

# Memorandum

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**To:** Debbie Hale, Executive Director  
**From:** Todd Muck, Deputy Executive Director  
**Meeting Date:** June 23, 2021  
**Subject:** 2021 American Planning Association National Conference

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From May 5-7, 2021, I participated in the virtual American Planning Association National Conference. Sessions I attended included the following:

- **Inclusive Engagement Strategies:** Public and private sector experts explore how low-tech solutions can be paired with innovative strategies and tools to enhance inclusivity and drive community involvement. Create a balanced, meaningful planning process using pandemic-era scenarios.
- **Reimagining Public Spaces and Shared Streets:** COVID-19 enabled communities to implement temporary alterations to public space. Should these changes become permanent?
- **Implementing Shared Micromobility to Meet Transit Gaps:** Explore the role that shared micromobility plays in the transportation system and how cities can use rapidly developing technologies to influence mobility, environmental equity, and public health outcomes — especially during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Is TOD an Awesome Missing Middle Housing Policy?:** Planners face uphill climbs when fostering prototypical large-scale TOD, like development subsidies on discounted public land. But missing middle housing has thrived under TOD policies.
- **Crowdsourcing Tools: Plan and Prioritize Infrastructure for People:** The pandemic has resulted in less driving and more walking/biking using trails and other transportation infrastructure. Planners can ensure that dramatic surges in pandemic-related bike sales and bicycling/walking activity will be sustained through equitable infrastructure as conditions return to normal.
- **Overcoming Connectivity Barriers Through Trail Oriented Development:** How cities are using trails to shift land use patterns by using trails as an organizing element, similar to transit-oriented development (TOD), including how this emerging infrastructure can create a new space for cooperation and partnership.
- **Intelligent Transportation Systems Application:** Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) use technology to address transportation challenges. Implementing ITS can be difficult because of

geographical limitations and the partnerships required, but examples from Texas show it can be done.

- **Confronting Power and Privilege:** Learn about a conceptual framework for how power systems in primarily white-led planning, real estate, and design fields affect health equity, and a test a beta action framework to challenge conventional practice.
- **City Digital Twins: The Virtual Lab for Planners:** In planning, city digital twins can be used for experimentation and simulation, to test policy options, to enhance cross-departmental collaboration, and to improve community engagement.
- **Updating the Outdated Planning Toolbox:** The planning toolbox is ripe for a makeover. Hear a critique of several planning methods, standards, and assumptions and how they undermine safety, economic vibrancy, and mobility. Get the case for reform.
- **I Copied This: Plagiarism and Planning Ethics:** When does borrowing go too far and become an ethical issue?
- **Addressing 'Transit Deserts' with Microtransit:** Millions of people lack adequate access to affordable transportation. Learn how microtransit (not to be mistaken for micromobility — scooters, e-bikes), is revolutionizing mobility in transit deserts and improving outcomes for vulnerable populations.

The final program of the conference is available on the website,  
<https://learn.planning.org/course/view.php?id=1175&pageid=191>