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

APA

Spring/Summer 2011

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Planetizen's 2011 Top Ten Websites

Abhijeet Chavan · Chris Steins · Nate Berg · Tim Halbur · Victor Negrete

Planetizen's annual list of the 10 best planning, design, and development websites represents some of the top online resources for news, information and research on the built environment.

Every year, Planetizen recognizes ten websites (and a few runners-up) as some of the best resources for urban planning, design and development. This list is based on nominations by Planetizen readers and staff, and judged against a common set of criteria, including content, design, and usability. We've listed the websites alphabetically, not in a particular order of rank.

Codes Project

www.codesproject.asu.edu

The Codes Project, developed under the guidance of Prof. Emily Talen at Arizona State University, is an impressive attempt to gather the variety of codes throughout history that have regulated land use into one useful directory. From the Code of Hammurabi to Seaside, Florida's Urban Code, you can download PDFs and compare these landmarks of regulation. You can even complete a "Synoptic Survey" and perform an urban analysis on your own town. An excellent, easy-to-use reference.

The Daily Pothole

thedailypothole.com

New York City's Department of Transportation created this blog as a campaign to re-brand the city's poor reputation when it comes to fixing potholes. The site is simply and irreverently designed to get the point across in a tongue-in-cheek fashion. The department is busy everyday filling thousands of potholes, and this site makes that number abundantly clear. The blog also provides a form for reporting potholes.

The Dirt

www.dirt.asla.org

The Dirt, a weekly blog from the American Society of Landscape Architects, has long been essential reading for Planetizen's editors. The ASLA staff have their fingers on the pulse of the most interesting news about landscape architecture, and regularly interview working professionals about their thoughts and processes. As the fields of landscape architecture, urban design and planning increasingly overlap, the perspective from The Dirt becomes more and more relevant..

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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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2011 WCC Newsletter Schedule
Fall/Winter – November 14, 2011
(submittal deadline is October 31)

Address/Email Changes

If your mailing or email address has changed, please contact the American Planning Association at www.planning.org. Log in on the right- or left-hand column of any APA web page, under the "My APA" heading. Click the "Go to My APA" link, and then click the "Edit" button in the contact information area.

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President's Message *by April D. Getchius, AICP*

Dear Western Central Chapter Members:

Hope this newsletter finds you and yours well and happy. Please know that those of you that have been touched by flood or other disasters, our thoughts and prayers are with you.

I attended the American Planning Association Conference in Boston in April. Boston is a great city, very walkable and with lots to offer. The conference is shortened from years past so it was a bit of whirlwind trip. There were lots of issues and sessions, very heavy on the climate change theme.

There was also a session on our aging communities. Many of us are approaching retirement and are in denial – we will always drive, always live in our homes, etc. Although our kids are probably glad to hear we don't want to move in with them, the reality is that we need to find new ways to help our elders age in place and stay in their homes as long as possible. Lots of creative ideas ranging from a virtual village where folks can call to get help with home maintenance, housekeeping, etc. to new designs in construction that facilitate staying home.

There was also a lot of discussion among planners regarding new dialogues in planning. Many people are active in local politics that have not been active in the past – they may oppose government regulation, sustainability, and smart growth. Seeing them as government dictates they oppose many proposals planners bring forward. A member of the Virginia Chapter of APA wrote a paper describing how we may need to change our vernacular. Most everyone appreciates efficient government and communities that provide residents with lots of choices – perhaps that is how we should begin to define and describe our work. Check out the article on the Western Central Chapter website, under the "Papers & Essays" link on the "Resources" tab.

As we get close to the end of summer, some are thinking about school this fall. If you are or know a graduate student in a planning related program, please check out the WCC website for our scholarship program. We hope that we can help pay for a few books, pizza, or materials for up and coming student planners in our chapter.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact me if we can be of assistance or if you have ideas on chapter services.

Best Wishes,

April D. Getchius

April D. Getchius, AICP
Chapter President

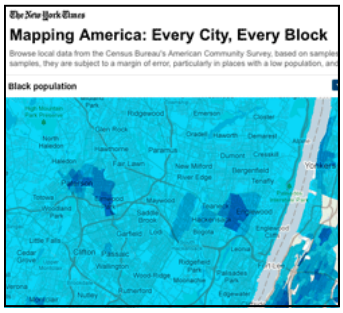
Editor's note: April has just accepted a new job at the State of Wyoming's Department of Health. She will be the Senior Administrator of the Division of Aging. Please join me in wishing her good luck with the job transition and the move to Cheyenne, WY!

April out of the office.

"Although our kids are probably glad to hear we don't want to move in with them, the reality is that we need to find new ways to help our elders age in place and stay in their homes as long as possible."

Websites *continued from page 1*

"Google Earth Engine opens up historic satellite data to allow researchers and scientist to see patterns of deforestation and environmental destruction more clearly."



Every City, Every Block
projects.nytimes.com/census/2010/explorer

A project of The New York Times, "Every City, Every Block" creates a very user-friendly interface for looking at the latest numbers from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Household income, demographics, median home value, same sex couples: every one of these data points can be mapped out across the U.S. or down to the census tract, color coded for easy viewing and analysis. We're not sure why The New York Times put in the effort, but it pays off in spades.

Google Earth Engine
earthengine.googlelabs.com

Google Earth Engine opens up historic satellite data to allow researchers and scientist to see patterns of deforestation and environmental destruction more clearly. The mapping tool allows anyone to see and detect changes, map trends and quantify differences on the earth's surface. As researchers add layers of information to the database, an unprecedented laboratory grows on top of the Google Earth surface. Brian McClen, VP of Engineering for Google Geo Group, said in an interview, "I believe that this is just the first of many Earth Engine applications that will help enable scientists, policymakers, and the general public to better monitor and understand the Earth's ecosystems."

Grist
grist.org

We've been remiss in not recognizing Grist in the past for its coverage of environmental and energy issues, but the addition of Placemaking Correspondent Sarah Goodyear pushes them over the edge. Goodyear has a knack for pulling together all the latest information on land use issues and presenting it in a no-nonsense way. Her latest article explains the absurdity of the so-called "War on Cars", when cars will obviously be part of the mobility solution for a long time to come. Grist is a voice of sanity in the sometimes chaotic world of "green media."

How Big Really?
howbigreally.com

A BBC Dimensions program, How Big Really? provides a unique way to visualize scale the built environment. The site basically transposes historical monuments, city buildings, environmental disasters, or other structures onto a map of a given area to provide a context to understand just truly how magnificent, colossal and or horrible they were. Try placing the Chernobyl radiation cloud over your hometown. Yikes.

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New Urban Network
newurbannetwork.com

New Urban News was an essential but somewhat dated-looking website and newsletter for over a decade, one of the few news sources dedicated specifically to covering New Urbanism. With this new website, Robert Steuteville and Philip Langdon have made a significant upgrade, creating an essential resource for smart growth news. Langdon in particular seems to be everywhere at once, delivering high-quality articles at a breakneck pace. We also can't help but notice they're using Drupal, our CMS of choice.

Solar Boston
gis.cityofboston.gov/solarboston

This .gov site for the City of Boston is a great example of the useful intersection of data, mapping and design. With the goal of increasing solar power in the city, Mayor Menino spearheaded the creation of a website to track the growth of installations around the city. It also gives users tools to analyze how effectively solar panels would work on their own home or office. The site's sophisticated interface is reminiscent of a Star Trek control panel with panels that move in and out of the picture when needed.

"The site's sophisticated interface is reminiscent of a Star Trek control panel with panels that move in and out of the picture when needed."

Street Films
streetfilms.org

If you're reading this, you've surely read one of the websites in the Streetsblog Network (we've recognized them all in previous Top 10 lists). The advocacy sites provide excellent coverage of transportation and complete streets issues. Streetsfilms deserves extra attention for putting words to image, with production-savvy videos that explain bus rapid transit, congestion pricing and bike boulevards for a general audience. Experts like Janette Sadik-Khan show up to illuminate the details, and Streetsfilms camera pops up around the world from London to San Francisco.

Honorable Mentions

CNT
cnt.org

The Center for Neighborhood Technology is a unique entity in the world of urban planning; staffers call it a "creative think-and-do tank." CNT regularly develops online tools for understanding the built environment, like the Housing and Transportation Efficiency Index, which illustrates just how much transportation costs impact household budgets. It turns out living closer to the center of your city is often just as affordable as living in the suburbs when you factor the two together.

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Meet the WCC Executive Board

As the bylaws state, the Western Central Chapter "shall elect a President and Vice-President as members to an Executive Board. Four state representatives (one each from Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming) shall also be elected or appointed from the membership of each state to serve as members of the Executive Board. From the elected officers and state representatives, the president selects, and the Executive Board members affirm, the selection of a secretary and treasurer. From the Chapter membership, the president selects, and the Executive Board members affirm, a professional development officer and a representative to Western Planning Resources, Inc. (WPR), who also serves as members of the Executive Board."

We thought the chapter membership would like to learn more about the people who are serving on their Executive Board. Please read below for brief bios (and even some pictures!) of the board members.

April D. Getchius, AICP
President

April Getchius just accepted a new position at the State of Wyoming's Department of Health in the Aging Division. She is moving to Cheyenne, Wyoming after serving as the Community Development Director of Casper, Wyoming for over 4 ½ y ears. April moved from Urbana, Illinois to take the Director position. Prior to joining the City of Casper, she served as the Campus Planner for the University of Illinois for 5 ½ years. In that role her primary responsibility was intergovernmental relations between the University campus and the local units of government. Before joining the University of Illinois, April worked for the City of Urbana for 13 years and was the Community Development Director before her departure.

April received her bachelor's degree in geography from the University of Illinois with a concentration in studies in Urban and Regional Planning. She has been a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners since 1993 and very active in the American Planning Association at the local, state and national levels. She also serves as president of the Western Central Chapter of the American Planning Association.

April is married to Craig Getchius, a landscape and wildlife photographer. They will celebrate their 35th wedding anniversary this year. They have two married sons.

Neil Putnam
Vice-President

Neil Putnam is his second term as the WCC Vice-President. Prior to becoming Vice-president, he served as South Dakota's State Representative. He is also serving his second term as president of the South Dakota Planners Association (SDPA) and was SDPA's secretary/treasurer for nine years. Neil is currently the City Planner for the City of Mitchell, South Dakota and has held this position since 1998. Prior to his time in city government, he served many years in county government as a director of equalization and deputy county auditor. Neil has also been on U.S. Congressional staff.

Jeff Bollman, AICP
Treasurer/Montana State Representative

Currently, Jeff is a Land Use Planner with the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Southern Land Office and is responsible for helping manage +/-380,000 surface acres of school Trust lands in a seven county area in south central Montana. He primarily deals with special use leases and easement/right-of-way requests but also gets

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EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Planetizen offers a variety of courses covering planning-related topics and taught by experts in the field. These self-paced courses are designed for professionals, students, or concerned citizens looking for quick yet thorough introductions to concepts relevant to their work.

Selected courses are eligible for credits from the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP*) Certification Maintenance program.

For more information on courses currently available, click here.

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to develop projects on Trust land.

Some of Jeff's "free" time is spent training for his next marathon or ultra-marathon. Last year he completed 14 marathon or longer races. Luckily, he has a very supportive (and understanding) wife, who accompanies him to many races. Jeff is also on the Board of Directors of a local trails advocacy group, BikeNet, as well as serving as the Chair of the Billings Board of Adjustment.

Dave Mingo, AICP
Secretary/South Dakota State Representative

Dave's work activities include land use planning, ordinance writing / administration, economic development and property management. Dave started his career in the profession at Planning and Development District III in South Dakota in 1989. He began work for the City of Yankton in 1993. Dave holds a graduate degree in Geography with an emphasis in regional and community studies from Western Illinois University. His undergraduate degree is from South Dakota State University. He became a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners in 1998. Dave enjoys many outdoor activities with wife Terri, daughter Megan (Yankton) and son Ryan (San Diego).

Jim Quirk
North Dakota State Representative

Jim Quirk, AICP joined the WCC Executive Board in late 2010. He has worked for 15 years in local planning agencies in Texas, Florida and California. His local government work assignments addressed advance planning, development review, strategic planning, natural resource management and development design issues. He has worked for 5 years in private consulting, producing entitlement materials documenting mixed use master planned proposals for developer clients. After a layoff from a consulting job in mid-2008, Jim, his wife Joan, and sons Aidan and Shane relocated to the Bismarck-Mandan area of North Dakota. Currently unemployed after recent work as a right-of-way specialist, Jim is seeking a managerial planning position to allow him to reenter public service.

Joanne Garnett, FAICP
Wyoming State Representative

Joanne E. Garnett, FAICP, has over 30 years of professional planning experience in the public and private sector. She has specialized in assisting local governments with their short term and targeted planning needs. Her experience includes urban, rural, and regional planning, community development and alternatives analysis, housing assessments, transportation assessments and recreation studies. Joanne is a past national president of both the American Institute of Certified Planners and the American Planning Association. When she isn't working, Joanne volunteers in disadvantaged communities around the world. joanne@orionplanninggroup.com.

Pepper D. McClenahan, AICP
Professional Development Officer

A native of Wyoming, Pepper loves all things outdoors….as long as the temperature is 60 degrees or higher! Educated at the University of Wyoming, she has a bachelor's degree in human communication with a minor in psychology. Pepper's introduction to the world of planning came 16 years ago by way of invitation from the Natrona County Planning Director

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ANNOUNCING APA MONTHLY WEBCASTS

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

Fights over Flight
August 12, 2011

Ehics for Planners - ETHICS CM CREDIT
Sponsored by WCC!
August 19, 2011

Eco-Industrial Development
September 8 , 2011

Successful Developer RFP Processes
September 16, 2011

Natural Gas Extraction
September 23, 2011

For more information, and a complete list of webinar topics planned for 2011, go to http://www.utah-apa.org/

Websites *continued from page 5*

Cubit Planning
cubitplanning.com

Although we're often hesitant to recommend fee-based services, we were so impressed with Cubit Planning's friendly interface, and the professional-quality demographic, poverty and housing reports, that we were hooked. Using a Google map interface, you draw your project on a map and press a button to get instant, pre-formatted data, maps and shapefiles. The brainchild of Kristen Carney, a planner for TxDOT Environmental Affairs, Cubit offers a workflow optimized for planning and environment projects. You can sign up for a free 7-day trial before opting for a paid plan ranging from $20 - $250 per month.

The Los Angeles Times
latimes.com

Over the past year, The Los Angeles Times has broken two incredibly significant urban planning stories. Reporters Jeff Gottlieb and Ruben Vives got the scoop on the Bell, California City Hall salary scandal, and the paper also produced a major exposé of California's redevelopment agencies that helped lead to Governor Brown's proposal to eliminate redevelopment programs altogether in the Golden State. In an age where investigative journalism has faced serious cuts, the LAT shows that its still got the chops.

reCities
recities.blogspot.com

Robert Kwolek's blog is wonderfully picture-heavy and pragmatic, presenting Kwolek's personal views on urban planning and design.

Top Website Criteria

The top websites are based on nominations by PLANetizen readers and judged against the following criteria.

1. The site should provide a service to the planning and development community.
2. The site should provide one of the following:
   a. a broad range of information relevant to the national planning and development community; or
   b. a particularly strong focus on a particular topic; or
   c. an outstanding example of the use of technology for planning and development.
3. The site should meet minimum basic expectations for design and professionalism.
4. The site should be available to the general public.
5. The site should be frequently updated and current.
6. Sites will be evaluated for web accessibility.

WCC RELEASES STRATEGIC PLAN

Thank you to the WCC members who commented on the draft copy of the WCC Strategic Plan. The final copy of the plan is now available on the Chapter's website: www.wccapa.org under the "About" tab.

Where in the World? *by Allyson C. Bristor*

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Thanks to Joanne Garnett for submitting this beautiful picture.
Submit your world pictures to the newsletter editor: abristor@bozeman.net

Visit WCC on the web: www.wccapa.org

State & Western Planner Updates

Montana

MAP Annual Conference: The 2011 MAP annual Conference will be held in Big Sky between 14-16 of September. Conference registration will be available soon along with a draft conference agenda. Watch the MAP website www.montanaplanners.org for new information.

2012 Western Planner Conference: Save the date! The 2012 Western Planner Conference will be held in Billings on 7-10 August 2012.

2011 Legislative Session: The session is over and there were not many significant changes made to statute. One area that will get further discussion during the Interim is the dreaded "subdivision for lease or rent" issue. For details as they emerge, watch the MAP web site.

MAP web site forums: If you have not already done so, make sure to register for the forums on the MAP web site. The forums are open only to MAP members and are intended to provide a place for discussion of the variety of issues that can crop up while trying to be a planner in Montana. So make sure you take advantage of this resource!

North Dakota

North Dakota Planning Association has identified improving outreach to planners, as well as citizens and public officials concerned with community planning issues, as a priority for growing and diversifying the membership. Board members have made contacts and identified potential partnerships with other organizations (such as ND League of Cities and ND

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to join his staff. He felt her background working in association management with real estate agents prepared her for working with the general public. In addition to working with diverse groups of people who didn't always see eye-to-eye, the Realtor organization also has a code of ethics to which they subscribe. Pepper been fortunate to work in the public sector for Natrona County, and the cities of Casper and Greenville, Texas, and received my AICP in 2001. One of my favorite jobs was traveling Wyoming working with small municipalities, water districts, state and national parks and the tribes completing source water and wellhead protection plans. I also worked in the private sector as senior planner and project manager for a WLC Engineering, Surveying and Planning where I divide my time between long-range planning projects, special studies and being the consulting planner for the towns of Mills and Evansville. Currently I'm working as a project manager for the State of Wyoming, Air Quality Division, Planning Section to develop a statewide analysis system for energy impacts.

Amber A. Vogt
Western Planner Representative

Amber attended Black Hills State University in Spearfish, SD and received her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Entrepreneurial Studies in 2003. Her first real job was at the local hospital in the finance department where she was in charge of collections. She can honestly say after doing a job like that for a year you have a high respect for the people that do it for a lifetime.

In September 2004, Amber married her best friend, Jay Vogt (no not the SD Historic Preservation person) at Terry Peak Ski Slope in Lead, SD. Right after her honeymoon in October 2004, she was hired as the Lawrence County Administrative Assistant and after 3 years of learning the position and also listening often to what her boss was doing, she was given the opportunity to move into the Director position in May 2007. Amber had her first child, Jaysa Jane, in September and she and her husband built a new house and moved in November 2007.

Now that you have the background, here are a few of Amber's hobbies: camping, hiking, reading, sketching and drawing, her husband, her daughter, her job, her pets (Kia a Siberian Husky and Whiskey a Siamese cat), a good beer and of course the Western Planners Organization and the Western Central Chapter.

Allyson Bristor
Newsletter Editor/Webmaster

Allyson is currently an Associate Planner and the Neighborhood Coordinator for the City of Bozeman, Montana. She's originally from the suburbs of Baltimore, Maryland and moved to Montana 8 years ago after completing her Masters of City Planning at the University of Pennsylvania. When she first arrived in Bozeman, she served as the City's Historic Preservation Officer and held that position for over 6 years. Historic architecture and its rehabilitation will forever remain a passion of hers.

Allyson's move across the country was not only for the job in Bozeman, but also for the love of the outdoors and the spirit of a small community. When not attending a City Commission public hearing or a neighborhood association meeting, Allyson can be found mountain biking in the Bridger Mountains, skiing at Big Sky resort, or completing the WOD (workout-of-the-day) at Bridger CrossFit..

Recently engaged to her boyfriend Chris Brekke, Allyson is having fun with a new type of work...wedding planning. The couple plans to wed next summer in Bozeman.

Where in the world? answer:

Salvador, Brazil.

Salvador is the largest city on the northeast coast of Brazil and the capital of the Northeastern Brazilian state of Bahia. Salvador is also known as Brazil's capital of happiness due to its easygoing population and countless popular outdoor parties, including its street carnival. The first colonial capital of Brazil, the city is one of the oldest in the country and in the New World.

Information obtained from Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvador,_Bahia

Updates *continued from page 9*

Association of Counties). The Board is mobilizing to provide a regular contribution to newsletters of these groups to highlight noteworthy planning activities going on in North Dakota's communities. NDPA hopes to formalize a training module aimed at the state's planning commissioners, perhaps in an on-line format. It is hoped that an ongoing contact with representatives of cities and counties would offer an opportunity to market the training module.

South Dakota

The SD Planners Association annual Planning and Zoning Conference will be October 26 & 27, 2011 in Huron, South Dakota. Details will be available at www.sdplanners.com. SDPA hopes to have AICP credits available and professional development opportunities for planners, planning commissioners, elected officials and anyone with an interest in land use policies. South Dakota like other states has been dealing with flooding. The record precipitation has resulted in unproductive farm ground, road closures, and property loss. The Missouri River has been at records levels and is causing havoc on the communities along the river. At this time, it remains to be seen as too the extent of the destruction.

The South Dakota Supreme Court has ruled on a couple noteworthy land use cases. One deals with whether or not a governing body's inaction on a proposed zoning ordinance is appropriate. The other deals with 'arbitrary and capricious' findings in regards to a conditional use. You may find the cases on the SD Supreme Court's website.

Wyoming

In May another successful Spring Workshop geared toward Planning and Zoning Commissioners was held in Thermopolis, Wyoming with about 50 attendees. The Spring Workshop has been a popular feature for WYOPASS members since it was begun over ten years ago thanks in no small part to its registration cost: FREE to WYOPASS members! The topics are relevant to citizen planners that are serving on P&Z's, and at the same time practicing planners benefit due to the subject matter and the fact that most sessions qualify for AICP CM credits. So it is a win-win workshop all around. Our workshops begin with the board meeting late Thursday afternoon, drift over to a reception for all in attendance, and then Friday we start early in the morning and wrap up by 3 p.m.

Laramie is the site of our fall conference to be held August 31-September 1, 2011. The conference hotel is the Hilton Garden Inn, and they have a block of rooms reserved for WYOPASS at the stellar rate of $99 per night. Reservations can be made by calling the Inn at 307-745-5500. Remember to ask for the WYOPASS rate! Information about conference registration can be found online at www.wyopass.org. Registration is $125 and it includes the opening reception Wednesday evening, three tracks of sessions all day Thursday and Friday, the awards ceremony, and plenary session by Dr. William Gribb on Measuring Sustainability. Check the WYOPASS website for details or call conference chair Charles Bloom at 307-721-5232 for additional information. See you there!

Western Planner

The Western Planner conference this year is September 11-14 in Santa Fe, New Mexico! There are 36 sessions in 4 conference tracts, most with CM credit available: a) Track 1 - Basics, Nuts and Bolts, b) Track 2 - Sustainable vs. Sustainabull, c) Track 3 - Western Ways & Means, and d) Track 4 – Infrastructure (Wheels and Deals). The conference schedule for your information at this link. http://www.sdplanners.com/WP Conf Schedule 3 as of 5-11-2011.pdf

The room rate at the historic La Fonda Hotel is only $119/night plus tax and $5 daily for guest parking. Call 1-800-523-5002 and reference #650163 or NMAPA/Western Meeting to reserve the special rate. You may also register online at www.lafondasantafe.com.

Conference registration is $250 before June 15, and then it creeps up $295 (and more after July 29). To register, follow the link:
https://www.planning.org/ecommerce/conference/viewConferenceDetails.aspx?conferenceId=147
(Note: this link takes you to the American Planning Association who is handling registration…you will need to get an APA ID 1st (free) in order to register for the conference.)

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

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).

American Planning Association
Western Central Chapter
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