AICP Exam Prep

Spring 2012

Exam Overview & Spatial Areas of Practice

FYI...

Technical Help: Use the question box on your Gotowebinar menu or call 1-800-263-6317

Content Question: Use the question box on your Gotowebinar menu

The session will begin at 9:00 AM
AICP Exam Prep
Spring 2012
Exam Overview & Spatial Areas of Practice

Exam Prep Chapters:
Illinois
Maryland
North Carolina
Pennsylvania
Today’s Agenda

- What & Why of AICP
- Exam Overview - Test Background & Tips
  - Spatial Areas of Practice
  - History, Theory & Law
  - Functional Areas of Practice
  - Plan Making & Implementation
  - Public Participation & Social Justice
  - AICP Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct
- Spatial Areas of Practice

Where are you in the process?
AICP – American Institute of Certified Planners

- APA’s professional institute

- To be AICP, a planner must:
  - meet requirements for education and experience,
  - pass the AICP exam,
  - pledge to uphold ethical standards (AICP Code of Ethics), and
  - engage in ongoing professional development (Certification Maintenance)
Why AICP?

- Demonstration to elected officials, community leaders, and employers of a commitment to excellence
- Potential employment
- Salary survey
Eligibility

- Current APA member
- Submit online application meeting education and experience criteria
- Fee of $495
- Pass exam

APA website – www.planning.org and the Exam Candidate Bulletin for all the details
Education and Experience Criteria

- **Education**
  - Graduate planning degree (PAB): 2 years
  - Bachelors planning degree (PAB): 3 years
  - Graduate planning degree (non-PAB): 3 years
  - Other degree: 4 years
  - No college degree: 8 years

- **Experience – *Professional Planning as defined by AICP***
  - Apply a planning process appropriate to the situation
  - Employ an appropriately comprehensive point of view
  - Involve a professional level of responsibility and resourcefulness
  - Influence public decision making in the public interest
Education and Experience

- Verifications!!!
  - For degrees and all employment you are claiming as professional planning experience
  - Check dates carefully
Test Windows – 2 weeks

- May: Application due in January after being open for approximately 5 weeks; response in March
- November: Application due in July after being open for approximately 5 weeks; response in September
- Early bird: earlier deadline, earlier notification
- Approvals (ATT) and incompletes notified by email
- Denials issued by letter
Need to know...

- Schedule on your own with Prometric
- Approvals are good for 4 exam cycles, but need to inform APA if not taking the exam in the next window
- Test centers
  - Arrive 30 minutes early for paperwork
  - Take required IDs – make sure name and spelling is matching
  - Calculator/paper/pencil provided
- APA Exam Bulletin and APA staff for any questions – don’t wait until it’s too late
Test Background

- 170 multiple choice questions, including 20 sample questions
- Scoring on a scale, questions are weighted
- Pass rate is approximately 65%
- Must answer approximately 110 – 115 of the 150 “real” questions correct in order to pass
- 55 is typically the passing score (range is 25 to 75)
- 3 ½ hours to complete (brief tutorial before exam)
- Test questions last updated in 2008...so no 2010 Census data yet...updates possible in 2013
How Should You Prepare?

Review the APA outline of material

Allocate study time according to the APA outline

AND

your own background

- Study early and often
- Identify weak areas
  - Study groups
  - Practice exams
Test Content

- Spatial Areas of Practice – 15%
- History, Theory & Law – 15%
- Functional Areas of Practice – 25%
- Plan Making & Implementation – 30%
- Public Participation & Social Justice – 10%
- AICP Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct – 5%

These 3 areas make up 70% of the exam – expect lots of approach & process questions

So How Many Questions?
Plan Making: 45
Functional: 38
History, Law, & Theory: 23
Spatial: 22
Public Participation & Social Justice: 15
Ethics: 7
Sample Question

An urban municipality has received grant funding to restore riparian buffers in order to improve the untreated water quality of the municipality's public water, which is drawn partially from surface waters. Which of the following steps is not necessary to get the project underway?

A. Research existing databases for information on water quality within the source waters' watershed.
B. Determine ownership of parcels along all surface waters within the municipality.
C. Review aerial photography to assess conditions adjacent to waterways within the source waters' watershed.
D. Research the most effective riparian buffer restoration methods for water quality improvement (such as differing buffer widths and vegetation type).
E. Contact adjacent municipalities that contain any of the source waters' watershed.

Answer: B. This exact step is not needed. Determining ownership for certain parcels in the source watershed will likely be needed later in the process.
Sample Question

Advocacy planning is associated closely with Paul Davidoff and Saul Alinsky. Which of the following was the significant effect of the advocacy movement?

A. Assisted single women with children find employment.
B. Caused social planning to move from back room negotiations into the public forum.
C. Reduced the need for more environmental documentation.
D. Created economic stability.

Answer: B. Questions related to people will not necessarily ask what they wrote or what year it was – they can ask how those people impacted planning.
Sample Question

Which of the following court case(s) is/are concerned with takings:

I. Renton v. Playtime Theatres Inc.
II. Pennsylvania Coal Co. v. Mahon
III. Metromedia, Inc. v. City of San Diego
IV. Agins v. City of Tiburon

A. I only
B. II only
C. I and III
D. II and IV

Answer: D. Three points here – one, question format. Two, court case questions can be important to mark, or make notes from, since they can overlap somewhat (see next slide/question). Three – this is a simple case law question. See the next slide for a more difficult case law question.
Sample Question

The landmark case Agins v. City of Tiburon (1980) established a test: a regulation is a taking if it can be shown that it:

I. Prompts a property owner to file a lawsuit.
II. Deprives property of all economically viable use.
III. Creates a nuisance on the affected property.
IV. Fails to advance a legitimate governmental interest.

A. I and II  
B. II and IV  
C. II and III  
D. III and IV

Answer: B. Similar points as the prior slide. One – question format. Two – marking (or notes) can help you answer questions due to potential overlap of questions. Three – this is an example of a more difficult case law question, focused on the details of the ruling.
Sample Question

This Supreme Court decision removed the "substantially advances" test for takings cases:

A. Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co. (1926)
B. Agins v. City of Tiburon (1980)
C. Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Council (1992)
D. Lingle v. Chevron USA (2005)

Answer: D. Agins v Tiburon had created the “substantially advances” test, but Lingle v Chevron removed it.
Sample Question

Which of the following pieces of federal legislation focused on slum clearance?

A. 1906 Antiquities Act
B. 1934 Federal Housing Act
C. 1949 Housing Act
D. 1968 New Communities Act

Answer: C. Know this level of detail on key federal legislation.
How Should You Prepare?
Get a Comprehensive Study Source

- PA Chapter PDC Study Notes
- PLAN 310 Planetizen AICP Exam Preparation Course ($129)
- APA AICP Exam Prep 2.0 ($195)

These generally review all topics noted in the APA outline of test content

*Planetizen and APA both include practice exams*

*Planetizen is more interactive*
Test Tips
Study Materials from PA Chapter

**AICP Exam under Career Center**

- PDC Study Notes
- Prior Prep Session PowerPoints
- Ethics presentation and scenarios
- How to obtain the CPC Manual (most chapters have)

www.planningpa.org
Test Tips

Study Materials from Other Chapters

- North Carolina – law
- Washington
- Rhode Island
- Florida
- Georgia
Test Tips

Study Materials from APA

www.planning.org and www.planning.org/certification/examprep

- AICP Exam Prep 2.0
- Ethics Code and Information/PowerPoints
- Policy Guides (www.planning.org/policy/guides/index.htm)
- Legislative Information
- Top 25s - 25th Anniversary (http://myapa.planning.org/25anniversary or Google)
  - Planning Stories,
  - Cases in Planning and Environmental Law,
  - APA Award Winners,
  - Most Significant Planning Laws (1978 – 2003),
  - Individuals Who Influenced Planning Before 1978
- Timeline (or Pathways) of American Planning History – APA website or Google to find this listing from 1785 to 2000
Test Tips

Other Sources

- www.planetizen.com
- www.planningprep.com (free now, perhaps dated?)
- Electronical flashcards: www.studystack.com (search AICP) and gFlash app for mobile devices
- www.oyez.org (legal)
- Colorado Chapter link: http://plannersreference.com/aicp/ ...this seems to be gone
- Cyburbia: http://www.cyburbia.org/forums/
- Chapter Presidents Council manual
Test Tips

Comprehensive Study Sources

- PA Chapter PDC Study Notes
- PLAN 310 Planetizen AICP Exam Preparation Course ($129)
- APA AICP Exam Prep 2.0 ($195)

*Practice exams are critical, but don’t memorize the specific questions – use them to understand your grasp of the topic.*

*Real questions are likely to require a mix of professional judgment and technical knowledge.*
Test Tips

Reading Materials

AICP Certification Exam Selected Readings

The following list may help planners who are preparing to take the AICP examination. Please note that the readings are presented with two cautions:

- No reading list can span the entire range of material in the AICP exam. As a result, the list is not a substitute for professional planning experience and education. It is not expected that exam takers will have read all the resources cited.
- The readings are intended as guidelines only. The AICP exam questions are not drawn from these readings directly, but are developed from materials of similar content.

General Reference

Books
- APA General References
- Planning magazine
- Journal of the American Planning Association
- PAS reports
- Planning & Environmental Law
- Policy Guides

1. History, Theory and Law
Test Tips

- Get plenty of rest for the exam
- Dress in layers
- Eat before the exam
- Arrive early
- Answer every question
- Use the “marking” option
- Think of answer before reviewing choices
- Skim answers before reading long questions
- Do math twice
- Think national
- Think APA
Questions on the Exam Overview?
Spatial Areas of Practice – 15%

- Planning at national level
- Planning for multi-state or bi-state regions
- Planning for state
- Planning for sub-state region
- Planning at county level
- Planning for urban areas
- Planning for suburban areas
- Planning for small town
- Corridors
- Neighborhoods
- Waterfronts
- Historic districts or areas
- Downtowns

Why plan at all of these different levels? Because the resource demands it.
Spatial Areas of Practice

- **PLANNING AT NATIONAL LEVEL**
  - Federal housing, transportation and environmental programs
    - Clean Air Act (1970)
    - Clean Water Act (1972)
    - SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users)

- **PLANNING FOR MULTI-STATE OR BI-STATE REGIONS**
  - Environmental and transportation
  - **Tennessee Valley Authority**
    - *Established in 1933 to convert 2 WW1 munitions factories and 1 Hydro electric plant into a regional power authority and a factory producing fertilizer. First example of multi-state planning for power and flood control*
Spatial Areas of Practice
Multi- or Bi-State Planning, cont.

❖ Chesapeake Bay Watershed *TMDL*
  - Subject of a recent Executive Order and a famous Lawsuit between Sierra Club and EPA (ongoing – filed in MD)

❖ Port Authority of NY & NJ
  - Created 1921, run most regional transportation infrastructure (bridges, tunnels, airports, seaports) within NY-NJ Port District along Hudson and East Rivers
  - In charge World Trade Center plaza rebuilding – lack of staff & multitude of approving agencies is holding up plans

❖ Hoover Dam, a.k.a. Boulder Dam
  - On border of Nevada and Arizona, completed in 1936
  - Apportioned the waters of the Colorado River between AZ, CA, CO, NV, NM, UT, and WY.
  - Environmental impacts were - and are – significant.
Spatial Areas of Practice

- **Planning for State**

  - Floodplain, environmental, Dillon’s Rule or Home Rule (39 states use Dillon’s Rule in whole or in part)
    - Dillon’s Rule narrowly defines the power of local governments, from a judge from Iowa who made a ruling in 1868. The first part of Dillon's Rule states that local governments have only three types of powers:
      - those granted in express words,
      - those necessarily or fairly implied in or incident to the powers expressly granted, and
      - those essential to the declared objects and purposes of the corporation, not simply convenient, but indispensable.
    - The second part of Dillon's Rule states that if there is any reasonable doubt whether a power has been conferred on a local government, then the power has **NOT** been conferred.

  - Hawaii, Maryland, Florida and Tennessee – states who have passed statewide Planning and/or Smart Growth laws.
Spatial Areas of Practice

- Planning for sub-state region
  - Parks, environmental, transportation
  - Outer Banks
  - Olmstead Parkway in Louisville KY
  - Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) dealing largely with transportation; also RPOs

- Planning at county level
  - Hazard mitigation plans, growth management
  - *Do Not Think State Specific!!*
Spatial Areas of Practice

- **Planning for Urban Areas**
  - Infill, redevelopment, traffic management, urban heat islands, food access

- **Planning for Suburban Areas (Old and New)**
  - Sprawl, connectivity, infrastructure, aging-in-place

- **Planning for Small Town**
  - Access to infrastructure and social services, town character, economic opportunity
Spatial Areas of Practice

- **NEIGHBORHOODS**
  - Neighborhood unit concept – Clarence Perry
  - Defined by history, geography, culture...
  - Access to services, walkability, or visitibility
  - Know about 1996 Symposium on Neighborhood Collaborative Planning (from the APA Policy Guides)

- **DOWNTOWNS**
  - Business improvement district (BID/TIF)
  - Traffic circulation
  - Mixed use – Density Issues
  - Wayfinding signage
  - Greening the urban area
  - Events / Tourism
  - AgriTourism
Spatial Areas of Practice

- **Corridors**
  - Transportation
  - Greenway

- **Waterfronts**
  - Environmental, hazard mitigation, accessibility and economic opportunity
Spatial Areas of Practice

- Historic districts or areas
  - National Register districts, landmarks, etc.
  - HARB
  - Local designations
Spatial Areas of Practice – Sample Question

Traditional small towns feature each of the following characteristics EXCEPT:

A. Incremental growth outward from a core
B. Low to very low density of development
C. Open space around the edges
D. Streets scaled for routine daily use rather than rush hour demand

Answer: B.
Neighborhood, rather than regional, planning may be more likely to address:

A. Wetland and floodplain protection
B. Airport accessibility
C. Availability of grocery stores
D. Provision of overnight parking for 18-wheelers

Answer: C.
Spatial Areas of Practice – Sample Question

The benefits of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) project including power generation and flood control extend to which type of area:

A. National
B. Multi-State
C. County
D. Urban

Answer: B.
Spatial Areas of Practice – Sample Question

Which of the following is not true about a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)?

A. They are federally mandated for urbanized areas with a population over 250,000.
B. They channel federal funds for transportation projects.
C. They maintain a long-range transportation plan for a region.
D. Their decision-making committees can be comprised of a mix of local, state, and federal representatives.

Answer: A. UZA population requirement is 50,000.
Spatial Areas of Practice

- Categories are not exclusive

- Complexity of planning process generally grows as the planning area grows

- Study within other topic areas, particularly functional
Questions?

Susan Elks, AICP
PA Chapter Professional Development Officer
selks@chesco.org

Mark Stivers, AICP
PA Chapter Professional Development Committee Member
markstivers@easthempfield.org

Next Week: Functional Topics
Registration: PA Chapter - www.planningpa.org/events

Exam Prep Chapters:
Illinois
Maryland
North Carolina
Pennsylvania