

**A PROPOSED NEW NAME FOR THE DIVISION:
“REGIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLANNING”**

By Lee Schoenecker, AICP, Division Chair

BACKGROUND

At the Division’s annual program and business meeting held in late April at the APA 2004 National Conference in Washington, DC, there was substantial discussion centering on changing the name of the Division to include the word, “regional.” One of the primary reasons for this change would be to attract new members engaged in sub state regionalism who do not directly associate this subject with the Intergovernmental Affairs Division, even though one of our Division’s primary missions centers on regional planning. It was resolved that a decision would be made about a name change in time for the National APA 2005 Conference in San Francisco where the APA Division Council and the APA Board of Directors would be asked to consider such a name change. The name we are proposing is: “Regional and Intergovernmental Planning.”

REASONS FOR PROPOSED NAME CHANGE, INCLUDING SOME HISTORY OF SUB STATE REGIONALISM

There are several reasons for the proposed change and they follow.

“Intergovernmental” No Longer Also Connotes “Regional” As in The Past: When the Intergovernmental Affairs Division was formed in the 1970s, the word, “intergovernmental” denoted, among other things, sub state regional planning and development. That was largely because the federal government was heavily into fostering this type of regional planning. Specifically, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s 701 financial planning assistance program made grants to regional planning bodies including councils of governments. Also, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget’s OMB Circular A-95 certainly promoted intergovernmental sub state regional planning, both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan; and in fact, A-95 was based upon Title IV Intergovernmental Cooperation Act of 1968 which also fostered regional planning and development. Further, at that time the U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) was looked to with considerable respect by state and local governments. The ACIR produced numerous reports on sub state regional planning which, in the main, gave support to sub state regionalism.

However, from the early to mid-1980s right up to the present, the federal government substantially reduced its emphasis on intergovernmental relations as well as regional planning. Neither the HUD 701 planning program nor OMB Circular No A-95 now exist. (A similar state orientated Executive Order EO 12372 has taken A-95’s place, but the OMB does not give this Executive Order emphasis.) And the ACIR was eliminated in 1996. True, there is still substantial emphasis on metropolitan transportation planning through the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Metropolitan Planning Organization program and requirements. And the U.S. Economic Development Administration and the Appalachian Regional Commission still support development district planning (usually nonmetropolitan, multi-county planning and development programs). In the main, however, the federal government has substantially reduced its emphasis on intergovernmental relations, in general, and on regional planning more particularly. Thus, the

term, “intergovernmental” no longer draws people who are interested in regional planning. In 2005 and the foreseeable future, we believe we have to include the term, “regional” in the Division’s title, to let people know that, in fact, regional planning is one of the primary mission components of our Division.

Our Division Name Should Match our Division’s Present Program Activities and Missions:

Our newsletter of the last several years has a heavy emphasis on sub state regionalism. For example, the entire October 2004 newsletter was devoted the Metropolitan Planning Organizations. (This newsletter was also reprinted in its entirety in the October 2004 APA Transportation Planning Division newsletter). Further, for the two speaking panels that we have sponsored over the last half dozen years or so at each of the National APA conferences, more often than not the emphasis has been on sub state regionalism. And this emphasis is also true of our web-site. For example, it contains electronic links to the weekly-issued “Regional Community News” as put out by Division member, Thomas Christoffel. Every bit as important as these program connections is that the name change would better reflect our latest mission statement adopted at the Denver APA 2003 National Conference. This mission statement, in large part, reads:

“The Intergovernmental Affairs Division exists to promote a sense of awareness and understanding of the interdependent nature of local, state, and federal levels of government in the planning and development of our nation’s communities. This interdependence includes communities, both rural and urban, metropolitan and nonmetropolitan. It also includes planning and development at the multijurisdictional level, across local governmental boundaries in both metropolitan and non metropolitan areas.”

Name Change Needed to Attract New Members and Other Organizational Links: Given that the term, “intergovernmental” no longer generally connotes what was meant 20-30 years ago in terms of suggesting regionalism, we need to include the term, “regional” in the Division’s name to attract new members. This is particularly true of younger to middle-age planners who might have come into the profession in the last 20 years or so and who, through direct public or non-profit employment, or through a private firm, actually work in the field of sub state regional planning in one way or another. As our Division indicated in its 2004 Performance Report to the APA Division Council (all APA Division’s are now required to submit annual performance reports) our biggest problem, as we see things, is not a large enough membership base. Thus, we very much need to make an identification with regionalism in our division’s title to attract more members to our Division.

As a corollary, adding “regional” our name will appeal to professional organizations and their constituent members who are associated with sub state regional planning. This step will help us to use our mission statement and program emphasis in our newsletters, annual conference panels, and web-site to forge better ties with the National Association of Regional Councils, the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, the National Association of Development Organizations, and the relatively new Alliance for Regional Stewardship. We need stronger ties with these and other organizations to fulfill our mission statement and to attract members to our Division from their ranks.

Promote Sub State Regionalism in the American Planning Association: The emphasis of the American Planning Association has historically been on city and county planning, both urban and rural, metropolitan and nonmetropolitan. And this is the way it probably will and should be in the foreseeable future. At the same time, however, there could be more attention focused on sub state

regionalism than there now is. In the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, this emphasis was there to a considerable degree. For example, in 1986, through the International City Management Association, the APA published one of its so called, Green Books, *The Practice of State and Regional Planning*, co-edited by Division members Irving Hand, Bruce McDowell, and Frank So,. This still available Green Book has chapters by Bruce McDowell, Thomas Roberts, and others dealing in depth with sub state regional planning. In 1990, the Intergovernmental Affairs Division, through the APA, issued, *Intergovernmental Challenges for the 1990's*, the proceedings of an intergovernmental roundtable sponsored by our Division. This roundtable and its proceedings had considerable emphasis on sub state regional planning. Written contributions to these proceedings included those of Division members Mary Kihl (the then Chair of the Division), Arnold Cogan (also a former Chair of the Division), and other members.

These excellent documents made substantial APA contributions to the field of intergovernmental relations and sub state regional planning that reflected a build up of knowledge and interest by the APA and others during the 1960s and up through the 1980s. Changing our name to “Regional and Intergovernmental Planning,” would hopefully, once again, begin to focus more APA interest on sub state regionalism, urban and rural, metropolitan and nonmetropolitan.

ALTERNATIVE NAMES, OTHER DIVISION PROGRAM EFFORTS, AND OTHER APA DIVISION VIEWS

Alternative Names Explored: One alternative, of course, would be to simply stick with our existing name. We explored this among several members of the Division, but after deliberations decided to go for a name change.

Another alternative considered was to call the Division either the, “Regional and Intergovernmental Affairs Division,” or the Intergovernmental and Regional Affairs Division.” These considerations received quite a bit of attention. However, by substituting the term, “planning” for “affairs” you place the emphasis on planning which, in a very large sense, is what the APA is all about. Further, quite a few of the other divisions end their name with the term, “planning” such as the Transportation Planning Division or the Environment Planning Division. Still another name change considered was either the “Regional Affairs Division,” or the “Regional Planning Division.” We rejected these names as, in one sense, they both seemed to be too narrow in focus and would also eliminate the full intergovernmental nature of our Division’s business. And in another sense such names might also be viewed as too broad in scope, especially at the local level.

So after all of these name alternative considerations, again, we settled on the name: “Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division.”

Other Existing Or Possible Division Nonregional Program Efforts: And what will happen to other program division activities such as inter-jurisdictional concerns, intergovernmental projects that truly take into account full intergovernmental considerations-local, state, regional, and federal?

We have no intention of abandoning these efforts. With regard to inter-jurisdictional (generally relationships across the boundaries of a limited number of local governments-usually two local governments), our March 2004 newsletter had two such articles, and it is anticipated that our March-April newsletter will have another such article. With regard to intergovernmental considerations affecting all levels of government, one of our two panels at the APA 2004

National Conference in Washington, DC examined the full array of intergovernmental relations growing out of recovery efforts for the World Trade Center in New York. Also, we have underway an article for our next newsletter which examines local, regional, state, federal, and public-private relationships for a rapid transit, heavy rail extension in the Washington, DC area.

State planning is another subject which the Division welcomes, be it statewide, overall policy planning and program development, or be it statewide planning in a given program area. Further and more particularly, to advance the status of sub state regionalism, we are highly cognizant that state legislation, programs, and directions are imperative.

Concerning program activities at the multi-state regional level, if members suggested this subject and it was not under the purview of some other APA division such as the Environmental Planning Division, we would certainly be willing to look at this item under our intergovernmental rubric.

And finally, if a program consideration arose which involved some type of national planning or coordination such as was the case of Division newsletters in the 1980s, again assuming this did not fall primarily under the jurisdiction of some other division such as the Federal Planning Division, we would embrace such activities under the intergovernmental nature of our Division.

What Are the Views of the Other APA Divisions: We initially had conversations with the Transportation Planning Division Chair as we believe that this Division has the most region-like programs outside of our Division. We definitely not only got the “go-ahead” from this Division Chair, but also encouragement. We subsequently also discussed the proposed change with the other two divisions that address some regional programs, the Environmental Planning Division, and the Economic Development Affairs Division. We also got positive signal from them.

YOUR COMMENTS AND STEPS TO EFFECTUATE THE CHANGE

How You Can Make Your Views Known: Please contact one of our three officers with any questions, comments, or suggestion you might have: Lee Schoenecker, the Division Chair at: leeschoenecker@aol.com or call, any time, at (202) 686-8864 before 10:00 PM, eastern time; or Thomas Dow, Vice Chair for State Affairs at tdow@ksdot.org or call at (785) 296-2552 during work hours; or, Rocky Piro, Vice Chair for Local and Regional Affairs, at rpiro@psrc.org or call at (206) 464-6360 during work hours. If you have written comments that you would rather not put in an e-mail or e-mail attachment, please send to Lee Schoenecker, 5543 30th Place NW, Washington, DC 20015. We would like to receive any comments within 30 days or so of the receipt of this newsletter.

Next Steps of Implementation: From our conversations with various individuals and other APA Divisions that we have had to date on the proposed name change, we do not anticipate many negative comments. However, should we receive substantial negative reaction from the Division membership and we cannot resolve the issue via e-mail or telephone, we will withdraw the proposed name change.

If Division membership does not indicate serious problems with the name change, we shall take the proposal to the Division Council for its approval or disapproval at its business meeting at the San Francisco APA National Conference, said meeting to be held on Saturday, March 19. If the Division Council approves, it will then be taken to the APA Board of Directors on March 20. The results of the Division Council and APA Board of Directors decisions will be announced at our Division’s annual Program and Business Meeting on Monday, March 21.

