The Nebraska Planner

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VIRTUAL CONFERENCES THIS FALL

Conferences can sometimes be a difficult to attend in person due to the time off work, travel expenses, and the registration fees. Why not take advantage of the learning and CM opportunities provided at a reduced rate this fall with several online events. Below are several great conferences taking place in our peer states.

- Planning Michigan 2020 (October 7-9) https://planning.org/events/eventmulti/9204782/
- APA Idaho Strengthening Roots-Cultivate Change (October 7-9) https://planning.org/events/eventmulti/9204014/
- Upper Midwest APA Conference (October 12-14) https://lnkd.in/e9PQuej

AICP EXAM

Thinking of taking the AICP exam but the cost is prohibiting you? There are scholarships available to our members to reduce the exam fee and make it more attainable. We encourage all our members not currently certified to consider taking the exam. We have study materials and mentors available to help you through the process. If you are interested in taking advantage of the funding support or have questions email Chapter PDO Stephanie Rouse at srouse@rdgusa.com.

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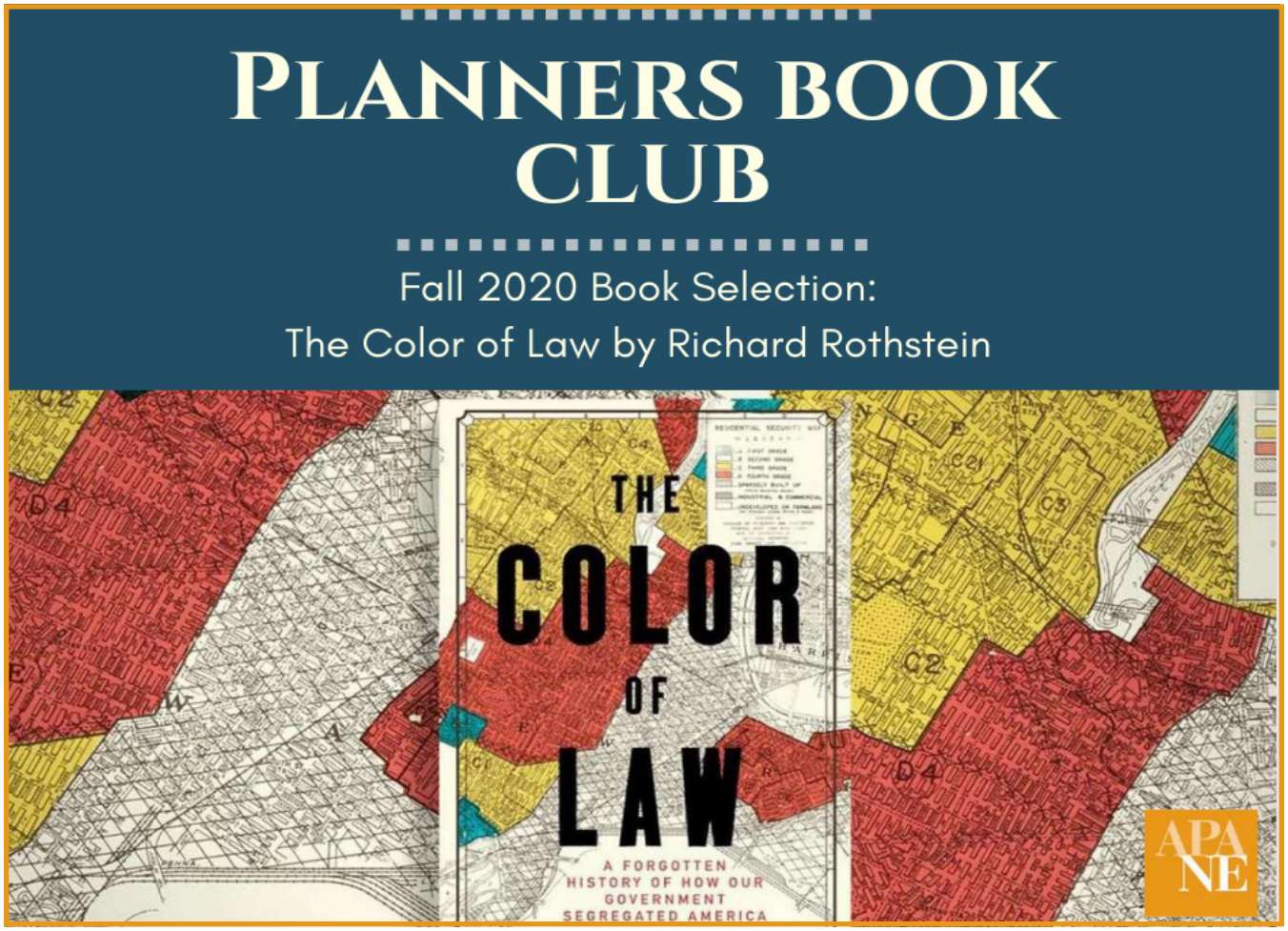
SPRING CONFERENCE PREPARATION

The leaves have barely fallen, but we are already underway with preparations for the Nebraska Planner Conference in the spring. We encourage anyone interested in presenting at the conference to submit their session idea by October 15th by heading to https://nebraska.planning.org/conferences-and-meetings/chapter-conference/ to download the form. While we hope the conference will be an in-person event, we are making sure the event could go virtual if necessary. The conference also means awards season is coming! Please start thinking about all the great projects you or your communities have worked on over the years and consider submitting when the nominations are opened. More information on the awards process can be found at https://nebraska.planning.org/community-outreach/chapter-awards/.

PLANNERS BOOK CLUB



JOIN YOUR FELLOW PLANNERS AND ALLIED PROFESSIONALS IN THE FALL 2020 PLANNERS BOOK CLUB HOSTED BY THE APA NEBRASKA CHAPTER'S EMERGING PLANNERS GROUP. HERE IS HOW IT WORKS:

- Register to participate at the following link: https://forms.gle/Pe6B5eMeA3LEggYV8.
- Read or listen to the book (available at your local library, bookstore, Libro.fm, or Audible). Just let us know if you need to request assistance in obtaining a copy.
- Join us for a lively discussion in mid-November. A Doodle poll will be sent out to book club participants several weeks in advance to find a time that works for everyone for the discussion, likely to be held over Zoom.

PRESIDENTS UPDATES

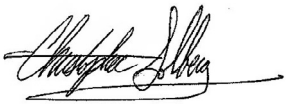
Christopher Solberg, AICP - NPZA President

From the President...

On October 2nd NPZA held our annual Nebraska Planning and Zoning Association Fall Workshop. This year's workshop was held virtually. This year's offering of topics includes community engagement in the age of COVID-19, findings of fact, board of adjustment, subdivisions, solar energy, planning fundamentals, changes to floodplains in rural areas, and dealing with CAVE people. It was quite a diverse selection of subjects arranged to provide learning opportunities for the "rookies" as well as those who have "been around the block". The best part is that if you weren't able to attend, you can still register for the workshop and watch the recordings. Just go to the Conference page on the NPZA website to register. A link to the sessions will be forwarded to those you register.

We have also started work jointly with APA Nebraska on preparation for the 2021 Nebraska Planning Conference. It is our goal to make this conference better each and every year, even in the wake of this year's challenges, and 2021 will be no different. We are looking forward to the conference next March and sincerely hope you can attend.

For more information on the Fall Workshop, the Nebraska Planning Conference, or on NPZA itself, please check out the NPZA website or follow our activities on Facebook and Twitter as well.



Jeff Ray, AICP - APA-NE President

The cooler weather is here, leaves are changing color, and the harvest is starting. I look forward to the Fall season change every year knowing that the cold gray winter will follow. We can not control the weather and will get the good with the bad.

That is how I feel about the "COVID season" too. So far, the majority of 2020 has been influenced by precautions for public health and safety with social distancing. This has limited our face to face interactions but allowed (or forced) us to adapt with on-line meetings and webinars. This year the NE APA will not be hosting a fall workshop but board encourages you to participate in one or more of the numerous state chapter online conferences. This opportunity is affordable, flexible and can provide different perspectives and topics that are not typically covered in Nebraska.

As a reminder, please submit your session abstracts of our March conference or let me know if you think an online session that your watched this fall would be a good topic for our Spring Conference. I remain optimistic that we will all be able to be together again in the spring, but I'm sure there will be some changes.

If you have any questions for me, please feel free to email, call or text me at jray@jeo.com or 402-779-1070.

THE OCHSNER MATCH

A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO DOUBLE YOUR STUDENT SUPPORT FOR THE COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE

Supporters of the College of Architecture at the University of Nebraska have a rare opportunity to double the amount of new endowments for scholarships, thanks to an extremely generous gift of approximately $2.5 million from the estate of architecture alumnus Norman Ochsner.

THE OCHSNER MATCH

Norman's gift was designated to support students in the College of Architecture. Dean Kathy Ankerson, Ph.D., felt that the best way to demonstrate gratitude for this bequest would be not only to use it exactly as Norman had intended, but also to leverage it to multiply the generosity of other alumni and benefactors.

Therefore, Dean Ankerson designated a portion of the Ochsner funds to match new endowed gifts 1-to-1. This arrangement allows donors to endow scholarships with donations of just $15,000 of the minimum $30,000 required to set up an endowment. Donors with a gift of $15,000 or more will have the satisfaction of doubling their philanthropy, providing more scholarships or doubling the amount of scholarship dollars awarded each year.

- The commitment may be a single outright gift or it may be pledged over two to five years.
- Each new endowed scholarship will be named by/for the donor making the commitment, along with a designation that describes it as part of the Ochsner Match.
- The commitment must provide an undergraduate scholarship or graduate fellowship within the College of Architecture.
- The commitment must be a minimum of $15,000. For example, a three-year pledge of $15,000 ($5,000/year for 3 years) would be matched by the Ochsner fund to create a $30,000 endowed scholarship. *Note: Any amount at $15,000 or above will be matched.*

CRITERIA FOR AN OCHSNER MATCH

- Ochsner funds will match your gift in or after October 2020.
- The number and dollar amount of Ochsner Match scholarships will be tracked to commemorate the generosity of Norman Ochsner and convey the impact of his gift.
- The Ochsner Match opportunity will last as long as designated matching funds from the Ochsner estate are available.
- The commitment must provide an undergraduate scholarship or graduate fellowship within the College of Architecture.
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CRITERIA FOR AN OCHSNER MATCH SCHOLARSHIP

Norman Ochsner provided three conditions for his gift.

- It must provide scholarships/fellowships
- It must be endowed
- It must support the Nebraska College of Architecture

While the University of Nebraska Foundation cannot limit or restrict the gifts being matched to specific programs or initiatives, Dean Ankerson is committed to working with anyone making such a gift to direct the scholarships to areas of mutual interest to both the donor and the college. For example, the scholarship/fellowship might be directed to any one of the four College of Architecture programs (architecture, interior design, landscape architecture or community and regional planning) or the scholarships might focus on areas of interest like financial need, travel and/or areas of emerging strength within the college.

FUNDING IDEAS

The match can be applied to many different kinds of gifts.

- Gifts from individuals — By effectively lowering the minimum funding necessary to establish an endowed student scholarship or fellowship to $15,000, the college is hoping to make it easier for individuals to consider creating their own funds.
- Class Scholarships — If class members raise a minimum of $15,000 for a new endowed class scholarship or fellowship, their gifts will be matched 1-to-1.
- Gifts from firms and organizations — The match can also be used by firms and organizations looking for an opportunity to create a new endowed scholarship/fellowship.

For more information, please contact Cameron Andreesen, Director of Development with the University of Nebraska Foundation, at cameron.andreesen@nufoundation.org or 402-458-1191.

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE

Norman Willard Ochsner

(1942-2018)

Norman graduated from Norfolk Senior High School in 1960. He received his associate degree from Northeast Community College in 1962 and his bachelor's degree in architecture in 1967 from the University of Nebraska. He worked in California for a few years before moving back to Norfolk to become a draftsman at Nucor, a steel company in the construction industry. Eventually, he took over the family farm from his parents.

Norman's generous gift will benefit aspiring students in perpetuity, an enduring legacy of kindness.

COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANT 2020

By: Stephanie Rouse, AICP

Since 2017 AARP Livable Communities has opened a competitive grant program called the Community Challenge which provides funding for quick-action projects to communities in all 50 states. Since its inception four years ago the program has provided $6 million to 560 projects. Each year nearly twice as many applications are submitted than funding allows, making this program highly competitive. Grants are awarded to projects based on their ability to meet at least one of the following outcomes:

• Create vibrant public places by improving open spaces and parks and activating main streets.

• Deliver a range of transportation and mobility options by increasing connectivity, walkability, bikeability, wayfinding, and access a wider range of transportation choices.

• Encourage the availability of a range of housing by increasing accessible and affordable housing solutions.

• Increase civic engagement and demonstrate the tangible value of "Smart Cities" by bringing together local leaders and residents from all backgrounds to address challenges.

Unique to this year's pool of funding were projects targeted specifically at COVID-19 relief. The fifth potential outcome added this year was "supporting coronavirus responses and recovery efforts by ensuring older adults' access to information, essential services, and civic life." Some projects, like the Estes Valley Community Garden in Colorado will be making physical improvements like adding hand sanitizing stations; others like the Delaware Children's Museum are developing specialized online curriculum and activity bags to help connect grandparents to their grandkids in celebration of Grandparents Day. Some grants target social isolation resulting from the pandemic. In Charlotte, North Carolina their funds will be used to provide Wi-Fi hotspots to borrowers for up to three weeks at a time.

In Nebraska, three communities with vastly different projects received funding this year. The projects are to be completed by December 18, 2020. More details on our state's projects are below. To review the full list of awardees visit www.aarp.org/communitychallenge.

Haigler Community Foundation

Haigler, Nebraska received $5,000 to install an ADA-compliant restroom and hand washing station at their museum. Once complete, the community will work with the State of Nebraska to designate the Haigler Museum Complex (comprised of the Cornerstone Museum, One Room School House Museum, and Conoco Station Museum) a state tourist visitor center. The Haigler Community Foundation, a 501c3 charitable foundation, is driven to improve quality of life in Haigler and Dundy County, Nebraska.

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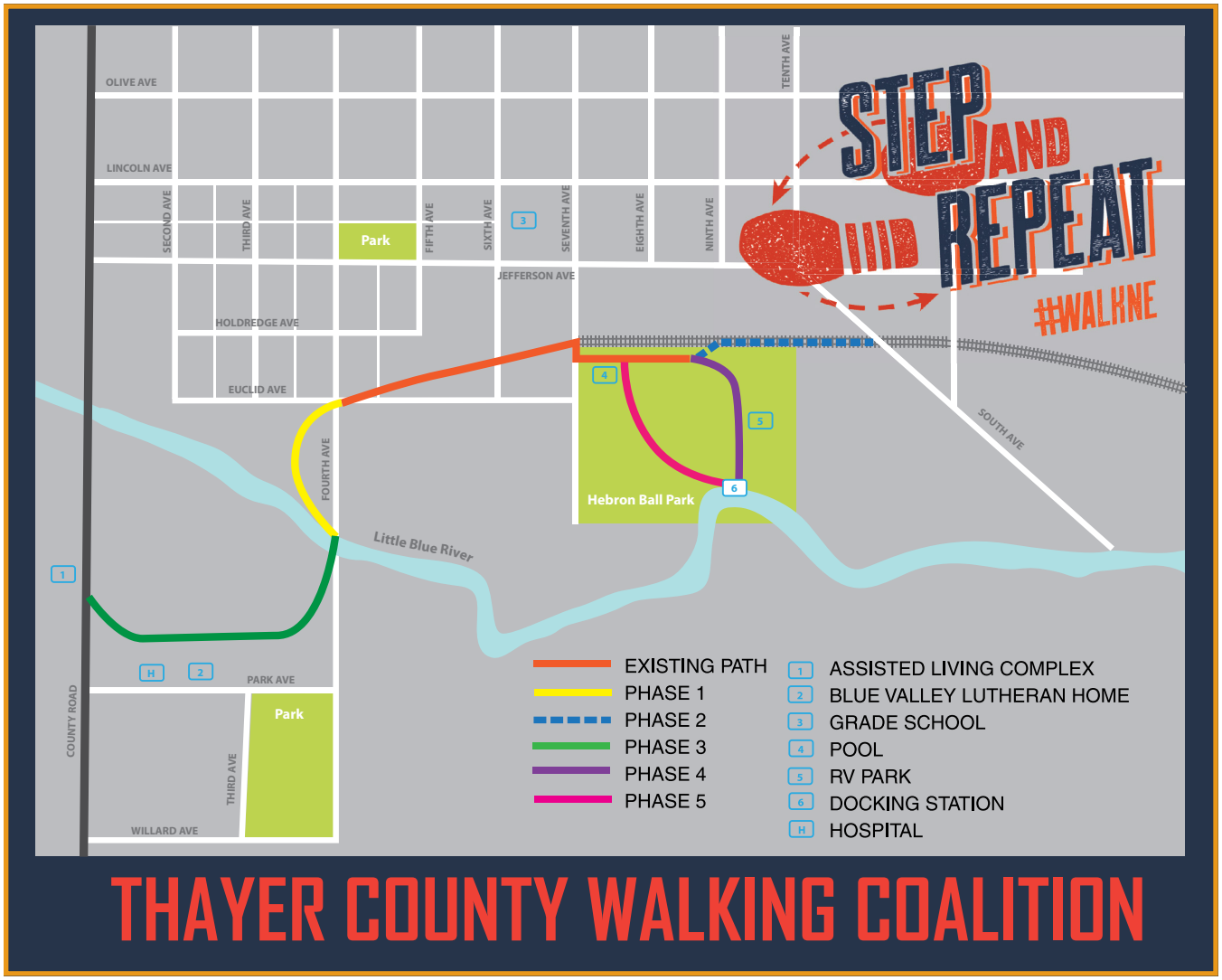
City of Hebron

The City of Hebron will be using $16,800 to install solar lighting on a popular walking trail to extend the hours users can safely access the trail. The Thayer County Walking Coalition project will benefit 2 miles of trails (see map below for trail route), increasing the capacity for physical activity and access key destinations for nearby residents. This round of funding builds upon their 2017 award which benefited older adults with the installation of signage and benches along the trail.



NeighborWorks Lincoln

In Lincoln, NeighborWorks received $24,300 for improvements at a community garden on a vacant lot at 14th and D Streets. The garden will provide nearby residents access to fresh food, a new green space and opportunities for physical activity. The construction includes garden beds, entrance structures, landscaping, benches, and poles for stringed lighting. In the summer of 2019 six families signed up to grow produce at the new garden following Learn and Feast on 11th Street, an event where neighbors shared a meal, discussed culture and food, and learned about available resources. NeighborWorks plans to continue to engage the community through this inviting space and hopes it will help neighbors get to know one another.

CASE STUDIES IN NEW RURALISM

SHARING LESSONS FOR SUCCESS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES NATIONWIDE

By: Jennifer Whittaker for the New Rural Initative

The New Ruralism Project, an initiative of APA Small Town and Rural Planning Division (STaR), APA Northern New England Chapter, and the APA Divisions Council, has been busy teaming up with communities nationwide to develop an online collection of case studies in New Ruralism. The project, which started by featuring efforts in Northern New England, has now expanded to feature grassroots initiatives to strengthen rural communities from Alaska to New York to Alabama.

We are excited to announce five new case studies featuring communities from across the United States who are reinventing local markets and developing grassroots driven programs to meet the needs of their rural residents. Two of our feature communities, Kodiak, Alaska and Port Townsend, Washington are embracing cooperative models of providing food and housing. Kodiak Harvest Food Co-op, located on Kodiak Island, is skipping the high shipping costs of bringing groceries to the island by providing a market for produce and seafood grown and caught locally. Senior residents of Port Townsend, in the Puget Sound, are passing up oversized maintenance-heavy old homes in favor of the self-governing and personally designed cooperative housing community, Quimper Village. Two more communities are demonstrating how meeting a specific local need can blossom into broader community revitalization. Parents in Frewsburg, New York wanted more affordable local activities for their children, so they transformed a downtown empty church into the Relief Zone Community Youth Center, now a thriving anchor for community activities for families. Residents of Camden, Alabama also revamped a downtown vacant building, turning an old car dealership into Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center, now a flourishing regional center for the arts and crafts sales, cultural preservation, and arts education. Meanwhile, residents of Allen County, Indiana are planning to be a vital part of regional economic growth. The NewAllen Alliance is bringing together residents and officials from seven rural communities to create a unified voice for small towns in larger economic development planning in the nearby city of Fort Wayne.

The Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center in Camden, AL is enhancing the regional economy through arts-related jobs and tourism while also preserving, reviving, and sharing the arts and craft movements, like basket weaving, of the region.

Photo: The New Ruralism Initiative

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Leaders in all five of these projects offer up lessons for success to share with other rural communities interested in developing grassroots-driven solutions to local challenges. New Ruralism communities note that they have found success by emphasizing collaboration over competition to build cross-sector support for projects. They credit the power of listening to and sharing with the community, observing that projects are most successful when they listen and adapt to the needs of residents while communicating well and often about progress. All five of the communities convey the importance of celebrating successes early, often, and publicly, noting that recognizing incremental movement keeps projects focused and moving forward. We hope lessons from these case studies serve as a resource for communities who may be interested in replicating similar projects without reinventing the wheel.

For more lessons for success, stay tuned to APA Small Town and Rural Planning Division's social media feeds in April. Each week, we will be featuring one of these innovative rural communities and sharing more details about what makes their projects exemplars of innovation. Not on social media? Check out each of these in-depth case studies on the New Ruralism website.

Most importantly, tell us if you think your community should be included as a case study in New Ruralism. Is your community tackling environmental, social, or economic challenges in a unique way? Nominate your people and projects by clicking here and telling us a few details about the efforts happening in your community. We want to hear your stories!

Quimper Village, a senior co-housing community in Port Townsend, WA is demonstrating that walkable, inclusive, high-quality housing can be designed within a larger community to allow residents to age in place surrounded by peers.

Photo: The New Ruralism Initiative

2021 - 2025

GUIDING SUCCESS

IN NEBRASKA OUTDOOR RECREATION

NEBRASKA GAME PARKS

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

OUTDOOR PLANNING GETS A MAJOR BOOST WITH THE GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOOR ACT

AN INTERVIEW WITH HANNAH JONES. ASSISTANT DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR FOR PLANNING & TRAILS FOR

By: Jesse Poore, AICP

In August 2020, President Trump signed the Great American Outdoors Act providing the necessary funds to restore, conserve and protect America's lands. In short, $1.9 billion (with a B) in funding per year will be directed to address deferred maintenance projects for agencies that operate the majority of our National public lands including National Parks, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Indian Education. Additionally, the Act also provides permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fun (LWCF) which supports recreational access, protection, and preservation of our Nation's natural and cultural resources. The LWCF grants enable State and local governments to develop and improve parks in their communities, as well as permanently conserve outdoor recreation areas for public use and enjoyment.

This welcome news created a question about what benefits would be seen in Nebraska. Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is responsible for the management of LWCF funds and leads the federally required process to develop a State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). This document is required by the National Parks Service (NPS) and is used to evaluate the supply and demand for outdoor recreation opportunities, summarize state and regional demographics, and provide guidance on how to proceed with future development of park lands sustainably. LWCF is a federal program established in 1965 that provides grant funds to states, counties and municipalities for outdoor recreation related planning, acquisitions and developments. States are required to update and submit the SCORP to the NPS for approval every five years to maintain eligible for these funds.

To learn more about the SCORP process, I called Hannah Jones with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to discuss some questions. Hannah agreed to share some basic information during the interview transcribed below.

Question: Where does Funding for LWCF generally come from and what impact will the Great American Outdoors Act have on this SCORP?

Answer: The primary source of revenue for LWCF comes from federal oil and gas leases on the Outer Continental Shelf. Revenues from the depletion of offshore oil and gas is used to conserve parks, wildlife refuges, forests, open spaces, trails and wildlife habitat. A significant piece of conservation legislation was signed into law on August 4, 2020. The Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) was signed authorizing full and permanent funding for the LWCF for $900 million dollars per year for the National Park Service. This will significantly increase the amount of dollars coming into Nebraska for outdoor recreation projects. The federal portion of the Act specifically provides funds for deferred maintenance of Department of Interior lands (National Parks, refuges, etc.). The Stateside assistance portion of the Act will see a large increase in funding. The State of Nebraska is estimated to expect approximately $3.8 million to $5 million dollars per year, which is 2 to 3 times more LWCF monies the State has received in the last five years annually

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for developing and acquiring properties for outdoor recreation use. These funds provide an extremely valuable opportunity for Nebraska to invest in additional outdoor recreation projects within communicates and for state park areas. SCORP identifies priority project areas for LWCF funding over the next five years; and with this funding increase, it will be critically important for communities to consider applying for LWCF grant to assist in their recreation projects.

Question: How does the SCORP planning process work and what are the tangible outcomes?

Answer: The SCORP planning process involves the collection and evaluation of demographic data, public outdoor recreation surveys, and input from the advisory committee to understand outdoor recreation preferences of Nebraskans. The tangible outcomes from the planning process are to:

- Identify changing demographic information
- Identify the level of use of different types of amenities and activities at parks
- Identify and evaluate the factors that limit households from participating in outdoor recreation
- Understand what amenities and activities are important for Nebraskans to have and what amenities should be added to the recreation landscape over the next five years
- Evaluate ways to create a more user-friendly document through the helpful tips and tricks within the guide
- Collaborate and share outdoor recreation project success stories throughout the state
- Set LWCF priority projects over the next five years
- Develop goals, action items, and desired outcomes

Question: What are some key recreation trends you are seeing for Outdoor Recreation in Nebraska?

Answer: We continue to see hiking and biking trails as a top amenity Nebraskans value over the last two SCORPs. We also see that outdoor swimming, beach areas, and playgrounds are within the top five amenities Nebraskans believe are important to have. We're seeing an increase in the demand for adventure activities such as rope and zip-line courses, wall-climbing amenities, and interpretive educational hiking/biking trails. We are also seeing a need for alternative playscape areas such as natural playscapes that are more economical and provide a connection to nature. Areas of solitude are also valuable to Nebraskans when recreating.

Question: How does the SCORP process engage the public and what has been different this time?

Answer: SCORP involves the public through the general and specific community targeted surveys, focus groups, advisory board, and recreation success stories. This SCORP identified a need for understanding college- age and youth outdoor recreation preferences through the demographic breakdown of the Generalized Nebraska Survey that showed majority of respondents age 40 and above. A pilot study survey was conducted with colleges throughout the state. Pilot studies were also conducted with youth to understand their outdoor recreation preferences through a survey and having them draw their "Perfect Park Art." The success stories throughout the guide were developed through collaborative efforts with communities and outdoor recreation professionals to highlight some of the great projects happening within Nebraska.

Question: How does comprehensive planning support project prioritization?

Answer: Comprehensive planning can assist project prioritization by informing outdoor recreation project decisions. Ensuring outdoor recreation projects are holistic by evaluating what you have and what your constituents want can assist in prioritizing community projects.

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Question: You described some new formatting for this SCORP that focuses on useful tools to get communities started. What are those and why were they a focus this time?

Answer: One of the new aspects of SCORP are the "how-to" elements for communities to consider as they navigate through the guide. The advisory board recommended that tips and ways to guide communities through the planning process be included in SCORP to make it a more user-friendly document. "How-to" elements are denoted throughout the guide with an icon. Each of the six goals within the final chapter have a "how-to" element outlining specific ways to maneuver through outdoor recreation planning. How to build partnerships and ensuring the right mix of recreation within a community are just a few "how-to" pieces in this SCORP.

Success Story - Trails in West Point

West Point, Nebraska is a community of roughly 4,000 residents with a tremendous support system that has taken part in several projects to expand opportunities for their citizens. In 2015, the City of West Point, in cooperation with the West Point Trails and Pathways Committee and the West Point Community Foundation, initiated a City Trails Program to start the journey of developing a trail system in West Point. The impetus behind the trail system was to promote physical fitness and create a culture of healthy lifestyles throughout the community. Connectivity with other resources such as the school and community centers were also a component. An ad-hoc committee of just four community members was created to discuss how this trail system would become a reality.

From there, public participation through phone calls, mailings, and focus groups were used to develop multiple partnerships with community organizations, business leaders, and schools to ensure this project was representative of all user groups, a key component in the success of this project. There are four phases to this trail system, three of which have been completed with approximately 99% of funding through private donations. This is no small order with the costly development of trail systems. One of the ways West Point encouraged people to donate is by creating events, such as the Trails Walk, specifically targeting individuals 30 years of age and younger to participate. Participants were asked to donate $100 per year for five years to help fund the trail. This raised approximately $40,000 and has built a foundation of lifelong ownership within the trail system by many youth and young adults. Volunteers from schools have offered their services to help with litter cleanups along the trail corridor. Buy-in from the City Council within West Point was at the forefront of this initiative to ensure they were vested in the community support and drive for this recreation amenity.

This success story shows that a large community isn't necessary to make outdoor recreation opportunities a reality and highlights the importance of community buy-in is instrumental in planning efforts to ensure a sense of ownership is created. Don't forget about the invaluable role community leaders play in being champions for outdoor recreation success. Are you a community champion? Why not harness that energy toward your next outdoor recreation success story?

CRP AND EXTENSION ASSIST BROWNVILLE WITH FLOOD RECOVERY

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM KERRY MCCULLOUGH-VONDRAK

Seventy-Five percent of the counties in Nebraska issued emergency declarations as a result of the devastating 2019 floods with a reported $1.3 billion in losses according to National Public Radio. University of Nebraska Extension and its university partners have been a driving force in these community-based recovery efforts.

This past year Brownville, Nebraska's community leaders approached UNL's Extension and the Community and Regional Planning (CRP) Program for assistance with flood recovery, mitigation and planning. The village sustained extensive flooding after the Missouri River overtopped and breached several levees following heavy rain and upstream snowmelt. Over a year out from the disaster, this town like many others, is still picking up the pieces. While the village's buildings remained mostly intact, the road infrastructure and riverfront area were heavily damaged and still in need of repair, causing further long-term, economic disadvantages for the small tourism town of 126 people.

Among the tourism structures that sustained heavy damage was the Captain Meriwether Lewis Dredge Museum which is also a U.S. National Historic Landmark and the Brownville Riverside Park which borne infrastructure and landscaping damages including torn up, cracked and raised sidewalks and trails that were rendered unusable.

Assisting with the project this spring semester, UNL Extension enlisted the help of Master of Community and Regional Planning student Anna Headlee and Master of Applied Science student Roland Schwichtenberg with serviceship positions. The serviceships were designed to support the community in the flood recovery planning process and the mitigation of further damage which includes an analysis report of their findings and recommendations.

Collaborations like this are great learning opportunities for students and the community.

"Having a real hands-on experience was an amazing opportunity to see what it means to really be a planner," said Headlee. "This experience helps me determine what areas of planning I may be most interested in, and shows me the importance of forming a vast range of connections and partnerships."

"These community based, serviceship projects give our students real-world leadership experience, coordinating efforts, building collaborations and galvanizing people," said College of Architecture's CRP Professor Zhenghong Tang. "These are all skills that prepare our students to be formative leaders as they plan tomorrow's communities."

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Honing their leaderships skills, Headlee and Schwichtenberg facilitated community meetings with stakeholders including Brownville residents, local officials and business owners. After listening and engaging in meaningful dialog, the students were able to put a plan in motion based on a needs assessment. One thing became apparent to the UNL team, connections to additional resources and agencies was going to be an imperative part of the process.

Through additional meetings, interviews and Zoom conference calls, Headlee and Schwichtenberg made inroads with other agencies for potential involvement and met with technical experts such as the State Historic Preservation Offices and Southeast Nebraska Economic Development District exploring their recommendations for the project. Each student also had the opportunity to utilize their technical skills, Headlee created and modified numerous elevation, flood zoning and watershed maps utilizing GIS software and made a floodplain risk assessment, all important tools for flood recovery analyzation and planning.

At the end of the semester, the students were able to collect valuable data for funding applications and assess which parts of the community needed the most attention and which partners needed to be involved for redevelopment efforts. While the purpose of this project wasn't to create the redevelopment plan for Brownville stakeholders, the students did present recommendations for the planning process, instructions on forming a planning committee, best practices for successful planning and suggestions for mitigation and flood prevention.

With the UNL team's recommendations, the Brownville steering committee is now able to start the planning process, focusing on landscape redevelopment for Brownville's Riverside Park and restoring the dredge boat, both contributing economic drivers for the community.

"This was a really nicely done and amazing project! It's a true example of how we can use the expertise of students for the benefit of the state," said Kathleen Lodl associate dean/4-H Program Administrator, UNL Extension.

"The UNL team made a tremendous contribution, and we are grateful for Roland and Anna's assistance with our EDA application. The Village Board would never have taken the actions they did without the resources they provided," said John Lauber, chairman of the Brownville Steering Committee. "We owe them a debt of gratitude."

Original article can be found at https://architecture.unl.edu/brownville

LEGISLATIVE ACTION TO SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

By: Baird Holm

Nebraska lawmakers are taking steps to reduce urban sprawl and incentivize affordable housing. On August 17, 2020, the Governor approved LB 866 adopting the Municipal Density and Missing Middle Housing Act and the Middle Income Workforce Housing Investment Act. The laws work together to (1) require reporting and action planning for affordable housing in cities across the state; (2) increase residential density by deregulating private sector development of "middle housing" (defined as duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage clusters and townhouses); and (3) provide direct financial investment in affordable housing through the Middle Income Workforce Housing Investment Fund. The bill results from a series of compromises and brings together a number of ideas around affordable housing and diversity of housing types.

First, beginning July 1, 2021, cities with populations greater than 20,000 must submit a report to the Urban Affairs Committee every two years detailing the city's efforts to address affordable housing availability and incentives through its zoning regulations and ordinances. The report also gives the Committee an overview of the city's housing needs, a breakdown of housing development by type, and an estimate of housing costs.

Next, beginning January 1, 2023, cities with populations greater than 50,000 must develop an "affordable housing action plan." The plan must include goals for construction of affordable housing, including multi-family and middle housing, and goals for an increase in the percentage of residential zones that permit such construction. The city must also set forth a plan to utilize its zoning regulations to incentivize affordable housing and to avail itself of federal, state, and local incentive programs. Cities with populations greater than 20,000 and less than 50,000 must develop a plan by January 1, 2024.

The bill gives cities time to tailor individualized local solutions to the lack of middle housing and to relax zoning restrictions which permit only detached single-family dwellings in residential areas. Any city that fails to do so in the allotted timeframe must amend its zoning regulations to allow development of middle housing in all residential areas zoned for detached single-family dwellings. Local level deregulation of multi family and middle housing development provides a market-based approach to the affordable housing issue and shifts the burden away from taxpayers. An increase in residential density also provides communities with additional property tax revenue.

Finally, LB 866 provides direct financial incentives to the communities it governs. The bill creates the Middle Income Workforce Housing Investment Fund within the Department of Economic Development and funds it with a one-time transfer of $10,000,000.00 from the state's General Fund. Its purpose is to provide grant funding for qualifying projects by nonprofit development organizations able to match grant funds dollar-for-dollar. The bill prioritizes funding for development projects in urban communities with populations greater than 100,000 based upon housing, economic and employment needs.

PLANNING LESSONS ON EQUITY & INCLUSION - REDLINING

By: Steve Miller, AICP

" Redlining is a discriminatory practice that puts services (financial and otherwise) out of reach for residents of certain areas based on race or ethnicity." (Source: Will Kenton in Investopedia, Sept. 2020) Historically, redlining was the practice used by the federal government, bankers, mortgage lenders and realtors to literally draw a red line on a map around neighborhoods they would not invest in based on racial bias alone. Neighborhoods with a significant population of African-American and often other non-white, immigrant populations were most likely to be redlined.

In 1934 the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was created to restore the housing market after the Great Depression. The primary focus of the FHA was to incentivize homeownership through a mortgage lending system that was applied equitably across the country. While the FHA created the mortgage lending system that is the basis of what is still used today, it was not equitable. Through a program called the Home Owner's Loan Coalition (HOLC), the FHA created a racially biased system introducing redlining in over 200 American cities. The HOLC introduced Residential Security Maps used to guide lenders and realtors to decide which neighborhoods would make secure mortgage investments and which neighborhoods were to be avoided.

The maps (see examples from Omaha and Lincoln) were color coded and included similar descriptions as these (Source: Lockwood, Beatrix. "The History of Redlining." ThoughtCo, Aug. 27, 2020, thoughtco.com/redlining-definition-4157858.):

Best (Green) – These areas represent in-demand, up-and-coming neighborhoods where "professional men" live. These areas were explicitly homogeneous, lacking "a single foreigner or Negro."

Still Desirable (Blue) – These neighborhoods had "reached their peak" but were thought to be stable due to their low risk of "infiltration" by non-white families.

Definitely Declining (Yellow) – Most yellow areas bordered Black neighborhoods. They were considered risky due to the "threat of infiltration of foreign-born, Negro, or lower grade populations."

Hazardous (Red) – These areas were neighborhoods where "infiltration" had already occurred. These neighborhoods, almost all of them populated by Black families, were described by the HOLC as having an "undesirable population" and were ineligible for FHA mortgage securities.

These Residential Security Maps were used by banks, mortgage lenders, real estate investors and realtors in the 1930s through the 1960s, including the Post World War II suburban housing boom, to make decisions about where mortgages and home improvement loans could be made. The color-based system – redlining – made it difficult or impossible for people in specific neighborhoods to access mortgage and home-equity financing and thus become homeowners or to make improvements to their existing homes. Redlining directed both public and private capital to native-born white families and away from African-American and immigrant families. As homeownership was arguably the most significant means of intergenerational wealth building in the United States in the twentieth century, these redlining practices had long-term effects in creating wealth inequalities and the degradation of neighborhoods through disinvestment that we still see today.

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What are the lasting impacts of the historical government policies on inequality in our cities and towns today? Research by the National Community Reinvestment Commission published in a 2018 study identifies recent social and economic conditions in historically redlined areas that contribute to persistent segregation and economic inequality. These conditions include:

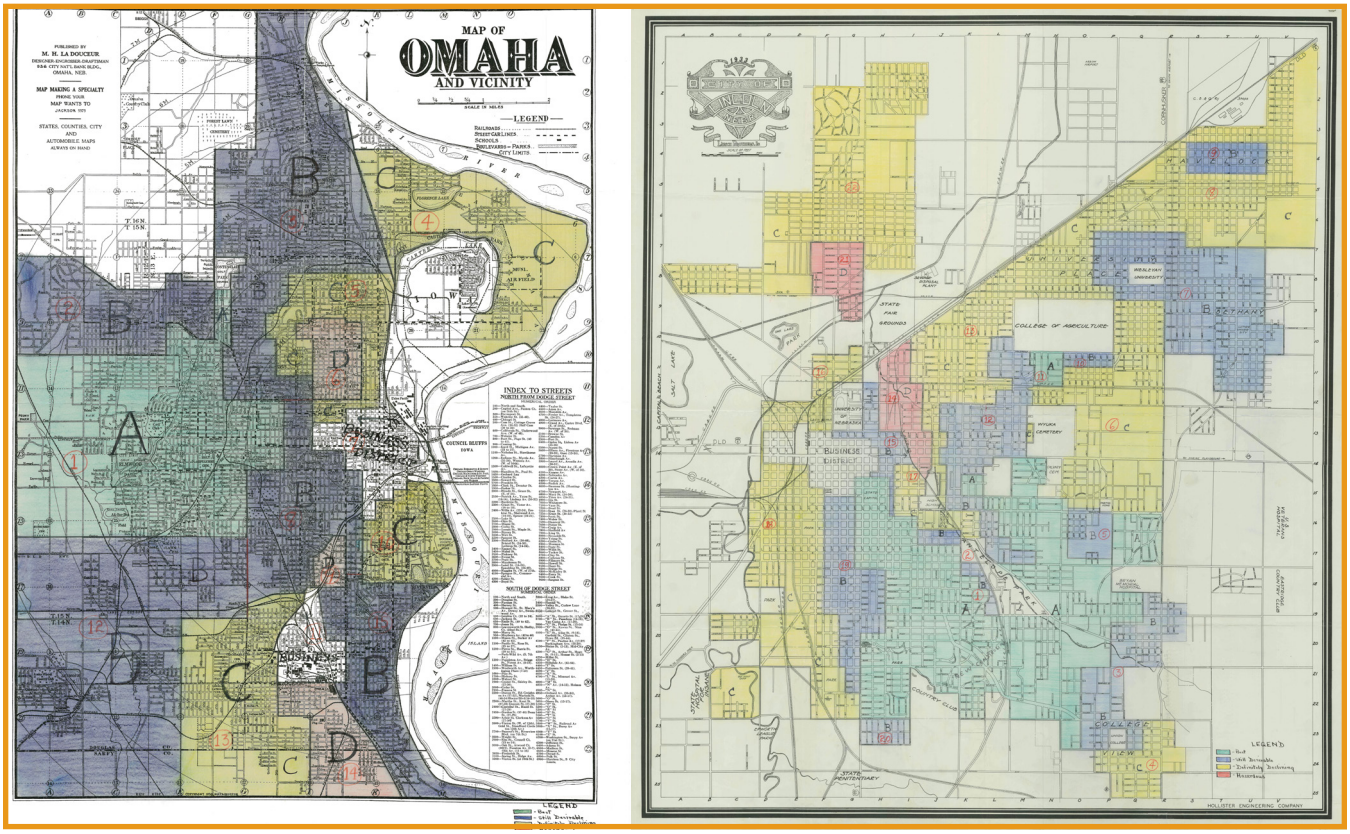
Economic and racial segregation. 74% of historic redlined areas are low-to-moderate income (LMI) today and 64% are minority neighborhoods.

Persistent economic inequality. Greater economic inequality exists today in cities where more historically relined areas are currently minority neighborhoods.

Persistent residential segregation. Minority residents tend to be more clustered in neighborhoods today where there were more historically redlined neighborhoods.

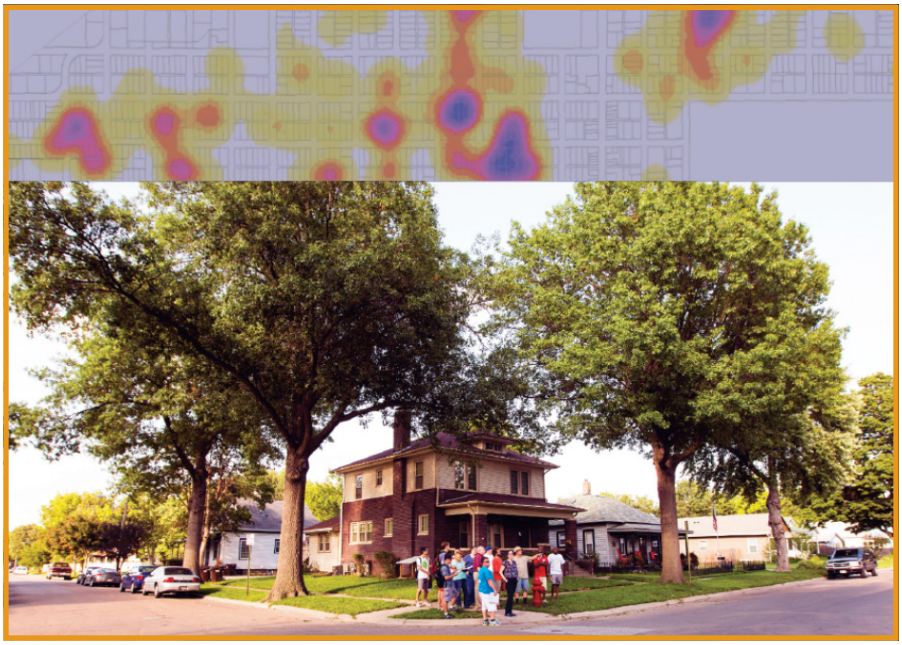
Gentrification is related to increased economic inequality. Gentrification has probably occurred in historically redlined areas because of decades of depressed home values.

So What? What are the lessons planners can take away from historic, government sponsored redlining practices? The primary lesson is to address any ignorance we as a profession may have that our communities became segregated by private actions and personal choices alone. When planners learn the history of redlining, the profession will be in a better position to redress housing discrimination, racial and economic segregation, and inequality in cities and towns.



NEIGHBORHOOD SCAN

By: Kurt Elder, AICP, GISP



In graduate school professor Dr. N. Brito Mutunayagam found delight in asking every student to enter his classroom, “what is planning?” The answers among the students were never the same because the answer reflected the background of each individual. Some were architecture undergrads; others were historians or political science. I was farm kid, who earned degrees in ag production, business, and computer science so his definition of planning as the management of change over time made sense to me. This definition has been part of my planning/project approach over ten years later, impacting my approach to creating community development tools and the focus of this article.

Lincoln Community SCAN is a remake of an existing property evaluation process that I used while I worked for Free-to-Grow as an AmeriCorps member. Their iteration was a straightforward process. Step 1: Complete a property assessment on paper, Step 2: Reenter the assessment in Microsoft Excel, Step 3: Group the address by block face and Step 4: Create bar charts to determine which properties were lower quality and why. Usually only one or two people would do the evaluation, making the process inefficient and time consuming.

To manage change over time tools are necessary to gather, analyze, and share the data. A training program to engage local neighborhood residents to accurately evaluate, record code violations, and complete a housing stock inventory is also important. Homes need continued care and not all property owners understand the need for routine maintenance to avoid deterioration. Unfortunately, no intervention can stop blighted, dilapidated housing conditions if not addressed. Therefore, its important to keep an eye on the neighborhood.

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I first developed a methodology of collecting data through a survey accessed on any smart device while in the field. An important next step was forming a unique partnership among the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, NeighborWorks® Lincoln, City of Lincoln's Department of Urban Development, and the Woods Charitable Fund and NeighborWorks® America (who provided funding) to provide get the survey into the hands of local residents. The tool was designed to help residents preserve the livability and value of their areas one house at a time.

The first Lincoln Community Scan project assessed the condition of every property in two Lincoln neighborhoods (Clinton and University Place) and compiled the information in mapping databases. Later iterations utilized ArcGIS Online. Areas of assessment include exterior housing conditions (safety issues and environmental conditions), sanitation (trash, litter, debris), vacant, dilapidated properties, weeds, graffiti, unregistered or junk vehicles, and housing conditions (i.e. roofing, paint, windows, porches, guttering). With this data residents could, via a mapping application/website, pinpoint their biggest concerns, set appropriate improvement goals for their neighborhoods, find resources or partner with existing partners to create new programs to correct problems.

How each surveyor viewed a property and rated the areas of assessment above in a uniform way was particularly important. Each participant completed a training to limit the variation between reviewers. Safety is important, so volunteers were asked to avoid potential confrontation and walking in alleys; however, Pat Anderson-Sifuentez (a community builder with NeighborWorks-Lincoln) felt the alleys were "where the good stuff is at." Below are examples of previous training photos. Can you identify some potential issues?

Over the years, more than 350 neighborhood residents and UNL students have assessed over 13,000 properties in eight Lincoln neighborhoods: Clinton, University Place, Everett, Irvingdale, Woods Park, Havelock, Indian Village and Hartley. Information from Lincoln Community Scan has helped neighborhoods rehabilitate problem homes and remove junk cars.

Many residents said the work improved their perception of their neighborhoods and showed them the impact of even one neglected property. Community Scan has had greater citywide effects as well. It has helped to pass a city ordinance that adds higher fees and penalties for those who repeatedly neglect their properties. Community Scan information also has been shared with the City of Lincoln's Transportation and Utilities Department, and additional funds have been acquired for fixing sidewalks in at least three neighborhoods that could pinpoint their most problematic areas thanks to the project.

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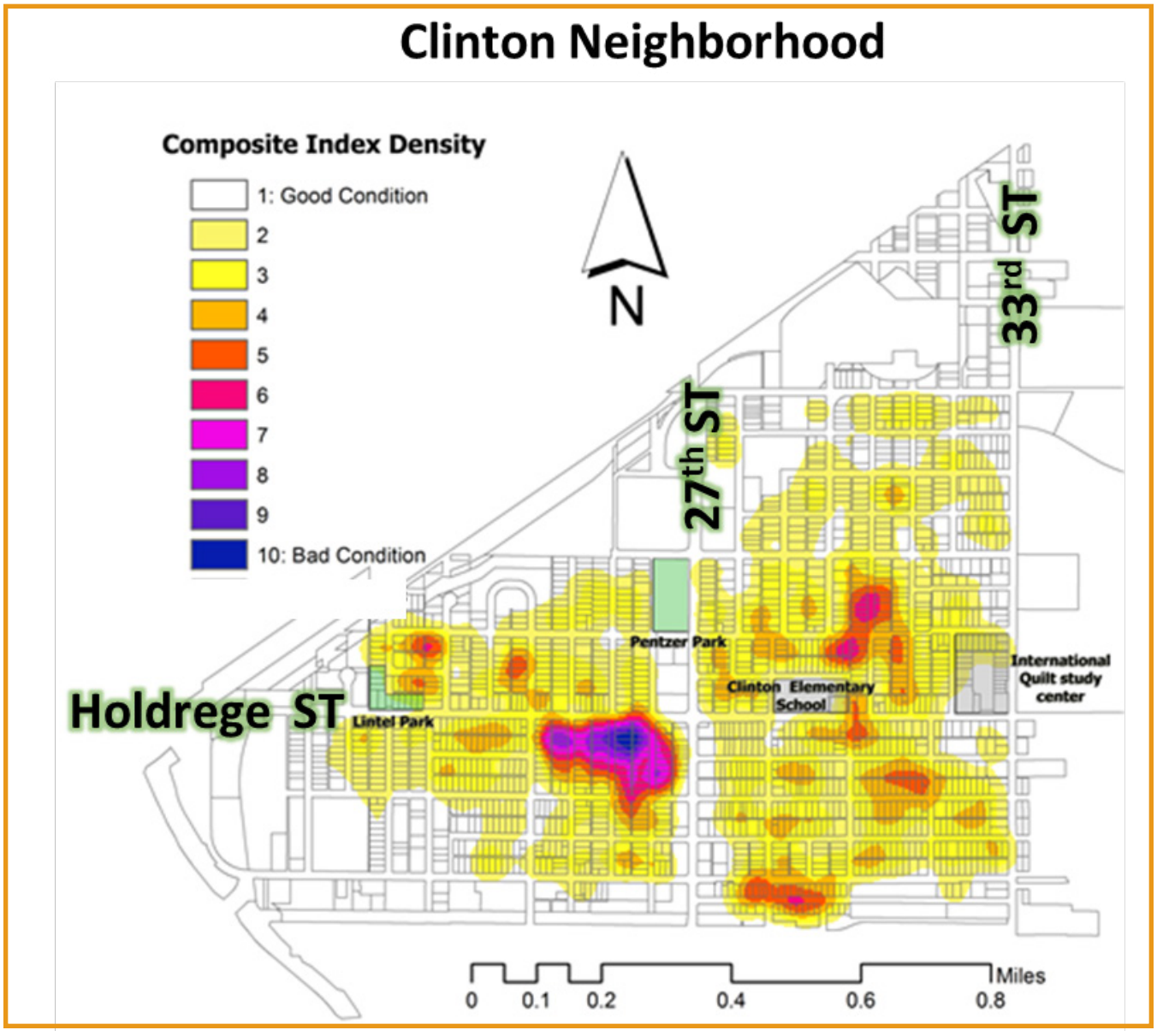
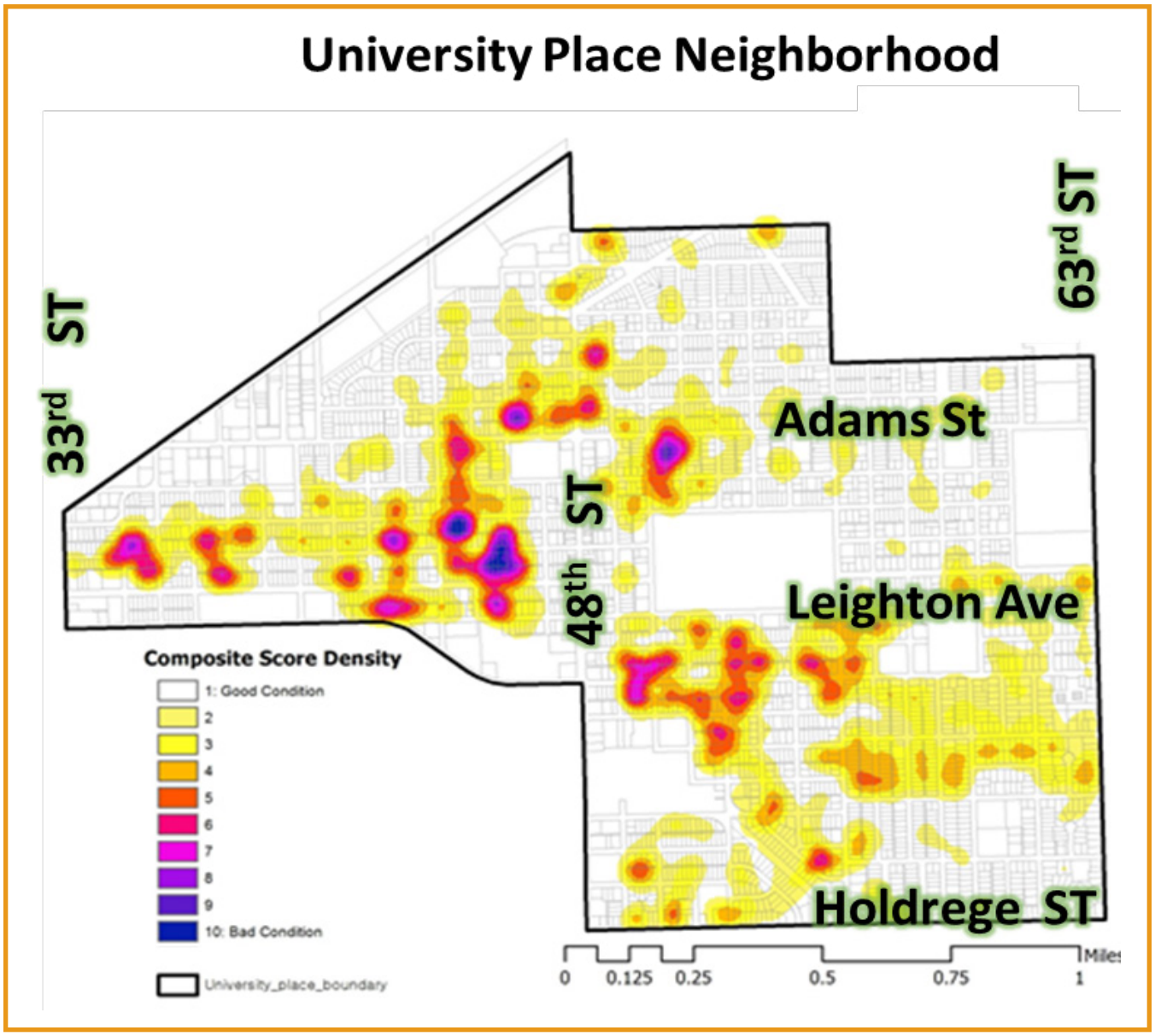
Below are graphics the University of Nebraska Community and Regional Planning Department put together that aided the above-mentioned efforts. In addition to images, the University provided descriptive statistics for each neighborhood. The graphics below look at the composite score across all assessment areas. This may look hard but completing a hotspot analysis in ArcGIS online is literally just a few clicks away once you have the data collected.

Above all, residents took charge. They learned how to identify and report physical distress. Resident leadership grew, and local research efforts supported change. When a neighborhood can come together, and not rely on outsiders to address issues they have control over then we have succeeded in not only managing change but also in enabling it.

This program has wound down over the years, but it's still available when needed. Other online tools in Lincoln such as UPLNK have become prominent methods to report problems to the correct city departments. UPLNK is a free app hosted on the SeeClickFix platform. Lincoln users use it to report non-emergency quality-of-life issues within the Lincoln City limits, such as streetlight problems, downed tree limbs, potholes or park maintenance issues. There is an option to upload a photo with each service request.





In closing, you might be saying to yourself, "I don't think I could setup my own community SCAN operation"; however, its much, MUCH easier than you would think. All that is needed is a personal use ArcGIS Online account ($100/year), and a little training. If you are interested deploying this tool in your community please feel free to reach out to me directly kurtelder@gmail.com. I would aid you were possible or connect you with one of our project partners.

SCHOLZ'S 46 YEARS

By: Kerry McCullough-Vondrak, Communications Coordinator at College of Architecture, UNL

The UNL College of Architecture extends our warmest wishes to Community and Regional Planning (CRP) Director Gordon Scholz as he prepares for retirement this summer. At the time of Scholz's retirement, he has faithfully served the college and its alumni for over 46 years, starting as an assistant professor in 1974 at the time the College of Architecture was established. By 1989 he was full professor and chair of the Department of Community and Regional Planning; he later served as program director. He served in these administrative roles at three different times, totaling 29 years.

Scholz is a native Nebraskan, growing up in Bellevue. He earned his Bachelor of Architecture degree at UNL and graduate degrees in urban planning and architecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners and is a licensed architect in the state of Nebraska.

Under his leadership, the Community and Regional Planning program initiated dual degree programs to connect the Master of Community and Regional Planning (MCRP) degree with other UNL graduate degree programs including Architecture's M.Arch., Law's JD and Civil Engineering's MS-CE degree; and coordinated eight consecutive successful accreditation and re-accreditation reviews for the MCRP Program.

"Gordon served as a core founder, a life-time mentor, an outstanding educator, a true leader and a well-respected planner for the planning program at UNL and the planning profession in Nebraska and the nation," said Community and Regional Planning Professor Zhenghong Tang.

Scholz's contributions across the university demonstrate his commitment to academic excellence. His service has included membership on the UNL Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Center for Great Plains Studies Board of Governors, among 35 other UNL service positions throughout his employment.

At the national level, Scholz has served on the board of the Urban Design & Preservation Division of the American Planning Association, as well as a site visitor for the Planning Accreditation Board. He served twice as president of the Nebraska Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) and was recipient of the Mitsuo Kawamoto Excellence in Planning Award from the Nebraska Chapter APA and the Wozniak-Selander Award for a Planning Pioneer from the Nebraska Planning and Zoning Association.

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Scholz's work over the last four decades has made a significant impact for Nebraska communities. In addition to his community service positions, such as board member of the Preservation Association of Lincoln and member of the City of Lincoln's Urban Design Committee, he has led numerous studio/course-based collaborations with community organizations across Nebraska. Most recently, Scholz galvanized a program effort to help the village of Winslow, Nebraska, with their flood recovery efforts and explored the option of relocating their community to higher ground.

Additionally, Scholz has led multiple UNL graduate planning studio collaborations with NeighborWorks Lincoln, the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department and the City of Lincoln Urban Development Department on various stages of community planning in Lincoln's older neighborhoods. He has worked with faculty colleagues and student teams to help various areas in Nebraska with community planning, including projects in Blair, Columbus, Crete, Custer County, Fremont, Grand Island, Oakland, Stromsburg, Superior, Valentine, and Wahoo.

"In leading planning studios, Gordon brought together community partners and planning students to produce valuable neighborhood plans," said MCRP alumnus and NeighborWorks Lincoln's Community Specialist Grant Daily. "Planning students received the benefit of hands-on planning experience in their local community. Local organizations, like NeighborWorks, gained valuable insight on existing neighborhood conditions and were able to consider new strategies for neighborhood improvement. These documents have a lasting value, as they continue to inform our actions in Lincoln's core neighborhoods. Gordon's community relationships in Lincoln and knowledge of Lincoln's history were especially valuable in making sure that these planning exercises were grounded in local context, and featured the voice of Lincoln's residents. We are proud of Gordon's lasting contributions to planning education at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, and are thankful to have had the privilege to work with him and his students."

"Collaborations don't happen with UNL unless a personal connection is made. Gordon was key in making these projects work, which provides such a key learning experience for students and help with work in the community as well," said NeighborWorks' Community Builder Pat Anderson-Sifuentez.

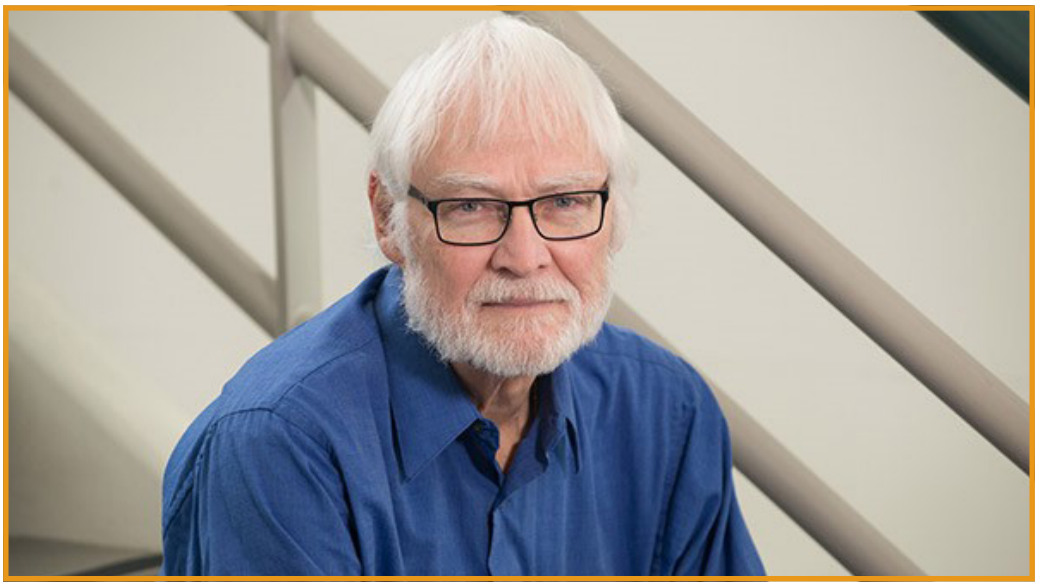
As an alumnus of UNL's architecture class of 1968, Scholz was a natural liaison with his graduating class and helped garner one of the strongest, most impactful alumni cohorts the college enjoys today. The class of 1968 has regularly held reunions and collectively raised over $68,000 in periodic campaigns among its members to establish an endowed Class of 1968 Scholarship Fund in the University of Nebraska Foundation.

"Gordon has been a solid supporter of the College of Architecture and the Community and Regional Planning Program. He has been a steady presence, providing insightful leadership within the academy and throughout the state of Nebraska. His impact can be felt through his thoughtful teachings, positive efforts and caring attention," said Sharon S. Baum Kuska, associate dean with the College of Architecture. "He has had an incredible career at the University of Nebraska, through which he has touched the lives of generations of students and colleagues. I will miss his laughter and friendship, and wish him well in his retirement."

"We would all like to thank Gordon for his dedication, service and leadership to this college and the university over these 46 remarkable years," commented Ankerson. "His impactful insight and invaluable contributions to our students' education, the advancement of the program and unrelenting community service is an inspiration to us all. He has left a lasting footprint in each of our personal lives as well as a legacy for the college and the CRP program."

CANTARERO'S 31 YEARS WITH CRP

By: Kerry McCullough-Vondrak, Communications Coordinator at College of Architecture, UNL



The UNL College of Architecture announces the retirement of Community and Regional Planning (CRP) Associate Professor Rodrigo Cantarero with great appreciation for his contributions and service. At the time of Cantarero's retirement, he dutifully served the college and its community partners for over 31 years starting as an assistant professor in 1989.

As a CRP faculty member, he has led the development and delivery of graduate-level courses focused on quantitative and qualitative methods for professional planning practice—critically important substantive areas for the CRP curriculum. Cantarero also regularly taught a unique course that compared planning challenges and practices in developing countries—a course that expands the students' awareness of planning issues and approaches around the world.

Cantarero also holds an affiliate professor position with UNL's Latino/Latin American Program and the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools. His collaborative research has made significant contributions to quality-of-life issues in rural Nebraska communities that have experienced large Latino/Hispanic population increases. Rural minority health has been a strong focal point in Cantarero's research. His research aimed to identify and address the specific needs of these members of society and promote the general welfare of the population.

"Rodrigo's teaching and research has sensitized our students to the essential aspects of the planner's professional ethical responsibilities," said CRP Program Director Gordon Scholz. During his tenure with the university, he served as CRP program director from 2000-2001 and as a project director of UNL's Community Outreach Partnership Center, developing a system that would allow Lincoln's four cultural centers, that serve minority populations, to access web-based information using Geographic Information Systems.

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Cantarero's enthusiasm for serving the community extended to his involvement with various organizations namely as a member, co-founder and director of the Latino Research Initiative, a fellow of the Center for Applied Rural Innovation, a research associate of the Monteverde Institute in Costa Rica and a member of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Board of Health.

"Rodrigo's passion for data is inspirational! His research has been used to guide programming in communities across the state," said Lisa Knoche, Research Associate Professor for the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools. "Because of my work with Rodrigo, I have been more thoughtful about the important influence of community resources and community characteristics on young children's health and well-being. I truly enjoyed and benefitted from every opportunity I had to work with Rodrigo starting back with the LRI. I can't thank Rodrigo enough for his many contributions!"

"We will greatly miss Rodrigo as he enters the next chapter of his life. I cannot say enough about what a strong contribution Rodrigo has made not only to the education of our students over these last three decades but also in the lives of rural minorities in Nebraska through his research and community outreach," said College of Architecture Dean Katherine Ankerson. "We wish him all the best!" Cantarero received his Bachelor degree in Urban Planning at Iowa State University, Master degrees in both Economics and Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Iowa, and a Ph.D degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Southern California.

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NPZA Fall Virtual Workshop
https://npza.org/

OCTOBER 2 (VIRTUAL)

Coastal Hazard Zones, BMP, Permitting and Planning Webinar
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/572175265335884814

OCTOBER 2 (VIRTUAL)

Hyde Lecture Series (Virtual):
Tamika Butler
https://architecture.unl.edu/degree-programs/2020-21-hyde-lecture-series

OCTOBER 12-14 (VIRTUAL)

Upper Midwest Virtual Planning Conference
https://planning.org/registrations/uppermidwest/9204281/

OCTOBER 23 (VIRTUAL)

Shared Spaces and Flush Streets; the Potential for Barrier Free Public Realms

https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1558555942425750284

OCTOBER 30 (VIRTUAL)

Capturing the best elements of engagement in a digitial first world
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5120691042190854155

NOVEMBER 6 (VIRTUAL)

Hyde Lecture Series
Stephen Gray
https://architecture.unl.edu/degree-programs/2020-21-hyde-lecture-series

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