

# FEDERAL PLANNING DIVISION WEBINAR SERIES

AICP Exam Informational & Training Session

Friday, March 26, 2021, 1pm – 2pm Eastern Time

## Participant Ground Rules for the Webinar:

1. **Please do not forward this email to anyone.** We only have slots for the number of people that have registered for this event. There is no way we can block people from coming into this call if they have the link below. For every unregistered person that logs in, a registered participant will not be able to join this call.
2. **Please keep yourself muted.** All guests with the exception of the panelists and hosts will be "muted-upon-entry" and muted for the duration of this call. In order to ensure we can deliver a high-quality, easy-to-hear conversation, we kindly ask that all attendees keep their lines muted for the duration of this event. If you prefer to dial in by phone rather than using your computer audio, please make sure you associate your phone audio with your computer log-in in order to fill only one slot for the event.
3. **We encourage your questions through Chat!** We encourage the use of the Chat function for your questions for our speaker.



American Planning Association  
**Federal Planning Division**

*Creating Great Communities for All*

# AGENDA

- AICP – What, Why, Who, How, and When
- Demonstrating Professional Planning
- AICP Recent Updates
  - 2017 Exam Update
  - AICP – COVID Update
  - AICP Candidate Pilot Program
- Exam Content
- Reading List
- Exam Strategy & Approach
- Helpful Study Materials & Additional Tips
- Certification Maintenance
- Practice Questions

# AICP – What & Why

- American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) – National qualifying standard for planners
- Why Get Certified?
  - Competitive for higher grades/positions
  - Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of planning principles
  - Demonstrates a commitment to ethical practice
  - Enhances your agency's authority, reputation, and credibility
  - Increases firm's marketability

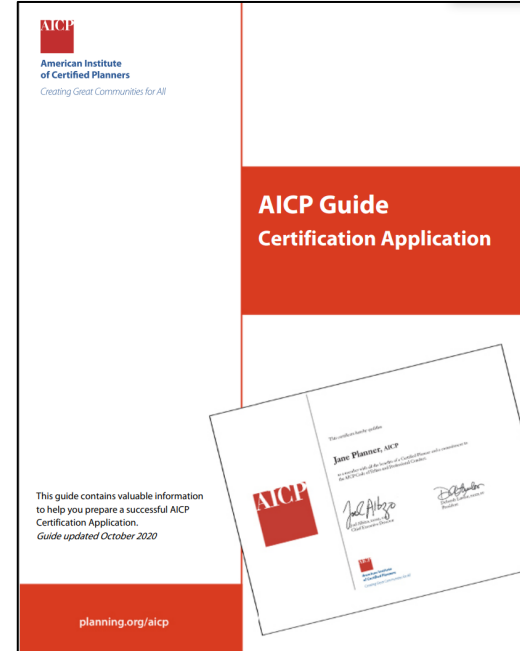
# AICP – Application

- Eligibility Requirements
  - ✓ Must be an APA member with 2-8 years of professional planning experience or Candidate Program
- Educational History
  - ✓ Copy of diploma (notarized copy no longer required), university transcript, or letter from University on letterhead
- Employment History
  - ✓ Employment info & detailed summary of your planning responsibilities at each position. (Verification Letter is no longer required)
  - ✓ Complete Job History no longer required
  - ✓ Internships, Research, International, and Part-time Professional experience can count towards the required years of experience
- AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct – Read and acknowledge
- Submit and Pay Application Fee
- Approval Email Notification: Up to 4 weeks after application
- Approved Applications do not expire.



# AICP – Application (Cont.)

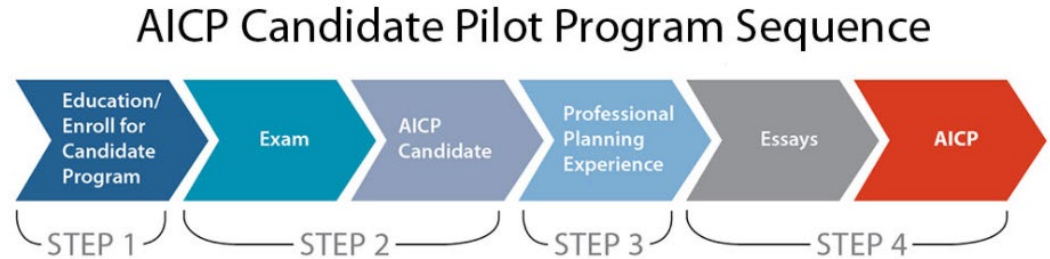
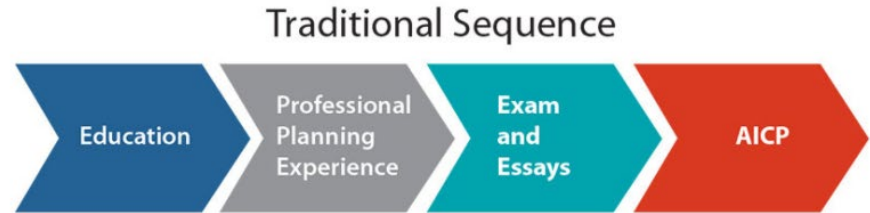
- Carefully Read the AICP Guide Certification Application prior to applying.
- AICP Fees:
  - ✓ Application: \$70
  - ✓ Essay Regular: \$220
  - ✓ Expedited Essay: \$290
  - ✓ AICP Exam: \$220
  - ✓ AICP Exam Transfer: \$100
  - ✓ Essay Appeal Fee: \$100
  - ✓ TOTAL COST: ~\$510 - \$580
- Submit Planning Experience Essays during specified submission windows
- Must pass the AICP exam and APA must approve their essays to earn the credential (can be in any order).
- Study and prepare
- Take the test!



# AICP – Application (Cont.)

## AICP Candidate Program

- Began in November 2017
- Register for exam in December of June after you graduate
- Must graduate prior to taking the exam
- Benefits
  - ✓ Take exam while knowledge is fresh
  - ✓ Distinguish yourself
- AICP Candidate Program Fees:
  - ✓ Application: \$35
  - ✓ Essay Regular: \$375
  - ✓ Expedited Essay: \$445
  - ✓ AICP Exam: \$100
  - ✓ TOTAL COST: ~\$510 - \$580

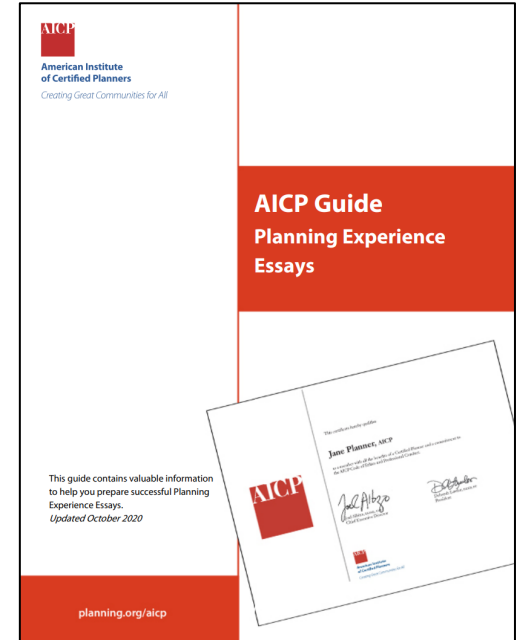


# AICP – Application (Cont.)

- The AICP is given twice per year – Exam windows each May and November
- May 2021 Exam
  - ✓ Application Period: 1 Jan 2021 – 2 Apr 2021
  - ✓ Exam Registration Deadline: 30 Apr 2021
  - ✓ Testing Window: May 1 – 25 2021
- Essay Dates 2021 Exam
  - ✓ Expedited Review Window: Feb 9 – 16, 2021
  - ✓ Regular Review Window: Feb 16 – 23, 2021
- Fall Exam
  - ✓ Application Period: Usually in June. Check Website in April/May.

# Professional Planning Experience Essay

- Carefully read the AICP Guide Planning Experience Essays before you apply for the essay.
- Planning experience essays demonstrate how the employment experience submitted in your AICP Application meets the established criteria that define professional planning.
- Expedited – Advanced notice of essay status and may resubmit revised essays within the same window.
- Regular – Must wait until next essay submission window to submit revised essays.
- Essay review takes 8-10 weeks
- Essays Must:
  - ✓ Base essays on verified professional experience
  - ✓ Be 250- to 500-words each and be unique
  - ✓ Be unique and self-contained



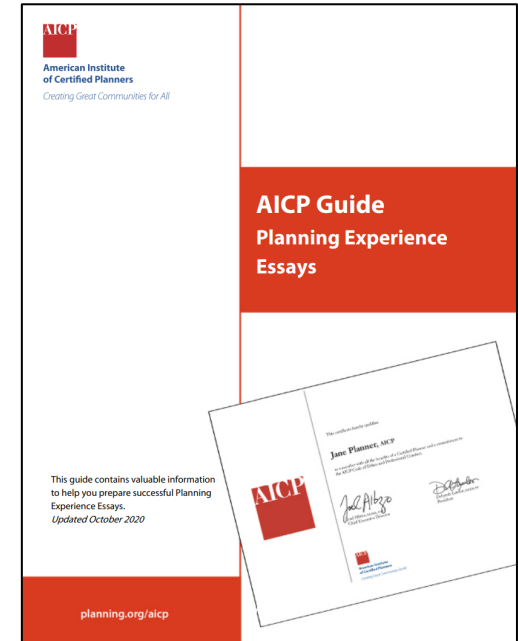


# Professional Planning Experience Essay (Cont.)

- Criterion 1: Professional planners demonstrate a professional level of responsibility and resourcefulness while applying a planning process appropriate to the project or situation.
- Criterion 2: Professional planners evaluate multiple impacts to a community when implementing professional planning tasks.
- Criterion 3: Professional planners influence public decision making in the public interest.

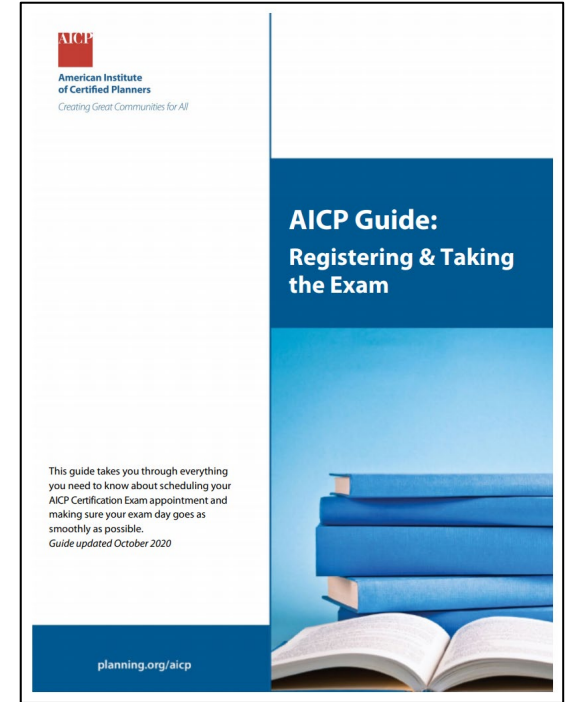
## Tips:

- Follow instructions
- Identify position held in each example used
- Provide one specific example from your professional experience in each essay
- Describe your personal contributions to all team efforts
- Proofread essay and use the checklist provided in the guide



# Prepare for the Exam

- The AICP Certification Exam tests the knowledge and skills of individuals eligible for AICP certification. The exam is developed by task forces of experts in the field of planning guided by Prometric test specialists. The AICP Exam Committee oversees the exam to ensure it evaluates relevant professional planning knowledge and skills.
- Administration: Prometric Test Centers or Test Remotely at home with ProProctor
- Exam Time: 3.5 Hours to complete the exam
- Following registration, do not lose your confirmation number via email in case you need to reschedule
- Transfers & Appointment Changes:



# Prepare for the Exam

- Transfers & Appointment Changes
  - ✓ Transfer within the same exam window
  - ✓ Transfers to next exam window - \$100 Fee
- Appointment is for four hours
  - ✓ Tutorial – 15 Minutes for tutorial after the exam begins, which doesn't count towards the 3.5-hour exam time.
  - ✓ Exit Survey – 15 minutes after exam

PROMETRIC'S CANCELLATION / RESCHEDULING POLICY	
TIME PERIOD	FEE
30 or more days before the test date	None
2-29 days before the scheduled test date	\$35 (to be collected by Prometric from member)
Less than 2 days before the test date	Full exam fee payment
Fail to appear for the scheduled test	Full exam fee payment
15 minutes after the scheduled start time on the test date and is refused entry	Full exam fee payment

# Exam Content

- Broad-based Exam – Random questions from a pool of 800+
- 170 Questions (150 scored & 20 experimental). Plan to be there 4 hours (15-minute tutorial + 3.5-hour exam + 15-minute exit survey)
- During Exam – Review all Questions, Change Answers, and Skip, Mark and Go Back over Answers.
- Each test is unique: Scores are reported on a scale of 25–75 with 55 as a passing score.
- Five Major Exam Topics <https://www.planning.org/certification/examprep/subjectmatter.htm>
  - ✓ Fundamental Planning Knowledge (25%)
  - ✓ Plan Making and Implementation (30%)
  - ✓ Areas of Practice (30%)
  - ✓ Leadership, Administration and Management (5%)
  - ✓ AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (10%)

# Exam Content (Cont.)

## Memorization Required (easy points)

- How many SF in an acre? 43,560
- How many feet in a mile? 5,280
- Who wrote famous planning books (e.g., Ian McHarg 1969 Design with Nature)?
- Types of zoning (e.g., Euclidean Zoning)?
- Law cases
- Major planning Acts of Congress and State Laws (e.g., New York State Tenement Housing Act)?

## Tricky Questions

- All of the above; None of the above; and A, B, and D

# Exam Content (Cont.)

## People that made important contributions to planning

- Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. – Mid 1800s – Central Park
- Edward Bassett – 1916 New York City Zoning Code
- Robert Moses – 1920s NY Parks and Parkways
- Jane Jacobs – Death and Life of Great American Cities, 1961
- Rachel Carson – Silent Spring, 1961
- Ian McHarg – Design with Nature, 1969

# Exam Content (Cont.)

**Places – Memorize facts that have influenced current planning and development decisions**

- First National Park, Yellowstone 1872
- First National Wildlife Refuge, Florida 1903
- First historic preservation commission, New Orleans 1921
- First off-street parking regulations, Columbus, OH 1923

**Milestones**

- 1916 NYC Zoning Ordinance
- 1956 National Interstate and Defense Highways Act
- 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)
- 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st century

# Exam Content (Cont.)

## Environmental Legislation

- 1969 NEPA
- 1970 Clean Air Act
- 1972 Clean Water Act
- 1972 Coastal Zone Management Act
- 1973 Endangered Species Act
- 1980 Superfund Act

## The Profession

- 1901 First National Conference on City Planning
- 1917 American City Planning Institute
- 1934 American Society of Planning Officials
- 1978 APA / AICP



# Exam Content (Cont.)

## Theories (know the basics of each theory and the individual)

- Planning Steps
- Rational Planning Model – Myerson and Banfield
- Incremental Planning – Charles Lindholm
- Advocacy Planning – Sherry Arnstein & Paul Davidoff
- 1893 City Beautiful Movement – Daniel Burnham
- 1898 Garden Cities – Ebenezer Howard
- 1920s Radiant City – LeCorbusier
- 1925 Concentric Ring Theory – Earnest Burgess
- 1932 Broad Acre city – Frank Lloyd Wright
- 1939 Sector Theory – Homer Hoyt
- Multiple Nuclei Theory – Harris and Ullman
- Growth Machine Theory – Harvey Molotch
- 1991 Edge City – Joel Garreau

# Exam Content (Cont.)

## Law – Memorize the law cases and why they are important

- Eminent Domain – 1954 Berman v Parker
- Essential Nexus – 1987 Nollan v CA Coastal Commission
- Takings/Rough Proportionality – 1994 Dolan v City of Tigard
- Freedom of Speech – 1994 City of Ladue v Gilleo
- Housing – 1975 Mount Laurel
- Growth Management – 1972 Golden v Planning Board of the Town of Ramapo
- Eminent Domain – 2005 Kelo v City of New London
- Telecommunications Act – 2005 City of Rancho Palos v Abrams

# Exam Content (Cont.)

## Planning at the National Level

- Federal Housing programs
- Federal Transportation Decisions
- Federal Environmental protection programs

## Multi-State Regional Planning

- Watershed planning
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- Hoover Dam

## State-Level Planning

- Floodplain development
- Environmental Protection Standards
- Dillon Rule (State pre-eminence over local government)

## County-Level

- Hazard Mitigation
- Growth Management

## Neighborhood Planning

- Neighborhood Concept – Clarence Perry

# Exam Approach

- Start casual reading studying 3 – 4 months out, plan on 100 hours of studying, then ramp up a couple of months before
- Start Practice Exams right away
- Schedule time to study (e.g., weekends, weekday evenings)
- Create flashcards
- Read the “Green Book” – once through, then focus on your areas of weakness
- Independent Study (Schedule time)
- Group Study
- Take a day or two off before the exam – all day study sessions

# Helpful Study Materials

- Practice Exams\*
- APA's "Top 25 Lists (in honor of APA's anniversary 1978-2003)\*"
- Top 25 Individuals Who Influenced Planning Before 1978\*
- Connect Authors to Books, but don't read any books!\*
- Top 25 Cases in Planning and Environmental Law \*
- Top 25 Most Significant Planning Laws 1978-2003\*
- Top 25 Planning People from 1978-2003\*
- Top 25 Most Significant Planning Laws 1978-2003\*
- The Practice of Local Government Planning, Charles Hoch, aka, "The Green Book."
- AICP Code of Ethics – From their website (read three times)\*
- Planetizen Prep Course
- iPhone/Android AICP Prep Apps and practice tests\*
- Miscellaneous Notes and Presentations found online or from other State APA sections (**Pennsylvania and Colorado APA Chapters**)\*
- Local AICP Prep Courses\*
- APA Policy Guides – Just as a reference\*
- Planning Magazine\*

*\*Indicates a free resource*

# Some Additional Tips

- **Focus** on what the question is asking
- Be aware of **distractors** and **extraneous information**
- Exam requires **memorization** and logic (e.g., notable planners, influential books and their authors, notable planners)
- Be prepared by taking many **practice exams** from different sources
- Expect that there will be questions that you do not know or even understand. Don't be alarmed when this happens – It's probably an **experimental question**
- You can use your scratch paper to write a "**Download Sheet**" during the 15-minute tutorial
- Exam **does not adapt answers**
- Answer each question from **APA's perspective**, not from your own experience
- **Read all choices.** There may be many "correct" answers, but only one "**best**" answer
- Test can answer its own questions.

# Certification Maintenance

- All AICP professional planners must engage in mandatory continuing education to maintain their certification.
- AICP members must earn a total of **32 CM credits** (1 contact hour = 1 CM credit) within their **two-year reporting period** (plus 4-month grace period). Beginning January 2022 the following credits are required:
  - 1 Law
  - 1 Ethics credits
  - 1 Equity
  - 1 Sustainability & Resilience
- 8 Self-Reported Credits allowed
- 16 carry-over credits allowed
- Look for Free credits on APA Website. Attend chapter luncheons and conferences.
- AICP Annual Membership Cost
  - AICP Dues: \$100 - \$190
  - APA Dues: \$189 - \$436
  - Chapter Dues\*: \$45- \$166

*\*FPD Division Dues are only \$25 annually*

# Practice Test

1. A developer contacts you with an opportunity to use your expertise as a paid consultant in a matter not pertaining to your employer's jurisdiction. You would work only on weekends. You should:

- A) Notify your employer prior to accepting the job
- B) Accept the job with no notification to your employer
- C) Decline the Job
- D) Decline the job and notify your employer of the offer



# Practice Test

2. Zero-Base Budgeting involves which of the following?
- A) The budget is broken up into “decision packages”
  - B) Budget starts from Scratch
  - C) Decision Packages are tied to long range plans
  - D) All of the above

# Practice Test

3. Hawaii was the first state to do which of the following?
- A) Adopt the use of EA's
  - B) Adopt statewide land-use planning
  - C) Adopt the use of tenement housing
  - D) Adopt the use of greenbelt cities

# Practice Test

4. What does TOD stand for?

A) Traditional Oriented Development

B) Topographical Oriented Development

C) Transportation Oriented Development

D) Transit Oriented Development

# Practice Test

5. Which of the following was involved with the Advocacy Planning movement?

A) Jacob Riis

B) Paul Davidoff

C) Saul Alinsky

D) Sherry R. Arnstein

# Practice Test

6. The City Beautiful Movement had some of these as deficiencies...

- 1) It catered to an upper class
  - 2) It's beautification and adornment had limited practicality
  - 3) Public investment was needed for its parks and boulevards, and this was not always available to cities
  - 4) It was the revival of city planning
- A) 1, 3
  - B) 1, 2
  - C) 1, 2, 3
  - D) All of the Above

# Practice Test

7. What recent case dealt with the issue of a moratorium on development?

- A) Palazzolo v. Rhode Island (2001)
- B) Suitum v. Tahoe regional Planning Agency (1997)
- C) Tahoe-Sierra Preservation Council, Inc. v. Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (2002)
- D) Dolan v. City of Tigard (1994)

# Practice Test

8. You are about to present to the Planning Commission your findings about whether to construct bus stop shelters along Main Street. During your presentation a Commission member asks if you have involved public input into your recommendation. You say that yes you have contacted all businesses and residents within 250' of Main Street, and worked with the bus company. She then asks if you were able to involve local groups that deal with homeless, shoppers that shop the street on weekends, and persons that were physically challenged. You did not meet or notify these groups because they did not have any formal organization. Which of the following is the BEST option for you?

- A) Because you contacted the formally organized groups you have fulfilled your obligations and should move forward with the recommendation.
- B) You sent out letters to properties within 250' of Main Street, this should satisfy the Commission members question.
- C) You should attempt to meet with all groups that could be affected by the decision, and you should try and involve the shoppers. This could be achieved by doing an on-street survey.
- D) You should try and involve only those informal groups that show up to a meeting on a weekday night at the Council Chambers.

# Questions via Chat

Attend local APA AICP Training Sessions

Additional Information on AICP on APA's Website – [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)

Questions...

**Josh Schiffer, AICP, PMP, LEED AP BD+C**

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## Thank You!