

COUNTY PLANNING



American Planning Association
County Planning Division

Making Great Communities Happen

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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OUR MISSION:

The County Planning Division of the APA seeks to strengthen relationships among county planners, county elected officials, and other county personnel by facilitating the sharing of technical information, encouraging continuing professional development of its members, researching county planning issues, and building strong ties with other organizations and disciplines with related interests.

APA Consolidated Election Results Congratulations New Executive Committee Members!

Thank you to all who participated in the APA consolidated elections over the tail end of the summer. The elections yielded new leadership for the APA Board of Directors, the AICP Commission, several state chapters and specialty divisions, and the Student Representatives Council. The County Division had three positions to fill, and despite not having any contested elections, our digital voter “turnout” was comparable to other divisions.



Congratulations are due to Robert Hill (Chair-Elect), Andrew Devereaux (Treasurer), and Stephanie Donohue (Secretary) for winning election to the Executive Committee. Find out more about them in their bios on Page X. We look forward to their continued leadership in their new roles, which will take effect on January 1, 2024. This will coincide with Adam Bradford moving into the Chair position, and Michelle Fuson moving into the Immediate Past-Chair position.

If you missed out on the election cycle this year, there are still plenty of opportunities to volunteer your time advancing the mission of the division. Please reach out to Michelle if you would like to discuss how you might be able to help: mfuson@latahcountyid.gov.

To see all results of the consolidated elections, visit www.planning.org/elections.



Letter from the Chair

As fall moves its way through October, it is always a good reminder to me of how perspective affects our lives. The leaves enter their slow demise as they fall to the ground and litter the yards, roads, and sidewalks with their skeletons, leaving the trees bare and shivering in the wind. The night starts to push its way into the day, stealing the light and taking with it the warmth. Alternatively, the leaves turn beautiful shades of red, orange, and yellow, before they make a crunchy blanket to walk on, and as days grow shorter, there is comfort in warm sweaters, fuzzy blankets, and pumpkin spice lattes. How we view the change in seasons is a matter of perspective.

The bottom line is that our perspective is what drives us and drives our attitude.

In planning, it is important to keep our perspective positive. We face daily challenges of all sorts. We are incredibly busy, and our day to day jobs can be stressful. Recognizing the positive helps us to keep our perspective and to carry us through the harder times, and it reminds us of the good we are trying to do in the world.

One way to try to find positivity is to look for “glimmers”. Glimmers are small moments that bring feelings of joy, peace, or safety, and can bring light to even the darkest days. To me, glimmers help with perspective. They can spark from many sources: a new idea, a co-worker that tells you a funny story, a supervisor that gives you helpful feedback, an application that goes smoothly, a code change that everyone is for, a customer that is happy that you helped them. You might have had a ridiculously busy day, but maybe someone shared a notepad with you or a co-worker brought you a coffee. Look for those glimmers and appreciate them. The more you recognize the positive, the easier it is to see.

Just as importantly, think about how you can provide a glimmer to someone’s day. When I was a child, I remember being so excited when the teacher would give out scratch and sniff stickers or candy. Those kind gestures have imprinted a fond memory that will stay with me forever. Every time you deliver a kindness, no matter how small, you have a bright positive effect in the world.

The beautiful thing is that when you put a glimmer in the world, it shines back on you too. Whether you think it or not, you set an example to the people around you; someone is looking at you as a role model, and your perspective can have an effect on others’ perspectives, and that matters.

So this week look for glimmers and recognize them. Give out glimmers to help others shine. Ask yourself how you can make a customer feel more comfortable, cheer up a co-worker, or do something extra for your supervisor. Compliment someone, change the paper towels at work, and resist the urge to gossip. Be the glimmer you would like to see in the world and see if recognizing these glimmers influences your perspective.

And to all of you, please, have a very happy Autumn!

Michelle Fuson

Chair, County Planning Division

Your Newly Elected Executive Committee Members



Robert W. Hill, SR, CEM® - Chair-Elect

Robert is the director of the County Development Department and Emergency Manager for Brookings County, SD. Brookings County has a population of 35,603 humans, and 87,936 cattle and calves. He has been an APA member since 2001 and is also an International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) certified emergency manager and has worked for Brookings County for the past 24 years.

During his time at Brookings County, he has been involved with the permitting of over 10 large Confined Animal Feeding Operations, Dairy, Hogs and Turkeys, four (4) wind farms with 180 turbines producing 363 megawatts of energy and a 300-megawatt combined-cycle power plant. He served 20 years in the U.S. Army and after retirement earned a master's and bachelor's degree in geography from South Dakota State University. He has been married for 44 years and has two children and two grandchildren.



Andrew Devereux - Treasurer

Andrew is a planner for Boone County Resource Management in Columbia, Missouri. His duties include overseeing the zoning ordinance for unincorporated Boone County, reviewing subdivision plats, and assisting in administration of the County's onsite wastewater program. He holds a master's in urban and regional planning from Virginia Tech and a bachelor's in geography from the University of Mary Washington. In his free time, he loves to read, play his guitar, and cheer on (and cry over) various Washington D.C. sports teams.



Stephanie Donahue - Secretary

Stephanie has been a volunteer of the American Planning Association for a year, investing crucial time in the County, City, and Hazards divisions, helping to improve communications and membership. She is excited about the prospect of making more improvements from an executive role and actively serving our APA County members.

A recent magna cum laude graduate, she balanced a full-time schedule while looking after her family during COVID. With ten years of experience serving small and medium-sized businesses, she is skilled at accounting, operations, project management, and business continuity. She has parlayed these skillsets toward emergency management and community planning.

As an Okie, she cherishes small town living, local culture, regional history, and hard work convictions. Her spouse hails from Worland, Wyoming and they have settled in Colbert, Washington with their brood of three. They love camping, football, motorsports, and public service projects. Team Rubicon is where Stephanie frequently spends her weekends, and she recently signed up to assist County EOCs during difficult times.

"It is a pleasure to serve this division and I am excited about the years to come. Reach out if I can assist you on your professional journey, stephanie@chicanestrategies.com. I am also happy to connect on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/stephdonahue/>."

2023 Project Award Winner: Small Area

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan

In 1961, the Washington National Pike, now known as Interstate 270 (I-270), was envisioned as a transit corridor – a vision further embraced by Montgomery County's 1964 General Plan and reaffirmed through decades of master plans.

While many corridor residents and employees use and enjoy existing transit services along the corridor today, a vision to serve the I-270 corridor with transit requires recommitment. Key midcounty and upcounty transit connections need to be established to link the corridor cities of Rockville, Gaithersburg, Germantown, and Clarksburg to the county's high-quality transit network. Transit access to neighboring Frederick and Fairfax counties could also be improved to be more frequent, direct, and competitive.



The plan relies on detailed technical analysis but strives to communicate ideas in plain language. The executive summary of the plan was translated into frequently spoken languages in Montgomery County, and a two-page explainer document seeks to summarize the key recommendations of the plan.

Corridor Forward aims to advance transit beyond talk and into action by developing a lasting, achievable transit vision for the I-270 corridor. The Plan employs a scenario-planning approach to help decisionmakers understand the different purposes, benefits, constraints, and costs of various transit options; how components of different options can fit together to create a complementary transit network, and the potential order of implementation for the recommended network.

After decades of population and employment growth along the I-270 corridor, county leaders are calling for sustainable transit opportunities to move people between home and work and leisure activities and back again. Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan presents recommendations that improve transit access along the corridor as well as advance the county's goals related to equity, environment, and economy.

Following the adoption of the plan, Montgomery County Council adopted a capital budget that allocated significant funding for the top priority short-term recommendations in the plan. As a result, those high priority projects are now advancing.

2023 Award Winner: Small Jurisdiction

WABASH COUNTY, INDIANA

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Imagine One 85: A Comprehensive Plan

After over 40 years of steady population decline, the 421 square mile area in northeast Indiana needed a plan that could change the inevitable, downward trajectory of the County's future.

That's why, in 2019, County leaders came together and created the first ever County-wide collaboration effort known as Imagine One 85. This unprecedented community comprehensive plan was the foundation the County had needed and waited for, and would act as the catalyst for real, positive, and evident change throughout Wabash County. This plan will act as the first, major step in combating a looming, unwelcome, and fundamental change to the County. Because the County leaders took action, it enabled the communities of Wabash to create a collaborative yet unique playbook to shape the future.



One of the major focuses of Imagine One 85 was the fiscal analysis done and recommendations suggested as a result. The Imagine process brought in a public finance consultant to take an in-depth look at the recommendations of the plan. A detailed, government-focused financial analysis for each jurisdiction was performed and included a summary of where a community could leverage existing revenues streams, in addition to pursuing new ones.

Achieving the plan's vision would not be possible without creative use of limited public dollars or alternative revenue sources that would provide for the investments necessary for growth of the County. Typically, a comprehensive plan will review revenue sources and fixed expenses of a jurisdiction, but this was not sufficient for Wabash County. This analysis went a step above the baseline so that communities could look at revenue sources that could be tapped into, maximized, or even ones that were not known to be available.

The final plan was structured as one cohesive document but laid out logically so that communities within the County could easily access and understand the recommendations laid out in the plan that were geared towards them. The graphics, charts, and text used create a structure that is inviting, compelling, and readable, even if one does not have a planning background.

Finally, the language used is to-the-point, and allows for all members of the community to not only realize the situation their community is in but understand that there is now a plan for the future.

County Officials Urged to ‘Get Creative’ to Meet Housing Affordability Challenge



by **MARYANN BARTON**

County News Editor
& Senior Writer
NACo

When it comes to housing affordability, no matter what size your county, it’s likely a problem with no easy answers. Creativity is vital to the solution.

NACo President Denise Winfrey kicked off the meeting, observing that “people who should be out and on their own are still in the basement, in spare rooms, still on the couch ... because they can’t afford to go anywhere.”

“Fresh out of school, they’re getting started, they don’t have the resources to afford anything decent to live in,” she noted. “I’m not talking about anything fancy, just a studio with a bathroom. It’s very expensive.”

Like other counties across the country, Winfrey noted that in her community of Will County, Ill., where she is on the county board, residents are seeing fewer and fewer

housing options.

County officials explored answers to the housing affordability problem during a panel discussion Saturday moderated by Valley County, Idaho Commissioner Sherry Maupin, who co-chairs the [NACo Housing Task Force](#). Even rural counties like hers, with a population of about 12,500, see housing challenges, she noted.

Maupin noted that all counties need to find “common goals and solutions for a growing problem and throughout our time on the Housing Task Force, that’s exactly what we’ve been working to achieve.”

In Mono County, California, we’re 94 percent public lands, said Mono County Supervisor Jennifer Kreitz, with some people living across the border in Nevada, where it’s cheaper to live.

“We have to look at ‘OK, what are the needs? And how do we start chipping away at it, little by little? That is sometimes the best way, is incremental changes. We just set aside \$2 million of our ARPA funds for housing in Mono County, so we’re trying to get four units here, five units there.” The county has a population of 13,000. “That’s

really how we’re going to bring back housing for everyone.”

When it comes to housing affordability, said panelist Williamson County, Texas Judge Bill Gravell, the size of your county doesn’t matter. “It doesn’t matter how small you are or how large you are,” said Gravell, whose county is located just north of Travis County with a population of more than 700,000.

“What matters is how creative you are,” he said.

“We work hard to fund our police force,” he said. “I’ll never forget the day I was riding with a deputy, and we were riding in a school zone. He said he and his wife loved the community but could not afford to live there.”

Gravell said later he asked himself “What’s wrong with us?”

The chief of police in Round Rock, Texas introduced Gravell to a police officer and his wife who had purchased 2.5 acres in a part of town that no one else wanted.

“They began to build a tiny home community of permanent houses, two-story homes,



Mono County, Calif. Supervisor Jennifer Kreitz describes her county's economic challenges Saturday morning during a panel discussion on housing affordability.

Photo by Bob Daemrich. Credit: National Association of Counties

County Officials Urged to ‘Get Creative’ to Meet Housing Affordability Challenge

880-square feet, your own driveway to park in. They built 28 units on the space. They were leased in 48 minutes. [Only police officers, teachers, grad students and paramedics could live there.](#)”

During a meeting with other members of the NACo Housing Task Force, he told other county officials about the community. “And Sherry [Maupin] said ‘Judge, that’s hero housing.’”

Since then, Gravel said he brought builders and developers together. I’m proud to announce that we now have an association of home builders and developers in our area that have created a coalition called the Hero Housing Nonprofit. Their total capital investment is \$65 million. By the end of next year, they’re putting 500 units on the ground.”

“As a county leader, do not think you cannot drive this train,” he said. “You don’t have to be a bully, you have to be a cheerleader.

You have to get with the community and

say ‘Hey, those cops who are protecting your subdivision, don’t they deserve to live in your subdivision? Those teachers teaching at your elementary school, don’t they have the right to be able to live in that community?’”

Other creative ways of tackling the problem including purchasing unused county property, was discussed by Commissioner Rene Flowers of Pinellas County, Fla., where the population stands at 968,000 and continues to grow.

Her county made an inventory of all county buildings and property to find out if they could sell them to make way for affordable housing.

“What property does the county own that is not being utilized? Let’s put that property back on the market.” In all, the county now has 11 properties in development after finding county property that was going unused.

Another factor that county officials need to consider, according to Washington County, Wis. Executive Josh Schoemann, is the

growing number of Baby Boomers who are retiring.

“The challenge is, what the next generation looks like,” he said. “If your community is like my community, as Baby Boomers leave the workforce, you’re going to have huge gaps in knowledge, but more than that, think what it’s going to do to our non-profits, volunteer fire companies, all of the corporations and the communities themselves. Our county boardrooms will have the same problem.”

Schoemann said “if we can’t solve this problem right now, do the math.” He noted that a young family in their 30s, making a combined income of \$100,000 in his county only has 20 homes to choose from that are under \$300,000 in a county with a population of 140,000.

“There’s nowhere for them to live,” he said.



OFFICE OF POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH (PD&R)

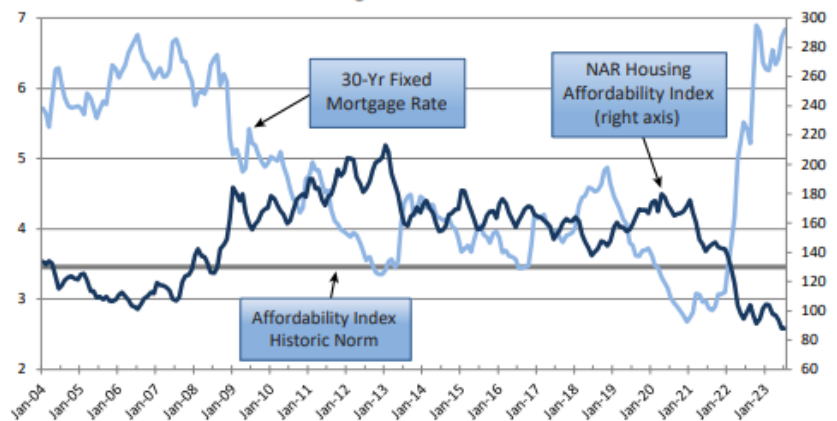


Looking for more information on the overall health of the US housing market?

Consider checking out the [National Housing Market Indicators](#) report, published monthly by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Office of Policy Development and Research.

Homeownership Affordability Remains Below Historic Norm, Mortgage Rates Up Markedly from Near Record Lows

Percentage Rates and Index Values



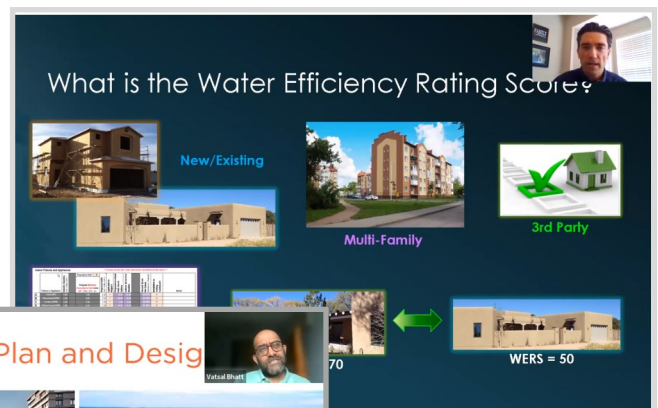
The historic norm of 130 is the median value of NAR’s housing affordability index since 1989. Sources: Freddie Mac and National Association of REALTORS®.

Training Toolkit: Planning Webcast Series

One of the most important ethical principles for APA planning professionals is to consistently participate in professional education. Evolving trends in the economy, architecture, transportation, housing, and social impacts, among others, require planners to be constantly learning in order to provide the best analysis and recommendations to decision-makers, clients, and the general public.

Training opportunities for planning education are abundant, and include resources such as [APA Learn](#) and annual planning conferences. Another excellent source of education in the [Planning Webcast Series](#), a series of webinars on planning topics established and organized by the Ohio Chapter of the APA.

The series offers a lot of value to the planning community. Need credits to sustain your AICP credential? Over 50 hours of credit-eligible content is provided each year. Budget tight this year for training opportunities? Due to the sponsorship of many APA chapters, webinar participation is free. Can't attend the live broadcast? Each session is recorded and made available on-demand, which is particularly helpful if you are looking to organize a group training with staff or other leaders that may require annual planning training in your state. Looking for more information on a very specific topic? The series maintains an archive of all previous webinars (over 450 already!) on its [Youtube page](#).

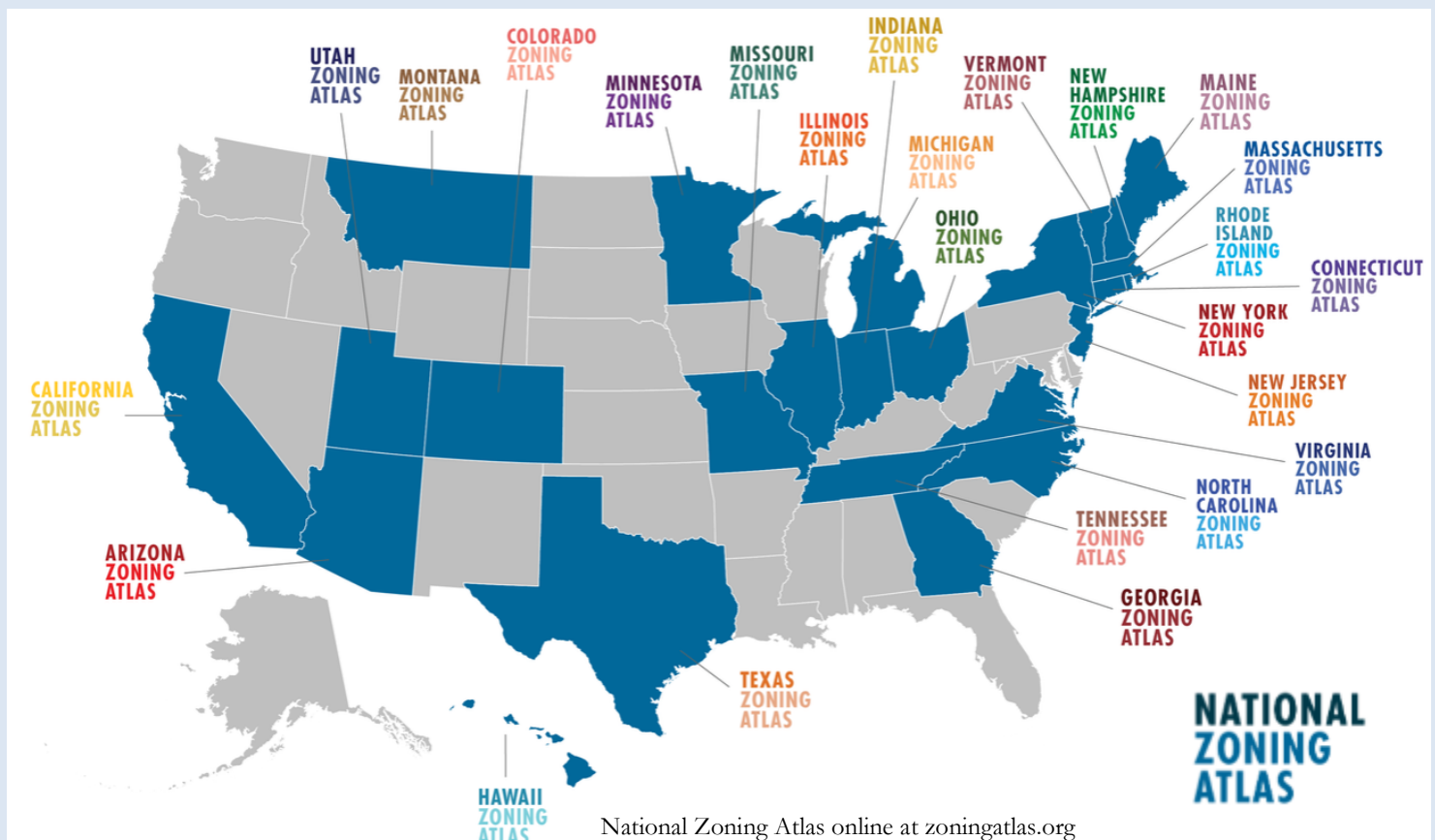


Creating a National Zoning Atlas

If you've ever been part of a team tasked with revising a zoning code, whether it's adding a new provision or redrafting the whole code, invariably the same question comes up: *"How are other jurisdictions regulating this?"* A goal of an ambitious project out of Cornell University's Legal Constructs Lab is to make answering that question a bit easier, for everyone. The National Zoning Atlas is leveraging researchers, donations, and volunteer code evaluation teams to compile a geo-coded repository of land use regulation to "enable comparisons across jurisdictions, illuminate regional and statewide trends, and strengthen national planning for housing production, transportation infrastructure, and climate response."

To learn more, check out the project website and the state atlases already underway. Don't see your state listed? You can pull together a team to get involved!

zoningatlas.org



Counties in the News



[Blaine County, ID](#) - Commissioners Consider New Airport Zoning Overlay (mtexpress.com)

[Botetourt County, VA](#) - County Wins Pair of APA Awards (theroanoker.com)

[Bryan County, GA](#) - Commissioners Pass Moratorium on Rezonings As Hyundai Plant Sparks Demand (wjcl.com)

[Clarke County, VA](#) - Supervisors Seek Ban on New Solar Power Plants (nvdaily.com)

[Fairfield County, SC](#) - Construction Begins on Affordable Teacher Housing Village (postandcourier.com)

[Georgetown County, SC](#) - Council Nixes Public Hearings for Multi-Family Developments (postandcourier.com)

[Kent County, MD](#) - Commissioners Resolve to Include Cannabis Sales Into Zoning Code (myeasternshorem.com)

[Lincoln County, NE](#) - Commissioners to Discuss Wind Energy Zoning Changes (northplattebulletin.com)

[Louisa County, IA](#) - Supervisors Consider 5,500-acre Solar Farm Project (mississippivalleypublishing.com)

[Milwaukee County, WI](#) - MCDOT Takes “Safe Streets Roadshow” to Municipalities (dailyreporter.com)

[Mohave County, AZ](#) - Proposed Zoning Change Would Allow Chickens on All Residential Land (planetizen.com)

[Monterey County, CA](#) - Recovery Planning Committee Launched to Rebuild Pajaro (ksbw.com)

[Oneida County, NY](#) - \$2 Million Investment in Broadband Expansion Announced (ocgov.net)

[Pierce County, WA](#) - Council to Repeal Zoning Ordinances Meant for Housing Community for the Housing Insecure (thenewstribune.com)

[Prince William County, VA](#) - Planning Commission Considers Permitting Gun Sales Out of A Single-Family Home (insidenova.com)

[Pulaski County, AR](#) - Designs Unveiled for Housing Community to Serve the Housing Insecure (arkansasonline.com)

[Rockingham County, NC](#) - Community Debates Proposed Casino (wfmynews2.com)

[Sarasota County, FL](#) - Plans Made to Spend \$202 Million in Hurricane Ian Recovery Funds (heraldtribune.com)

[Skagit County, WA](#) - Proposed Change Pits Agriculture Against Agritourism (spokesman.com)

[Sonoma County, CA](#) - Supervisors Approve Local Coastal Plan (sonomacounty.ca.gov)

[Yankton County, SD](#) - Commissioners Approve Temporary Zoning Controls for Solar Farms (yankton.net)

Exciting or intriguing news to share? Let us know!

Email the County Planning Newsletter Editor: jonathan.buono@yorkcountygov.com