



Emerging Planning Professionals

APA Virginia Young Planners Group

February 2023



Work Plan: 2023-2024

February 2023

**American Planning Association
Virginia Chapter
Emerging Planning Professionals
& Young Planners Group
*Creating Great Communities For All***

Acknowledgements

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Part One: Development

Why EPP/YPG?

What is a “Young Planners Group”?

- ❖ “YPGs” are chapter-level communities within the APA that focus on providing young and emerging planners or professionals community, career guidance, resources, and professional development opportunities.

Why did we change our group name to include Emerging Planning Professionals (EPP)?

- ❖ Following in the footsteps of several other state chapters’ groups, the APA VA young planners’ group wanted to choose a name that was more inclusive; no matter one’s age, career stage, or profession, everyone is welcome within our group-and we wanted to include a group designation that best reflected these ideals. After polling our members in Fall 2022, the consensus fell to “Emerging Planning Professionals”.
- ❖ Our group is intended to include professionals in the early stages of their careers, students, and recent graduates. APA Virginia EPP/YPG is open to planners of any age.

APA National Young Planners Group Mission Statement

The APA realizes the importance of cultivating and inspiring the next generation of leaders and innovators for the organization and the planning field. YPGs play a critical role in doing this and APA provides support, training, and opportunities for knowledge exchange among YPGs across our chapters.

The National Movement

- ❖ The YPG movement began in 2007, when the APA appointed a group of 15 APA members to the Young Planners Group Task Force to address the growing needs of young planners within the profession and provide a forum for young planners to be a resource to the organization. The goals of the Task Force were to investigate the next generation of planners in order to offer services to these members and cultivate a new generation of leaders. The Task Force conducted research and made findings and recommendations on demographic shifts within the profession, what APA can do for young planners, and what young planners can do for APA. APA California, Sacramento Valley Section moved ahead in organizing its own young planner’s group program, which became the first YPG in the nation.
- ❖ In 2014, APA released the draft of the “Guide to Young Planners Groups 2.0” which includes YPG tools and techniques, allied organizations, sample YPG documents, and steps to starting a YPG, all of which were utilized in the creation of this work plan. YPG resources can be found here: <https://www.planning.org/ep/resources/groups/>.
- ❖ Aside from the APA Virginia EPP/YPG, there are currently 28 other YPGs within the APA as of 2023.

EPP/YPG in Virginia

Interest and Need for Virginia

- ❖ Nationally, APA loses a high percentage of student members in the first few years after graduation. In Virginia, there is a lot of interest on behalf of young planners to become involved in the professional organization, but outside annual conferences and professional development events, networking opportunities can be limited. The EPP/YPG facilitates a process of consultation between APA and EPP/YPG members, and is a support group for career development and networking with other professionals.
- ❖ Emerging professionals within APA are scattered across multiple disciplines and career fields: public sector planning, private consulting, transit planning, engineering, etc. The Virginia EPP/YPG provides an organized group for this cohort to develop specialized skills, build new professional relationships, and share or learn from each other's experiences in the planning profession.

Part Two: Organization

Formation and Structure

- ❖ APA has developed a guiding document to organize groups entitled "Guide to Young Planners Groups 2.0." While this sets the foundation for starting a group, APA understands that each state chapter (or section) is organized differently and groups may fit in slightly differently with their parent organization.

APA Virginia EPP Subcommittee

The EPP/YPG subcommittee will meet every quarterly (either virtually or in person) and will communicate via email/phone as necessary to plan and organize meetings and events.

EPP/YPG Chair (Caitlin Aubut)

- ❖ The Chair shall preside at EPP Subcommittee meetings, provide leadership on EPP policies and lead the development of the strategic plan. The Chair will be the main point of contact to the APA Virginia Board of Directors and is responsible for all events, internal and external communication, and general leadership of the committee and broader group. The Chair is also responsible for maintaining the EPP email list, website, and social media communication outlets.

EPP/YPG At-Large Committee Members (Courtney Powell, Gia Ha).

- ❖ One to two people could serve on the subcommittee to provide more insight, leadership, and diversity of ideas.

EPP/YPG Section Representatives (Daniel Segura, Taylor Jenkins, Nick Cicero, Aaron Frank, Haley Wilson, Maggie Eastlack, Jon McCoy)

- ❖ These subcommittee members would be responsible for leading regional EPP/YPG sub-sections, with the support of the larger statewide group, and coordinating local events and meetings. EPP/YPG Section representatives can also coordinate with their respective Virginia Chapter Section board leadership.

Local Focus

- ❖ As a statewide group, our members tend to be scattered throughout the Commonwealth. This makes holding frequent meetings and events challenging at times. The intent of Virginia EPP/YPG Sections isn't to further divide the group, but to empower local EPP/YPG sections to host monthly meetings or events with members in their geographic area, with support from the larger statewide group.
- ❖ Current EPP/YPG Sections include:
 - Blacksburg/New River Valley
 - Richmond
 - Northern Virginia
 - Charlottesville/Piedmont
 - Hampton Roads
 - Fredericksburg

Financing

- ❖ The Board has awarded EPP/YPG an operating budget of \$3,500 for FY 2023. Income will include minimal event fees (\$5-\$10) and sponsorships for activities from Chapter partners.

Part Three: Proposed Events

Social and Networking Events

Statewide social events

- ❖ Hosting social events is a time-honored method of fostering professional networking opportunities. These events will be located throughout the various sections of the Commonwealth on a rotated schedule.

2023 APA VA Annual Conference

EPP/YPG Social

- ❖ The 2023 young planner's social at the statewide conference was an enormous success, and we want to keep the ball rolling this year! The 2023 Chapter conference will be in Roanoke this year, and we will plan to host a similar after-hours networking and social event at a lively, laid-back venue.

New graduates Q&A panel

Professional Development

AICP Exam prep and study groups

- ❖ Several EPP/YPG members are preparing to either take the AICP exam or submit the required experience application this year. To assist members prepping for the exam, we would like to facilitate study groups. The YPG subcommittee will partner with the Virginia Chapter AICP Professional Development Officer for guidance and resources to establish successful study groups.

APA Webinars

- ❖ The Virginia Chapter hosts monthly webinars with “Your Hour With APA Virginia”, covering a wide range of topics. We will advertise these webinars in the quarterly newsletter and encourage participation.

APA VA/VCU Mentorship program

- ❖ APA Virginia and VCU recently revived a mentorship program, to run the academic year 2022-2023. Based on the success of the program, next academic year, we might explore expanding the program to UVA and Virginia Tech.

Volunteer Opportunities

Conferences/Workshops

Part Four: Communications

Email List

- ❖ The EPP/YPG chair will maintain an updated list of email contacts for all EPP members on the EPP shared Google Drive.

Coordinated APA Virginia and Virginia EPP/YPG websites

- ❖ EPP/YPG will continue to maintain an updated webpage on the APA Virginia Chapter website. The webpage will contain group information, links to the quarterly newsletter, event flyers, and contact information.

Social Media and Quarterly newsletter

- ❖ The EPP/YPG Facebook page will continue to be updated with information regarding upcoming events, newsletter links, and meeting information. The facebook page also currently serves as a place to link other Chapter events/information, and allows employers to post job openings.
- ❖ EPP/YPG will continue to issue a quarterly newsletter (March 2023, May 2023, August 2023, and November 2023). The newsletter will serve to provide group updates, EPP/YPG events and meeting announcements, advertise Chapter events, etc.

References

American Planning Association's Guide to Young Planners Groups 2.0, 2014

Colorado Chapter of the American Planning Association, Strategic Plan, 2012 / 2013

Constitution of the Student Planning Association at Arizona State University, 2013

Illinois Chapter of the American Planning Association, Young Planners Group, Work Plan Draft, 2013

Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association, Puget Sound Section, YPG Bylaws, 2012

Arizona Chapter of the American Planning Association, Young Planners Group Work Plan 2015

Appendix A: Strategic Plan

GOAL	HOW TO IMPLEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
Essential Goals:			
Communcation and Membership			
Maintain updated webpage on the Virginia Chapter Website	A: Maintain updated webpage B. Post event flyers, newsletter links, and monthly calendar links	EPP Chair	Ongoing
Newsletter	A. Include meeting and event information	EPP Chair, Subcommittee members	Quarterly
	B. AICP Study Column	EPP Chair	Quarterly
	C. Virginia Chapter material (webinars, conferences)	EPP Chair	Quarterly
Strengthen member involvement and recruitment	A. Encourage new members and retain existing members through regular meetings, events, and frequent communication	EPP Chair, Subcommittee members	Ongoing
	B. Regular membership contact through email and social media posts	EPP Chair	Monthly
	C. Advertise meetings, conferences, and CM credit opportunities	EPP Chair	As needed

Meetings	A. Hold an annual statewide meeting, host quarterly virtual subcommittee meetings, and encourage frequent local section meetings	EPP Chair, EPP Section representatives	Quarterly
Professional Development			
Prepare AICP Candidates for Exam	A. Host study groups, attend the annual review session at the state conference, collaborate with Chapter AICP PDO	EPP Chair	Ongoing
Events at state conference	A. Host and advertise sessions and events at annual conference, encourage attendance of National Conference	EPP Chair and EPP Section representatives	Annually
Allied Organizations	A. Encourage participation in allied organizations (i.e. VAZO) and support cross-organization networking	EPP subcommittee members	Ongoing