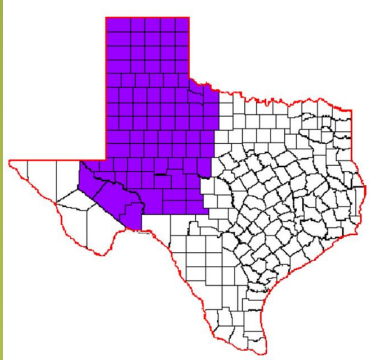




NORTHWEST SECTION QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION
TEXAS CHAPTER | NORTHWEST SECTION
SUMMER 2018



The Northwest Section includes 88 Texas counties. Member cities currently include Abilene, Amarillo, Ballinger, Big Spring, Clyde, Levelland, Lubbock, Midland, Odessa, San Angelo, and Vernon. For more information, visit www.txplanning.org/northwest/.

Section Officers:

Director: AJ Fawver, AICP, CNU-A, CPM, City of Amarillo

Assistant Director: Jon James, AICP, City of San Angelo

Secretary: Kristen Sager, City of Lubbock

Treasurer: Zack Rainbow, City of Abilene

Newsletter Editor/Website: Jeff Fisher, AICP, City of San Angelo

Professional Development Officer: Cameron Walker, AICP, Permian Basin MPO



Message from the Director

On the heels of a very successful event in April, we are entering the summer months with lots of great ideas as to what challenges our members are currently facing around the section.

We are happy to bring you several pieces in this newsletter that incorporate your suggestions and submittals. Lots of things are happening in our area.

Based upon the unanimous approval of our members in attendance at the April meeting, we have submitted our draft budget for the year, along with a grant request to help us secure the funds to bring excellent events and speakers to our area. We will bring you an update on how the Chapter leadership responds to this request in our Fall edition.

The discussion in Lubbock was excellent, and I hope you all went home full of ideas and excited about the possibilities. Here in Amarillo we are talking about taking the next

steps, and will share that with you if we are able to proceed. I found the comments from all of you very helpful, and some wonderful ideas were shared, so stay tuned on how we begin integrating these as we move forward!

Please remember that to stay connected, we need our members to participate, speak up, and weigh in. I'm proud of what we accomplished with the first event of the year, and look forward to getting to know our newer members, while staying in touch with those who have been part of the section for some time. Keep up the good work, and keep those ideas coming!

-AJ

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Jun 28, 2018 - AICP exam application deadline ([FMI](#)) for November test

Jun 29, 2018 - Northwest Section Business Meeting (in person)

July 1, 2018 - Online registration begins for Texas Chapter Conference ([TXAPA page](#))

July 17, 2018 - How creative placemaking can help build more resilient communities ([live webinar](#))

July 18, 2018 - Roundabouts that Work for Cyclists and Pedestrians ([live webinar](#))

August 22 - 23, 2018 - Strengthening Your Facilitation Skills ([in person event](#))

Polling All Members

This month's survey: Subdivision Regulations.

How does your City regulate subdivisions? What are some the challenges faced in the midst of increasing development and fiscal impacts? How do you feel your current process could be improved? Go to the following link to complete the survey: <https://bit.ly/2rB0Bwy>

We will share the results in an email to our members list and in the next newsletter.

Results of Spring Short Term Rentals Survey:

- 2 cities allow these
- 1 city does not, but is drafting rules
- 1 city does not allow
- 2 cities allow these by right in certain districts
- Top 5 concerns about short term rentals are:
(1) Traffic, (2) Crime, (3) Negative impact on property values, (4) Noise.

Featured Projects

The City of Amarillo established the "Community Counts" neighborhood planning program in 2016.

The second neighborhood plan to be completed under this initiative, the Barrio Neighborhood Plan, was adopted by the Amarillo City Council on April 17th. This neighborhood planning effort was comprised of six neighborhood advisory committee meetings, and three neighborhood meetings over the course of 12 months. The neighborhood plans are funded both by a recent bond election approved in 2017, and a City/County funding partnership. The plan can be found at: <https://bit.ly/2IkAWSI>. This plan is an amendment to the Amarillo Comprehensive Plan, and will serve to:

- Guide orderly growth through land use and development ordinances.
- Guide decisions regarding services and as a tool for policy making.
- Evaluate potential policies and land use decisions.
- Serve as a basis for prospective public-private partnerships.
- Be a starting point for infrastructure and mobility projects.

Meanwhile, the Permian Basin MPO has been busy working with its transportation partners to complete a 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program. Once approved, the document will indicate what the spending priorities are in the Midland Odessa region. Contained in the list of projects is approximately \$202 million of transportation investment projects.

Additionally, they are finishing the process to hire a consulting firm to assist with an effort to establish potential locations for a bicycle and pedestrian corridor to connect Midland and Odessa. The cities have bicycle and trail facilities, but there is a gap of approximately 12 miles.

Thank you to our new and renewing members!

Rolandrea Russell, City of Midland
Richard Porter, San Angelo
Aida Ejroushi, Texas Tech University
Christina Benante, Midland
Girmay Berhie, Lubbock
Janna Keller, Midland
G. Randolph, Abilene
E'Lisa Smetana, Abilene MPO

What's Happening

In each issue, we will feature some news stories of interest from within our section. Here's a look at recent events:

Judge Dissolves Order, City Council Can Vote on Annexation

Fixing the smile: Infill development could fill in, fill out Abilene's future

New business park planned for South Abilene

Council to consider partnership for downtown SPC location

\$6 million townhome project coming to Early

Historic Santa Fe Depot to become part of downtown revitalization

City, county form courthouse committee

P&Z approves alcohol permits, new hotel near sports complex

PBBOR: Home supply drops below one month's worth

City overhauls downtown incentive programs

Commissioners Corner

Whether your city is large or small, if you have a Planning & Zoning Commission, then you know the importance of commissioners. Keep in mind that they can also benefit from joining our section, as well as APATX.

In this issue, we encourage you to become a member of the American Planning Association (APA). APA provides a wealth of training, resources, publications and tools for its members. APA Planning Board Members connect to a diverse community of planners and other professionals. Resources include online training, policy guides, and access to a bi-monthly magazine, "The Commissioner" which is full of resources and knowledge to assist you in making informed decisions. For example, this month's edition focuses on relationships between the commission and staff. Here's an excellent piece on that very topic, written by Wayne Senville, and referenced in the April edition: <https://bit.ly/2Im2zdP>.

One tidbit? "Be clear when asking questions and try to minimize surprises." Great food for thought.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS / UPDATES

City of Richardson v. Oncor Electric Delivery Company decided ([via TML](#))

The next big economic development issue? The status of property tax abatement agreements after 2019. ([via TML](#))

TIGER is no more, replaced by BUILD transportation grants. Applications for surface transportation projects are due July 19, 2018. For more information, and for training webinars, click [here](#).

Reviews You Can Use

From technology to the latest reads, subscriptions to engagement methods, our goal is to continually review what's new that our membership might be able to utilize or learn from.

In this edition, we focus on two user-friendly phone apps with a focus on mobility.

Streets (\$1.99 available at the App Store)
<http://www.futuretap.com/apps/streets>

This app allows you to use view panoramic images at street level using your iPhone, iPad and Apple Watch. It includes any location covered by Google Street View. Streets includes a mini interactive map allowing to user to easily browse 360 degree panoramas or satellite images. Shops and businesses with indoor panoramas are identified in orange.

Street View coverage is displayed in blue (for standard panoramas) or orange (for shops and businesses with indoor panoramas). Streets can be launched from Google Maps allowing the user to switch from maps to view 360 degree panoramas on Streets.

Final Thoughts

Streets is a low-cost application convenient for planners and anyone assessing the built environment. Planners interested in urban design, architecture, and providing successful urban spaces can benefit from this tool on their iPhone, iPad or Apple Watch.

Piktochart (free account, begins at \$12.50 per month) <http://piktochart.com>

Piktochart.com allows the user to create clear and creative infographics, including charts, graphs, and images for presentations. The application is available on both Android and iOS phones. In addition to presentations, the app also allows you to produce reports, flyers and posters. Once a draft of the visual product has been created, the template may be shared on a single dashboard, allowing an entire team access to make changes.

Final Thoughts

Although the application can be costly, (ranging from \$12.50 per month to the Pro Team package of \$82.50 per month), it provides a comprehensive and diverse set of application tools, including icons and images, templates, interactive charts, and maps to utilize. Planners can benefit from this application, especially the dashboard option which allows teams to access Piktochart files in a single location and make changes in real time.

Have an item you'd like us to review? Email your suggestions to jeff.fisher@cosatx.us.

2018 MEETING SCHEDULE

Friday, June 29th - Amarillo [Main Event:
Subdivision Platting Discussion Panel]

Friday, September 21st - Abilene [Main Event:
Historic Preservation]

Stay tuned for information about a
Commissioners' Training in November!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Call for Chapter Awards & Planning Excellence

Chapter Awards - submit by July 13th

Any APA Texas member may nominate plans, projects, programs, individuals, or organizations to several categories, such as:

- Community of the Year
- Comprehensive Planning
- Current Planning
- Journalism
- Planning Official
- Planning Project
- Student Project

You can easily nominate your project via a digital application and uploading tool found [here](#).

Planning Excellence Awards - submit by July 2nd

The Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association continues its program of recognizing planning excellence in municipalities throughout the State.

Evaluation criteria include the level of training of Planning Commissioners and professional staff, professional qualifications of the planning staff, breadth and currency of master plan components and completion of other planning related projects. Fill out an easy online application for this [here](#).

Past recipients from our section include:

- City of Amarillo
- City of San Angelo

If you have questions about either program, please email aj.fawver@amarillo.gov.

Job Opportunities

Here's a look at planning-related positions currently open in and around the section. Take a look and share with your friends and contacts!

Assistant City Manager (Community Service Departments), City of Odessa, \$10,759/month, posting [here](#).

Planner I (Land Use), City of Amarillo, DOQ, posting [here](#).

Planner II (Land Use/Transportation), City of Amarillo, DOQ, posting [here](#).

Director of Planning & Development Services (Land Use/Transportation), City of Abilene, DOQ, posting [here](#).

Community & Economic Development Program Specialist, Panhandle Regional Planning Commission, \$36,569 - \$52,779, posting [here](#).

Planning Division Manager, City of Midland, DOQ, posting [here](#).

Featured Member

Roxanne Johnston, City of Big Spring



Roxanne has been a planner in Big Spring for almost 4 years, and

previously worked as a planner for the City of San Angelo. She has been a member of the Northwest Texas Section since 2014.

She has a Masters degree in Planning from the University of Arizona. Her proudest accomplishment so far is building the department she works in. Her dream project would be getting involved in a network of pedestrian and biking trails in order to connect key places. She can be reached at: rjohnston@mybigspring.com.