

# NEBRASKA PLANNING & ZONING ASSOCIATION



Archive Yesterday,  
Action Today,  
Achieve Tomorrow

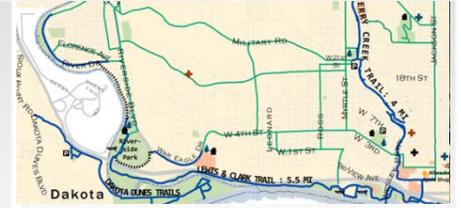


## Newsletter Pre-Conference 2017



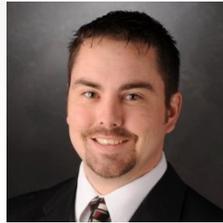
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## From the President...

Staring out the windows of City Hall, I dread the thought of heading out into the blistering cold. However, my thoughts are immediately warmed by the reminder that the Annual Nebraska Planning Conference is nearing. Last year's celebration of NPZA's 50<sup>th</sup> year was a rousing success, resulting in the largest turnout we've seen at the conference.



We have been working hard with the Nebraska Chapter of the American Planning Association on planning the 2017 Nebraska Planning conference. This year's conference (March 8-10<sup>th</sup>) will once again be held in the Younes Conference Center in Kearney and will cover a wide range of great topics for those interested in attending. More information regarding the event can be found on our website (<http://www.npza.org>) including the "save the date" flyer, the conference program, and a link that allows you to register online. Also, check out NPZA's Facebook and Twitter accounts for updates and pictures last year's conference.

Each year at the annual meeting NPZA recognizes outstanding individuals and communities that have contributed to the field of planning in Nebraska. If you wish to nominate an individual or community for one of the available award categories, please fill out the nomination application on the NPZA website and submit it for review.

The NPZA Board and I are excited about the upcoming conference and we look forward to seeing you there. Until then, stay warm!

--Christopher Solberg  
President-NPZA

## Mark Your Calendars

**March 8-10, 2017:** Nebraska Planning Conference  
Younes Center, Kearney, NE  
Info on Page 4

**May 6-9, 2017:** APA National Planning Conference  
New York City  
March 2- First registration cutoff; April 6- Second cutoff

## Creating a Walking and Bicycling Coalition in the Siouxland Area

By Kevin Randle; Planner II, Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council (SI/MPCO)

Many communities are trying to become more walkable and bikeable. The benefits associated with being friendly to pedestrians and bicyclists are many, such as increased health and wellness, more environmentally friendly, it saves commuters money, and helps relieve traffic congestion. One of the best ways to advance a walkable and bikeable agenda is with a diverse group of local stakeholders, which is the approach that the Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council (SIMPCO) took when it developed its Bicycle & Pedestrian Roundtable.

SIMPCO is a tristate council of governments that serves areas in Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota. SIMPCO provides a variety of services including transportation planning, community & economic development, and housing programs. Many pedestrians and bicyclists in the

See 'Siouxland Walk/Bike' page 3....





## Wayne Public Schools are Making the World a Better Place

By Jeffery Ray, AICP, Planning Department Manager, JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

How can we make the world a better place? February 18-21, students from Wayne Public Schools will represent Nebraska at the Future City Finals competition in Washington, D.C., where they will answer that question and present their solution via a virtual city. Future City is a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) competition for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Using the engineering design process, the students spend about four months creating a virtual city (using SimCity), which is supposed to exist at least 100 years in the future and provide the team's solution to a citywide sustainability issue. The issue for 2016-2017 is the Power of Public Space.

The competition consists of five deliverables to be scored:

1. Project Plan
  - a. They create the plan to organize their project and use throughout the process.
2. Virtual City
  - a. Created using SimCity and present it in a slideshow.
3. City Essay
  - a. A 1,500-word essay describing their city's attributes and their solution.
4. City Model
  - a. A physical model of their city built with recycled material.
5. City Presentation
  - a. A 7-minute presentation discussing their city's features and their solution followed by 5-8 minutes of questions and answers.

JEO Consulting Group had the privilege of providing two employees to judge Nebraska's regional competition in Omaha in January. Jeff Ray, Planning Department Manager, said he is looking forward to being more involved with a team next year as a mentor. In that role, he will support the team throughout the process to help

them understand project management and serve as a technical resource for the students. Good luck to Wayne Public Schools in Washington, D.C.! For more information on Future City, go to [www.futurecity.org](http://www.futurecity.org).

## NPZA Board Update

The NPZA board has been busy with members planning for the State conference, working on Zoning Administrator training and certification, and setting goals for the coming years. The Board will meet prior to the conference on Tuesday afternoon, March 7, and immediately following the conference on March 10<sup>th</sup>. As the election of officers was held in 2016, this year's association and district officers will remain the same.

NPZA President: Chris Solberg, City of La Vista

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Judy Clark, City of North Platte

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Dan Gittinger, City of Gretna

Metro Chair: Kevin Anderson, JEO

Northeast Chair: Mary Ziemba, Boone County

Southeast Chair: Dave Schmitz, Otoe County

South-Central Chair: Harry Milligan, Milligan & Associates

West Central Chair: Dolly Kienke, Boyd County

Panhandle Chair: Daniel Bennett, PADD



## 'Siouxland Walk/Bike' continued from page 1)

Siouxland area had concerns about safety, the built environment, and local policies. SIMPCO worked with these groups to develop the Bicycle & Pedestrian Roundtable in 2009 in order to serve the interests of these stakeholders. The group consists of local pedestrians and bicyclists, representatives of local governments, downtown representatives, public health officials, and department of transportation staff from three states.

Once formed, the group began to tackle many of the issues that needed to be addressed for the area. The multi-jurisdictional and multi-organizational approach was immensely successful. It proved beneficial to have such a diverse group come together to promote an agenda. Together the group was able to exert more influence and accomplish more than they could individually.

The efforts of the group have been successful in implementing many improvement projects in the Siouxland region. The roundtable group worked with private businesses in 2011 to fund a local bike rack program to provide safe locations for bicycles to be locked up. The group was also able to convince Sioux City transit to add bicycle racks onto all busses in 2014. This allows for bicycle riders to take advantage of transit when needed, such as when travelling long distances or in inclement weather. The group has also worked in an advisory capacity in 2015 during the designation of corridors for future street improvements, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes.

The roundtable group has also done an excellent job of organizing events and activities to encourage and educate the community about walking and bicycling. One of the group's most notable events is organizing Bike-to-Work Day. Bike-to-Work Day has been a major success every year since it began in 2013 and typically attracts about 50 registered bicyclists annually. A regional bicycle summit was organized in 2015 and consisted of speakers coming to discuss topics such as bicycle trail funding sources,

best planning practices, and success stories with local government leaders in the area. The group also helped with Park(ing) Day 2016, which is an event that converted parking spaces into miniature parks one day. The group has also given a 2016 bicycle friendly employer award to a local business that has made admirable strides in creating a bicycle friendly environment for its employees and customers.

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Roundtable is still an active group that continues its work in advocating for bicyclist and pedestrian interests. The group is continuing its efforts and is looking forward to the future with even more ambitious projects.

## Nabity: Hillbilly Elegy Book Review

by Chad Nabity, Regional Planning Director, Hall County Regional Planning Commission

*The following article was originally published in the Winter 2017 edition of the Small Town and Rural Planning Division of the American Planning Association Newsletter and is used with permission.*

I love small towns and rural places. In my mind, that is the small towns and rural places in Nebraska. But I have been involved in National APA long enough to know that small town and rural means something different to every person, and changes based on where you are in the country. I also love to read. I don't get to read nearly as much as I want to, but I meet that need by listening to books. This summer at the end of July I saw this interview on my Facebook feed.

<http://www.theamericanconservative.com/dreher/trump-us-politics-poor-whites/> The American Conservative is not a magazine that I would typically subscribe to, follow, and to be honest, even pick up in a doctor's waiting room. I consider myself moderate, independent and non-partisan in my political views. Magazines and web sites with names like this turn me off. This feed on my Facebook

See 'Nabity' page 4....



# 2017 Nebraska Annual Planning Conference

March 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> • Younes Conference Center • Kearney, NE



2.5 days  
30+ Presenters

Full Conference.....\$190  
Wednesday Only.....\$105  
Thursday & Friday Only .....\$105

This year's conference promises to be special with 30+ presenters, generous sponsors, great networking opportunities, and the annual awards banquet. Conference Accredited for 14.0 MCLE credits. Conference registration, scholarship, sponsor, and membership forms available at [npza.org](http://npza.org).

## Schedule at a Glance

Wednesday, March 08

7:00 AM Registration  
7:45 AM Welcome  
8:00 AM-4:30 Institutes & Sessions  
4:30 PM-6:30 Ethics

Thursday, March 09

7:00 AM Registration  
8:00-10:45 General Sessions  
11:00-5:00PM Sessions  
6:30 Awards Banquet

Friday, March 10

7:30AM Registration  
8:00-12:15 PM Sessions  
12:15-12:30PM Closing  
12:45 PM NPZA Board Meeting

*Lodging is the registrant's responsibility*

## 'Nabity' (continued from page 3)

page intrigued me; (there may be something to their interview question, I knew that I wanted to read the book or hear this story. Add in the fact that it was available on Audible and I could listen to the book while tending my CSA garden, driving to work, or other daily activities that keep my hands or feet busy, but allow my mind to roam, and I had to get the book.

The very beginning of the response from J.D. Vance to the first interview question:

*What many don't understand is how truly desperate these places are, and we're not talking about small enclaves or a few towns – we're talking about multiple states where a significant chunk of the white working class struggles to get by. Heroin addiction is rampant. In my medium-sized Ohio county last year, deaths from drug addiction outnumbered deaths from natural causes. The average kid will live in multiple homes over the course of her life, experience a constant cycle of growing close to a "stepdad" only to see him walk out on the family, know multiple drug users personally, maybe live in a foster home for a bit (or at least in the home of an unofficial foster like an aunt or grandparent),*



*watch friends and family get arrested, and on and on. And on top of that is the economic struggle, from the factories shuttering their doors to the Main Streets with nothing but cash-for-gold stores and pawn shops.*

What Vance describes is not what I envision when I think small towns and rural areas. I don't think I am alone in projecting my biases on what I want to see. His story, a personal success story, tells of small town and rural life that is significantly different from the one I grew up with, and even from the one I think I see where I live. It is an important story that eloquently describes a life that too many rural Americans live every day. His story provides the kind of context that we as planners need in order to avoid the pitfall of making plans that don't or can't apply in our communities.

Vance very clearly does not have the answers. He is a young man just getting started as an attorney at the end of this part of his story. It is my hope that I can, after reading his story, use this information to make the plans for my rural communities a little better and a little more responsive to this rural America that I don't know.

*Please submit any questions, comments, concerns, or ideas regarding the newsletter to Daniel Bennett at [danielb@nepadd.com](mailto:danielb@nepadd.com)*