

# YPG WORK PLAN



2015-2016

Young Planners Group, APA Virginia

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YOUNG PLANNERS GROUP, APA VIRGINIA

## VISION

We envision a professional development organization that is defined as:

**YOUNG** in age, heart, mind, body and soul. We are those just starting in the profession, changing careers, or established professionals pursuing change.

**PLANNERS** of the social, physical, natural, technological, and economic environment. We are strategic thinkers. We take steps today with tomorrow in mind.

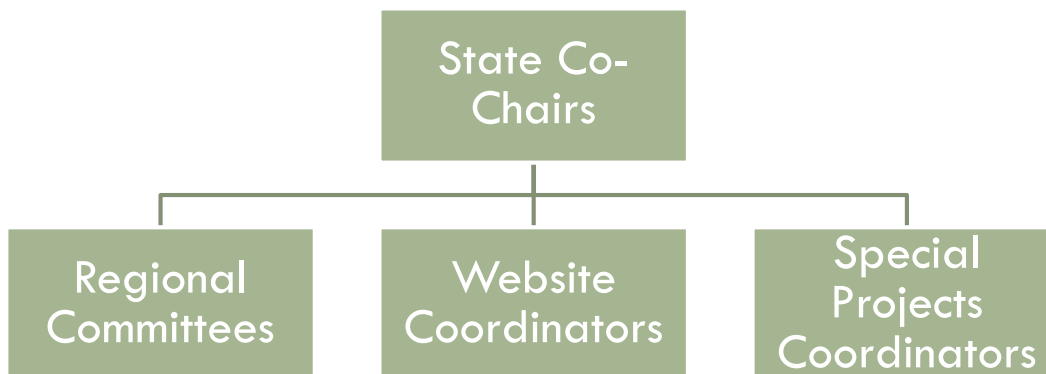
**GROUP** of dynamic, intelligent, and collaborative individuals. We are a network of experts and innovators that give input and challenge each other to create the best product possible.

## MISSION

To engage passionate young professionals working in the community development field by providing educational training, social networking events, and professional development opportunities to aid in career advancement and improve planning practices in Virginia's communities.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- **State Co-Chairs (Abbey Ness and Mario Wells):** Create and manage YPG programming and resources at the state-level. Tasked with providing the administrative, financial, and marketing support to foster regional YPG systems.
- **Regional Committees (RVA, Hampton Roads, NOVA, with Cville and Fredericksburg starting this year):** Members of regional committees plan and organize events in their region (section). Events could include, but are not limited to, networking events, skills development trainings, AICP test preparation workshops, tours, book clubs or film showings. Regional committees can be as active as they choose, but should aim for hosting at least three events per year.
- **Website Coordinators (Sarah Richards, Ben Holt):** Updates website content monthly. Responsibilities may include profiling young planners, updating the AICP resources list, writing blog posts, contributing content to forum discussions and graphic design.
- **Special Projects Coordinators:** Chairs special projects, such as the creation of a guide for new planners or Community Planning Month programming. The time commitment will be temporary but will vary depending on the project.
- **Individual Members:** The central focus of YPG programming. YPG serves members by engaging them in professional development activities that evoke and deepen their passions for community planning and development.



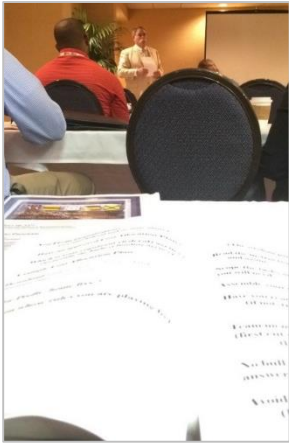
## APA VA WORK PLAN ITEMS

The Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA VA) has a biannual work plan created by the Board of Directors to outline organizational goals and guide chapter activities. YPG is responsible for several of the work plan items, listed below in the gray boxes. These items are our first priority over the next two years.

Activity Description	Who's Responsible	Timeline	Status
<p><b>Seek involvement</b> of Student Planners, university faculty, Young Planners, and Planning Directors in Annual Conference planning and Section events, Chapter newsletter production, and in general support of implementing the Chapter's Strategic Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Directors Committee Chair</li> <li>• Student Representatives</li> <li>• Newsletter Editors</li> <li>• SRC</li> <li>• YPG</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>✓ YPG partnered with students, planning directors, ECDC, and other members in the past year. YPG submitted content to chapter newsletters and outreach materials.</p> <p>Relationships with university faculty have been more difficult to establish. This will be a continued effort in 2015-2016.</p>
<p><b>Partner with one or more allied groups or organizations</b> per year in supporting networking opportunities for new and young professionals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YPG Chairs</li> <li>• VP-Sections</li> <li>• Membership Director</li> </ul>	<p>By Spring 2014</p>	<p>✓ YPG partnered with the Storefront for Community Design in 2014-2015.</p> <p>YPG plans to partner with the Virginia Association for Mapping and Land Information Systems (VAMLIS) in 2015-2016.</p>
<p><b>Fund the Young Planners Group</b> to assist in conducting networking activities throughout the state (3 per year).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YPG Chairs</li> <li>• Treasurer</li> </ul>	<p>Fall 2012 and ongoing</p>	<p>✓ In 2014-2015, funds were available for regional events in the spring, but regional groups successfully conducted events that were no cost. In 2015-2016, funds will again be available for regional use.</p>

## PRIMARY GOALS

The following items are our primary goals for the year. They incorporate items from the APA VA work plan whenever possible.



**AICP Test Preparation:** Young planners desire AICP credentials, but often find AICP test preparation materials to be a financial burden. YPG will support the Professional Development Officer in hosting an AICP test preparation workshop before the spring exam. YPG will investigate broadcasting the session via webinar so remote members can attend virtually.

**Skill Development and Training:** YPG will host three skills development workshops this year. Partners such as VAMLIS, USGBC, volunteer retirees, university professors or professionals can provide content for such workshops. At the 2015 APA Virginia Annual Conference, YPG sponsored a skills development workshop covering public speaking and proposal writing.



**Networking/Social Gatherings:** Regional committees across the state organize activities for local members. These events include networking activities that connect YPG members with each other and other planning professionals. Last year, YPG hosted several happy hours allowing YPG members to network informally with graduate students, Ethnical and Cultural Diversity Committee members, and planning directors. This year, we hope to organize more networking events that link YPG members with members of other professional organizations.



**Mentor Program:** Creating a permanent membership program for YPG members will not be an easy feat. Several YPG members have volunteered to come up with a model for a statewide program to be launched in the fall/winter 2015. FAICP Committee members have agreed to serve as mentors in the program.





**Virginia-Specific Educational Experience:** Each year, YPG hosts a field trip to cities or regions of Virginia to learn about unique local planning issues and hear from experts in the field. This year, we hope to visit the Eastern Shore of Virginia, where we will learn about regional watershed management, housing affordability and quality, and rural economic development, among other issues. Other learning opportunities could include the New River Valley to learn about collaborative planning processes and citizen engagement or the

Hampton Roads area to learn about coastal resiliency. Last year, we visited the Town of Ashland to learn from local government staff and residents about the Town before making recommendations about how to attract millennials to the area.



**Promoting Planning Advocacy:** Young planners across the state are advocating for better planning practices in their communities. The “Planning and Advocacy” event series will feature citizen planners and professional planners who dedicate their time and talent outside of work. Anticipated speakers include planning commissioners, leaders of citizen groups, and blog authors, among others. YPG also hopes to plan 1-2 events that transform public spaces through tactical urbanism or grassroots action.

**Celebrate Planning Month in October:** National Planning Month is a great opportunity to highlight the innovative ideas and energy that young planners bring to the field. Activities organized by regional committees could include awareness campaigns via social media, bike tours, tactical urbanism projects, or educational programs exposing K-12 students to planning principles.

**Communication:** Last, but not least, YPG will continue to prioritize communication among its members. By continuing our email blasts and social media presence, we hope to effectively let members know about upcoming events and non-YPG professional development opportunities. A website refresh is set for early September.



**APA VA Conference:** YPG co-chairs will keep Virginia chapter conference rates affordable for young planners to encourage participation. YPG will host professional development and networking events at the conference that meet the needs of young planners.

Activity Description	Who's Responsible	Timeline
<p><b>AICP Test Preparation:</b> Support the Professional Development Officer in hosting an AICP test preparation workshop before the spring exam.</p> <p>Create a repository of test preparation resources available to APA VA members. Example resources could include videos of test preparation workshops, flashcards, discussion threads to get feedback from fellow planners and online access to study materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mario Wells</li> <li>• Professional Development Officer</li> </ul>	<p>Workshop anticipated November 2015, repository by February 2015</p>
<p><b>Skill Development and Training:</b> Host three skills development workshops per year. Partner with VAMLIS, USGBC, volunteer retirees, university professors or professionals to provide workshops.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abbey Ness</li> <li>• Student Reps Committee</li> <li>• VAMLIS, USGBC and other groups</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Networking/Social Gatherings:</b> Host at least three social/networking events. Sample events include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planner happy hours = informal events for YPG and non-YPG members</li> <li>• Quarterly speakers</li> <li>• Co-sponsoring Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Committee (ECDC) events promoting diversity in planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Committees</li> <li>• ECDC Chair</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Mentor Program:</b> Partner with FAICP members to create mentoring program for young planners. Participants will decide the frequency and mode of mentor-mentee interactions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jimena Pinzon, Bret Schardein, Tim Paladino</li> <li>• Jim Zook and other FAICP members</li> </ul>	<p>September 2015</p>
<p><b>Virginia-Specific Educational Experience:</b> One YPG event per year in cities or regions of Virginia to learn about unique local planning issues and hear from experts in the field.</p> <p>Example locations include the New River Valley to learn about collaborative planning processes and citizen engagement; Accomack/Northampton Counties to learn about Chesapeake Bay watershed management; or the Hampton Roads area to learn about coastal resiliency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mario Wells</li> <li>• Special Projects Coordinators</li> </ul>	<p>Spring 2016</p>

Activity Description	Who's Responsible	Timeline
<p><b>APA VA Conference:</b> Keep Virginia chapter conference rates affordable for young planners. Young planners frequently cite high registration costs as a barrier to participation in the state conference.</p> <p>Host professional development and networking events targeted to the needs of young planners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mario Wells</li> <li>• Abbey Ness</li> </ul>	<p>By July 2016 for 2016 conference</p>
<p><b>Communication:</b> Continue monthly email blasts.</p> <p>Launch new website, link to resources, and update regularly. Add material to website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update website with new content</li> <li>• Re-evaluate existing content</li> <li>• Link to student work, blogs written by young planners in the state</li> <li>• Continue Young Planner of the Month profiles</li> <li>• Add job page to the website?</li> <li>• Add AICP resources to YPG website (reading lists, links to helpful websites, profiles of planners who have chosen to get and not get certified)</li> <li>• Evaluate usefulness of listing webinars, other educational opportunities on the website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abbey Ness for emails</li> <li>• Ben Holt, Sarah Richards for website</li> </ul>	<p>August 2015 for refresh (ongoing)</p>
<p><b>Promoting Planning Advocacy:</b> Invite advocates from across the state to speak to young planners about their experiences. Examples include planning commissioners, leaders of citizen groups, or prominent voices in Virginia planning issues.</p> <p>Plan events that transform public spaces through tactical urbanism or grassroots action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garet Prior</li> <li>• Regional Committees</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Celebrate Planning Month in October</b> with one of the following or other method(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness campaign via social media</li> <li>• Tactical urbanism project</li> <li>• Activity/event that celebrates planning (ex. group bike ride on new trail, tour of new development, visiting an arts district)</li> </ul>	<p>Regional Groups</p>	<p>October 2014</p>



## SECONDARY GOALS

The following goals, while helpful for YPG members, are either not as supportive of YPG and APA VA goals as the goals listed in the previous section, or they are not in high demand by YPG members.

Activity Description	Who's Responsible	Timeline
<b>Create “welcome to the chapter” information for students and new members about YPG</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tyler Klein</li> </ul>	October 2015
<b>Support APA National initiatives:</b> Work with Monica Groh, other state YPG leaders to create webinar series for young planners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abbey Ness</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>Participate in planning career panels</b> organized by the Student Reps Committee at universities across the state.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YPG members</li> <li>• Student Reps Committee</li> <li>• Planning Directors</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>Encourage YPG members to attend the national conference</b> via email reminders and website posts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abbey Ness</li> <li>• Sarah Richards</li> </ul>	By April 2016