

**Planning Association of Washington**

**Strategic Plan Summary**

**As of December 11, 2013**

**The Planning Association of Washington (PAW) is a grassroots educational organization serving the needs of planning commissioners, elected officials, tribes, special purpose districts, private sector firms, state agencies, students and interested citizens.**

**VISION**

Strong and livable communities guided by informed citizens

**MISSION**

Shaping a vibrant Washington through effective and informed community planning

*We do this by providing an inclusive forum for sharing problems and solutions, developing planning knowledge and putting this knowledge into the hands of the public and their elected officials.*

**EDUCATION**

Providing valuable, regionally-based training and networking sessions.

**TAG LINE**

Good planning doesn’t just happen. [www.planningpaw.org](http://www.planningpaw.org)

**GOVERNANCE**

Board of Directors

* 15 voting members and 8 ex-officio (non-voting)

Standing Committees

* Education
* Resource Development
* Conference
* Outreach
* Nominating

Ad Hoc (short term) Committee

* Bylaws Review
* Other as needed

**HISTORY AND BACKGROUND**

The Planning Association of Washington (PAW) is an educational, not-for-profit organization that does not practice advocacy in advancing our mission of shaping a vibrant Washington through effective and informed community planning.

Though PAW is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization formed in 1963, its history began in the 1950s when regional planning associations were formed throughout the state. The Inland Empire Planning Association and the Central Washington Planning Association led the effort to form the PAW when the national meeting of the American Society of Planning Officials was held in Seattle in 1963. Throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s, PAW held ~~local~~ conferences throughout the state, providing training and promoting membership.

In the 1970’s PAW held statewide conferences twice a year, and developed the Short Course on Local Planning. Implemented by the Washington State Department of Commerce, Short Courses are now presented over 20 times a year.

The 1980s and 1990s brought growth and maturity to the Planning Association of Washington. PAW formed an affiliation with The Western Planner in 1982. PAW has co-sponsored a Joint Awards Program with the APA-WA Chapter since 1986, and conducted joint conferences from the late 1970s through the mid-1990s.

PAW has worked actively to develop partnerships and co-sponsor conferences with other agencies and organizations involved with planning, including tribal organizations.

**Unbiased planning education is the reason PAW was formed almost 40 years ago, and it is still the mission of PAW today.** Working collaboratively with the state’s Department of Commerce, PAW provides basic planning training to local communities through the three-hour Short Course on Local Planning. Additionally, PAW sponsors daylong Regional Short Courses on specific topics and organizes special training sessions at major planning conferences.

**Short Course training is provided at no charge.** Professionals in the law, planning, and related fields generously contribute their time and expertise as course instructors.

**PAW Educational Efforts**

**Annual Conference-**

PAW holds an annual conference alternating between western and eastern Washington. Multiple concurrent topical sessions take place that focus on educating conference attendees on current challenges that exist locally. Networking opportunities allow for the creation of new partnerships and opportunities.

**Regional Planners’ Forums-**

PAW partners with the Washington State Department of Commerce, the Washington State Chapter of the American Planning Association and the Washington State Department of Ecology to bring valuable, regionally-based training and networking sessions to locations throughout the state on a quarterly basis.

**Short Course on Local Planning-**

PAW partners with Commerce and other organizations to bring the *Short Course on Local Planning* to jurisdictions and groups across the State to assist local communities address their planning needs. The Short Course is the centerpiece of PAW educational outreach, and is free of charge to all citizens interested in planning and land-use decision-making.

**Land Use Boot Camp-**

PAW launched a new workshop series, the *Land Use Boot Camps* that focus on the legal aspects of planning, including mock land-use hearings so that participants understand the hearings process.

**AICP Certification Maintenance-**

PAW continues to offer support of AICP certification by offering CMs for its own programs as well as providing Certification Maintenance support for partnering organizations.

**Western Planner-** PAW is a Sustaining Member of the non-profit Western Planning Resources (WPR). Accordingly, each PAW member or organization receives the *Western Planner Journal.* The Journal reaches 1,800 readers in 14 western states, and provides a platform to share information uniquely relevant and useful to communities in the western United States.

**APA-PAW Joint Awards-**

For the past 26 years, APA and PAW jointly honor outstanding contributions to the field of planning in Washington. The awards program is designed to bring attention and recognition to public and private sector planning efforts, as well as university student projects.

**Communication/Outreach-**

PAW has a website, a table top display, and uses Constant Contact to distribute e-news to our Stakeholders which include citizen planners, elected officials, staff of local/state agencies, consultants, economic development and environmental groups to name a few.

**Education is the Most Important Thing We Do**

* The most important service PAW provides is training via the Short Course. As such it is clearly the most visible part of the PAW “brand”.
* The Planners’ Forums, provided jointly by PAW, Commerce and APA are very important to our members.
* Planners are hungry for information. Our annual conferences provide a traditional way to provide information. There is also interest and opportunity for the more abbreviated forums that are less time intensive, shorter and less costly. And the PAW website, www.planningpaw.org, provides timely information on current events, training and employment opportunities.
* Joint PAW/APA Awards have taken place for over a quarter of a century and are valued by the winners of the awards. Creative and innovative solutions to complex planning problems are showcased in this venue.

**Collaboration between PAW and APA**

PAW recognizes that greater coordination with APA is needed. This can be done at both the leadership level and through grassroots interaction.

**Western Planner and PAW communications**

Work on messaging to be clear on the Western Planner/PAW nexus. PAW leadership will be increasing direct communications to the membership via a newsletter/e-format.

**PAW GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

**1. Develop sustainable infrastructure that will build organizational capacity**

* Confirm and prioritize core operations
* Create resource development plan
* Provide good governance
* Formalize board development process
* Identify roles and responsibilities of Board and staff
1. **Provide education to targeted stakeholders**
* Determine education needs of stakeholders
* Develop education programs based on needs and available resources
* Seek partners for content and dissemination

**3. Grow awareness of the purpose and value of PAW**

* Review/revise benefits of PAW membership
* Develop a comprehensive branding / communication plan with strong, specific messaging to position, package, and market PAW
* Share successes that demonstrate PAW’s value, purpose and impact
* Foster relationships with current partners
* Seek opportunities to partner with other entities, groups, etc.
* Provide student sponsorship opportunities to build long term sustainable membership.