

WESTERN CENTRAL CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



American Planning Association
Western Central Chapter
Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Western Central Chapter of the American Planning Association

montana • wyoming • south dakota • north dakota



Fall 2009

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Can Historic Preservation Help Lead Us Out of the Recession? *by James T. Kienle, FAIA*

Today's headlines are filled with a variety of facts, opinions, and predictions about the economy, natural environment, and sustainable development. Spanning these topics is the proven impact of historic preservation with its inherent "greenness" and economic value, possibly leading the way during these challenging economic times. The current recession began with the collapse of the housing market, which had a domino effect into nearly all sectors of construction. With new construction waning, the economics of reusing existing structures becomes more inviting. Despite the tired cry of "that old building is too expensive to save," I have seen very few buildings in my nearly 40 years of practice that would fit that description. "That old building" may not only be the greenest on the block, as is often said of late, but it may also be the most cost-effective opportunity to revitalize our communities in this time of uncertainty.



The historic Lerner Theatre in Elkhart, Illinois before the renovation efforts began. Photo credit: [NowPublic](#).

Out with the Old; In With the New—Until Now

During the building boom, preservationists relentlessly tried to educate people about the inherent sustainability and economic advantages of reusing structures, often falling on deaf ears. The seductiveness of building new was too great a temptation to overcome. Land was cheap as cities and towns sprawled into precious farmland. The real estate tax structure favored new construction over reinvestment in existing structures. The older structures in America's downtowns from urban centers to villages sat vacant, often demolished by neglect. It was easier to clear virgin land and build new—ever widening the suburbs—than to reclaim the old.

With new construction now lost to the depressive effects of the current recession, more people are beginning to take heed of the economic value, and inherent and environmental value of older structures. Particularly those structures built before 1940 are more sustainable by design because they considered natural heating and cooling with operable windows, greater

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Newsletter Information

This newsletter is published by the Western Central Chapter of the American Planning Association. Circulation is to the APA members of the Western Central Chapter (WCC). The WCC Executive Committee welcomes submission of original articles, editorial letters, and any other information of interest to both professional and citizen planners. Submissions should be made to the newsletter editor:

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2009/10 WCC Newsletter Schedule

Winter – January 25, 2010
 (submittal deadline is January 11)

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If your mailing or email address has changed, please contact the American Planning Association at the address below. You can also edit your information online at <https://www.planning.org/myprofile/>.

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President's Message by April D. Getchius, AICP

Dear Fellow Chapter Members:

Folks, I am not sure what happened to 2009, but it has flown by. Before I go on, please let me extend to you my wishes for the happiest of holidays!

A lot of elections are coming down the pike this year. APA Board membership is up for election, as are AICP Commission members. I have been asked to serve on the AICP nominating committee so please keep an eye out after the first of the year for election materials, position statements and ballots. Please get involved and vote and think about running yourself in the future.

The Western Central Chapter is also having elections. There are only two candidates and elections will return in another two years. Please vote and, again, think about getting involved when the next opportunity comes about.

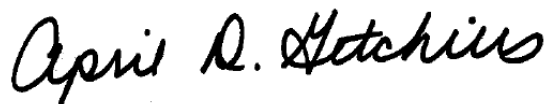
The fall APA leadership meeting was, to say the least, interesting in October. APA National, like many organizations, is facing budget challenges. They originally looked at withholding a substantial fee for membership to cover service costs to the Chapters. This was a surprise to the Chapter Presidents present and much conversation focused on outreach to the chapters and the impacts of the withholding. Originally, the APA Staff had proposed withholding \$10 per regular member in the chapter from chapter membership fee. For chapters like Hawaii, that was two-thirds of the membership fee cost. For chapters like ours, it would have been a significant hit as well. We do not have a "chapter annual meeting" that acts as a fund raiser so we have no way to make up revenues.

After much discussion, National returned with a more modest proposal of \$2.92 dollars per member each year. The net loss of revenue for our chapter is estimated to be \$890. We can absorb this cut, but we will have to keep an eye on APA's budget discussion in future years to see if this is a temporary charge or a permanent one.

Lastly, we have had three of our members nominated for the College of Fellows for AICP. This is a great honor and a lot of work for both the nominees and the folks helping them with the nomination. I asked Joanne Garnett, FAICP, to chair this process and so many thanks to her for reviewing applications, resumes, nomination letters, etc. We will know the outcome in a few months and will certainly let membership know.

Again, best wishes for a wonderful holiday season.

Cheers,



April D. Getchius, AICP
Chapter President



April out of the office.

"The Western Central Chapter is also having elections...Please vote and, again, think about getting involved when the next opportunity comes about."

“Reusing existing structures is recycling at its best. Not only is the embodied energy preserved, but avoiding demolition also reduces the financial and environmental costs of hauling it off to a landfill.”

Historic Preservation continued from page 1

thermal mass, more environmentally friendly materials, and natural orientation to the environment. Further, the energy to build them has already been spent. The USGBC has even adjusted its LEED rating system to begin accounting for the value of older structures. Additionally, reusing existing structures usually results in reusing other existing infrastructure, employing the already built network of roads, utilities and community facilities, instead of stretching them to unaffordable levels.

Reusing existing structures is recycling at its best. Not only is the embodied energy preserved, but avoiding demolition also reduces the financial and environmental costs of hauling it off to a landfill. Energy and money are spent in rehabilitating structures, but seldom come close to the costs of a new building. Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation pointed out at the 2008 Greenbuild International Conference & Expo: "Demolishing a 500,000-sq.-ft. building creates 40,000 tons of debris, enough to fill 250 railroad boxcars, a train two miles long, heading for the landfill. Constructing a new 500,000-sq.-ft. building would release as much carbon into the atmosphere as driving a car 30 million miles. It takes 35 to 50 years for an energy-efficient new home to recover the carbon expended to construct it."

Realizing the Value of Preservation

The cost advantages and environmental impact of new construction versus recycling older structures are important to keep in mind as urban areas are revitalized. Hopefully, these factors are enough to keep developers and planners from making the same mistakes seen during the urban renewal period of the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, when whole blocks of historic structures were wiped out to build new neighborhoods and commercial areas. Reusing an older structure and creating appropriate in-fill is a challenge and requires significant vision from the architect. It is often simply easier to wipe out the old and start with a clean slate, but if you take into consideration the entire cost in dollars and energy of this approach with demolition, landfills, creating new infrastructure and new construction, the challenge is one that the architectural profession needs to embrace more ardently.

Furthermore, not only is reusing an existing structure and infrastructure an appealing option for the cost and environmental advantages of recycling a building versus building new, but studies show that dollar for dollar, historic preservation is one of the highest job-generating economic development options as illustrated in the 2005 presentation "The Economics of Historic Preservation" by Don Rypkema:



The Lerner Theatre became a reality with the Grand Opening on November 24, 1924. It had 2000 seats and was host to a variety of vaudeville, big band and theatrical reviews as well as the exciting new movies! In 1931, the Lerner was purchased by the Warner Family and was renamed "The Warner". Photo Credit: www.elcotheatre.com.

Historic Preservation continued from page 4



Rendering of Lerner Theater in Elkhart, Ind., restoration of classic revival theater and new addition to revitalize downtown. Rendering from [Contract Magazine](#) original article.

- **In Michigan**, \$1 million in building rehabilitation creates 12 more jobs than does manufacturing \$1 million worth of cars;
- **In West Virginia**, \$1 million of rehabilitation creates 20 more jobs than mining \$1 million worth of coal;
- **In Oklahoma**, \$1 million of rehabilitation creates 29 more jobs than pumping \$1 million worth of oil;
- **In Oregon**, \$1 million of rehabilitation creates 22 more jobs than cutting \$1 million worth of timber;
- **In Pennsylvania**, \$1 million of rehabilitation creates 12 more jobs than processing \$1 million worth of steel;
- **In California**, \$1 million of rehabilitation creates five more jobs than manufacturing \$1 million worth of electronic equipment;
- **In South Dakota**, \$1 million of rehabilitation creates 17 more jobs than growing \$1 million worth of agricultural products;
- **In South Carolina**, \$1 million of rehabilitation creates eight more jobs than manufacturing \$1 million worth of textiles.

The Advisory Council for Historic Preservation further observes: "These are not just temporary construction jobs but also permanent jobs of various types, including continuing building repair and maintenance. As past studies have found, there are both direct and indirect economic effects from historic preservation, and there is an economic multiplier effect that ripples through the economy."

The current recession has been grave indeed, and many are not confident it has run its course, but historic preservation may be the vanguard for the construction industry and a major catalyst for economic improvement. It offers interesting and challenging opportunities for developers to reuse the built environment, and architects to step up with creative design to take advantage of the cost and environmental benefits of helping rebuild our economy.

James T. Kienle, FAIA, is the director of the historic preservation studio at [Moody•Nolan, Inc.](#), in Columbus, Ohio. Moody•Nolan is the largest African-American owned and operated architecture and engineering firm in the nation. This article originally appeared in [Contract Magazine](#) and is reprinted here with permission.

"In South Dakota, \$1 million of rehabilitation creates 17 more jobs than growing \$1 million worth of agricultural products."

Rural Broadband: Let's Talk About Cost

by Nick Muntean

JOB CORNER

Looking for a job? Several online planning job listings are free to search. Here are just a few:

American Planning Association: <http://www.planning.org/jobs/search/>

Planetizen: <http://www.planetizen.com/jobs>

USA.gov: [http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Work for the Government.shtml](http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Work%20for%20the%20Government.shtml)

Montana Association of Planners: <http://www.montanaplanners.org/jobs.htm>

If interested in posting a job listing in the WCC Newsletter, please contact the [newsletter editor](#) by the [submittal deadline](#) (as shown on page 2).



When the federal government brought electricity to rural America, it worried more about cost to farm families than construction. There's a lesson here for broadband.

The story of how the federal government helped bring electricity to rural America teaches an important lesson to those who are now deciding how to spend \$7 billion on extending broadband to the countryside. It's this: Cost is just as important as build-out. In fact, affordability of broadband is probably more important than its availability.

The comparison of electric service and broadband isn't exact, of course. But it is worth pausing for a moment to reflect on the lessons we can learn from the last government-sponsored effort to bring massive infrastructural improvements to rural areas — that of the rural electrification movement of the 1920s and '30s.

With so much of the present discourse focused on questions of build-out, it is important to realize that one of the gravest issues facing rural electrification was not simply the extension of electric lines to every nook and cranny of rural America but the affordability of electrical services for the end user. Given the present financial situation of many rural residents, this issue must be addressed in any appropriations bill for rural broadband development.

Created in 1935 at the height of the Great Depression, the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) was originally created as a relief agency. It was a public program intended to bring electrical power to rural areas which had been ignored by private utilities and to do so by hiring laborers from the nation's growing ranks of unemployed workers.

There were few skilled electricians among those out of work, however, which required the REA to transform itself from an agency that provided relief to one that issued loans. The REA eventually found its role not in the direct construction of lines but in issuing subsidized loans to electrical utilities, municipal power districts, and public power cooperatives.

Before the REA, private utilities required rural residents to pay the cost of constructing power lines to their homes, which frequently cost upwards of \$2,000 per mile. Private utilities, eager to make their money back as soon as possible on these investments, would require that the farmer repay the costs over a period of no more than three years. That repayment schedule made the cost of electrification prohibitive for all but the most prosperous farmers.

Most farmers who could afford electricity had already received service from private utilities by 1935. In the eyes of the private utilities, the project of rural electrification was "finished" despite



Lester Beall produced a series of posters promoting the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) during the 1930s and '40s. The REA promoted electricity not as a way to make money, but as a way to make life easier.

Rural Broadband *continued from page 6*

the fact that less than ten percent of rural residences were connected to the power grid.

For the other ninety percent, electrification remained a desirable yet elusive promise, as the economics of their situation did not support private build-out of the electric grid. While electrification could bring increased productivity to certain energy-intensive pursuits, such as dairy farming, it provided almost no gains in efficiency for more common farm products, such as cotton or most food crops. There simply wasn't an immediate commercial need for electricity on most farms. For the vast majority of farmers the real effects of electrification were to be felt in saving domestic labor time, the introduction of electric lighting, and the health benefits associated with modern plumbing.

For the typical farmer, the most promising benefits of electrification were precisely those things that could not "pay" for themselves.

Realizing that the project of build-out would be for naught if no one could afford the electricity the lines delivered (or the electrical gadgets the lines would power), the REA worked to reduce the cost of both power and machinery to rural users. The REA created a program to subsidize



Graphic credit: Lester Beall

the cost not only of wiring homes for electricity (bringing the cost for wiring a typical family home down from over \$100 to only \$10) but of clothing irons (\$3) and radios (\$7) as well.

By making a commitment to reducing costs through the funding of non-profit electrical cooperatives, the REA was able to drive down rates across the board for all rural subscribers, regardless of whether they were receiving service from a private or public power provider. Private utilities had been content to remain complacent before the creation of the REA. But when they saw rural users (the utilities' last potential segment for market growth) being siphoned away by the new non-profit cooperatives, the private utilities grew anxious.

By 1936, in the face of this new competition, it became common practice for private power companies to provide services to farmers without requiring them to pay the cost of constructing the lines. Private utility rates fell dramatically and became roughly equal to those charged by the cooperatives.

While these changes in rate schedules and line construction policies certainly benefited rural residents, it was only in conjunction with the REA's subsidization of home wiring and electrical appliances that the dream of electrification became a reality for millions of rural Americans.

The mantra "if you build it, they will come" is not always and forever

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ANNOUNCING APA MONTHLY WEBCASTS

No cost to APA members
CM 1.5 each webcast
1 pm - 2:30 pm EST

2009 Sessions

Creating Sustainable Communities
December 4, 2009

Community Strategies for Dealing with Distressed Properties - LAW CM CREDIT
December 10th

Social Equity - ETHICS CM CREDIT
December 11th

2010 Sessions Announced

Planners without Borders: Making Multi-Jurisdictional Planning Work
January 8th

Workforce Housing Challenges
January 15th

Planning for Wind Energy
January 22nd

Historic Preservation Part I
February 5th

The Future of Transportation
February 12th

Talking the Property Rights Blues
February 19th

Historic Preservation Part II
February 26th

For more information, and the entire list of webinar topics planned for 2010, go to <http://www.utah-apa.org/webcasts.htm>

Rural Broadband *continued from page 7*



Graphic credit: Lester Beall

true. Many people simply cannot afford the cost of admission. In thinking about the future of rural broadband development, it is imperative that we remember the lessons of the past and consider the ways in which consumers can be empowered to take actual advantage of these new technologies being delivered to their doorsteps.

Nick Muntean is a PhD student in the Radio-Television-Film Department at the University of Texas at Austin.

Where in the world? by Allyson C. Bristor, AICP



Thanks to Jeff Bollman for submitting this picture.

Submit your world pictures to the newsletter editor: abristor@bozeman.net.

It's a great way to brag about vacations!

WCC ELECTIONS - VOTE NOW!

The Western Central Chapter's Nominating Committee presents the election ballot to membership. Voting closes on **December 20, 2009**. Members, please follow the [link](#) and vote. Each member shall only vote once.



State Director & Western Planner Updates

Montana by Jeff Bollman, AICP

MAP Annual Conference

A successful conference was held in Red Lodge on September 30th through October 2nd. There are copies of some presentations and photos on the MAP website: www.montanaplanners.org. If you presented at the MAP conference and want your presentation posted on the web site, please contact [Jeff Bollman](mailto:Jeff.Bollman).

MAP Board Strategic Planning

The MAP Board held a Strategic Planning session on Friday, November 13th in Butte. Janet Cornish was gracious enough to volunteer her services as a facilitator of this session. One of the outcomes of this meeting was the decision to re-activate Board Committees that have been dormant for a while. These committees and their chairpersons are:

Membership:	Andrew Finch
Legislation:	Roger Millar
Public Education:	Candi Beaudry
Professional Development:	Janet Cornish
Western Planning:	Jeff Bollman
Ad Hoc Website Committee:	Kristin Smith

Now the Board needs members to come forward and help fill these committees. Additional information on the Strategic Planning session and how to volunteer can be found on the MAP website.

Wyoming by Joanne Garnett, FAICP

No update this issue.

South Dakota by Neil Putnam

No update this issue.

North Dakota by Stephen E. Miller, AICP

No update this issue.

Western Planner by Amber Vogt

The 2009 Western Planner Conference in Spearfish, South Dakota between September 8th and 11th was a success! Thanks to all who attended. With the help of the WCC, attendees had an opportunity to log 39 CM Credits from the sessions. We have received a number of registrations and are on our way to hitting our goal of 125 paid registrants! The WCC's contribution of \$2000 towards a Keynote Speaker helped us to gain a great person and awesome planner, Rick Harrison from Rick Harrison Design Studio in Minnesota.

As a WP Chapter member I am assigned a certain number of articles to contribute to the WP newsletter every year and I am happy to inform all of you that I have already met those deadlines and did one extra! I have contributed the following articles to the WP:

EDUCATION & CM CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

Wednesday Webinars

Planetizen is now offering **live one-hour webinars** every Wednesday! These informative sessions will introduce planners, designers and developers to new technologies and skills that will help expand knowledge of the field.

Each webinar will take place on **Wednesdays at 12 p.m. Mountain/2 p.m. Eastern**. The cost is just \$49.95. All Webinar Wednesday sessions have been approved to provide AICP CM credits. For more information on courses currently available, click [here](#).

Podcasts

APA is offering several podcasts about a range of planning topics. They are **free to download** and obtain CM credits! An easy way to remember this great resource is by [subscribing](#) to the podcasts through iTunes.



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State Director & Western Planner Updates *continued from page 9*

“Featured Planner: Michele Reinhart from Montana;”

“Planning Commissioner’s Corner, The 4 Basic Questions and the Survival Kit for Planning Boards” by Amber Vogt;

“Planner’s Toolbox, The Value of Digital Parcels” by Mike McMahon and Jenny Sorensen; and

“Planning Commissioner’s Corner, Too Many Traffic Lights and Stop Signs” by Bob Meyer.

AICP Certification Corner by Pepper McClenahan, AICP

A Year of Knowledge

What a fantastic year! 2009 has been action packed with wonderful educational opportunities available to APA members in a variety of formats including great conferences, national education providers, webcasts, podcasts, and DVDs for viewing in the comfort of your home or office. There’s something for everyone, whether you are an AICP seeking Certification Maintenance (CM) credits, or just looking to keep abreast of the latest tools for planners.



The December APA Calendar is brimming with educational opportunities. Check them out at <http://www.planning.org/calendar>. If you still need additional credits to maintain your AICP, visit the Utah APA Chapter website for three free webinars scheduled for December 4th, 10th and 11th: <http://www.utah-apa.org/webcasts.htm>. Course size is limited to the first 1,000 registrations so sign up soon. Keep in mind that no-shows frequently occur and you can often get into the webinar by logging in on the date and time of the webinar.

2010 is shaping up to be equally exciting. The Western Central Chapter will once again participate with other APA Chapters around the country to bring our members free webinar sessions. Many Chapters, including the WCC, are offering more than one event so the “monthly” webinars will now offer at least twice as many educational opportunities. As a member of WCC, you are eligible to participate in all the webinars. In addition to the other Chapter’s events, WCC will sponsor one webinar on March 12th and another webinar on August 13th. This year’s webinar series will offer a wide variety of topics including multi-jurisdictional planning, using [Myspace](#) and [Facebook](#), workforce housing challenges, historic preservation and much more. A complete schedule of events will be emailed shortly.

Please feel free to contact me (pmcclenahan@wlcwyo.com) any time with questions about Certification Maintenance, applying for the AICP examination or assistance with preparing for the AICP exam.

Happy Holidays!

Pepper McClenahan, AICP
Chapter Professional Development Officer

Where in the world? answer:

Florence, Italy.

Florence (Italian: Firenze) is the capital city of the Italian region of Tuscany and of the province of Florence. It is the most populous city in Tuscany.

Information obtained from Wikipedia.

APA Planners Press Feature



Downtown Planning for Smaller and Mid-sized Communities

by Philip L. Walker

Description: "For so long we were floundering and taking ad hoc measures, but the minute I understood what a downtown plan really was I said 'We need one of those!' As it turned out, it was the most fantastic vehicle I've ever seen," said Susan Moffat-Thomas of New Bern, North Carolina. Her hometown got a much-needed shot in the arm from a good downtown plan. Does yours need a similar boost?

Philip L. Walker, an experienced downtown-planning consultant, offers practical tips for preserving a sense of place, improving fiscal efficiency, and enhancing quality of life in *Downtown Planning for Smaller and Mid-sized Communities*.

Planners and revitalization officials will learn how to address physical components of the downtown, as well as economic development. Walker, an experienced downtown-planning consultant, also explains how to develop an organization to implement a downtown plan; how federal, state, and local policies may influence the planning process; and how to fund a downtown revitalization effort.

Click [here](#) to read the reviews!

Conference Opportunities

9th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference: "Building Safe, Healthy and Livable Communities"

Seattle, WA
February 4 - 6, 2010
www.newpartners.org

The Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute 19th Annual Land Use Conference: "The New American Landscape"

Denver, Colorado
March 4 & 5, 2010
<http://www.law.du.edu/index.php/rmlui>

Popular Culture Association Conference

Renaissance Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri
March 31 - April 3, 2010
<http://www.pcaaca.org/conference/national.php>

WyOPass Spring Workshop

April 22 - 23, 2010
Thermopolis, Wyoming
<http://www.wyopass.org/Conferences.aspx>

APA National Conference

New Orleans Convention Center
New Orleans, Louisiana
April 10 - 13, 2010
<http://www.planning.org/conference/>

Design Review for Officials

May 26, 2010
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. ET
<http://www.planning.org/audioconference/series/design.htm>

South Dakota Planners Annual Planning & Zoning Conference

Ramkota Inn in Pierre, South Dakota
October 27 & 28, 2010
Contact: [Neil Putnam](#) for more information.

National Preservation Conference

Austin, Texas
October 27 - 30, 2010
<http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/training/>



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