

# Massachusetts Chapter of the American Planning Association

## Strategic Plan – 2017 to 2020

Adopted: 13 October 2017

### INTRODUCTION

The Massachusetts Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-MA) is one of forty-seven Chapters and twenty-one Divisions of APA. Both APA and the Massachusetts Chapter are organized to represent and support the members of the organization as well as the larger community of professional and citizen planners. APA, its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, and the Massachusetts Chapter support advances in the art and science of planning in order to assist the creation and development of great American communities. The organizations encourage excellence in planning that contributes to improvements in the quality of life for all Americans.

As part of its Mission, the Massachusetts Chapter develops a Strategic Plan every three to five years. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to create a program of action for the Chapter to pursue in support of planning in Massachusetts.

The action items detailed in this plan are intended to implement the Chapter’s strategies in each of following areas of responsibility:

• Member Services & Professional Development	• Advocacy & Outreach
• Resources	• Chapter Administration

The Priorities listed in the Plan are categorized as follows: High, Medium, Low

The Timelines listed in the Plan are as follows: Ongoing; < 6 months; 6-12 months; 12-24 months; 24 -36 months

### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Planning Association is to enhance planning in Massachusetts through education, advocacy, outreach, communication, and provision of services & resources to members and the larger planning community.

## MISSION GOALS

The goals of the Chapter are to:

- To promote the public good through the application of planning for better decision-making;
- To assist in meeting the needs of residents and citizens in a manner that enhances the quality and distribution of resources in the physical, social, and economic environment;
- To advocate for open, informed, transparent, and inclusive public processes for residents, citizens and local officials to make the best decisions for the future of their communities;
- To advance the art and science of planning and promote the value of planning within Massachusetts; and
- To provide services and resources to meet the needs of the planning community.

## MEMBER SERVICES & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Topic	Actions	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
1.1 - Collaboration with nearby APA Chapters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Connecticut and Rhode Island Chapters to improve administration of SNEAPA. Notify adjoining chapters about conferences and events held by the MA Chapter. Coordinate with NNECAPA</li> </ul>	SNEAPA Chair, Chapter President, Vice President, Professional Development Officer	Medium	6-12 months
1.2 - Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the AICP Prep Course annually</li> </ul>	PDO	Medium	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve functionality and increase publicity of events, jobs, and RFP postings</li> </ul>	Secretary, Webmaster, Chapter Administrator	High	< 6 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop special programs on specific topics with at least one half-day workshop per year</li> </ul>	Primarily Committees and Regional Representatives, Other Board Volunteers	Medium	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand distribution and knowledge of webinar series (Chapter Division Webinar Series and APA National Webinar Series)</li> </ul>	Secretary, PDO, Webmaster, Chapter Administrator	High	< 6 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold at least one regional event per year</li> </ul>	Regional Representatives	High	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a webinar for the Chapter Division Webinar Series</li> </ul>	PDO	Low	6-12 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the creation of a scholarship for APA events or internship program for students and/or emerging planners</li> </ul>	YPG, Treasurer	Medium	6-12 months

## MEMBER SERVICES & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Topic	Actions	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a FAICP Task Force every two years to reach out to eligible members, assist those who wish to pursue nominations and publicize members selected for induction into College of Fellows</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Current FAICP Members	Medium	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide yearly sessions on Ethics and Law, in addition to SNEAPA</li> </ul>	PDO, Legislative and Policy Officer	Medium	6-12 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply for Chapter President Council grants, and other grants, that would provide resources to the Chapter for initiatives such as guidebooks, training, planning projects, research studies, etc.</li> </ul>	President	Medium	Ongoing
1.3 - Social Events and Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively recruit nominees for the Annual Awards</li> </ul>	Awards Committee	Medium	6 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold an event to recognize Chapter members newly inducted into FAICP.</li> </ul>	President, Chapter FAICP Ad Hoc Committee	Medium	Every 2 years
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicize and promote the Annual Awards Lunch and award winners</li> </ul>	Awards Committee, Chapter Administrator	High	6-12 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restart the Meet Mass event</li> </ul>	Ad-Hoc Committee or Board Volunteer	Low	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to expand and support YPG programming</li> </ul>	YPG, All Members	Medium	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue the Planners Movies and Meetup Series</li> </ul>	Ad-Hoc Committee or Board Volunteer	Low	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in planning and actively advertise the New England or Region 1 Reception at the National Planning Conference</li> </ul>	President	High	12-24 months Ongoing
1.4 - Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the newsletter into a professional publication that is distributed on a regular basis</li> </ul>	Newsletter Editor	High	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a monthly digest of events and upcoming opportunities</li> </ul>	All Members, Chapter Administrator	High	< 6 months

## MEMBER SERVICES & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Topic	Actions	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire a website developer, and/or investigate APA services, to create a new website with improved functionality and design</li> </ul>	Webmaster, Secretary, Chapter Administrator	High	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a public calendar on the website that includes all APA-MA events and CM opportunities</li> </ul>	Webmaster, Chapter Administrator	Medium	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce a Chapter Annual Report, that includes the Chapter's annual financial report, to be distributed at Annual meeting at SNEAPA, posted on website, included in newsletter, and sent to APA National</li> </ul>	Executive Committee	Medium	6-12 months
1.5 - Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly articulate the value of APA-MA membership</li> </ul>	All Members	High	< 6 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey members to identify why they are APA-MA members, which service(s) are most beneficial to members, and what additional service(s) or events they would value</li> </ul>	Executive Committee	High	< 6 months Every 24-36 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop promotional materials that explain what APA-MA is and what the organization does</li> </ul>	Secretary, Chapter Administrator	Medium	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold a productive and well-led Annual Meeting at SNEAPA</li> </ul>	President, Executive Committee, Chapter Administrator	High	< 6 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a welcome packet of materials for new members</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Communications Committee	Low	12-24 months
1.6 – University Planning Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create an University Liaison position to serve as the primary contact for schools, keep the Board informed of university activities, and build the relationship between the Chapter and university</li> </ul>	President	High	<6 months

## MEMBER SERVICES & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Topic	Actions	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and maintain a list of colleges and universities offering planning degree and certificate programs</li> </ul>	PDO, YPG, University Liaison	Medium	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reach out to schools with planning programs to provide information on member services to students</li> </ul>	President, PDO, University Liaison	Medium	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold lunch events at the PAB-accredited schools</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, University Liaison	Medium	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer a mentoring program</li> </ul>	Executive Committee	Medium	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize a panel of young professionals for events at the planning schools to discuss career topics</li> </ul>	YPG, University Liaison	Medium	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the 4 accredited planning schools in organizing the annual 4P Lecture series</li> </ul>	President, University Liaison	High	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in the Planning Accreditation Board accreditation reviews of Harvard, UMass- Amherst, Tufts and MIT</li> </ul>	President, Ad Hoc PAB review Committee, University Liaison	High	Every 3-5 years

## ADVOCACY & OUTREACH

Topic	Actions	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
2.1 - Advocate for Excellence in Planning at	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define relationship of Chapter to MAPD, MACP, CPTC, and other allied organizations.</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Organizational Liaisons	Medium	12-24 months

## ADVOCACY & OUTREACH

Topic	Actions	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
the State and Local Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen existing partnerships with allied organizations (Smart Growth Alliance, MMLA, MMA, DHCD, EOHED, MARPA, NCDA, etc.)</li> </ul>	Board Liaisons, All Members	Medium	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Smart Growth Alliance and others to develop material explaining the proposed changes to Chapter 40A and other state laws and regulations</li> </ul>	Legislative Officer, Legislative Committee	High	< 6 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track legislative changes related to planning and zoning and provide comment to the Legislature as appropriate</li> </ul>	Legislative Officer	High	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and take positions on draft APA Policy Guides. Transmit that position to Chapter Delegates Assembly</li> </ul>	Chapter Delegates	Low	Ongoing
2.2 Engage in APA Legislative and Policy Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become involved in the APA Advocacy Network</li> </ul>	President, Legislative and Policy Officer	Medium	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and take positions on draft APA Policy Guides. Transmit that position to Chapter delegates for National Planning Conference.</li> </ul>	President, Chapter Board	Medium	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in the Fall APA Legislative and Policy Conference</li> </ul>	President, Legislative and Policy Officer	Medium	6-12 months
2.3 - Engage in Legislative Process for Comprehensive Zoning Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively engage with our allied organizations to advocate and lobby for comprehensive zoning reform and other good planning practices</li> </ul>	President, Legislative Officer, Board Liaisons	High	< 6 months Ongoing

## ADVOCACY & OUTREACH

Topic	Actions	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
2.4 - Increase and Improve Outreach Efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better publicize the existence of the APA-MA Annual Awards and actively publicize &amp; promote award winners</li> </ul>	Regional Representatives, Awards Committee	Medium	< 6 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicize and work with communities in applying for APA Great Places/Neighborhoods/Streets Program</li> </ul>	Awards Committee	Medium	6-12 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote other public events that highlight the benefit of good planning</li> </ul>	Social Media Coordinator, Executive Committee, All Members	High	6-12 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a Great Places MA Program, coordinate with Smart Growth Alliance's program, or create a tri-state great places program to be announced at SNEAPA</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Awards Committee	Low	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an effective brochure to promote APA-MA</li> </ul>	Secretary	Medium	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve use of social media and other communications tools</li> </ul>	Social Media Coordinator, Chapter Administrator, Executive Committee	Medium	< 6 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a communications strategy by appointing a Communications Committee. Explore hiring a communications firm or person</li> </ul>	President	Medium	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and build relationships with related organizations and/or organizations with similar goals (AARP Livable Communities and others working on topics such as smart growth, livable communities, aging in place, walkability, etc.)</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Committees	Medium	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan for and celebrate Community Planning Month each October and Community Development week each April</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Committees, Regional Representatives	Medium	6-12 months

## RESOURCES

Topic	Actions	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
3.1 - Expand Public Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with allied organizations and others to create materials and host public events</li> </ul>	Committees, Executive Committee, Regional Representatives	Medium	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicize adopted APA policy guides to members, cities and towns, legislators, etc.</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Legislative Officer, Chapter Delegates	Low	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate members and the public about legislative matters including zoning reform</li> </ul>	Legislative Officer, Regional Representatives	High	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate strategies to reach out to planning and zoning board members to join the Chapter</li> </ul>	Executive Committee	Low	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decide if we want to provide education and other resources to Planning Boards and other local officials, such as the APA <i>Commissioner</i> publication.</li> </ul>	Regional Representatives, Committees, Special Task Force	Medium	12-24 months
3.2 - Provide a Library of Planning Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare guidebooks and/or issue RFPs for the production of guidebooks and other publications to promote good planning practice</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Committees	Low	24-36 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicize and widely share materials created by APA National and other organizations. Debrief after events and publicize in newsletter</li> </ul>	President	Medium	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a Library of photos of excellent design examples on the website. Link to APA website and other chapters</li> </ul>	All members	low	12-24 months



## CHAPTER ADMINISTRATION

Topic	Actions	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
4.1 - Explore Options for Changing the Chapter Administrative Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review management structures of other APA Chapters and similar organizations and develop a proposal recommending a structure for Board review and decision</li> </ul>	President, Vice President, Treasurer	High	< 6 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define responsibilities for staff and prepare an RFP or RFQ to implement the recommended structure</li> </ul>	President, Vice President, Treasurer	High	< 6 months
4.2 - Improve Meeting Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and prepare recommendations for changing the meeting format and schedule</li> </ul>	President, Vice President, Secretary	High	< 6 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create and adhere to a standard timeline and process for agenda setting</li> </ul>	President, Secretary, Chapter Administrator	High	< 6 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedule meetings and identify locations annually</li> </ul>	Secretary, Chapter Administrator	High	< 6 months Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review meeting location, type, and frequency to improve attendance and participation (alternate day / time, monthly conference calls with quarterly in-person meetings, or other structure – for example) and implement findings</li> </ul>	Executive Committee	Medium	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide previous meeting minutes to Board members prior to Board meetings</li> <li>Provide follow-up “to do” list from Board meeting decisions to Board members.</li> </ul>	Secretary, Chapter Administrator	High	< 1 month ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider an in-person joint APA-MA / MAPD board meeting each year</li> </ul>	Executive Committee	Low	12-24 months
4.3 - Internal Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create board email aliases (<a href="mailto:board@apa-ma.org">board@apa-ma.org</a> and <a href="mailto:exec@apa-ma.org">exec@apa-ma.org</a>) to simplify internal communication</li> </ul>	Secretary, Chapter Administrator	High	< 6 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an internal board calendar that includes meetings, events, and deadlines for specific tasks</li> </ul>	Chapter Administrator, President, Secretary	High	< 6 months ongoing

## CHAPTER ADMINISTRATION

Topic	Actions	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish policy regarding who is responsible for Chapter website, Facebook page, Twitter account, Constant Contact account, etc. and who has password access social media</li> </ul>	Executive Committee	Medium	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute draft minutes within a week following each Board meeting and again with the agenda for the next meeting. Circulate a tasks and votes list immediately following meetings</li> </ul>	Secretary	High	6-12 months
4.4 - Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare an annual or biannual budget that is consistent with the current strategic plan</li> </ul>	Treasurer, Executive Committee	High	< 6 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicize budget to members in Newsletter, on website and presentation at Annual Meeting</li> </ul>	President, Treasurer	High	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually file IRS Form 990 and any other required federal or State forms</li> </ul>	President, Treasurer	High	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish protocols for a “back-up” Treasurer.</li> </ul>	President, Treasurer	Medium	6-12 months
4.5 - Board Organization and Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare written descriptions of each position and committee including ad-hoc committees to define roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Descriptions should reflect the Strategic Plan</li> </ul>	All Members	High	< 6 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review committee and position descriptions annually</li> </ul>	All Members	Low	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare a task list for new volunteers so the Chapter has specific needs and ideas in place when people volunteer to help and publicize this list.</li> </ul>	Secretary, Chapter Administrator	High	< 6 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a PDO Committee</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, PDO	High	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and revise Strategic Plan annually</li> </ul>	President, Vice President, Strategic Plan Committee	Medium	Ongoing

## CHAPTER ADMINISTRATION

Topic	Actions	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
4.6 - Bylaws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create ad-hoc committee to update and revise Bylaws and Regulations to reflect Strategic Plan priorities</li> </ul>	Bylaws Committee	Medium	< 6 months
4.7 - Provide Board Training and Develop Organizational Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create an orientation program for new members and members moving into new positions</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Ad-Hoc Training Committee	High	< 6 months
4.8 - Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Join APA National Election Cycle</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Nominating Committee	High	6-12 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a Nominating Committee for elected positions, to help recruit new board members, prepare current board members for new positions, and serve as a resource</li> </ul>	Executive Committee	High	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that that nominating committee reviews the board roles, responsibilities, and expectations with each potential candidate</li> </ul>	President, Nominating Committee	Medium	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish guidelines for the Nominating Committee</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Nominating Committee	Medium	12-24 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a succession plan</li> </ul>	Nominating Committee	Medium	12-24 months
4.9 - Develop a plan for administering the Guidebook to Massachusetts Land Use Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a specific email address on the website for people to submit questions, concerns, errors etc. (<a href="mailto:Guidebook@apa-ma.org">Guidebook@apa-ma.org</a>)</li> </ul>	Secretary, Chapter Administrator	High	< 6 months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assign responsibility for updating the Guidebook on a predetermined schedule</li> </ul>	President, Guidebook Committee	High	< 6 months ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assign responsibility for responding to questions, error notices, complaints, and recommendations regarding Guidebooks</li> </ul>	President, Guidebook Committee	High	< 6 months ongoing
4.10 - Comply with APA National Chapter Performance Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt income-based dues structure</li> </ul>	Treasurer, Chapter Board	High	< 6 months