

**Adopted**

10.28.11

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2011-2016

American Planning Association  
**Delaware Chapter**

*[www.delawareapa.org](http://www.delawareapa.org)*



## VISION

The Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) envisions the rise and preservation of livable, healthy, sustainable and prosperous communities across the First State through progressive planning.

## MISSION

The mission of the Delaware Chapter of APA is to:

1. Advance the art and science of planning in Delaware.
2. Provide vision and leadership to foster better planning for Delaware in the development of sustainable vital communities and conservation of valuable physical, natural and fiscal resources.
3. Provide a forum for the training, understanding and application of sound planning principals.
4. Provide continuing education for planning professionals, public officials and the public in Delaware and beyond.
5. Facilitate the individual participation of APA members in the affairs of the APA.

## STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT

In an effort to meet our National APA standard to have a long-term development plan, and to better serve our local membership, Chapter leadership began constructing a five year Strategic Plan in early 2011.

A Strategic Planning Subcommittee guided the plan's development. Kathy Wian, coordinator of the University of Delaware's Conflict Resolution Program, was engaged to help with the process. The Subcommittee began the work with a sweeping membership survey in the spring of 2011 to identify positive and negative perceptions about the Chapter and areas for growth.

### Membership Survey

The survey was drafted by the Subcommittee and administered online with help from National APA. There were 13 fixed-response questions, some of which offered the opportunity to add

comments, and 6 free-response questions. Copies of the survey and a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the results are included in the Appendix.

E-mails requesting participation in the survey were sent to all 130 members of the Chapter. Fifty-eight members (57 full members and one student) responded. Most respondents (58.6%) had been members for 10 years or less. Another 22.4% had been members for 11 to 20 years and 19% had been members for more than 20 years. Most respondents (65%) worked in the public sector. An additional 20.7 % worked in the private sector and 5.2% worked in education.

Within the past 12 months, more than 50% of the respondents had attended the APA DE/MD Regional Conference in Dover and 50% had attended an audio/webcast in Kent County. Events co-sponsored by the Chapter and audio/webcasts in New Castle County also were attended by more than 25% of the respondents. Close to 20% of the respondents had attended courses in the Planning Education Certificate program offered by the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration (IPA) and close to 15% had attended the National Planning Conference. When asked about their satisfaction with aspects of these events, the responses were overwhelmingly positive, generally 4s and 5s, with no 1s on a scale from 1 to 5. Most respondents (over 65%) thought the two days allocated for the Regional Conference was the appropriate length of time for such an event.

Most respondents (61.4%) said that we were offering enough opportunities for AICP planners to obtain Certification Maintenance (CM) credits, although more than half of those respondents (33.3% of the total) would like more opportunities. When asked whether we were doing enough to support those studying to take the AICP exam, 73.7% of the respondents expressed no opinion. This response mirrors the 21.1% who expressed no opinion on whether we offered enough opportunities to earn CM credits because they were not AICP planners.

When asked to rate the services and activities that the Chapter presently provides, the majority of respondents rated three events a 5 or a 4 by: the Audio/Web Conferences in Kent and New Castle County; the Law Sessions with Local Case Review/Analysis and the APA Delaware and Maryland Regional Conference. This focus on Chapter events was also reflected in responses to the question "What has been the best or most beneficial experience you have had with APA Delaware in the past 5 years?" Most respondents named some aspect of attending or helping with a Chapter event.

When respondents were asked how the Chapter could improve upon the services we currently provide, the following four most popular responses were as follows: Improve regular communication via a newsletter and an upgraded website. Offer more CM training sessions. Offer shorter courses at a reduced cost. Offer more audio/web conferences.

When respondents were asked to rate new initiatives being considered by the Executive Committee, three initiatives were rated highest by the most respondents: enhancing communications to members; more involvement with statewide legislation issues; and increasing membership and participation from local governments.

Regarding potential barriers to the Chapter's success, responses focused in four areas. Lack of resources, as a small chapter, lacking in both funds and volunteers, was foremost, followed by apathy, which may be a related concern. Politics was also seen as a concern in that Delaware is a small state and much of the active membership works in the public sector. Finally, there were concerns about the Chapter's image as an organization and a lack of prestige associated with the planning profession in Delaware.

For four of the last six questions, a series of repeated themes were identifiable in the responses, even though the questions were not, intentionally parallel. Respondents were asked to identify ideas for new Chapter initiatives, to identify their worst, or least beneficial experience with the Chapter in the past 5 years, what would happen if they could transform the Chapter in any way they wished, and as a catch-all, for any further comments. In the answers to each of these four questions, six themes were evident:

- Meetings & Events
- Advocacy and Public Policy
- Website and Communications
- Public Engagement
- Students
- Involvement of More Current and Potential Members

After an analysis and discussion of the survey results four ***strategic initiatives*** were identified by the Strategic Planning Subcommittee:

- Advocacy, Public Policy, Public Engagement
- Meetings and Events
- Membership
- Website and Communications

### Planning Workshop

A workshop was held on May 2, 2011 to develop projects out of our strategic initiatives. The 23 participants reviewed the results of the membership survey, validated the vision and mission statements found above, then self-selected into one of four groups. The four teams identified

goals, objectives and actions for their particular initiative. Following the workshop, the Strategic Planning Subcommittee compiled their work and wrote the present document.

## CHAPTER PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

The National APA lists ten performance criteria for state chapters:

1. **Mission Statement:** Each chapter shall develop a mission statement, which defines the chapter's core function(s) or purpose(s) and submit to APA staff.
2. **Long-Range Development Plan:** Each chapter shall prepare and maintain a long-range development plan and submit to APA staff at least every five years.
3. **Annual Work Plan:** Each chapter should prepare an annual work plan, which identifies outcome-based goals for the coming year(s), based on the mission statement and the long-range development plan. This work plan can be a listing of goals and objectives, much of which correspond to these criteria and shall be submitted to APA staff.
4. **Bylaws:** Each chapter shall operate under a current set of bylaws. Chapters shall review their bylaws no less than [sic] once every four years and update as needed. These bylaws shall be sent to APA staff.
5. **Financial Report:** Each chapter must prepare and submit the financial report (including any required IRS forms, such as IRS Form 990) for the previous (or most recent) fiscal year to APA staff annually. The report shall include the identification of all sources of income as well as expenditures.
6. **Annual Business Meeting:** Each chapter must hold a business meeting annually in person or via electronic communications.
7. **Leadership Meetings:** Each chapter must send its chapter president or proxy to at least one of the two leadership meetings held in any given calendar year.
8. **Communications:** At least three (3) times per year, each chapter shall distribute to its members and APA staff, a newsletter or comparable form of communication that

focuses on current information and concerns relevant to its chapter. This communication may be in an electronic form.

9. **Brand Identity:** Chapter publications shall be consistent with the APA Brand Identity for logos and signatures; letterheads; and newsletter mastheads.
10. **Chapter Officers:** Each chapter shall provide and maintain a current list of all chapter officers to APA staff.

Following the publication and execution of this plan, the Delaware Chapter will meet each of these requirements.

## CURRENT ACTIVITIES TO CARRY FORWARD

The membership survey revealed strong support for many current Chapter initiatives, particularly the regional conferences. Each of the following past initiatives will continue, as appropriate, through 2016:

- Bi-annual Regional Conference with the Maryland Chapter
- APA webcasts offered at no cost in New Castle and Kent Counties
- “Value Added” sessions that pair a webcast with local speakers
- Ethics sessions with the “Planning Thespians”
- Law sessions with local case law reviews by local attorneys
- Co-sponsorship of the University of Delaware’s Planning Education Program
- Annual meeting
- Website ([www.delawareapa.org](http://www.delawareapa.org))
- AICP exam support
- Occasional Chapter co-sponsored events and mobile workshops

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

### Advocacy, Public Policy, Public Engagement

**Goal:** Develop a solid, statewide reputation as a go-to organization for planning issues

**Objective:** Establish committee to pursue objectives related to advocacy, public policy and public engagement

**Action:** Appoint chair and gather committee membership

**Objective:** Revisit IPA's training programs to determine how to increase effectiveness and refine curriculum

**Action:** Review current programs

**Action:** Identify areas for improvement

**Action:** Implement improvements within curriculum

**Objective:** Create planning-friendly narrative to counter anti-planning/anti-Smart Growth messages

**Action:** Establish a messaging subgroup

**Action:** Obtain professional marketing/messaging assistance if necessary

**Action:** Use the narrative in Chapter communications

**Goal:** Build stronger relationships with organizations that share our goals

**Objective:** Develop effective coalitions with outside organizations to strengthen the Chapter's position

**Action:** Identify organizations to network/collaborate with

**Action:** Consider reviving Delaware Institute for Planning and Design or similar collaboration

**Action:** Effectively advocate with legislators, local governments

**Objective:** Hold joint sessions with allied professions at previously-scheduled meetings to spur collaboration and mutual support

**Action:** Include groups such as: Institute of Transportation Engineers, Association of American Geographers, American Association of Retired Persons, American Institute of Architects, American Society of Landscape Architects

*Notes: Partner with Meeting and Events Committee for support*

## Meetings and Events

**Goal:** Continue implementing ongoing meetings and events, and improve upon them

**Objective:** Establish a committee to pursue objectives relating to meetings and events

**Action:** Appoint chair and gather committee membership

**Objective:** Hold a regional conference every two years in conjunction with the Maryland Chapter; the location should alternate between the two states

**Action:** Breakfast for local planning administrators (when in Delaware)

**Action:** Have something in conjunction with the meeting for a group, such as a mixer (when in another state)

**Objective:** Hold CM-approved planning socials, three times per year in Delaware to promote networking and education

**Action:** Brown bag lunch

**Action:** Social mixer/dinner

**Action:** Breakfast meeting

**Action:** Add on to webinars

*Notes: Have technical subject/speaker to receive CM credit.*

**Objective:** Hold a sponsored meeting by agency/joint city, county, state agency, home builder, realtors once per year in Delaware

**Action:** Organize meeting to discuss what they do and the planning “tie in”

## Membership

**Goal:** Better understand existing membership (geography, public vs. private, years of experience) to better target activities

**Objective:** Establish a committee to pursue objectives relating to Chapter membership

**Action:** Appoint chair and gather committee membership

**Objective:** Analyze membership data to better understand the Chapter’s composition and underrepresented groups

**Action:** Develop report on membership composition

**Goal:** Engage students/young professionals (0-5 years) to increase their membership

**Objective:** Develop an outreach program for students to attract greater participation from that population

**Action:** Understand what students may gain from membership

**Action:** Develop appropriate outreach materials/literature

**Action:** Engage faculty/staff

**Action:** Engage students

**Objective:** Develop outreach program for young professionals to attract greater participation from that population

**Action:** Understand what young professionals may gain from membership

**Action:** Develop appropriate outreach materials/literature

**Action:** Engage planning directors and similar agency heads

**Action:** Engage young professionals

**Goal:** Increase membership from other groups which the membership composition report may reveal to be underrepresented

**Objective:** Develop outreach programs for other underrepresented groups

**Action:** Engage these groups through appropriate mechanisms

## Website and Communications

**Goal:** Content Management

**Objective:** Establish a committee to pursue objectives related to website/communications

**Action:** Appoint chair and gather committee membership

**Objective:** Contact National APA for logo, national branding to use in communications

**Objective:** Track website hits with Google analytics in order to understand the popularity of the Chapter's webpages, and patterns of web hits

**Objective:** Each committee should have its own webpage in order to streamline content distribution

**Goal:** Website enhancement

**Objective:** Contact Mark Deshon/Nicole Minni to help with a redesign of the website's homepage

**Objective:** Investigate a more user-friendly platform for the website

**Objective:** Select three website administrators (possibly more if needed) to enable quick updates and a better distributed workload

**Objective:** Better integrate website with online fiscal component to streamline paid transactions

**Goal:** Develop newsletter

**Objective:** Use e-mail software to more effectively communicate with membership

**Action:** Review and define e-mail list to reflect current e-mails and membership

**Action:** Consider additional targeted audience lists to constituencies

# APPENDIX

1. Membership survey
2. PowerPoint summary of survey results



American Planning Association  
**Delaware Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

*We Need Your Feedback...* Your APA Mississippi Chapter Executive Committee would like to learn more about your ideas and opinions to determine how we can improve the chapter services and better impact planning initiative in the State of Mississippi. Please take a few minutes to fill out the survey. All members are encouraged to provide their feedback, the results of this survey will be compiled anonymously. Please complete your survey by **Friday, May 27, 2011**.

Thank you for your participation!

APA MEMBER ID#



American Planning Association  
**Delaware Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

1. What is your current membership category with the APA?

- Full member
- Student Member
- Chapter Only Member

2. How long have you been an APA Delaware member?

- 0 - 10 years
- 11 - 20 years
- 21 or more years

3. Where do you work?

- Public sector
- Private sector
- Education sector
- Nonprofit sector
- Student
- Retired
- Not currently employed

4. What APA and APA Delaware events have you participated in **during the last 12 months?** (*check all that apply*)

- National APA Conference
- APA Delaware/APA Maryland Regional Conference
- Audio/Web Conference offered in New Castle County
- Audio/Web Conference offered in Kent County
- APA Delaware Annual Meeting
- APA Delaware co-sponsored conference or event
- Delaware Planning Education Program, offered by UD IPA

5. If you have attended a recent APA Delaware/APA Maryland Regional Conference, please answer the following questions using the scale below (1=very unsatisfied; 5=very satisfied)

	Very Unsatisfied			Very Satisfied	
	1	2	3	4	5
What is your overall satisfaction with the conference?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How do you feel about the geographic location of the conference?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- How do you feel about the quality of the conference sessions?
- How do you feel about the conference facilities (hotel or conference center)?

6. If you answered question 5 above, which conference were you primarily referring to (please pick one)

- 1999 Easton
- 2001 Rehoboth
- 2003 Rocky Gap
- 2006 Wilmington
- 2008 Annapolis
- 2010 Dover

7. How long should the conferences be?

- 1 day
- 2 days
- 3 days
- I don't care as long as they serve a hot lunch

8. If you have not attended a recent APA Delaware/APA Maryland Regional Conference, why not? (check all that apply)

- Geographic location is too far from my home/work
- Registration cost is too high
- Topic/theme/sessions do not interest me
- Too many days away from work
- Employer won't pay
- Other:

9. Has APA Delaware been offering enough CM training opportunities locally for AICP planners?

- Yes
- Somewhat, but I'd like to see more
- No
- I am not an AICP planner
- No opinion / neutral

10. Has APA Delaware been doing enough to support those studying to take the AICP exam?

- Yes
- Somewhat, but I would like more assistance
- No
- No opinion / neutral

11. Please rate the current APA Delaware chapter services and activities in terms of their importance to you as a member. (1=Not important at all; 5=Very important)

	<b>Not Important at All</b>			<b>Very Important</b>	
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
APA Delaware/APA Maryland Regional Conferences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
APA Audio/Web Conferences offered in Kent & New Castle Counties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
“Value Added” sessions (pairing of audio/web sessions with a panel of speakers)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ethics Sessions with the "Planning Thespians"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Law Sessions with local case law review by attorneys	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DE Planning Education Program offered by UD IPA (co-sponsored by APA Delaware)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
APA Delaware Annual Meeting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
APA Delaware Website (www.delawareapa.org)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
AICP Exam support for those studying to take the AICP exam	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Occasional co-sponsored events and mobile workshops	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. How can APA Delaware improve upon the services we currently provide to you, our members? (check all that apply)

- Have conferences more regularly
- Offer shorter conferences at a reduced cost for registration

- Offer longer conferences, although they may cost more for registration
- Improve our regular communication with members via a newsletter and upgraded website
- Offer more audio/web conferences
- Offer more CM training sessions
- Offer more activities in New Castle County
- Offer more activities in Kent County
- Offer more activities in Sussex County
- Provide more support for those who aspire to take the AICP exam
- Other:

13. The following table lists new initiative being considered by the Executive Committee. Please rate these initiative based on their importance to you as a member. (1=Not important at all; 5=Very important)

	Not Important at All		Very Important		
	1	2	3	4	5
Becoming more involved in statewide legislative and policy issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enhancing communications to members, including newsletters, emails and our website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing pro-bono training opportunities for local planning commissions and citizen planners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaborating with affiliated organizations (like AIA, AARP, DAPA and others) on topics of mutual interest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing membership and participation from local governments, particularly planning commissioners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advocating for the establishment of an accredited planning school in Delaware	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Do you have any additional ideas for new initiatives that the chapter should consider undertaking? If so, please list them here.

15. What has been the best or most beneficial experience you have had with APA Delaware in the past 5 years?

16. What has been the worst, or least beneficial experience you have had with APA Delaware in the past 5 years? Be honest, we can take it. We can't improve if we don't know about it.

17. If you could transform our organization in any way you wish, what would it look like and what would we be doing?

18. What do you see as potential barriers to the success of our chapter?

19. Please provide any additional ideas, thoughts or comments you have about our chapter here:

If you would like to participate in the APA Delaware strategic planning session, and are willing to devote half a day to improving your chapter and charting its future, please contact APA Delaware President, David Edgell, at david.edgell@state.de.us or phone (302) 739-3090.

**Thank you** for taking the time to complete this survey. The results will be invaluable as we plan for the upcoming year!

Submit Survey

# 2011 Membership Survey Results

## HIGHLIGHTS



American Planning Association  
**Delaware Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

## 2011 Membership Survey Results - Intentions

- 1) OUTREACH TO EXISTING MEMBERS
- 2) GATHER A BETTER BASELINE ON WHO WE ARE
- 3) COLLECT INFO. & INPUT ON PAST PARTICIPATION, EVENTS, AND INVOLVEMENT
- 4) FEEDBACK ON OUR ORGANIZATION (How are we doing?)
- 5) BASED ON FEEDBACK, DEVELOP INITIATIVES for DE APA & A STRATEGIC WORK PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

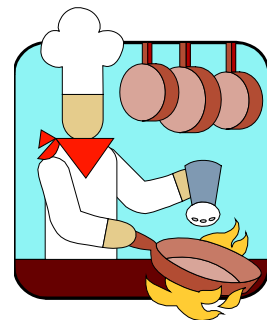
# General Information



- 58 Responses from 130 registered members
- 57 Full Members; 1 student
- Years of Membership: 0-10 (58.6%); 11-20 (22.4%); 20+ (19%)
- Public Sector (65%); Private Sector (20.7%); Education (5.2%); others (8.5% from Non-Profit, Student, Retired)

# Within last 12 months what events have you attended?

- APA DE/MD Regional Conference 33 (56.9%)
- Audio/Web Conference Kent Co. 27 (46.6%)
- APA DE co-sponsored conference/event 16 (27.6%)
- Audio/Web Conference in NCC 15 (25.9%)
- DE Planning Ed U. Program Offered by UD IPA 11 (19%)
- National APA Conference 8 (13.8%)



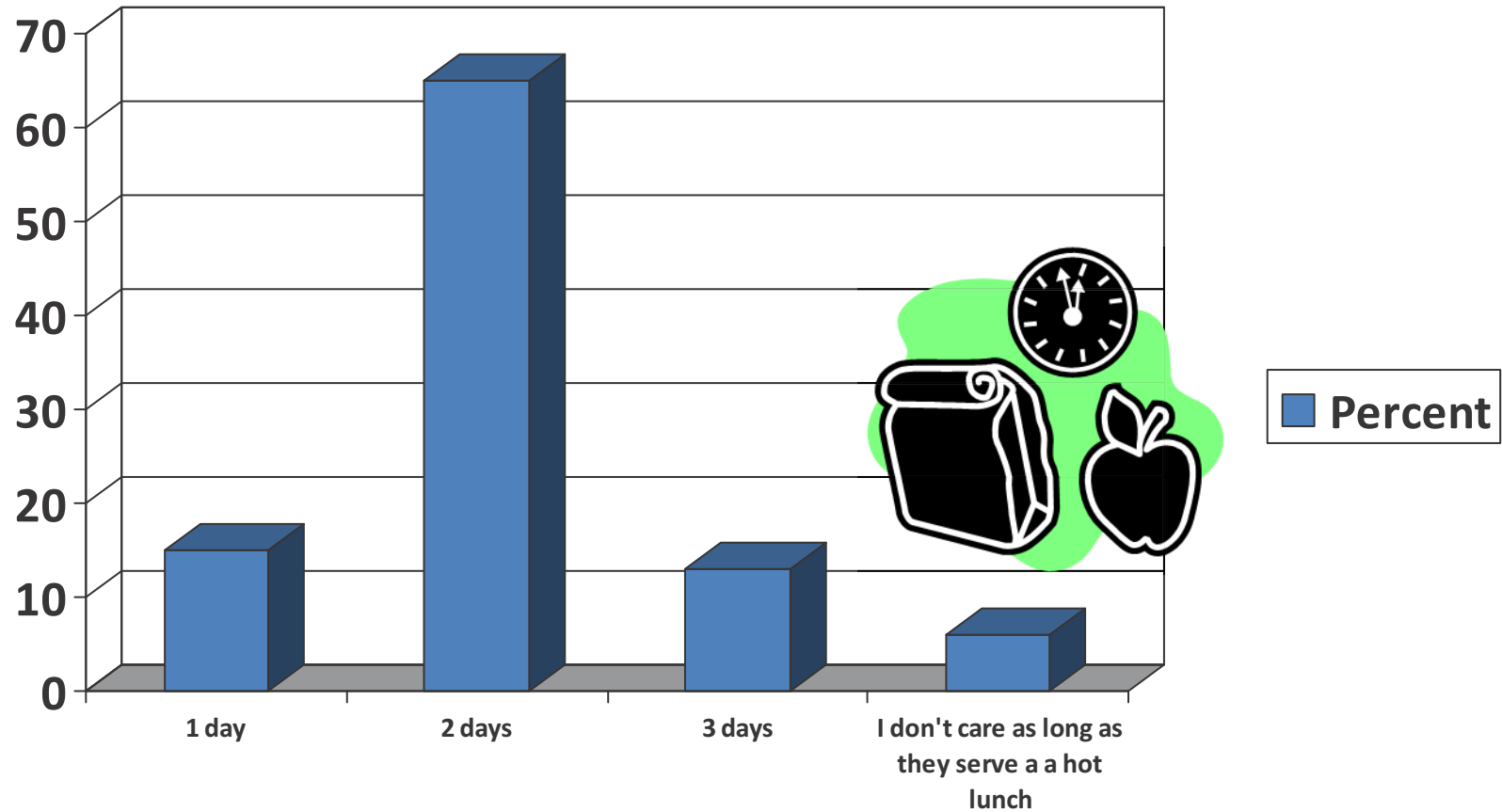
# RESULTS from ATTENDED EVENTS

(scale from 1-5)

- Conference facilities and center = 4's and 5's
- Quality of Conference Sessions = mostly 4 with some 5's and 3's
- Geographic Location = mostly 5's with some 4's; Referencing Dover Downs
- Satisfaction of Conference = mostly 4's and then 5's; few 3's
- No score of 1's: Attendees appear satisfied!
- 15 unanswered



# How Long Should the Conferences Be?



If you have not attended an APA Delaware/APA Maryland Regional Conference, why not (check all that apply)? (some of the 15 unanswered)

**Main Answers**

**Responses**

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| • Too many days away from work? | 7 |
| • Employer won't pay            | 6 |
| • Registration cost too high    | 5 |



# Has APA Delaware been offering enough CM training opportunities locally for AICP Planners?

→	Yes	16	28.1%
→	Somewhat, but I'd like to see more	19	33.3%
	No	5	8.8%
	I am not an AICP planner	12	21.1%
	No opinion / neutral	5	8.8%



Has APA Delaware been doing enough to support those studying to take the AICP exam?

42 respondents (73.7%) offered no opinion or response.

Presumably, most of the survey responses were from existing AICP members.

# 1 thru 5: WHAT ARE WE CURRENTLY DOING THAT IS IMPORTANT?



Three services and activities were rated a 5 or a 4 by the majority of respondents:

- Audio/Web Conferences in Kent and NCC
- Law Sessions with Local Case Review/Analysis
- APA Delaware and Maryland Regional Conferences

Every service and activity was rated at least a 3 by most of the respondents.

# How can APA Delaware improve upon the services we currently provide to you?

The most popular responses to highlight are:

- Improve regular communication via newsletter & upgraded website
- Offer more CM training sessions
- Offer shorter courses at a reduced cost
- Offer more audio/web conferences



Sample comments:

- Collaborate on conferences and advocacy with other related groups.
- Field trips to case study location moderated by local practitioners for CM
- Offer more services and content on the website.

## **New initiatives are being considered by the Executive Committee. What received the highest ratings?**



- Enhancing communications to members
- More involvement with statewide legislation issues
- Increasing membership and participation from local governments

Very respondents rated anything a 1 or a 2; two respondents did not answer this question.

**Do you have any additional ideas for new initiatives that the chapter should consider undertaking?**

**IN REVIEWING RESPONSES, SOME COMMON THEMES EMERGED**

**Meetings & Events (educational, professional, social)**



“More audio/web conferences for CM training and credit.”

“It may be helpful to have some kind of special meeting (maybe make it an annual event) with planning directors statewide to discuss getting them and their staffs as well as their planning commissioners involved with what we are doing.”

“A regular informal meeting (perhaps 4 times per year) – lunch, short speaker, time to chat and network. Could be over dinner once a year. Perhaps rotate counties.”

## **Advocacy and Public Policy**

“Planners as a profession need to devise a way to become players in the planning legislative and policy development realm.”

“Advocacy for SMART growth at state and county levels.”

“Emergency preparedness planning: what would happen if we had an earthquake and an east coast tidal wave? A presentation or forum like this should take place in Sussex County.”



## **Website and Communications**

“Advertise events better and provide all information needed on the website, including the location of the webinars.”

“Offer more services and content on the website. Provide a planners discussion forum. Offer exemplary and model ordinances.”

## **Collaboration**

National Association of Housing and Rehabilitation Officials  
Institute of Transportation Engineers  
Association of American Geographers

## **Public Engagement**

“Offer planning assistance to vulnerable groups.”

“Site visits to improving communities explaining how policy meets infrastructure - i.e. is there a disconnect between planning and zoning? Are we really making things better?”

## **Students**

“Provide more support for new graduates seeking employment.”

“Increase outreach to high schools during career day fairs.”

“Consider scholarship(s) to student members to further education or attend an event.”

## **Planning Certification Programs**

“State registration/licensing/certification of professional planners in Delaware.”

What has been the **best or most beneficial** experience you have had with APA Delaware in the past 5 years?



**Most people focused on our Chapter events, either attending them or helping with them.**

“Participating with our membership and other associated professions in developing programs to benefit our members such as the Delaware By Design tour and our regional conference with Maryland APA.”

“Best experiences are the webcasts, the reasonably priced annual meetings especially when combined with opportunities for CMs and hot food.”

“I helped to develop and lead mobile workshops for the APA Regional Conference in Wilmington. The workshops were well received and eventually adapted for the National APA Conference in Philadelphia.”

What has been the **worst or least beneficial** experience you have had with APA Delaware in the past 5 years?



**Analysis: we see some of the same themes**

## **Meetings & Events** (educational, professional, social)

“Some of the Chapter meetings that I attended were no worth the time spent. It felt as though it was a meeting just to hold a meeting.”

“Annual meeting shouldn't try to do so much in a single meeting.”

## **Website and Communications**

“The website. You have to jump through page upon page to get to where you want to go; especially when trying to register for an event. There should be direct links from the main page to events, not just stating what they are.”

## **Collaboration**

“Lack of coordination with other local neighboring Chapter or local agency activities/services such as Wilmapco.”

.....continued - i.e. worst or least beneficial experience you have had with APA Delaware in the past 5 years?

## Public Engagement

“The lack of a public relations effort to publicize the activities of APA Delaware to the general public which can be easily transported to APA Delaware sponsored or related events & activities.”

“A consistent, quality awards program should be a high priority.”



**If you could transform our organization in any way you wish, what would it look like and what would we be doing?**

**We see the same development of themes related to:**

- Meetings & Events
- Advocacy and Public Policy
- Website and Communications
- Public Engagement
- Students
- Involve More Current and Potential Members
- Be more like Connie Holland



## Meetings & Events



“More CM training.”

“When we gather, there needs to be some element of excitement and fun in addition to the educational things.”

## Advocacy and Public Policy

“A stronger voice for good planning in Delaware. Testimony at hearings from the APA. A speakers bureau for groups that want better planning outcomes in Delaware.”

“No one is speaking out for sustainable growth and thoughtful planning. We should be uniting with like-minded organizations (AIA, ASLA), preparing ourselves more for effective advocacy on issues such as eminent domain, redevelopment, brownfields, sustainable growth.”

## Website and Communications

“Have a web page devoted to pending Planning Legislation for Delaware.”

“I love the DE Planning News emails from Mike Mahaffie. Just enough bullets with links to additional info, if you want it.”





## **Public Engagement**

“Make the Chapter presence known. Re-brand. Provide greater outreach & opportunities to be involved. Offer exemplary and model ordinances/ guidelines via the website. What's working & not working in other municipalities? Create a planners discussion forum. Kick-off a marketing & outreach program to make presence known and re-brand Chapter.”

## **Students**

“Targeting some activities toward college students for career fields or interests in planning.”

## **Involve More Current and Potential Members**

“More members and a more diverse membership, socially, racially, culturally, and economically. Most local government planning commissioners and private sector planners and developers would be members.”

“Get more of the young planners involved as well as planning commissioner types.”

**What do you see as potential barriers to the success of our chapter?**

There are themes here too. They are different but they mostly refer back to volunteer efforts of our organization:



## **Lack of Resources (Size matters.)**

“We have limited resources of both volunteer time and money. Although we have no shortage of grand ideas, we are at risk of over-reaching beyond available resources. Let’s do a few things, and do them very, well. “

## **Apathy**

“Membership involvement especially with the young planners and planning commissioners.”

Question 18..... continued : What do you see as potential barriers to the success of our chapter?



Delaware Chapter of the  
American Planning Association

## Politics

“The political landscape creates a barrier to the chapter being more involved in legislative and policy issues, especially since many members and leaders of our organization work for the public sector.”

## Our Image (as a chapter and as a profession)

“Perceptions of the chapter as disorganized and not useful will have to be overcome.”

“Local government bias against planning, and financial cutbacks which may discourage planner training and recognition.”

Please provide any additional ideas, thoughts or comments you have about our chapter?

**Broad-Based Themes:**



## **Meetings & Events**

“Networking with other planners. How about having "brown bag" lunch sessions where a different planner gives a presentation on what they are working on and discuss it's strengths and weaknesses.”

## **Website and Communications**

“The web site is really poor ... in visual appearance and keeping information current. Update and better embrace this form of technology.”

## **Collaboration**

“Would like to see more collaboration between our chapters. We are affiliated with PA and with MD. It seems our allied professions are not able to be as collaborative as we should be.”

“We could collaboratively build momentum for a Planning/Landscape Architecture school at UD which is in essence already there.”



## **Public Engagement**

“We need to realize we are the leaders for the State in this regard and work to promote our message and expertise to the public and decision makers.”

“More pro bono work with city planning commissions and assistance in identifying sources of grant funding.”

### **Miscellaneous comments.....**

“It's better to do a few things well than to attempt a lot of activities.”

“Informal networking is invaluable and APA needs to find ways to facilitate that. “

“For a chapter our size, we do a lot already. If we our strategic plan is simply to maintain our current level of activity, that may be enough.”

“The Chapter has improved greatly in the last 10 to 15 years, but we cannot rest!”

WHAT NEXT???????

