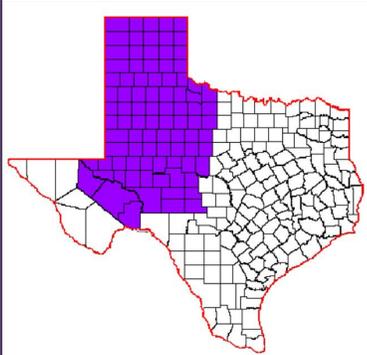




NORTHWEST SECTION QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION
TEXAS CHAPTER | NORTHWEST SECTION
FALL 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 Lubbock

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

2018 has been great for our Northwest Section. We recently wrapped our June 29th subdivision forum in Amarillo, and it exceeded our expectations. Thank you to everyone who attended and/or assisted with getting that pulled off. Now we are focusing our efforts on the September meeting. More to come on that!

Our ongoing drive to increase membership is yielding some results, but we still need your help. From the colleges and universities in our section to the inclusion of all of the communities in our section - it will truly require our best efforts as a team. Please let me know if you have contacts that could be helpful.

Our attendance at the June business meeting was small, but the group had amazing ideas and suggestions that we plan to incorporate into our 2019 event schedule. It was an excellent brainstorming session, and I'm still thinking about that dill pickle pasta salad. It sounded odd, but was absolutely delicious!

You might also remember that we, in April, voted to submit a grant request to the Texas Chapter leadership seeking \$5,000 for next year's budget. I am excited to share that we were awarded \$4,500 for our 2018-2019 budget - a milestone for our division.

Lastly, I want to thank the top-notch speakers at our June 29th event. The Q&A was robust, and the suggestions given were very helpful. We are gearing up for events in September, & we need all our section's commissioners at our November event!

Let's keep the momentum going into the fall, and continue advancing our mission!

-AJ

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug 15, 2018 - The Changing Stormwater Landscape, Are We Creating Actual Solutions or Expensive Dreams? ([live webinar](#))

Aug 17, 2018 - Sustainable Transportation - What is it? With Examples from a Sustainability Icon, Norway! ([live webinar](#))

Sep 13, 2018 - Innovation Lab: Seattle, WA - Winning: The Art of Getting Voters to Open their Wallets for Parks ([live webinar](#))

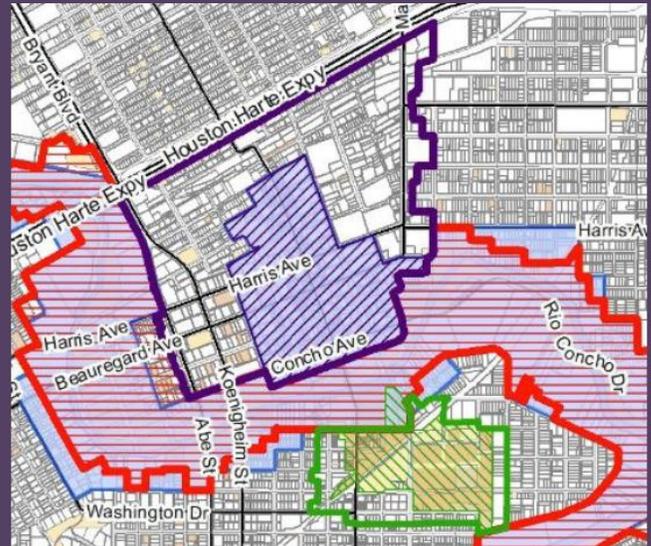
Sep 19, 2018 - Placemaking in the Burbs ([live webinar](#))

Oct 17, 2018 - Economic Profiles and Assessments; what you will learn about your community and what others may learn about you ([live webinar](#))

Featured Projects

The City of San Angelo Planning Division is proposing that City Council approve a revised River Corridor District that follows the river line; a Downtown District that includes most of the land designated "Downtown" in the City's Comprehensive Plan, and a Cultural District to preserve the cultural heritage and historical buildings in this district. The creation of the three new districts will allow:

- The creation of new design standards in the Zoning Ordinance for these districts;
- Require the Design and Historic Review Commission (DHRC) or Planning Director to review exterior construction in these districts; and,
- Review for consistency and appropriateness in these districts to improve their economic vitality and preserve historic and cultural resources.



An excerpt of the proposal, with the revised River Corridor in red, the Downtown District in blue, and the Cultural District outlined in purple. [Courtesy of the City of San Angelo]

The Planning Division is also proposing a new approvals process for exterior construction in these districts. Exterior painting, temporary food trucks, and landscaping in a private park, may be approved by the Planning Director. This item will be presented to City Council at their August 21, 2018 Meeting. Further information including copies of Staff Reports and Maps may be found on the Planning Division's [webpage](#).

The City of Lubbock is approaching the 95% mark in completing their [Comprehensive Plan](#), due for completion and adoption by the close of 2018.

Following the adoption of the Plan, the Planning Department will begin the project of putting together a Unified Development Code, or UDC. For more information on UDCs, visit this [link](#).

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:

City of Abilene considers allowing dogs on restaurant patios

Abilene council denies controversial rezoning

Odessa city council looking to improve housing costs

Make Borger Beautiful Committee surveying citizens to set priorities

Midland City Council approves plan for new bike paths in Downtown

Taylor County Commissioners approve Dyess Joint Land Use Study

City vote could boost downtown grants

A face lift for a Big Spring amphitheater

County sets TIF support at 75 percent

Mayor says economic development No. 1 priority for Abilene

City of Big Spring booming with addition of railroad tracks

City Moves Forward with Two Big Projects for Downtown

Council OKs covering costs of over-budget Ector Theatre

MPO takes action on cycling thoroughfare study

Commissioners Corner

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

Training - Inexpensive & Within Reach!

While training for commissioners is usually difficult to find, you are in luck as a Northwest Section member! We are hosting a training specifically for commissioners in Midland on Thursday, November 8th. For only \$60, you have the opportunity for your commissioners to receive instruction and answers on ethics, relevant laws, conduct, etc. In order to make this a success, we need every city to participate.

Galveston - Short Course for Officials

We encourage your city's planning commissioners to attend the upcoming Texas APA Conference in Galveston, TX on October 17-19, 2018, at the Galveston Island Convention Center. A component is a **short course for appointed and elected officials**. The short course covers basic planning issues such as zoning and subdivisions, comprehensive plans, and transportation planning, and important challenges.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS / LEGAL UPDATES

Open Meetings Act Challenge ([via TML](#))

Texas Attorney General Seeks To Remove Members Of Austin's Planning Commission ([article](#))

No ruling in first hearing for lawsuit aimed at Austin's CodeNext ([article](#)).

CodeNext to code nixed: Adler, council members abandon code rewrite ([article](#)).



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.

Social Explorer (\$0-\$150/month)

Launched in 2005, [this app](#) allows you to access both current and historical census data, and create specific maps and tables for any particular census area. This app is particularly beneficial for long-range planning and planning research in providing useful demographic and statistical information.

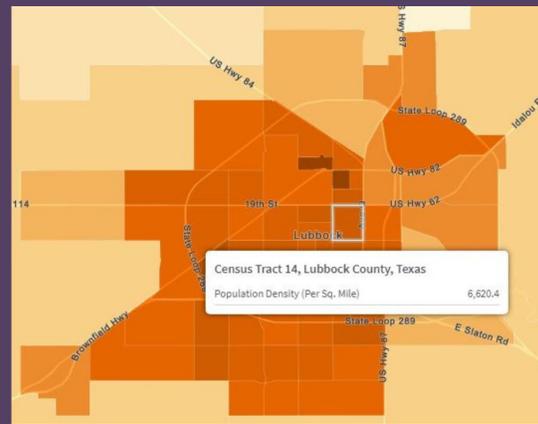
Demographic information includes U.S. Census and American Community Surveys. Planners can create comparative maps to show differences in how their community compares in a particular demographic such as age or income. Maps include multi-variable maps, swipe maps, and satellite and street views.

Final Thoughts

Social explorer is ideal for planners who require access to large amounts of demographic data. The free version includes only the 2000 Census but allows the user to create maps and reports, and download data. The \$150.00 business package is ideal for Planning Departments and includes unlimited data access.

Mapillary (free account)

[Mapillary](#) allows planners to take photos and videos from their cellphones and connect these images spatially to build better maps and records. The photos and videos can be linked to show time and space by creating virtual



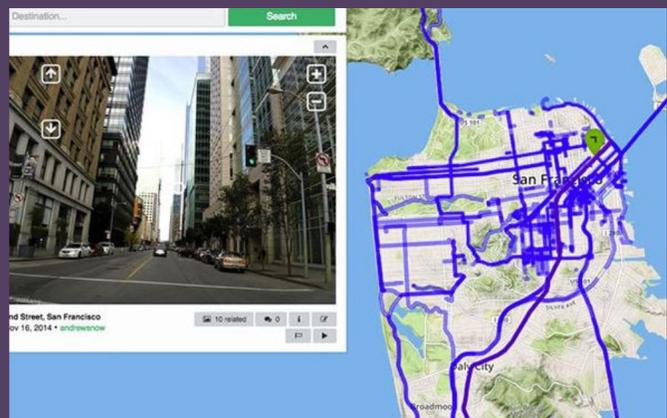
An excerpt from Social Explorer

walk-throughs of any subject area. To cover larger amounts of space and show transition in land use patterns, planners may take continuous photos or video feed. In addition to creating your own street-level views, images can be shared with a global network and millions of images are added every week to the overall data set.

Final Thoughts

The program is not only free, but provides the 3D spatial information that planners need to conduct site assessments for development reviews and long range planning decisions. Therefore, it is a valuable tool that planners can use, and is available at the iTunes store.

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



An excerpt from Social Explorer

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Section Event:

Friday, September 28th - Abilene [Main Event: Historic Preservation Discussion Panel]

Registration Open Now!

Wednesday, October 17th - Friday, October 19th - Texas Chapter Conference in Galveston, Texas

Planning & Zoning Commissioner Training

Thursday, November 8th - Midland, Texas

10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Atmos Energy Building, 2304 Loop 40, Midland, TX 79706

The workshop will provide a full day forum specifically tailored to elected and appointed officials. The focus of this workshop is to provide training on the municipal planning process and present the latest issues for city council, board and commission members. Both new and experienced officials will benefit from this workshop. Planning professionals will present and discuss various planning and development related issues across Northwest Texas. Luncheon will be included. Tickets available [here](#).

2018 National Community Planning Month

October 1st - October 31st

This year's theme: Housing as Community Infrastructure

For ideas, please visit the [APA site](#).

Featured Member

Kristina Heredia, City of San Angelo

Kristina has been a planner with the City of San Angelo for 1 1/2 years.



Kristina has been a member of the Northwest Section since 2017. She previously worked as a Planning Technician with the City of Weatherford. Kristina has a Master's Degree in City and Regional Planning from the University of Texas at Arlington. She loves to work on projects that bring community together.

Originally from the beaches of Southern California, Kristina would spend more time outside in San Angelo if it was not so hot. She can be reached at kristina.heredia@cosatx.us.

DIRECTOR'S CHALLENGE

With National Community Planning Month around the corner, we are laying out a challenge for our members. It is our goal to envision and execute some of the most original ideas for sharing the purpose of planning and this year's theme with the communities around our region.

At the end of October, share background and details about your event (including pictures!) with afawver@mylubbock.us. Not only will we feature you in our Winter newsletter, our Section Director is willing to put up a lucrative and fun prize for the winning group.

We'll send out a reminder, but want to get your creative juices flowing now.