J**  
[pbsj.com](http://pbsj.com) • 205.969.3776

discussed by the commission for months, since they learned the occupational tax was in real jeopardy. Ending of discretionary contracts, such as those with Colonial Realty Limited Partnership, will save the county almost \$25 million, while eliminating all building inspections and zoning regulation programs will save only about \$4.4 million. Currently, the County's Land Development office administers zoning and subdivision regulations for the county and provides similar planning support, by contract, to several small towns in Jefferson County.

In January, Circuit Judge David Rains upheld a 1999 ruling that the half-percent occupational tax was illegal. Rains permitted the county to continue levying the tax, but ordered that it be placed in an interest-bearing escrow account. In 2000, a circuit court judge found the 1999 repeal law was unconstitutional because of the number of legislators voting on it. A 2005 Alabama Supreme court decision in another case upheld the legality of such votes. And, in 2007 the legal fight over the occupation tax resumed.

At the heart of the matter is the fairness of the tax, which exempts professionals such as lawyers and doctors who already pay a state licensing fee. All others must pay the tax. The real debate on the tax has changed little in the 20 years it has been collected. No political headway on either side of the debate seems to have been achieved.

The County commission appealed Rains' January decision. In the interim, Rains allowed the county access to the money to avoid a crisis while replacement tax legislation would be passed. But, after members of the local Senate and House delegations failed to agree on new occupational tax legislation for the county, Rains concluded on Thursday June 4 that the County could no longer spend the tax money.

While the possibility of ending County zoning and inspections programs, road maintenance, and other important county services looms, lawmakers are still unable to agree on how to structure new tax legislation.



There is still a chance for the issue to be resolved by the legislature through a special session convened by Governor Reilly. However, without agreement within the county legislative delegation on the matter of who pays a reformulated occupational tax, the special session is unlikely.

## SPRING CONFERENCE: A STUDENT VIEW

*Mona Scruggs*

There was a significant student presence at this year's Alabama APA Spring Conference in Orange Beach. Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities were well represented by enthusiastic planning students. Students saw the conference as an excellent opportunity to gain a better understanding of who planners in Alabama are and what they are doing to carry out planning initiatives. Perdido Beach Resort was an excellent location as far as the students were concerned. Some, who are not Alabama natives, were pleasantly surprised with the beauty of our beaches. Of course, there is always the temptation to spend time on the beach rather than attend lectures! Fortunately, the speakers made each session informative and engaging.

The theme of "Tourism in Planning" was a hit. Students went back to their respective universities eager to share with their fellow students and faculty what they learned. Students were relieved to learn - from Gulf Coast Convention and Visitors Bureau President Herb Malone - that tourism on the Gulf Coast, in light of the current economic situation, is alive and well. Pete Conroy intrigued planning students with a lively presentation, in which he emphasized Alabama's biodiversity and what that means for eco-tourism. Students found it reassuring that the importance of the state's natural treasures was highlighted throughout the conference and moreover that people who have the power to make a difference were there to hear about it. Students were excited to meet Discovering Alabama star Dr. Doug Phillips and enjoyed the planning law session facilitated by Bob Atallo on the final day of the conference.

Of course, one reason students are eager to attend professional conferences is to meet potential employers. Students felt the conference's relaxed atmosphere gave ample opportunities to network with planning professionals. It was also a great opportunity to meet students from other schools. Some students attended, especially, for the Student Competition, a new element to this year's conference. Students hope the competition will be continued in years to come and that it will grow and play a bigger role in the conference. Congratulations to the winning team from Alabama A&M University!

Those who attended are grateful to the state chapter for setting an affordable registration price, which made it possible for more to take part in the event. The conference, overall, was a positive experience for the students.

# NEW NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS LAW TO BENEFIT ALABAMA

*Birmingham Environmental News*

On March 30, President Barack Obama signed into law the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act. The new law establishes 2.1 million acres of wilderness in nine states, gives landmark protection to more than a million acres in the Wyoming Range, designates four national conservation areas and establishes one national monument.

In Alabama, the new law established the following:

- Newly adjusted and expanded boundaries for the Little River Canyon National Preserve;
- Creation of the Shoals National Heritage Area;
- Creation of the Chattahoochee Trace National Heritage Area

Each National Heritage Area carries limited financial and technical assistance from the National Park Service.

For additional information about the new Omnibus Public Lands Law, visit [www.wilderness.org](http://www.wilderness.org)



## TAPA Fall Conference 2009

### Save the Date

Wednesday, September 23-Friday, September 25.  
Chattanooga Marriott and Convention Center  
Downtown Chattanooga

Contact Karen Rennich, (423) 757-5216 or  
[Rennich\\_karen@mail.chattanooga.gov](mailto:Rennich_karen@mail.chattanooga.gov)

## PLANNING SPOTLIGHT: NORTHWEST ALABAMA

NACOLG Planning Director Nathan Willingham has provided Alabama Planner readers with the following run-down on planning efforts taking place in northwest Alabama this year:

- Town of Killen develops Master Plan
- City of Florence drafts West Florence Neighborhood Plan
- Florence-Muscle Shoals MPO & ARC continue U.S. Highway 72 Corridor Study
- Florence-Muscle Shoals MPO moves forward with Long Range Transportation Plan
- Shoals Cultural Affairs Committee plans for Heritage Area Designation
- Colbert County plans recreational improvements in Colbert Alloys Park Master Plan
- Town of Hodges continues Hodges Economic Development Study and Hodges Equestrian Trails Plan
- City of Russellville begins Wastewater Facilities Plan to evaluate growth and capacity
- NACOLG and Franklin County pursue Franklin County Water Systems Survey and Infrastructure Study
- NACOLG and Franklin, Marion, and Winston Counties pursue Economic Development Study and Target Industry Analysis
- City of Guin plans for a Mural City
- Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan process continues in Lauderdale, Colbert, Franklin, Marion and Winston Counties
- Town of Cherokee reviews zoning plan
- Region 1 Workforce Development Council implements components of Region 1 Workforce Development Strategic Plan
- I-22 communities consider development plans
- Northwest Alabama transportation planning delegation meets with Governor Riley
- Downtown and neighborhood revitalization a continuing concern throughout Northwest Alabama



## JUST HOW GREEN IS YOUR VALLEY?

*Sherri Blair*

It seems you can't go anywhere, read a magazine or newspaper or watch anything on television without the word "green" popping up....GREEN living; GREEN vacations (aka eco-tourism); GREEN building; GREEN this and GREEN that. Reducing one's carbon footprint is fodder of cocktail party conversations. But, do we really know what it means to live green or are we just throwing it out there in an attempt to be fashionable? It isn't a new craze by any means.

In 1854 Henry David Thoreau published his account of two and a half years of living in a cabin in the woods - living off the land and becoming more aware of the mark he would leave behind. However, what he fails to detail is the fact that his mother, who lived only two miles away, delivered basketsful of cookies, doughnuts and other goodies every Saturday. I don't deny that Thoreau's attempt to be more Earth friendly is to be admired but, he did it as an experiment - an endeavor to become Transcendent - not a continual lifestyle change. It is, however, changes in daily lifestyle that will, in the end, promote the sustainability of our planet; not an all-or-nothing proposition but a continued methodology.

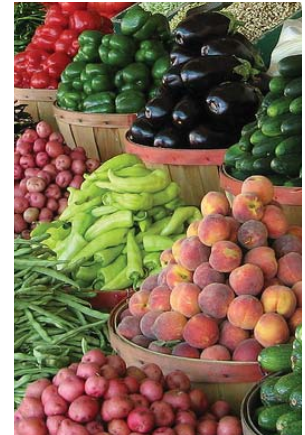
There are many things that can be enjoyed - that are ecologically sound - that don't require living in the wilderness. Each Saturday morning in the parking lot of the City of Madison Senior Center nearby farmers, small

and large scaled, set up and sell their fresh produce. At this open air market one can also purchase local honey, homemade jams and jellies, herbs, plants, candles and wares crafted by local artisans. It's a lovely idea and benefits everyone involved. Many cities have large markets where bushels of fresh fruits and vegetables are available.

Living green starts with small, personal changes. [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org) is an excellent place to begin.

Local Harvest is dedicated to connecting farmers with individuals through Community Supported Agriculture. People benefit from the weekly, year-round, purchase of fresh, local produce and meats, and farmers benefit from ongoing financial support. Many of the member farmers don't even pick vegetables until the day they are sold.

Drastic changes make life difficult. Small changes often do not, especially delicious ones. Log on to Local Harvest to locate the farm closest to you. Spend a Saturday morning picking strawberries with your children and Saturday evening eating strawberry shortcake. Teach those who are coming behind us to embrace a green lifestyle and pretty soon it won't be newsworthy; it will be the ordinary.



### SOUTHEAST REGION

# 1ST ANNUAL ALAPA STUDENT PLANNING AND DESIGN COMPETITION

Jason Fondren

After a discussion with fellow students at an Auburn University Student Planning Association (AUSPA) meeting, Mac Martin, president of the organization, contacted state chapter president Johnny Blizzard to initiate a planning and design competition for student planners. As a result, the contest became a new feature at this year's state APA Spring Conference. Planning students at Auburn University and Alabama A&M University entered the competition Martin had organized.

On March 25, the first day of the conference in Orange Beach, four student teams set up exhibits and readied themselves to present their submissions. A crowd of APA members arrived on that Wednesday afternoon to see the student presentations as a kick-off to the conference. After browsing the entrance boards and mingling with fellow planners, everyone took their seats for the student presentations.

The four planning teams, each made up of three students, outlined the major issues involved in the project sites they had chosen. With guidance from Dr. Constance Wilson, each of the three Alabama A&M teams chose locations along Meridian Street, the primary corridor connecting the university to Downtown Huntsville. The Auburn team focused their efforts on Downtown Opelika. The teams laid out their proposals to encourage reuse and reinvestment in each of the project sites.

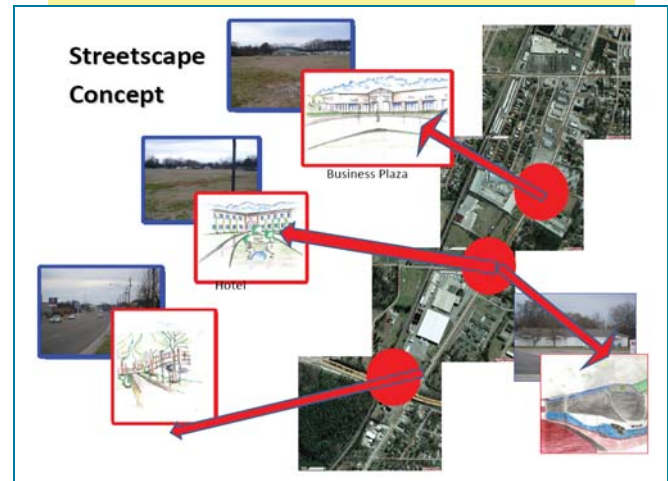
For the competition, the chapter's executive committee took on the role of judges and, following the presentations, reviewed and discussed the student displays. Taking into account the verbal and visual quality of the presentations, the project visions, the underlying research and the implementation strategies for each proposal, the panel selected a winner and notified the awards committee. The winning team was then honored for their work, alongside projects undertaken by practicing planners, during the annual awards banquet the following evening.

The team of Amanda Blakeney, Brittany Lavender and Lauretta P. Moore from Alabama A&M University won for their submission "Economic Empowerment along the Meridian Street Corridor: A Call for Reclamation, Reinvestment, and Revitalization." See inset above.



Above: Competition winners (from left to right): Brittany Lavender, Lauretta P. Moore, and Amanda Blakeney.

The winning team from Alabama A&M University's Department of Community Planning and Urban Studies proposed various strategies along Meridian Street, between Hwy. 72 and Oakwood Ave., including reinvestment in new land uses, infill development, pedestrian improvements and new transit facilities.



ALAPA greatly appreciates the time and energy that Mac Martin, the student teams and their faculty advisors invested in making this first annual competition a success. The competition not only provided the opportunity for students to attend and meet practicing planners at the conference, but it also gave faculty and student representatives from the two planning schools another chance in the academic year to interact. The contest instilled a healthy dose of competition that inspired students to put their best work on display in front of their peers and professionals. Hopefully, this is just the beginning of what will become a long tradition that, in its own way, advances the planning profession in our state.

We look forward to another great contest at next year's Spring Conference.



## STUDENT TEAMS

The teams representing the Alabama A&M University Department of Community Planning and Urban Studies focused their work on the Meridian Street corridor in Huntsville, Alabama advocating for its revitalization through Community Reinvestment Actions, which became a theme embodied in their project titles. The teams included:

Team I: Community, Corporate, Campus

- Lakeisha Johnson
- Aries Little
- Andrew Munya

Team II: Reclamation, Reinvestment and Revitalization

- Amanda Blakeney
- Brittany Lavender
- Laurretta P. Moore

Team III: Antiquity, Artistry, and Aesthetics

- Marie'A Allen
- Solomon Andrews
- Omri Stewart

The team from Auburn University's Graduate Program in Community Planning developed a proposal for the revitalization of historic Downtown Opelika. The team included:

- Meghan Lee
- Ben Krauss
- Stephen Stock

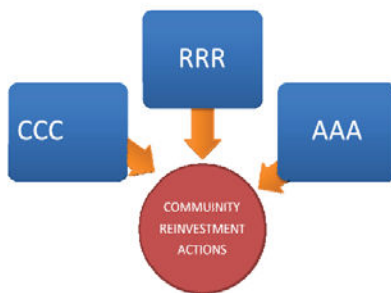
*Below: A&M students proposed the conversion of this Meridian Street industrial building for lofts.*



*Above: The student team from Auburn proposed reuse of the Coke Building in Downtown Opelika for an events center.  
Below: The entry from Auburn included a rendered plan identifying infill, building reuse and parking opportunities.*



## Planning Philosophy



Philosophical statement: Advocating for the rebirth and resurrection of Meridian Street to re-establish its place of prominence in Huntsville, Alabama.



*Above Left: A community reinvestment philosophy united the three A&M entities. Above Right: The Auburn and Alabama A&M student teams gather for pictures after their presentations.*

# HEADLAND NAMED COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE

## *Alabama Communities of Excellence Press Release*

The City of Headland has been designated as an “Alabama Community of Excellence” after successfully completing the Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE) program, a comprehensive three-phase approach to economic and community development for cities with populations between 2,000 and 18,000.

The graduation ceremony took place Monday, May 4th during the Alabama League of Municipalities Annual Convention held in Montgomery. During the ceremony, the City of Headland was recognized as an Alabama Community of Excellence and presented with a \$5,000 grant from ACE to be used in funding a priority economic and community development project.

This check was presented by Joe A. Sumners, ACE President and Director of Auburn’s Economic & Community Development Institute; Lamar Smith, ACE Director – Community Development, and Perry Roquemore, ACE Partner and Executive Director of Alabama League of Municipalities. Accepting the award on behalf of the City of Headland were: Mayor Ray Marler and ACE Local Coordinator Mary Claire Wilson.

“Communities with eligible populations must complete and submit an application in order to be considered for the ACE program,” said Joe Sumners, president of ACE. “The two main criteria used in selecting ACE participants are 1) the level of local commitment to the ACE program, and 2) the community’s capacity to support the ACE program...We are so proud of Headland for successfully completing all three phases of the ACE program,” said Sumners. “Their dedication to community development should be commended.”

During the graduation ceremony, Sumners explained ACE’s three-phase approach.

“Phase I is known as the assessment phase. During this time, a comprehensive report card detailing community assets and weaknesses is prepared and presented to the community along with recommended strategy and actions,” Sumners said “During Phase II, the Leadership Development and Strategic Planning component, each community must establish a leadership development program, prepare an up-to-date strategic plan, and identify a local ACE coordinator,” said Sumners.



According to Sumners, “Phase III is the Implementation and Comprehensive Planning segment. Issues addressed during Phase III include comprehensive planning, commercial business development, education enhancement, infrastructure, health and human services, retiree attraction, tourism, economic development, and quality of life.”

To maintain the ACE designation, a community must be recertified every three years. Headland will be eligible for recertification in 2012.

“Throughout each of these phases, ACE Partners work with each community to successfully achieve their goals,” Sumners stated. “The ACE program would not be possible without the funding, hard work and participation of the ACE Partner organizations.”

ACE Partner organizations include: AARC, ADECA, Alabama Development Office, Alabama Historical Commission, Alabama League of Municipalities, Alabama Municipal Electric Authority, Alabama Power Company, Alacom Finance, Auburn University Economic & Community Development Institute, Economic Development Association of Alabama, Goodwyn, Mills & Cawood/Merchant Capital, PowerSouth Energy Cooperative, Tennessee Valley Authority, the University of Alabama Center for Economic Development, the University of West Alabama, and USDA - Rural Development.

Fifteen communities have previously been certified as Alabama Communities of Excellence: Atmore, Brewton, Demopolis, Fayette, Guin, Gulf Shores, Guntersville, Haleyville, Headland, Heflin, Jackson, Millbrook, Monroeville, Thomasville and Valley. Eight other communities are currently working through Phases II and III of the ACE program: Childersburg, Evergreen, Graysville, Jacksonville, Leeds, Livingston, Tarrant and York.

In addition, the five new communities selected for ACE’s 2009 Class of participants were also announced. These communities are: Arab, Eufaula, Foley, Hartselle and Montevallo.



## IN MEMORIAM

Eufaula city planner Timothy Walker Milner died March 1 at Southeast Alabama Medical Center in Dothan. With family at his side, he died peacefully after a struggle with pneumonia. He was 51.

Milner, a native of Muscle Shoals, worked his way through college at a local grocery store. He graduated from the University of North Alabama with a degree in public administration and urban planning. He married and had two sons, Chase and Daniel. Milner worked as a jeweler in the 1980s, managing Lorch's in Gadsden and Decatur. He received national manager of the year awards in 1987 and 1988. Milner opened his own store, Heritage Jewelers, in Muscle Shoals, which he operated until a car accident in 1994 left him a quadriplegic.

In 1994, he moved to Eufaula. After extensive rehabilitation, Milner returned to college in 1998 and became certified in Geographic Information Systems. He took classes at Troy State, Wallace Community College, and the University of North Alabama and completed his certification in 2001.

The City of Eufaula hired Milner as city planner in 2002, allowing him to take up the profession he had chosen so many years ago. Working with local volunteers, community stakeholders, and consultants from Auburn



### THIRD COAST DESIGN STUDIO

3707 MEADOWBROOK AVENUE  
NASHVILLE, TN 37205

615.463.7453 TEL

615.463.7454 FAX

info@thirdcoastdesignstudio.com

[www.thirdcoastdesignstudio.com](http://www.thirdcoastdesignstudio.com)

University and Audobon International, Milner helped prepare the Eufaula 2020 Plan, which emphasized community sustainability. Milner then worked with consultants to implement changes to city land use policy and regulations. As city planner, he had a wide array of responsibilities, including writing grants, press releases and speeches. In 2004 Barbour County named Milner Outstanding Employee of the Year. The Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities also honored Milner's accomplishments.

**Van Buskirk, Ryffel and Associates, Inc.**

***"Planning Innovations for Tomorrow with a Smart Growth Approach Today"***

**The Interactive Growth Model™**

- **Accurate Population Forecasting in 5-year Increments to Build-out**
- **Sub-models of The Interactive Growth Model™**

Land Use Timing and Distribution	Commercial Corridor Studies
Public Schools	Industrial Parks
Parks/Recreation/Open Space	Transportation Plan Updates
Fire/EMS	Law Enforcement
- **Other Applications**

Data for Transportation and Utility Models/Update

Comprehensive Plans

"Smart Growth Management Tool"

Annexation Impacts

**Co-recipients of the 2009 ALAPA Outstanding Planning Award for a Project/Program/Tool with the City of Auburn for the "Auburn Interactive Growth Model"**

For more information about our firm, population forecasting methodology to build-out or how our Interactive Growth Model™ can be used in your planning jurisdiction, visit our webpage at [www.InterActiveGrowthModel.com](http://www.InterActiveGrowthModel.com)

100 Estero Boulevard, Suite 434, Fort Myers Beach, Florida 33931  
 Phone: 239- 281-6312 Fax: 239-463-5050  
 Email: [cryffel@InteractiveGrowthModel.com](mailto:cryffel@InteractiveGrowthModel.com)

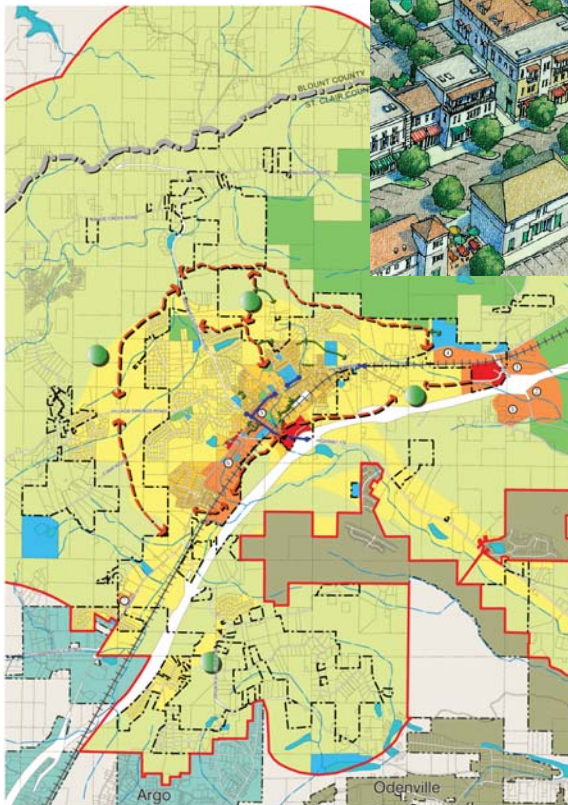
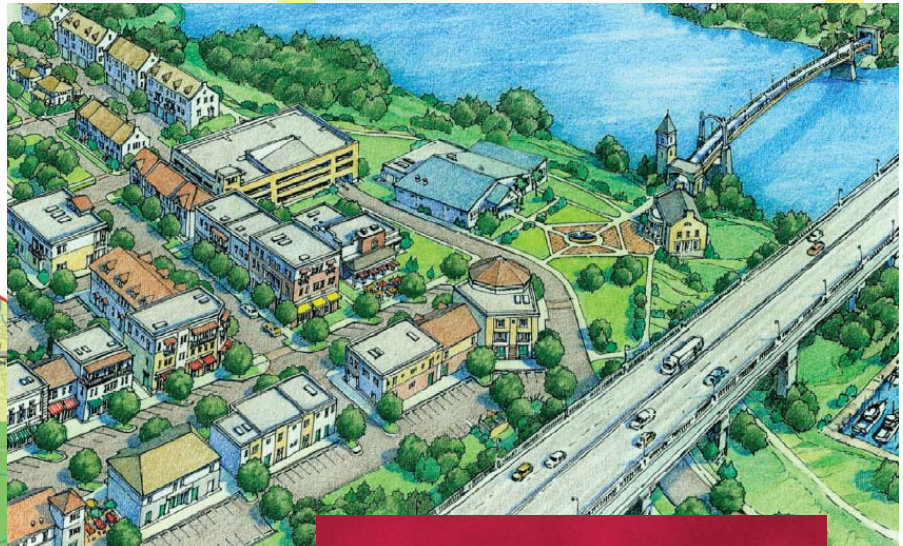
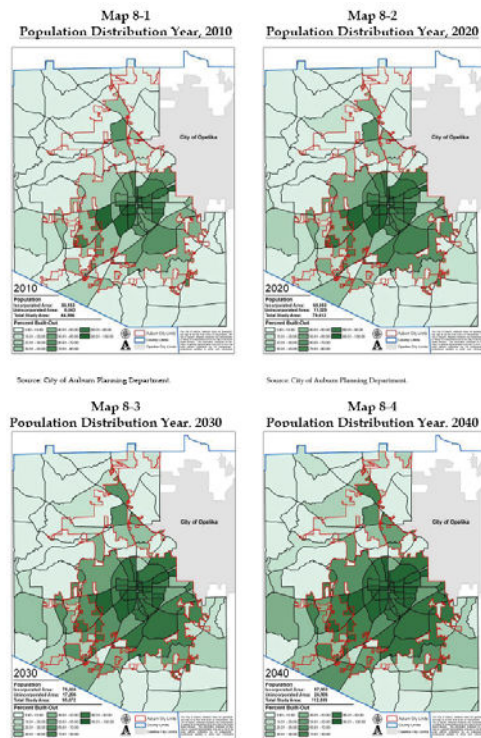


## AWARD WINNING PLANS

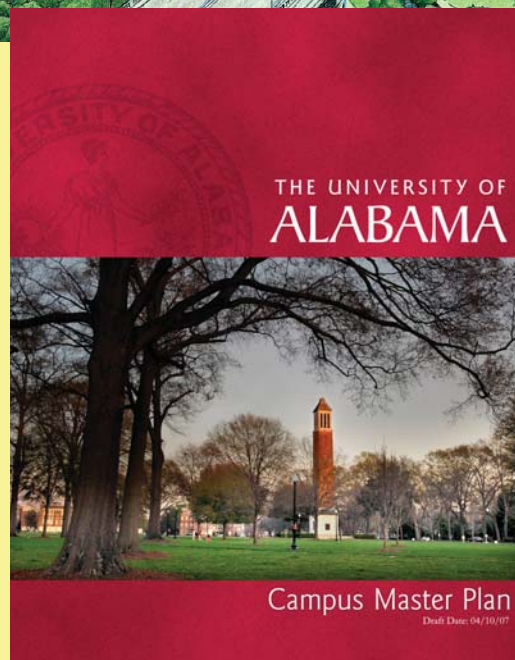
If you are interested in learning more about the plans and planning tools recognized at the 2009 State Chapter Awards Program, you can find them at the winner's websites. Click on the links below to visit each website:

- [City of Springville Comprehensive Plan](#)  
(Outstanding Comprehensive Plan)
- [City of Northport Downtown & Riverfront Plan](#)  
(Outstanding Plan)
- [City of Auburn Interactive Growth Model](#)  
(Outstanding Project/Program/Tool)
- [University of Alabama Campus Master Plan](#)  
(Franklin M. Setzer Outstanding Urban Design Project)

*Clockwise from top right: Population Distribution Maps from the Auburn Interactive Growth Model, Bird's eye rendering from the Northport Downtown and Riverfront Plan, University of Alabama Camus Master Plan, Land Use and Transportation Plan map from the Springville Comprehensive Plan.*



Springville Comprehensive Plan  
Springville, Alabama  
KPS



## JUNE WALKING TOURS

*Joe Watts, from the YourTown website*

Some 30 towns across Alabama will be on display during Saturday mornings in June as part of the Alabama Tourism Department's June Walking Tours. A variety of community leaders will lead the free tours through historic districts and downtown areas. The hour-long tours will start at 10 a.m. on June 6, 13, 20, and 27. The tours are being coordinated by Brian Jones with the State Tourism Department. "Alabama is the only state in the nation to hold statewide, simultaneous walking tours. The beauty of the June Walking Tours is that any community, whether big or small, can do this. We have done more than 900 walking tours since the beginning of the program six years ago and they keep increasing in popularity every year," Jones said.

Towns and starting places for the June Walking Tours are:



*Limestone County Courthouse, Athens, Alabama*

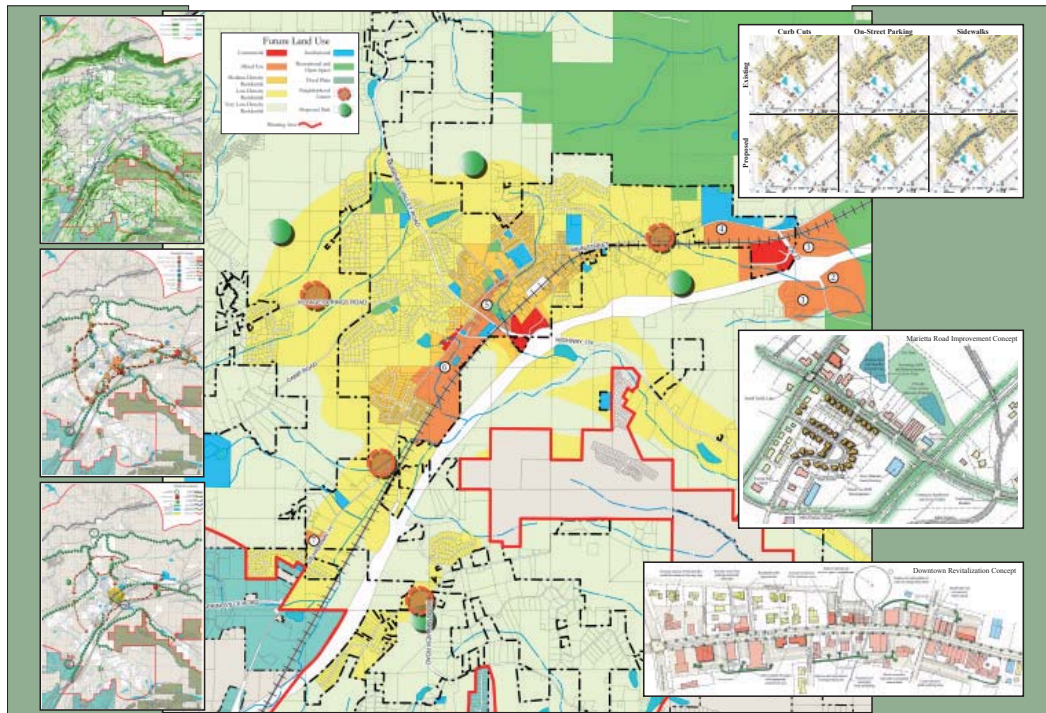
- Ashland, High Point Coffee & Books
- Athens, Limestone County Courthouse Annex Parking Lot
- Birmingham, Civil Rights Institute
- Butler, Jackson's Jewelry and Gift
- Centerville, Bibb County Courthouse
- Cullman, Cullman County Museum
- Dadeville, Tallapoosa County Courthouse
- Decatur, Old State Bank Building
- Demopolis, City Hall
- Dothan, Salute to the Peanut Industry Mural
- Enterprise, Rawls Hotel
- Fairhope, Fairhope Welcome Center
- Fayette, Fayette Historical Depot
- Florence, various starting locations
- Gadsden, City Hall Gazebo
- Gilbertown, The Village Shoppe
- Guntersville, Chamber of Commerce
- Hartselle, Downtown Historic Depot
- Huntsville, Al. Constitution Village (June 6 & 13 only)
- Madison, Clay House Museum (June 20 & 27 only)
- Mobile, Cathedral of Immaculate Conception
- Montevallo, Chamber of Commerce
- Montgomery, Downtown Train Shed
- Ozark, Confederate Monument/Courthouse
- Prattville, Autauga County Heritage Center
- Scottsboro, Jackson County Heritage Center
- Selma, Selma-Dallas County Public Library
- Sheffield, Sheffield Municipal Building
- Tuscumbia, ColdWater Bookstore
- West Blocton, Cahaba Lily Center
- Wetumpka, Chamber of Commerce

More information about the June Walking Tours is available by going online at [www.alabama.travel](http://www.alabama.travel) or by calling 1-800-ALABAMA.

JRWA

J.R. WILBURN AND ASSOCIATES, INC.





**K|P|S**  
G R O U P

2101 First Avenue North  
Birmingham, AL 35203

Tel: 205.251.0125  
Fax: 205.458.1513  
[www.kpsgroup.com](http://www.kpsgroup.com)

Darrell Meyer, FAICP  
[dmeyer@kpsgroup.com](mailto:dmeyer@kpsgroup.com)

Amy Smith, ASLA  
[asmith@kpsgroup.com](mailto:asmith@kpsgroup.com)

Springville Comprehensive Plan- Alabama APA 2009 Comprehensive Plan of the Year

Planning • Architecture • Urban Design • Landscape Architecture

## HOUSE REHAB RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

Kitty Chamberlain, a planner with the City of Montgomery's Long Range Planning Division, submitted a residential rehabilitation project to the Sustainable Building Industry Council's (SBIC) 2008 Beyond Green™ High-Performance Building Awards program. The "greening" of the historic Gayle-Browning House at 634 Felder Avenue won SBIC recognition in its residential High-Performance Buildings category in late February. Winners were honored on Capitol Hill during a congressional briefing recognizing sustainable building practices.

From the SBIC Press Release:

"Our intention is to sensitize the audience to the benefits of high-performance buildings by showcasing actual examples of these buildings from across the country," said SBIC Executive Director, Sophia Greenbaum. "To that end, today we are presenting our 2008 Beyond Green™ High-Performance Building Awards and sharing why these projects exemplify best-in-class for high-performance construction practices and initiatives nationally."

Alabama Planner

The 2008 Beyond Green™ High-Performance Building Awards challenged public and private sector practitioners to demonstrate the successful application of the whole building approach and show how they integrated the eight design objectives that define high-performance buildings including accessibility, aesthetics, cost effectiveness, function, historic preservation, productivity, safety/security and sustainability.

The 1913 house was restored by architect Clynn W. Clark, AIA and owner George Browning, Chamberlain's father. The owner and designer hoped to increase the energy efficiency of the home while maintaining its historic architectural integrity. They also intended the project to set an example for green building techniques and products and serve as a training resource





## ONLINE COURSES FROM PLANETIZEN.COM

Planetizen offers a number of detailed courses on a variety of planning topics. These self-paced courses can be taken at anytime from anywhere, offering students a flexible way to learn on their own schedule. Planetizen offers the following online courses:

### *Introduction to Historic Preservation Planning*

Instructor: Hector Abreu

<http://www.planetizen.com/courses/plan110>

### *Transit Oriented Development Toolbox*

Instructors: John Renne, PhD, and Jeff Wood

<http://www.planetizen.com/courses/plan115>

### *Census 2000, Census 2010, Factfinder, ACS, and Understanding Growth*

Instructor: Christopher Williamson, PhD

<http://www.planetizen.com/courses/census>

### *Introduction To Smart Growth*

Instructor: William Fulton

<http://www.planetizen.com/courses/smartgrowth>

### *Planning Ethics*

Instructor: Carol Barrett, AICP

<http://www.planetizen.com/courses/plan145>

## JOBS FOR PLANNERS

If you have a job opening, or know of open positions that might be of interest to Alabama Planners, please email them to [jfondren@kpsgroup.com](mailto:jfondren@kpsgroup.com) or mail them to:

Jason Fondren, AICP  
c/o Alabama Planner  
2101 First Avenue North  
Birmingham AL 35203

There is no charge for placing job postings in the newsletter.

### *Technology for Planners*

Instructor: Justin Emond

<http://www.planetizen.com/courses/tech125>

### *Economic Thinking for Planners and Developers*

Instructor: Peter Gordon, PhD

<http://www.planetizen.com/courses/econ201>

### *Planetizen AICP\* Exam Preparation Course*

Instructor: Jennifer Evans-Cowley, PhD, AICP

<http://www.planetizen.com/courses/plan310>

### *Planning Commissioner Training*

Instructor: Ric Stephens

<http://www.planetizen.com/courses/commissioner>



Planning  
Landscape Architecture  
Engineering  
Environmental  
Surveying  
Transportation  
Geotechnical

A million details.  
One choice.

Larry Watts, FAICP  
[larry.watts@gmcnetwork.com](mailto:larry.watts@gmcnetwork.com)  
Cathy Gerachis, RLA  
[cathy.gerachis@gmcnetwork.com](mailto:cathy.gerachis@gmcnetwork.com)  
Jane Ross, RLA  
[jane.ross@gmcnetwork.com](mailto:jane.ross@gmcnetwork.com)



**GOODWYN, MILLS AND CAWOOD, INC.**

Offices in Birmingham and other Southeastern cities  
[www.gmcnetwork.com](http://www.gmcnetwork.com) 205.879.4462

Andalusia   Birmingham   Eufaula   Huntsville   Auburn   Mobile   Montgomery   Prattville   Vernon

## PLANNING FOR SAFETY

Jean Rosene, WARC

Each county in the West Alabama region will soon have an up-to-date hazard mitigation plan, allowing them to apply for grants to reduce the potential impact of natural and man-made disasters. The plans will fulfill the requirements of the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and meet all grant eligibility requirements of FEMA. The Act requires all state and local governments develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan to receive federal assistance.

The purpose of the plans is to achieve a safer, more hazard-resistant environment for residents in West Alabama. Each plan covers the entire county including all municipalities. The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program provided funding for the five-year updates. The plans identify hazards that may affect the counties and their residents along with strategies to help reduce the impact of various kinds of disasters including loss of life and property.

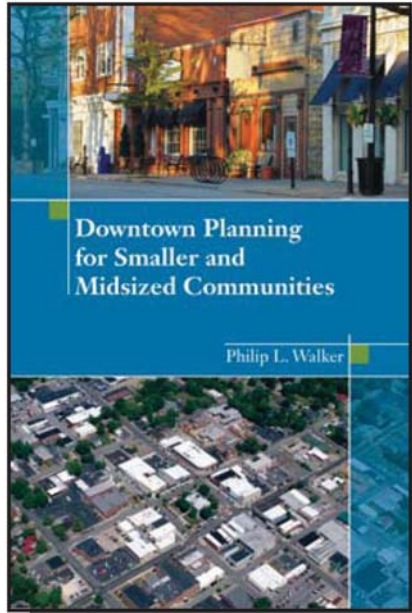
The initial plans were developed in 2005. The update process began in July of 2007 after the AARC was awarded a planning grant from the Alabama Emergency Management Agency. The West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC) facilitated plan updates for Bibb,

### Urban & Regional Planning

### Downtown Revitalization

### Historic Preservation

Principal Phil Walker's recently released book on downtown planning can be purchased through the American Planning Association's Planners Press.



2408 Belmont Boulevard  
Nashville, TN 37212 / 615.383.1510  
pwalker@walkercollaborative.com  
www.walkercollaborative.com



Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens and Tuscaloosa counties. Each has a Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee whose members represent each jurisdiction and local government, police, fire and medical personnel, and local emergency management personnel.

Planner Cory Johnson is the lead staff on the project for WARC. The seven draft plan updates will be reviewed by the Alabama Emergency Management Agency and FEMA.

## API COURSE SCHEDULE

### *The Legal Foundation for Planning and Zoning in Alabama*

June 12 @ UNA East Campus 9:00 am-12:30 pm  
July 22 @ Gulf Shores 8:30 am-12:00 pm  
August 8 @ Madison 9:00 am-12:30 pm

### *Powers, Duties and Responsibilities of Planning Commissions and Boards of Adjustment*

June 12 @ UNA East Campus 9:00 am-12:30 pm  
July 22 @ Gulf Shores 1:00 pm-4:30 pm  
August 8 @ Madison 1:30 pm-5:00 pm

### *Comprehensive Planning: How to Prepare, Update and Implement Your Plan*

June 26 @ UNA East Campus 9:00 am-12:30 pm  
July 23 @ Gulf Shores 8:30 am-12:00 pm

### *Basic Zoning and Subdivision Regulations*

June 26 @ UNA East Campus 1:30 pm-5:00 pm  
July 23 @ Gulf Shores 1:00 pm-4:30 pm

### *Meeting Management and Dispute Resolution*

July 10 @ UNA East Campus 9:00 am-4:00 pm  
July 24 @ Gulf Shores 9:00 am-4:00 pm

### *Sign Regulation and Manufactured Housing in Your Community*

June 20 @ Fultondale 8:00 am-4:30 pm  
July 25 @ UNA East Campus 8:00 am-4:30 pm

### *Planning for Sustainability*

July 17 @ Bay Minette 8:00 am-6:30 pm

### *11th Annual Land Use Law Update*

September 21 @ Mobile 8:00 am-3:30 pm

For more information or to register, visit the API website at [www.una.edu/continuing-studies](http://www.una.edu/continuing-studies).



Should I get my master's now?



GO PLACES

## Do it all at once with Cal U's 100% ONLINE Master of Arts Tourism Planning and Development Program

**Do you have a passion for the tourism industry?** California University of Pennsylvania wants to take it to the next level. At Cal, we understand your busy schedule.

The Cal U Global Online Program is 100% online. As there is no classroom attendance requirement, the program fits comfortably into any busy schedule, giving you the freedom and flexibility to earn your master's degree, gain valuable experience in the job market and live your life, all at the same time.



California University of Pennsylvania  
Building Character. Building Careers.  
[www.cup.edu/go/tourism](http://www.cup.edu/go/tourism)  
A proud member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

**CALU**  
GLOBAL ONLINE

In just 16–24 months\*, you will prepare yourself for an exhilarating career in the ever-evolving fields of tourism research, planning and development. **Cal U** is an affiliate member of the World Tourism Organization's Education Council, which is comprised of worldwide leading tourism education institutions. This means you get an education of the highest quality, from one of the world's leading tourism education institutions. At Cal U, you'll find the curriculum unique, the flexibility a relief and the coursework captivating.

To learn more about **Cal U's Master of Arts Tourism Planning and Development Program**, check us out at [www.cup.edu/go/tourism](http://www.cup.edu/go/tourism) or call 866-595-6348.

\*The program is designed for a student to complete in 16–24 months. Changes to the proposed schedule can lengthen the program's duration.



California University  
of Pennsylvania  
250 University Avenue  
California, PA 15419

A proud member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.



# ALABAMA PLANNER

Jason Fondren, Editor  
2101 First Avenue North  
Birmingham, AL 35203

phone: (205) 458-3267  
email: [jfondren@kpsgroup.com](mailto:jfondren@kpsgroup.com)



American Planning Association  
**Alabama Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

## CONTRIBUTIONS

The Alabama Planner is a volunteer produced publication and member contributions are highly encouraged. If you are interested in volunteering or submitting an article, news item, opinion piece, correction, or suggestion, please contact Jason Fondren at the address/email address above.



American Planning Association

*Making great communities happen*

## ALABAMA ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

5900 Carmichael Place  
Montgomery, AL 36117-2345  
Phone: (334) 277-2221  
Fax: (334) 277-3899

### 1. Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

P.O. Box 2603  
Muscle Shoals, AL 35662-2603

Phone: (256) 389-0500  
Fax: (256) 389-0599  
Website: [www.nacolg.com](http://www.nacolg.com)

Director: Keith Jones

### 2. West Alabama Regional Commission

P.O. Box 509  
Northport, AL 35476

Phone: (205) 333-2990  
Fax: (205) 333-2713  
Website: [www.warc.info](http://www.warc.info)

Director: Robert B. Lake

### 3. Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham

1731 First Avenue North  
Suite 200  
Birmingham, AL 35203-2056

Phone: (205) 251-8139  
Fax: (205) 328-3304  
Website: [www.rpcgb.org](http://www.rpcgb.org)

Director: Charles Ball

### 4. East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

P.O. Box 2186  
Anniston, AL 36202-2186

Phone: (256) 237-6741  
Fax: (256) 237-6763  
Website: [www.earpdc.org](http://www.earpdc.org)

Director: James W. Curtis

### 5. South Central Alabama Development Commission

5900 Carmichael Place  
Montgomery, AL 36117-2345

Phone: (334) 244-6903  
Fax: (334) 270-0038  
Website: [www.scadc.state.al.us](http://www.scadc.state.al.us)

Director: Tyson Howard

### 6. Alabama-Tombigbee Regional Commission

107 Broad Street  
Camden, AL 36726-1701

Phone: (334) 682-4234  
Fax: (334) 682-4205  
Website: [www.alarc.org/atrc](http://www.alarc.org/atrc)

Director: John Clyde Riggs

### 7. Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

P.O. Box 1406  
Dothan, AL 36302-1406

Phone: (334) 794-4093  
Fax: (334) 794-3288  
Website: [www.sanman.net/searpdc/searpdc.htm](http://www.sanman.net/searpdc/searpdc.htm)

Director: Thomas B. Solomon

### 8. South Alabama Regional Planning Commission

P.O. Box 1665  
Mobile, AL 36633-1665

Phone: (251) 433-6541  
Fax: (251) 433-6009  
Website: [www.sarpc.org](http://www.sarpc.org)

Director: Russell J. Wimberly

### 9. Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

125 Washington Avenue  
Third Floor  
Montgomery, AL 36104-4240

Phone: (334) 262-4300  
Fax: (334) 262-6976  
Website: [www.carpdc.com](http://www.carpdc.com)

Director: Bill Tucker

### 10. Lee-Russell Council of Governments

2207 Gateway Drive  
Opelika, AL 36801-6834

Phone: (334) 749-5264  
Fax: (334) 749-6582  
Website: [www.lrcog.com](http://www.lrcog.com)

Director: Suzanne Girard Burnette

### 11. North-Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments

P.O. Box C  
Decatur, AL 35602-9003

Phone: (256) 355-4515  
Fax: (256) 351-1380  
Website: [www.narcog.org](http://www.narcog.org)

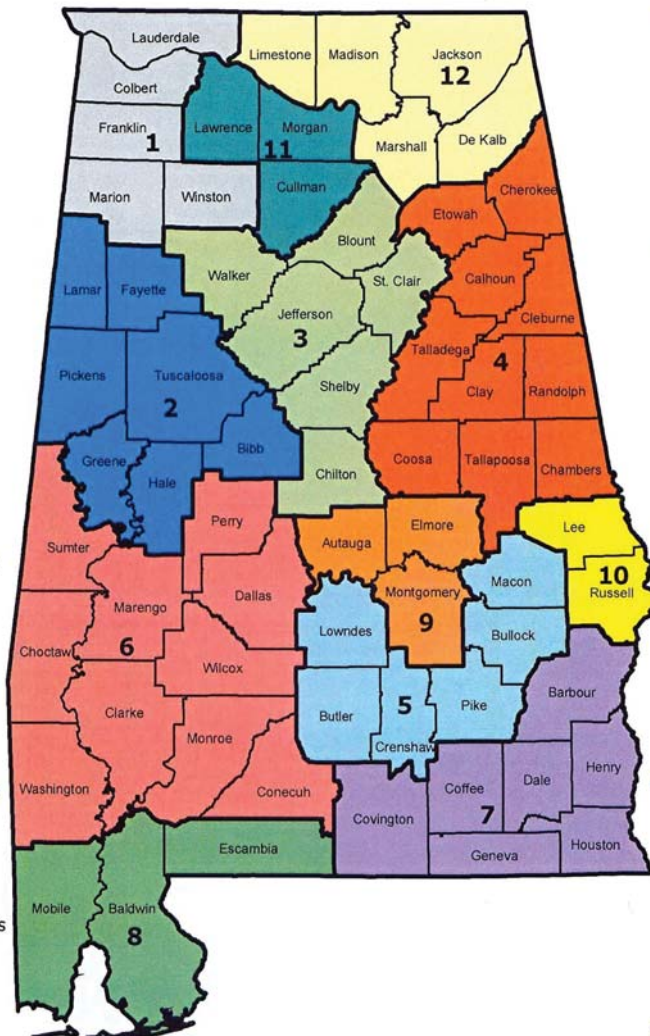
Director: C. Ronald Matthews

### 12. Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments

5075 Research Drive NW  
Huntsville, AL 35805

Phone: (256) 830-0818  
Fax: (256) 830-0843  
Website: [www.tarcog.org](http://www.tarcog.org)

Director: Robert B. Culver



Visit us on the Web at:  
<http://www.alarc.org>