



ACSP

Connecting educators,
researchers and students

**Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning
Strategic Plan
2025-2030**

**Approved by the ACSP Governing Board
October 22, 2025**

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LETTER FROM THE ACSP PRESIDENT

Members of the ACSP Community,

I am thrilled to share the news about the development of ACSP's first strategic plan, designed to steer our organization towards achieving our goals and aspirations for the future. This plan has been carefully crafted through efforts involving the Executive Committee, Governing Board, Strategic Plan Task Force, and interest groups.

While ACSP made great progress in realizing our mission over the past decade without a strategic plan in place, the ambitions of the organization, interests of the membership, and the need to build a stable financial future suggest the need for a strategic plan. The underlying goal is to ensure that the ACSP remains a relevant and effective organization and that it continues to serve the needs of its membership.

By introducing this plan, we are proactively preparing to tackle challenges and embrace new opportunities. Given evolving technology, values, political, financial, and social landscape ACSP needs to ensure our ability to adapt and respond effectively to these new shifts and continually review our strategies to ensure relevance and impact.

This strategic plan seeks to elevate faculty and researcher excellence, support student development, enhance impact through external engagement, promote cultural awareness and inclusivity, generate positive social impact, and achieve operational excellence.

I extend my gratitude to all our members for their support and commitment to furthering ACSP's mission. Together we can strive towards a future where planning education is accessible to all and has a lasting impact!

Sincerely,

Ivis Garcia
ACSP President
2025-2027

INTRODUCTION

As we embark on the development of the ACSP Strategic Plan, it is imperative to acknowledge the crucial context and foundation laid by the work of the Strategic Plan Task Force (SPTF). This strategic plan is a direct response to the need to create financial sustainability and respond to issues raised by the organization's members.

The Executive Board of ACSP formed SPTF in 2024 to prepare a strategic plan for the organization for the next five years. The goal of the plan is to ensure that ACSP remains an effective organization and that it continues to meet the needs of its membership.

SPTF gathered, reviewed, and summarized findings of relevant documents, including other relevant strategic plans and a report from the professional consultants who completed a SWOT analysis for the organization in 2022 as well as ongoing surveys of ACSP constituents. Building upon this groundwork, SPTF aligned the previously identified pressing issues within the planning education and research community with the future goals of the organization. SPTF broadly represents the interests of our constituents. Its responsibilities were to create this draft and conduct engagement.

In the following document, SPRF outlines the goals and strategies that have been crafted. Each goal is designed to address specific aspects of the organization while also ensuring that our efforts align with our mission, vision, and values.

The following ACSP members were part of the 2024 SPRF:

Ivis Garcia (Chair), Texas A&M University

Caitlin Dyckman, Clemson University

Jay Mittal, Auburn University

Jordan Yin, Alabama A&M University

Laura Tate, Simon Fraser University

Maria Conroy, The Ohio State University

Tim Chapin, Florida State University

Bonnie Johnson, University of Kansas

Bryce Lowery, University of Oklahoma

Andrew Greenlee, University of Illinois

Berneece Herbert, Jackson State University

Joshua Newton, University of California San Diego

Fallon Aidoo, Tulane University

Luna Kirfhan, University of Waterloo

Ana Paula Pimentel Walker, University of Michigan

Carrie Makarewicz, University of Colorado Denver

Magdalena Novoa Echaurren, University of Illinois

Manish Chalana, University of Washington

Danielle Rivera, University of California Berkeley

Mennatullah Hendawy, Technische Universität

Berlin

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan has been developed to guide ACSP towards achieving its goals and aspirations for the future, ensuring that ACSP remains effective. Key goals of the plan include:

Goal 1: Support Planning Programs

Establish a sustainable framework to support planning programs by addressing key topics such as budgeting, enrollment, diversity outreach, DEI, community engagement in RPT processes, and STEM designation.

Goal 2: Cultivate Mentorship for Growth

Establish a comprehensive intergenerational mentorship program that supports individuals from student to retirement, fostering academic, professional, and personal growth.

Goal 3: Advance DEI and Anti-Racism

Develop workshops, resources, and networking opportunities to enhance diversity outreach, anti-racism initiatives, and professional development for underrepresented groups.

Goal 4: Innovate Planning Education

Create an online platform to host resources, workshops, and collaborative opportunities on emerging topics like AI, equity, online pedagogy, and global case studies, fostering knowledge exchange, advocacy, and cross-departmental collaboration through co-teaching initiatives.

Goal 5: Elevate Planning Visibility

Enhance the visibility of planning programs through marketing, collaborative public campaigns, and promoting studyurbanplanning.org as a key resource.

Goal 6: Ensure Operational Excellence

Strengthen operational excellence through sustainable financial strategies and long-term capacity building.

Goal 7: Strengthen Partnerships

Build and sustain partnerships with key organizations to enhance curriculum, support professional development, and increase the visibility of planning programs.

ACSP VALUE STATEMENT, VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) is an organization of university planning programs and scholars, with a mission to lift planning education and scholarship and to support the scholarly field in its role generating and disseminating knowledge and educating current and future generations of planners. The field and profession of planning are context, scale, and place dependent; focuses on understanding the multi-layered interactions between the built and natural environment and human behaviors/actions; and considers how socio-cultural, natural, and institutional systems influence the quality of life for people and the well-being of the planet. Planners are deeply committed to ethical and responsible research and practice, a commitment that is integrated into the planning curriculum. That commitment requires that we acknowledge the times, past and present, when the planning profession has been a tool that has marginalized individuals, harmed communities, and sustained structures of racism, sexism, oppression, and power imbalances. ACSP, through its mission to advance excellence in planning education and research, is committed to broadly inclusive engagement that enables our member programs to educate planners who can work toward more socially, environmentally, and economically just communities.

Value Statement

Planners link knowledge with collective action, work in the public interest, and advocate for transformational change.

Vision

The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning envisions a future where planning professionals work collaboratively with stakeholders to promote education, research, and community outreach in the United States, Canada, and around the world that leads to sustainable, resilient, and thriving communities where justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion are prioritized.

Mission

The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning promotes education, research, and outreach in the United States and Canada and throughout the world by seeking to:

- recognize diverse needs and interests in planning;
- strengthen the role of planning education in colleges and universities through publications, conferences, and community engagement;
- improve and enhance the accreditation process, and;
- extend planning beyond the classroom into the world of practice.

Values

- **Excellence in education and scholarship:** ACSP also values transformative change through cutting-edge research, innovative teaching practices, and practical solutions that address the complex issues facing our world today.
- **Broadly inclusive methodological perspectives and a fully inclusive range of voices:** ACSP recognizes that planning is a field that welcomes multiple disciplinary and methodological approaches and is enriched by scholarship that seriously interrogates questions related to access, equity, and disparities, and the intersectional dynamics of inclusion and exclusion.
- **Engagement across multiple publics:** ACSP recognizes the critical importance of deep and sustained community engagement with multiple publics to create transformative, socially responsible, and just actions.
- **Education that supports inclusion and cultural competence:** ACSP supports curricula and instructional approaches that prepare learners to become future scholars and professionals who serve as ethical and culturally competent partners, adept at working in multiple contexts, from local to global.
- **An inclusive and a welcoming environment within all our association activities:** ACSP is committed to welcoming all members, scholars, and educators and to developing events, meetings, and publications that are welcoming, inclusive, and safe venues for discourse and inquiry.

ACSP OVERVIEW

The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) was founded in 1969 to bring together university programs that offer degrees and certifications in urban, rural, regional, tribal, and community planning. Today the ACSP has expanded to include more than 100 member schools from institutions dedicated to the study and application of planning.

As of 2024 ACSP member schools collectively employ over 2,000 faculty and staff members educating around 15,000 students across graduate and doctoral planning programs. These programs cover a range of specializations such as urban design, transportation planning, environmental planning, economic development, housing, social policy, among other specialties.

ACSP member schools are well known for their research in areas like international development, transportation planning, economic development, affordable housing, community involvement, and resilience planning. Many faculty members are experts in their fields who regularly publish research that influences the future of urban planning practices.

ACSP is instrumental in highlighting the significance of planning education and research to groups including government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and industry collaborators. Through its advocacy for the role of planning in tackling regional issues, ACSP contributes to increasing public understanding of the valuable contributions made by planners and academic experts in enhancing community well-being.

ACSP takes pride in its dedication to promoting diversity and inclusion within the planning field while encouraging collaboration between practitioners and academics from disciplines. The organization also offers networking opportunities and professional development resources for its members. Additionally, ACSP works towards advancing planning education through publications, an annual conference, and advocacy efforts on behalf of the planning community.

REVIEW OF RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

2022 ACSP Board Needs Assessment

The [Needs Assessment Survey](#) was conducted by the Centre for Strategic Impact & Growth Inc. for the Association of Schools of Planning (ACSP). The survey, completed by 20 respondents, shared with the board in October 2022, aimed at identifying areas of strengths and opportunities for the ACSP to inform future strategic planning opportunities. The consulting team gave a [PowerPoint presentation](#) at the board meeting on November 22, 2022. Key findings from the survey revealed:

1. **Revise mission and vision:** A lot of board members or general members do not know ACSP mission and vision. In fact, a vision had not been developed at all. This means that there is a necessity for articulation of ACSP's mission and vision among its members.
2. **Exercising mission and vision in decision-making:** It is unclear how the ACSP board, committees, etc. use the mission and vision to make decisions. There is a significant need to incorporate the mission and vision into policy decisions and actions. Recommendations were proposed to enhance communication, engagement, and include diversity in the strategic planning process within ACSP.
3. **Improving planning programs:** There are concerns regarding education issues such as decreasing number of students, budget limitations of programs, a decline in student quality, and the lack of diversity in the student body as well as faculty. Note that much of this is addressed by PAB directly/indirectly and perhaps we can consider some enhanced strategic alignment.
4. **Communicating the relevance of planning:** Students stumble on the planning field, is not well known and is unclear how the field is relevant. It could be made relevant by being a field where critical spatial and build environment topics are addressed like diversity, equity, climate change, environmental justice, housing affordability, transportation, economic development, and so on.

Based on the comments the consulting team reported:

1. Three main issues affecting higher education are: **(1) the cost of higher education, (2) equity related issues, and (3) low enrollment.**
2. Three main issues in planning today are: **(1) climate change, (2) affordable housing, and (3) equity related issues.**
3. When asked "What do you think ACSP should be doing within the next 3 years?" the main goals were identified: **(1) equity related issues, (2) impact through external**

engagement, (3) building a pipeline of planners (faculty & students): enrollment, ensuring students and faculty have the tools for success.

The consultants summarize in a [document](#) the ways in which 24 Board Members or leaders from interest groups are willing to help in identified issues:

- **Communicating the value of planning to address the student pipeline:** Communicating with high school students, the public, and policymakers about the value and relevance of planning. Board Members also are interested in working to support both undergraduate and graduate education in addressing fairness issues, creating pathways for future planners.
- **Share ideas of how to promote diversity and inclusivity within ACSP schools:** Some discuss working with organizations like APA and promoting diversity and inclusivity within ACSP schools. Other interests of Board Members include seeking funding for engagement efforts, arranging meetings to share knowledge among planning programs and advancing planning education and fairness through initiatives like Indigenous Planning certificates.
- **Improve ACSP governance:** There was a focus on the Board Member on governance and responsibility as well as encouraging involvement at ACSP.

The consultants also submitted a [report](#) shortly after the October 2022 conference in Toronto that provides an overview of a strategic planning process undertaken by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP). It details the facilitation of a Board Engagement session of 22 individuals by The Centre for Strategic Impact and Growth Inc., aiming to develop a Strategic Plan Framework. Key activities included a SOAR analysis exercise involving twenty-two participants to identify strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) for ACSP, leading to a series of recommendations aimed at enhancing the organization's visibility, collaboration, and impact in the field of planning.

The report discusses the importance of fostering meaningful inclusion, equity, representation, and establishing strategic partnerships to bolster the field's profile and engage future generations and professionals. In summary the report emphasized both accomplishments achieved by ACSP far and areas warranting improvement while offering suggestions for advancing with a focus on fairness, fostering pathways for students and faculty, and bolstering engagement.

2023 Presidential Task Force on Anti-Racism Report

The [Anti-Racism Report](#) recommendations focus on:

1. **Communications and decision-making:** Enhancing communication between task forces, board, interest groups etc. and incorporating diverse voices and perspectives into all levels of decision-making within ACSP. In terms of the decision-making, a task force could develop an anti-racism protocol for general operations in the organizations for example things like choosing a city for a conference or appointing people to a committee, among other decisions.
2. **Analysis of conference submissions:** An anti-racism track could be developed, and the chairs could analyze conference topics being submitted to understand trends in the field—what is being discussed and where there is room for new topics.
3. **Conference feedback:** Review the conference evaluation form to ensure that all attendees are treated with respect and equity. Create a way for people to report incidences of discrimination.
4. **Workshop within the conference:** Encourage collaboration between attendees to create solutions that address the racial disparities in urban planning.
5. **POC reception:** Create a reception where POC are welcomed.
6. **Professional development outside the conference:** Offering professional development opportunities beyond the conference is key from students to full professors.
7. **Accountability measures in teaching:** Another idea could be to work with PAB to establish accountability measures to educate students about historical racism in urban planning.
8. **More venues for discussions and collaborations:** Create venues to promote collaboration for effective solutions creating platforms for sharing experiences and concerns related to racism and integrating anti-racism principles into all facets of the conference.
9. **Educate conference attendees of anti-racism:** Commit to educate conference attendees on the history of racism in urban planning and its implications for today's cities.
10. **Antiracist resources and training:** Provide professional development to faculty, administrators, planners, mayors, and city council members on anti-racist issues. Implement antiracist and cross-cultural training to generate racial, ethnic, and cultural awareness among faculty, staff, and administrators. Provide resources for attendees to learn about and discuss topics related to racial justice outside of the

conference. Provide professors with resources and support to engage in meaningful dialogue and activities that address racism and promote anti-racism. Additionally, the suggestions include providing antiracist training or offering professional development for various stakeholders to enhance diversity and inclusivity efforts. Work with PAB to cover topics such as implicit bias, unconscious bias, and structural racism. Help improve recruitment, retention, scholarship, curriculum, and classroom climate. Work with PAB to incorporate anti-racism into the curriculum, making sure to include topics such as the history of racism in urban planning and the role of racism in today's urban planning decisions.

11. **Evaluation of anti-racism efforts:** Create accountability mechanisms and evaluations of diversity initiatives, hiring practices, racial impact studies, and climate surveys. It could also evaluate diversity initiatives internally but along with PAB it can conduct comparative studies on how JEDI is incorporated into programs to improve recruitment and retention.
12. **Case Study research:** Implement comparative studies evaluating cross-cultural, antiracist training and other diversity efforts among organizations from different sectors and geographies. Work with local community organizations to identify ways to address and reduce disparities in urban planning processes.
13. **Address tokenism and disparities in planning practice:** Along with APA, ACSP can develop strategies to avoid tokenization of POC planners and partnering with planning organizations to address disparities through community involvement. Furthermore, ACSP can be a leader in advocating for diversity in practices, support professors in championing racism efforts, and collaborate with local community groups to foster inclusive planning processes.

ACSP Post-Conference Surveys

Based on the findings from various ACSP post-conference survey results (2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023), several key recommendations for improving future conferences can be integrated into the strategic plan. These recommendations focus on enhancing the conference experience and aligning it with broader organizational goals:

- **Enhancing diversity and inclusivity:** Prioritize the well-being of POC and LGBTQIA+ attendees by avoiding conferences in locations perceived as hostile to these groups. This is in line with the broader goal of championing diversity and inclusivity within ACSP.
- **Sustainability and climate action:** Emphasize climate change mitigation, such as incorporating carbon offsets for travel and promoting local keynote speakers to reduce travel distances. This aligns with ACSP's commitment to environmental action and sustainability.

- **Networking and engagement:** Improve networking opportunities, perhaps through sessions focused on interaction and critical analysis. Encouraging collaboration and networking is a central theme in the strategic plan.
- **Improving virtual conference elements:** Enhance the virtual conference experience by improving the platform for more effective networking and information sharing. This recommendation can be integrated with the goal of innovating in planning education, which includes exploring new methods and technologies.
- **Work-Life balance at conferences:** Implement work-life balance policies during conferences, such as designated quiet zones and health-focused activities. This aligns with the objective of supporting wellness and work-life balance.
- **Enhanced session planning and structure:** Regularize the structure of sessions, ensuring consistent quality and engagement in discussions and presentations. This could involve more rigorous planning and guidelines for presenters and moderators.
- **Fiscal responsibility and logistics:** Maintain financial sustainability by considering the impact of venue changes on attendee costs and conference logistics.
- **Antiracism and social justice focus:** Integrate antiracism and social justice themes more deeply into conference programming, aligning with ACSP's broader goals of addressing social justice issues and promoting inclusivity.

Implementing these recommendations would not only enhance the conference experience but also align with the broader strategic goals of the ACSP, ensuring a cohesive and impactful approach to organizational growth and development.

Strategic Topics Discussed by the ACSP Board

From 2019 to 2023, the ACSP Board hosted a 1-hour discussion session. Here is a list of the important topics discussed:

- Institutional Governance Committee Board recommendation to include interest group representation on the Governing Board
- Brainstorming long term goals for the ACSP
- Linking to NSF/NIH to promote research programs related to planning or a planning program in NSF
- Building a more long-term research expertise
- Publicizing planning and exploring links to APA
- Enrollment
- STEM designation
- Values statement
- Global Planning Education
- Bylaws recommendations
- Conference Locations

- Code of Conduct
- Bylaws changes to regional representatives
- Inclusion/Social Justice
- Need for Strategic Planning
- COVID 19 – ways ACSP can help our members respond and contingency planning considering the pandemic
- Future Conferences and contingency planning
- Budget and Strategic Opportunities
- Effective Board Meetings and Board Membership
- Orientation with Association Management Consultant Bob Harris
- Strategic Planning with Consultant – Centre for Strategic Impact

The ACSP's priorities, as indicated by the board's discussions can be condensed into overarching themes that mirror the organization's objectives:

1. **Governance:** Emphasizing representation of interest groups proposing changes, to bylaws and conducting board meetings suggest a commitment to more inclusive, transparent, and efficient governance. Deliberations on values statements, social justice/inclusion efforts and code of conduct display dedication to creating a diverse and ethical environment.
2. **Research and academic excellence:** Setting long term objectives fostering research collaborations with NSF/NIH and cultivating expertise in research signal a dedication to advancing the planning field through research and academic initiatives.
3. **Strategic alliances and visibility:** Promoting planning initiatives exploring partnerships with APA and enhancing planning education indicate a desire to expand the organization's influence and collaborative networks within and beyond academia.
4. **Addressing enrollment:** Dealing with enrollment presents an issue that involves strategic initiatives to draw in students to planning. STEM designation has been proposed to provide a potential solution.
5. **Crisis response and resiliency:** Addressing COVID 19 impacts preparing for conference contingencies and engaging in planning activities on location highlight a focus on adapting to external and internal challenges proactively while building organizational resilience.
6. **Financial and operational strategy:** Deliberating over the budget and identifying strategic opportunities show priority to align financial resources with the organization's long-term strategic goals.

Key Partner Organizations Strategic Plans or Priorities

Planning Accreditation Board

The [PAB Strategic Plan for 2023 2028](#) emphasizes exploring new services and strengthening partnerships with allied planning organizations. Unlike the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan that focused on defining and embodying PABs core values this new plan reflects a shift in direction. Formulated through a process initiated in 2022, which involved reviews, surveys, interviews, and a strategic planning retreat the plan identifies three key themes for PABs future development:

1. Increase awareness of the significance of accreditation and foster closer collaboration with sponsoring organizations and accredited programs.
2. Revamp PABs services to ensure stability and offer enhanced support to programs.
3. Adjust strategies to align with an expanded scope while continuing progress from the strategic plan.

Each theme outlines objectives aimed at tackling identified challenges and seizing opportunities. For instance, Theme 1 aims to enhance awareness about accreditation importance and strengthen ties with sponsoring organizations such as APA, AICP, and ACSP. Theme 2 delves into reimagining PABs services to cater to existing members' needs while adapting to industry evolution. Theme 3 focuses on ensuring that PABs operations are equipped to support these extended goals while enhancing engagement with stakeholders.

The strategic objectives of PAB closely align with the goals set by ACSP in strengthening collaboration and boosting the visibility and comprehension of planning accreditation. This alignment can be observed in aspects:

- **Promoting awareness and collaboration:** PAB and ACSP share a goal of increasing visibility and understanding of the planning profession and the significance of accreditation. PAB intends to collaborate with ACSP and other organizations to raise awareness and emphasize the importance of accreditation to an audience, including potential students, planning professionals, and programs without accreditation.
- **Supporting accredited programs:** PABs plan to revamp its services to offer assistance to accredited programs aligns with ACSPs mission to enhance the quality and relevance of planning education. Through services PAB aims to cater to the requirements of emerging fields within planning thereby contributing to the overall improvement of planning education championed by ACSP.

After a conversation with PAB, the following additional issues and opportunities were identified:

1. **Accreditation for allied fields:** There is potential for PAB to expand its accreditation scope to include allied fields.
2. **Exploration of new services:** PAB is currently exploring new services, including conducting site visit training.
3. **Training for program administrators:** There is a need for specialized training for program administrators on accreditation standards.
4. **Collaboration with the Committee on the Academy:** Strengthen partnerships and collaboration with the Committee on the Academy to enhance the value and understanding of accreditation in planning.
5. **Value of accreditation:** Emphasize the importance and benefits of accreditation in planning programs.
6. **Marketing initiatives:** Consider hiring a firm to improve marketing efforts for accreditation and planning programs.
7. **Online programs:** Address the requirements for online programs, particularly whether they need to maintain a bricks-and-mortar presence or apply for a new modality.
8. **Student enrollment trends:** Investigate whether there is a decline in student numbers based on Chair surveys.
9. **Awareness campaign for undergraduate programs:** Launch a campaign to raise awareness about undergraduate planning programs, as there is a growing interest in these programs.

American Planning Association

The APA is dedicated to building vibrant communities through [strategic goals](#) that are practical and forward thinking. Their focus on equity boosting the influence of planners enhancing skills and staying current in the realm highlights their values of equity, diversity, innovation, and dedication to ethical practices. The alignment between the goals of APA and ACSP is clear in their shared commitment to advancing:

- **Equity and diversity:** APAs emphasis on equity aligns with ACSPs efforts to combat racism and promote diversity in planning education and practice showing a dedication to creating inclusive communities.
- **Upskill planners:** Upskill planners to equip them with knowledge, insight, and skills for effective change management. APAs goal of skill building for planners matches ACSPs objective of supporting career growth through mentorship programs while exploring AI technology in planning education to prepare planners for navigating change.

- **Digital relevance:** Both organizations understand the need to adapt to progress. APAs pursuit of digital relevance corresponds with ACSPs exploration of formats and integration of digital tools into planning education and practice.

APAs vision for the future involves leading the way towards creating thriving communities through methods, which aligns with ACSPs aim to integrate global perspectives and promote innovation in planning education and research. On the front of advancing the planning profession APA is focused on reshaping how planning is perceived, ensuring that the profession's significance is recognized and appreciated. APA seeks to reframe the voice of planning to ensure planners are valued and sought after by decision-makers. This goal complements ACSPs work to increase awareness of planning programs and projects beyond conferences.

Both APA and ACSP share a vision for an inclusive forward-looking planning profession that prioritizes community engagement, ethical standards, and ongoing education. Their mutual objectives demonstrate a shared aspiration to equip planners with the tools, knowledge, and platforms needed to build fair communities.

American Institute of Certified Planners

The [AICP Strategic Plan](#), approved in 2019, lays out a set of objectives aimed at bolstering the credibility, significance and influence of the AICP certification. It also aims to set standards for certification and professionalism, uphold values and practices, support ongoing professional growth, recognize dedication and service, improve communication and collaboration, ensure efficient management and promote education and research. Here's how these objectives align with the plan of ACSP:

- **Goal 1. Integrity and value:** AICP strives to uphold the integrity and value of the AICP credential which is in line with ACSPs efforts to enhance the standing and acknowledgment of planning education and the planning profession. Both organizations work towards advancing the field while advocating for its practitioners by highlighting the importance of certification and accreditation.
- **Goal 2. Certification and professional standards:** Through defining competency standards AICP ensures that planning experts are well equipped to tackle challenges. This objective resonates with ACSPs focus on upholding standards and ensuring that planning curricula remain pertinent and adaptable to industry changes.
- **Goal 3. Ethical principles and practice:** AICPs emphasis on ethical principles aligns with ACSPs dedication to promoting justice, equality, and ethical conduct in planning education as well as within the profession itself. Both organizations acknowledge

that maintaining standards is crucial for preserving public trust to further enhance the positive impact of the profession on communities.

- **Goal 4. Professional development:** The dedication of AICP to learning and lifelong career development is in line with the ACSPs mission to support planners' growth and engagement at all stages of their careers. Both organizations emphasize the value of education and professional achievement.
- **Goal 5. Service, commitment, and recognition:** AICP's focus on recognizing planning professionals mirrors ACSPs commitment to creating an involved membership community. They both aim to honor and celebrate the accomplishments of their members, strengthening their dedication to the field of planning.
- **Goal 6. Communication and collaboration:** Fostering communication among APA leaders, students, educators and practitioners aligns with ACSPs objective of promoting collaboration within the planning education sector. AICP and ACSP share a goal of bridging academia with practice to enhance the effectiveness of the profession.
- **Goal 7. Management:** Both organizations prioritize documented programs that're cost effective and well-coordinated to support ACSPs broader objective of efficient organizational management. Operational excellence is a shared goal aimed at serving members and advancing the planning profession.
- **Goal 8. Education and research:** The promotion of development through education and research resonates with ACSPs emphasis on innovation in planning education and the significance of research in advancing the field.

Working together with PAB and ACSP to support standards that align with AICP guidelines demonstrates dedication to improving planning education and research. In essence the objectives outlined in the AICP Strategic Plan align well with ACSPs aims by concentrating on upholding integrity, advancing educational and ethical norms, nurturing professional growth, acknowledging members' contributions, promoting effective communication and teamwork, ensuring efficient administration and prioritizing education and research. Both organizations share a goal of advancing the planning profession and enhancing its influence on communities and society.

Strategic Plans and Priorities from Similar Associations

Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture

The [ACSA Strategic Plan](#) for 2022-2025 highlights the importance of fairness, social equality, environmental action, improving teaching methods, backing research endeavors, nurturing endeavors, building partnerships fostering engagement promoting innovation and ensuring organizational operations to enhance architectural education. ACSA objectives are in line with the ACSPs commitment of:

- Championing diversity and inclusivity
- Pushing advancements in the field
- Encouraging collaboration among fields of study
- Aiding in the professional growth of its members

Both ACSA and ACSP strive to elevate their domains through work, education, research and community involvement to ensure that their disciplines adapt effectively to present day challenges and possibilities.

Association of American Geographers

The [AAG Strategic Plan](#) for 2023 2025 is focused on boosting the field of geography enhancing programs and engaging with the community, refining membership strategies and striving for excellence. The plan outlines objectives such as training geographers in leadership, media and policy; upgrading meeting and virtual platforms; revamping membership approaches for growth; and optimizing operational efficiency. ACSP could structure its plan like the objectives of AAG:

- Elevating the discipline
- Enhancing programming
- Improving membership
- Cultivating community
- Achieving organizational excellence

Both organizations are dedicated to advancing their fields through education, community engagement, and innovation. They share a commitment to development. Making a positive impact on society.

Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration

The [2023 NASPAA Strategic Plan](#) is geared towards improving public service education embracing diversity and inclusivity advocating for service outlining a strategy and upholding accreditation standards. These priorities are designed to assist member institutions and enhance the quality of public service education on a scale. The organization objectives highlight the significance of:

- Public policy, affairs, and administration education
- Committing to diversity and inclusivity within its community
- Expanding international impact of its programs
- Promoting the field as a valuable public service

- Ensuring top-tier academic accreditation standards

Urban Affairs Association

Although UAA does not have a strategic plan we looked at its [mission and strategic priorities](#). The mission of UAA is to create "interdisciplinary spaces for engaging in intellectual and practical discussions about urban life. Through theoretical, empirical, and action-oriented research, the UAA fosters diverse activities to understand and shape a more just and equitable urban world." Their strategic goals include:

- To foster education, professional development, and student mentoring in urban affairs
- To foster and build the capacity among scholars, policymakers and other members of the community for collaboration on significant urban issues
- To foster interdisciplinary scholarship on urban affairs
- To offer a space for the examination of university engagement in urban communities such as service learning, engaged scholarship and university/community partnerships
- To support university based urban affairs education, research and service
- To recruit, develop, and sustain scholars to serve and influence the field of urban affairs and its institutions

STRATEGIC SCAN

The Centre for Strategic Impact & Growth Inc. conducted a survey, completed by 20 respondents, which asked about the three main issues affecting higher education and planning today. From these questions among other comments from the survey and the focused conversation with the Executive Board and Interest Group representatives at the Toronto Conference in 2022 the ACSP Strategic Planning Task Force organized and identified the following trends affecting planning and ACSP (external and external factors).

External Factors

The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) operates in a changing landscape that influences the organization's opportunities and challenges. The external environment surrounding ACSP is shaped by the following factors:

- **Communicating the value, relevance, and goodwill of planning:** Board Members indicated that other degrees are shorter than planning. Students are seeking degrees in affiliated fields (not planning) to become planners due to the length of most graduate programs (48-52 credits). Another drawing to other programs like sustainability studies because they are STEM and most planning programs are not. In addition, it was commented by Board Members that planners are labeled as the bad guys, who destroy communities of color, are not inclusive, etc. The way the public sees the value and the role of planning in society is crucial. There is a lack of optimism in the profession and ACSP needs to highlight how planning can improve quality of life and push for policies that prioritize planning principles.
- **Articulating the role of higher education in society:** Colleges and universities need to better communicate how higher education benefits society by highlighting the advantages of earning a degree like job prospects, higher income, and positive contributions to the community. In addition, it is important to produce effective, non-extractive, and impactful scholarship and communicate outside the academy.
- **High cost of higher education:** The increasing costs of tuition and related expenses create barriers to education, specially for historically marginalized or disadvantaged communities. There is a widening gap between more affordable and unaffordable schools and often there are manifestations of racial segregation.
- **Pipeline challenges:** One major obstacle discussed was the task of establishing and sustaining a group of individuals interested in planning spanning from school all the way through college and postgraduate studies. Increasing the number of students opting for careers in planning and improving recruitment initiatives are areas that need attention to grow as a field as well as to improve student quality. Pipeline challenges are exacerbated by the lack of preparation for K-12 (e.g. reading, critical

thinking, writing, geography) and the limited access for international students (through visa and funding restrictions).

- **Reduced resources for planning programs:** Funding availability and resource allocation for higher education can affect the stability of planning programs, from student enrollment rates to access to research grants and scholarships. These adjustments in funding can affect the resources to planning schools and their capacity to provide high quality programs and services.
- **Demographic changes:** Shifts in population demographics (e.g., growing minority communities, immigration, lower fertility rates, an aging population, etc.), urbanization patterns, and societal preferences can impact the demand for planning education as well as the specific issues that planning programs need to focus on.
- **New forms of community engagement:** Given technological and demographic changes, planning needs to become a leader in how to engage communities, particularly historically marginalized communities. For instance, platforms such as forums, social networking sites, interactive mapping services, virtual reality simulations and mobile applications can all be leveraged to engage an audience and encourage valuable involvement in the planning.
- **Lack of academic jobs for graduates:** The competition for faculty positions is challenging for new PhD graduates. This tough environment may deter individuals from pursuing careers potentially causing lasting effects in the profession.
- **Lack of diversity in higher education:** Despite efforts to promote diversity in colleges and universities many institutions still struggle to recruit diverse students and faculty.
- **Address JEDI in a meaningful manner:** Overall this means addressing white supremacy, racism, injustice, and dismantling colonial structures. This includes tackling challenges like pay, recruiting, and retaining women, minorities, and LGBTQ individuals to promote equality and provide opportunities for everyone.
- **Political polarization:** Red states and blue states policies tend to differ on issues related to climate change, immigration, LGBTQAI, support for tenure, JEDI initiatives, etc. It is important to continue to find ways to have dialogue together on important issues impacting our shared quality of life and shared future on the planet.
- **Changing political climate related to JEDI restrictions:** In some states it is becoming harder to carry out Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) programs, including antiracism work, in the planning field. Issues like funding restrictions, limitations on curriculum content, and difficulties in forming partnerships with marginalized communities could impede progress in addressing JEDI concerns in planning education and practice. It is essential to overcome these barriers and explore approaches to uphold JEDI principles for fostering equity and inclusivity in the profession.

- **Sustainability, resilience, and climate change threats:** Heightened concerns about sustainability, resilience, and climate change might prompt a reassessment of planning curricula to include principles of development, environmental conservation efforts and strategies for adapting to climate challenges.
- **Addressing the most important issues in the field:** Board members identified that the three main issues in planning today are climate change, affordable housing, and equity related issues. These issues are both challenges and opportunities to advance social justice, as well as to enhance the relevance of our degrees to broader communities.
- **STEM designation of planning:** ACSP's pending nomination to U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to have planning's main instructional code (CIP Code) designated as a STEM field: (1) If the code is approved, getting ACSP members who previously switched to Sustainability Studies (or other codes) to switch back to the primary code, (2) Encouraging existing institutions who report in the main planning CIP Code but are not ACSP members to join ACSP, and (3) Lobbying the US Department of Education to update the main CIP Code in their decennial reclassification in 2030, perhaps to advocate planning not to be classified as a subfield of architecture.
- **Policy changes in the planning field:** Changes in policies and regulations at the federal, state, or local government levels may influence the content taught and research priorities in planning schools requiring programs to keep up with evolving standards and expectations. Engaging with policymakers is a must in the future.
- **Globalization:** In today's interconnected world planning programs must consider international best practices and cross-cultural competencies when it comes to education and research.
- **Adapting to online platforms:** The move towards online platforms, including planning programs online, might mean adjusting its programs and services for virtual settings. This change opens opportunities to improve access and reach out better engage with members, stakeholders, and the planning community as a whole. Creating approaches for delivery using technology to enhance interactive and lively experiences and seamlessly integrating virtual elements into planning operations are crucial for fully embracing the advantages of going digital.
- **Rise in open access journals:** The emergence of open access publications has expanded the availability of research to the public and researchers from diverse backgrounds who can now stay informed about the most recent advancements in their respective fields. However, it has resulted in growing inequalities for academics who lack the financial resources or institutional backing required to be able to publish open access.

- **Evolving technology:** Advances in technology including the use of AI data analysis, machine learning, coding, and GIS technology in planning practices could change how planning education is delivered and the skills required for planning professionals.
- **Changing pedagogy and the need for innovation in teaching:** Factors such as technological innovation, demographic changes, emerging issues, and the recognition of preparing students with essential skills for tomorrow might bring the need for new course content and non-conventional teaching approaches which are typically less centered on lectures and memorization.
- **Emphasis on work-life balance:** People are starting to recognize the value of maintaining a balance between their professional commitments and personal well-being and many workplaces have incorporated programs that support for example wellness, etc.
- In essence ACSPs external environment is influenced by a mix of legal factors that bring both opportunities and challenges. Adapting to these forces while seizing opportunities and addressing obstacles will be crucial for ACSP to achieve its goals and drive progress in planning education.

Internal Factors

The following factors related to ACSP's internal environment affect the organizations' opportunities and challenges:

- **Financial and fundraising challenges:** The decision to relocate the conference from Miami, Florida to Chicago, Illinois has put a strain on ACSPs finances and resources. The Miami cancellation fees were close to \$278,000. Our budget plan aims to achieve a revenue target of \$100,000 from our conferences. The actual results may vary depending on each event. The Toronto Conference brought in \$37,000, in revenue. There was a 20% decrease in attendance and expenses were 30% higher than expected. The financial assessment for the Chicago Conference is still pending. We anticipate reaching a break point. The turnout in Chicago was impressive, with 1,175 participants. However, the hotel we chose which aligns with our values turned out to be costly. Unfortunately, the State of Illinois did not acknowledge our tax status under section 501c3. The fiscal year 2022-2023 concluded with a deficit of \$113,000. The initial budget for 2023-2024 predicted a shortfall of \$73,000. Following the fall meeting significant budget cuts were approved for the six months by the Governing Board. As a result, it is anticipated that we will end 2023-2024 with a deficit of \$25,000. In response to the economic challenges, the ACSP leadership had to make difficult decisions, such as violating its reserve requirements, laying off members of its staff, and reducing services and financial support for important

programs such as the JPER junior faculty workshop, migrating online the administrators conference and other programming, as well as suspending assistance to special interest groups. Additionally, reductions have been made in staff services contracts. All unspent funds allocated to committees and interest groups have been trimmed down. Seeking out funding avenues such as nurturing donor connections, collaborating with partners and maximizing resources are vital elements in securing ACSPs financial stability and ensuring its ongoing support for programs and initiatives. It'll also be key to addressing the procedures in place for identifying, assessing and managing risks to ensure the organization's stability and ability to adapt to challenges.

- **Need to clarify vision and mission:** In general board members hold mixed views on how clear ACSP's mission and vision are. Some believe the organization is effectively fulfilling its mission through projects while others think there is confusion and a lack of understanding among board members and beyond the membership. There is, however, overall agreement that ACSP is making progress towards its actions in tackling disparities in the planning field. There are opportunities for enhancing communication and alignment on its mission and vision.
- **The implementation of the mission and vision within the ACSP across policies, strategies, and decisions appears to be inconsistent:** Some individuals believe there is room for enhancing the link between decisions and the organization's mission and vision while others acknowledge steps such as increased diversity initiatives. It is suggested that more efforts should be made to ensure that alignment with the mission and vision is maintained throughout the organization. Furthermore, the turnover of board members and presidents might contribute to inconsistencies in applying these guiding principles.
- **Member engagement and retention:** Maintaining strong relationships with members is essential for the sustainability and growth of ACSP. Engaging members through meaningful interactions, valuable resources, and relevant programming can enhance their experience, loyalty, and active participation in the organization. Implementing strategies to attract new members, retain existing ones, and cultivate a sense of community and belonging within the organization is key to fostering a vibrant and supportive membership base.
- **Governance, decision-making, engagement, communication, and transparency:** It is key to analyze the structure of ACSP along with its decision-making processes and systems of accountability. Further, it is crucial to uphold communication with stakeholders such as members, partners, donors, etc. By keeping stakeholders updated on plans, trust can be built, comprehension nurtured and support garnered for ACSPs projects. Creating communication channels seeking input and showcasing

accountability are key to maintaining transparency and involvement within the organization.

- **Changes in staff and management of human resources:** ACSP lost several employees because of financial issues, and this implies a loss of services. Although ACSP contracts with a company who hires its own staff, it is important to review how the organization handles human resources matters this might include working with the contractor to discuss issues such as hiring, retaining employees, fostering growth, and nurturing a healthy work environment.
- **Technology adoption:** Embracing digital tools and platforms to enhance communication, collaboration, and efficiency within the organization. This includes exploring virtual meeting options, online resources, and digital marketing strategies to reach a wider audience and engage members effectively. It'll be important to explore how ACSP utilizes technology and innovative approaches to improve its services, programs, and engagement with the community.
- **Strategic partnerships:** A crucial element of ACSPs strategy to improve its services and expand its reach in the community involves forming partnerships. By working with organizations such as the American Planning Association, the Planning Accreditation Board, among others it can combine resources, knowledge, and networks to maximize its influence.
- **Evaluation and impact assessment:** To gauge the effectiveness of its programs and projects ACSP can employ evaluation techniques and impact measurement practices. By gathering information on performance metrics, results, and input from stakeholders, ACSP can monitor advancements, pinpoint opportunities for enhancement and convey its influence on stakeholders.

Taking steps to tackle these obstacles head on and introducing thought-out plans to surpass them can pave the way for ACSP to thrive, make a difference and achieve success.

SOAR ANALYSIS

Most of the items included in the strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) in the section below come from the facilitation of a Board Engagement session by The Centre for Strategic Impact and Growth Inc., aiming to develop a Strategic Plan Framework. A total of 22 individuals participated in this activity. In the interest of time, participants were divided into four groups and were assigned one area to cover. Each group was tasked with identifying responses under each heading and reporting back to the larger group.

Suggestions were at times combined with others or edited for clarification. Issues that seem to be missing from other documents were added.

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <p>What does ACSP do well, along with its key assets, resources, capabilities, and accomplishments?</p>	<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>What circumstances can the team leverage for success, e.g. to improve profitability, competitive edge, new territories?</p>
<p>ASPIRATIONS</p> <p>What ACSP wants to be and achieve in the future? A vision to build on current strengths, provide inspiration and challenge the current situation.</p>	<p>RESULTS</p> <p>Identify tangible outcomes and measures that demonstrate ACSP has achieved its goals and aspirations.</p>

Strengths

What does ACSP do well, along with its key assets, resources, capabilities, and accomplishments?

- **ACSP as a resource and "the" academic association for planning:** The ACSP stands out as the organization for students, educators, and experts in the field of planning. It fosters a welcoming environment for individuals involved in planning to connect work together and stay updated on the studies and tools in the field. Boasting a membership of more than 100 schools and establishments, ACSP proves to be an asset for those striving to progress in their planning careers and contribute to planning.
- **ACSP is meeting its mission:** Board members do feel that the board is meeting its mission.

- **Values are incorporated in decision-making:** There is some consensus that the Board is using the mission and values in policy, strategies and decisions as evidenced by recent work with respect to diversity and equity related issues.
- **Staff continuity:** Donna's history and expertise and organizational continuity.
- **Sufficient length of term for the President:** The term of the President is two years which is followed by two years as Vice President. This promotes consistency and stability in leadership while also opening avenues for ideas and viewpoints to emerge.
- **Succession planning:** The organization identifies a pool of skilled people to step into vacant positions.
- **Conference as an avenue for showcasing work/academic job search:** Although it is important to note that ACSP is much more than the conference, it is such a strength that many people equate the association with the conference.
- **Management of the conference:** Staff of ACSP do a great job managing the conference. The National Conference Committee provides guidance and oversight for all Association-sponsored meetings and conferences to ensure effective management. In addition, the Committee on the Academy oversees the Administrator's Conference and recommends potential sites, plans programming, and evaluates post-conference results. This overall structure seems to be working well.
- **Aligning funding with mission:** ACSP has effectively matched funding with its goal of advancing education and research in planning.
- **Responsive to emerging issues standing committees, task forces, and interest groups:** ACSP focuses on tackling and keeping up with developments in regional planning. By utilizing its committees, task forces, and interest groups ACSP can bring together resources and knowledge to address issues such as climate change, injustice, etc.
- **JPER:** One of the most important accomplishments of ACSP is JPER as a venue for academics to share their work and its impact factor has been on the rise.
- **Career resources, development, and mentorship:** ACSP has valuable resources, including networking opportunities, and mentorship programs to help its members thrive in their chosen career paths. The talks are on professional development from interest groups and others.
- **Workshops:** ACSP has several workshops such as the doctoral workshop, pre-doctoral, faculty mentorship workshop, international student workshops, JPER writing workshop and junior faculty workshop. Some workshops were specially highlighted: the students' workshops and JPER.

- **ACSP's relationship with PAB:** Close and collaborative relationship when it comes to improving and promoting planning education. ACSP also has a PAB Site Visitor Nomination Committee.
- **Committee of diversity:** The committee strives to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in planning education. They are involved in organizing a variety of programs such as the Predoctoral Workshop for Students of Color, the Junior Faculty Workshop, and CV book.
- **Engagement opportunities:** Several opportunities to engage and be active within the organization, activities for faculty, pre-doctoral, and doctoral.
- **Awards, scholarships, and recognition:** ACSP, including interest groups, offer 7 awards for students and 11 awards for faculty members to recognize their service, teaching, and scholarship.

Opportunities

What circumstances can the team leverage for success, e.g. to improve profitability, competitive edge, new territories?

- **Mission and vision require clarity:** The mission and vision have become less clear and require some clarity.
- **Need for mechanism to operationalize mission in decision-making:** It is commonly felt that more centering of the mission and vision as it relates to policy, strategies and decisions could be implemented.
- **Emphasizing the viewpoint of planning as different:** In contrast, to fields like architecture, engineering, geographic, etc. urban planning centers on how different elements of the build environment interact to develop habitable environments for everyone. The emphasis on resiliency, inclusivity, and commitment to community-based solutions distinguish planning from sectors highlighting its crucial role in shaping the destiny of our cities.
- **Become global and embracing it:** ACSP can expand their reach, access new perspectives, and engage in cross-cultural collaboration. Right now, the Global Planning Educators Interest Group (GPEIG) incorporates global perspectives in planning education and research, and to connect with colleagues and partners in other regions of the world. There are also collaborations with the Global Planning Education Committee (GPEC).
- **Dismantling racism and increasing diversity:** ACSP has the potential to foster a more inclusive group of planners who are well prepared to tackle racism and contribute to diversity in society.
- **Undergraduate education:** Undergraduate education isn't valued, and it should be. We should concentrate on undergraduate education.

- **Online certificates and other forms of planning education options:** A collaborative indigenous planning online certificate for example.
- **Elevating community collaboration and equity in planning:** Community work is underrated. Tenure should value community work. In addition, planners should be collaborators working with the community to further equity goals but metrics for engagement need to be developed.
- **Fostering collaboration between academic and practicing planners through partnerships and knowledge exchange:** Establishing collaborations locally and globally, between planners and professionals, in the field to promote the sharing of resources, data, and knowledge exchange. One idea is a playbook for bridging academic planners and practitioners.
- **Explore possibilities with AI in teaching:** As this technology continues to advance and impact various industries, including planning education and practice it is crucial for schools to stay ahead of the curve and incorporate AI into their curriculum and teaching methods.
- **Raise dollars for open-source publications:** By supporting JPER open-source publications, the ACSP can help make valuable information more accessible to students, academics, and professionals as well as increase citations and impact.
- **Opportunity to teach the next generation of planners:** As teachers we hold the opportunity to influence the direction of our areas by equipping students with the knowledge and resources to make thoughtful choices and build thriving eco-friendly neighborhoods.
- **Require AICP for tenure:** Requiring AICP certification as a prerequisite for obtaining tenure showcases a dedication to upholding professionalism and basic knowledge (regardless of one specialization) within the field of planning. This requirement guarantees that tenured planners possess a grasp of industry practices as well as the ethical dilemmas of professional planners.
- **Stand against anti-DEI legislation:** Keep the collaboration with ACSA, CELA, and ACSP to jointly communicate our opposition to any legislation that prevents educators from teaching and sharing complete and accurate knowledge about the built environment for the purpose of shielding students from "divisive" or "disagreeable" content related to the impact of race and racism in American and global society, as well as other pedagogy related to gender and LGBTQ+ identities.

Aspirations

What does ASCP want to be and achieve in the future? A vision to build on current strengths, provide inspiration and challenge the current situation.

- **Have a strategic plan:** We do great things, but people don't know. We need a strategic plan, so people feel like their work matters.
- **Increasing pipeline of diverse students:** Planners, academics, and practitioners, should look like the communities they serve. This is why it is important to increase the pipeline of diverse students.
- **A conference that is more inclusive:** That the conference is welcoming, and it fosters a sense of community, values the work of all, helps doctoral students who come without faculty here and be aware of the perception of elitism of receptions, for example. Be aware of small cohorts feeling left out.
- **Journal aspirations:** JPER being a higher profile journal and perhaps a second journal. The second journal could make more impact in the profession or education, first be more pedagogical research, it should be open access and low cost.
- **Poster or infographic of ACSP resources:** Thinking about how to give ACSP visibility, and that members understand connections of all groups and opportunities in ACSP for students and members to know what resources ACSP has.
- **ACSP as a platform for sharing good ideas and best practices:** Why changes to master's program, what issues are we facing for example like declining enrollment. We can encourage facilitation, lifting ideas, community, two-way sharing, more collaboration, and less competition.
- **Regional coordination:** There could be regional meetings where the reps meet with schools in their area via Zoom.
- **Collaboration between ACSP and APA:** There could be general collaboration to have data for analysis and research articles. We can get AICP data that is correct for each school. But in general, we need better data that could serve both practice and academia. People who do surveys at APA and ACSP could meet regularly like the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) does.
- **Develop more giving from organizations and sponsorships:** Organizations and companies can play a critical role in supporting ACSP conference and other programming by providing financial sponsorship or grants.
- **Joint conferences and meetings with other organizations:** We can have smaller meetings with partners to discuss the possibility. We can do an ACSP member survey—what meetings and conferences members go to, where to branch out to, what are their travel budgets, where are people publishing?
- **In the future we can have an Executive Director with planning training:** A spokesperson and leader not just for organizations but profession.
- **Active links to international organizations:** ACSP should aim to create connections with organizations to encourage cooperation, share expertise and enhance worldwide discussions, within the planning domain.

- **Better membership options for those not in programs:** One option might be to develop a membership level designed specifically for professionals in the planning industry or similar fields.
- **More links to members other than the conference:** ACSP can facilitate connections between its members through various means like online workshops.

Results

Identify tangible outcomes and measures that demonstrate ACSP has achieved its goals and aspirations.

- **Number of new undergraduate programs:** There are 16 undergraduate accredited programs, but it is unclear of the overall number.
- **Assess and update curriculum and teaching methods based on trends:** Reducing gap between what the world is doing and what we are teaching.
- **Keep programs on professional development going:** ACSP should keep hosting workshops to mentor faculty and students at different points in their careers, improve their skills, and expand their success in academia.
- **BIG idea sessions on emerging technology (AI):** ACSP should hold sessions online or at conferences about AI technology and its influence on planning and how it can enhance creative thinking.
- **Visibility of the field:** ACSP should follow the Public Health model. For example, the social determinants of health, in the Public Health model acknowledge that various social, economic, and environmental factors play a role in shaping health outcomes. This model expands beyond healthcare strategies by considering the environment in which individuals live, work, and plan. The model underscores the significance of tackling disparities, like poverty, discrimination, resource accessibility, and community support to enhance the well-being of the population.

ACSP CONFERENCE ENGAGEMENT

At the ACSP Conference in Seattle from November 6–9, two sessions were conducted with 26 Board Members. The first session engaged with the following questions: Does the assigned goal address the key challenges you face at your institution or those ACSP should tackle? Is ACSP addressing this now, and if so, how? How can this be improved given our resources? Session two then asked participants, in the same groups, to suggest the top three actions for their assigned goal, focusing on impact and feasibility while considering the list provided or proposing new ideas. Additionally, two sessions were held with general members during the conference, with a total of 15 attendees (not including task force members).

The most important comments from these discussions were summarized and combined below. The final goals were refined to reflect the insightful feedback received during the conference, ensuring they address both broad priorities and specific challenges highlighted by participants. Changes focused on aligning strategic efforts with practical needs, such as improving collaboration, enhancing mentorship programs across career stages, advancing DEI, and fostering innovation in planning education. Additionally, the goals emphasize operational sustainability, stronger partnerships with key organizations, and increased visibility for planning programs through collaborative campaigns and accessible tools.

Goal #1: Support Planning Programs

- **Support for Planning Programs:** Strategies such as shared repositories and collaborative tools were highlighted as essential for enhancing access, coordination, and resource sharing among planning programs.

Goal #2: Cultivate Mentorship for Growth

- **Mentorship Pipeline:** Participants supported expanding mentorship initiatives to cover all career stages, from pre-doctoral students to senior professionals.

Goal #3: Advance DEI and Anti-Racism

- **Accountability in Actions:** Attendees recommended setting measurable accountability metrics for DEI efforts to track progress effectively.
- **Training and Collaboration:** Workshops on anti-racism and large-grant applications were identified as essential tools to promote equity and capacity-building.
- **Dynamic Nature of Issues:** The importance of addressing complex, evolving DEI challenges was emphasized.

Goal #4: Innovate Planning Education

- **Curriculum Innovation:** Attendees emphasized the need for flexible educational models like micro-credentialing and the inclusion of programs such as APA Passport to address evolving student and workforce needs.
- **Open Access Initiatives:** Publishing resources on emerging topics like AI, online pedagogy, and global case studies was encouraged to enhance accessibility.
- **Citizen Academy:** Participants proposed creating programs to introduce high school students to advocacy and planning concepts.
- **Collaboration Across Schools:** Shared teaching initiatives and resource-sharing across departments were identified as opportunities for fostering innovation.

Goal #5: Elevate Planning Visibility

- **Collaborations with APA:** Partnering with APA, ULI, and others to design impactful public campaigns was a recurring theme.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Legislative engagement and outreach efforts emphasizing planning's societal value were encouraged.
- **Templates for Recruitment:** Standardizing marketing tools, such as templates, was suggested to streamline recruitment efforts.
- **Public and High School Outreach:** Participants noted the importance of engaging APA chapters to inspire high school students about planning careers.

Goal #6: Ensure Operational Excellence

- **Resilient Funding Models:** Participants highlighted the importance of sustainable funding approaches, such as revenue-sharing and securing grants, to support long-term operations.
- **HR Continuity:** Long-term HR strategies for organizational growth and stability were recommended.
- **Workshops for Large Grants:** Training sessions for grant applications were proposed to strengthen financial and programmatic capacity.

Goal #7: Strengthen Partnerships

- **Academia-Industry Bridge:** Establishing think tanks to connect academic research with professional practice was identified as a key opportunity.
- **Partnerships with Organizations:** Collaborations with groups like ULI, ESRI, and APA were encouraged to foster mutual benefits and align educational programs with industry needs.

GOALS

The following goals outline a comprehensive approach to advancing the effectiveness and impact of planning programs. These objectives emphasize key areas such as supporting academic programs, cultivating mentorship, advancing diversity and inclusion, innovating planning education, elevating program visibility, ensuring operational excellence, and strengthening partnerships. Each goal includes actionable steps, measurable outcomes, and a clear timeline to ensure progress and accountability over the next five years. By addressing these priorities, the framework aims to enhance planning education, foster professional development, and promote greater engagement within the field.

Goal 1: Support Planning Programs

Establish a sustainable framework to support planning programs by addressing key topics such as budget training, student enrollment, diversity outreach, DEI challenges, community engagement in RPT processes, and STEM designation.

Specific:

- Establish a task force to prioritize topics, select speakers, and determine dissemination methods.
- Conduct at least two recorded Zoom workshops annually.
- Utilize the Administrators Conference and ACSP Annual Conference to host two additional workshops.

Measurable:

- Establish the task force and establish a schedule for topic selection and speaker recruitment.
- Deliver four workshops each year with at least 20 participants per session.

Achievable:

- Leverage existing conference platforms and institutional resources to organize and promote workshops.
- Engage faculty, administrators, and professional organizations for content and participation.

Relevant:

- Align the framework with institutional goals for enhancing planning education, addressing DEI, etc.

Time-Bound:

- Year 1: Form a task force to assess gaps in current support programs, prioritize topics, and design an initial framework for workshops and resources.
- Year 2: Launch two recorded Zoom workshops and two conference-based workshops focused on high-priority topics. Begin building a resource library with recorded sessions.
- Year 3: Expand the workshop program to include additional topics and evaluate the impact of the framework and refine based on feedback.
- Year 4: Continue delivering workshops and expand dissemination efforts to reach a broader audience through partnerships with professional organizations.
- Year 5: Conduct a comprehensive review of all programs and evaluate progress. Adjust the framework based on findings for sustained growth.

Goal 2: Cultivate Mentorship for Growth

Establish a comprehensive mentorship program that supports individuals from pre-doctoral stages to retirement, fostering academic, professional, and personal growth.

Specific:

- Leverage existing ACSP mentorship initiatives (e.g., Doctoral Workshop, Pre-Doctoral Workshop, Faculty Mentorship Workshop, International Student Workshop, JPER Writing Workshop, Junior Faculty of Color Workshop) to address gaps and expand offerings.
- Develop at least two new mentorship opportunities e.g., for mid-career and senior faculty or PhD students seeking to work in industry.

Measurable:

- Establish the task force composed of leaders of existing mentorship initiatives to establish a schedule for topic selection and speaker recruitment.
- Deliver three additional workshops each year with at least 20 participants.

Achievable:

- Utilize ACSP's existing resources, faculty networks, workshops and conference platforms to implement and promote mentorship opportunities.
- Collaborate with partner organizations to provide additional expertise and resources.

Relevant:

- Align with ACSP's mission to support professional development and equity in urban planning education and practice.
- Address the growing need for mentorship at all stages of academic and professional careers.

Time-Bound:

- Year 1: Assess gaps in existing programs and form a task force to design new initiatives.
- Year 2: Launch mid-career mentorship program and evaluate its impact.
- Year 3: Expand mid-career and senior-level mentorship programs as well as develop a program for PhD students interested in industry based on feedback.
- Year 4: Continue mentorship programs and evaluate.
- Year 5: Evaluate progress across all mentorship initiatives and adjust accordingly.

Goal 3: Advance DEI and Anti-Racism

Develop workshops, resources, and networking opportunities to enhance diversity outreach, anti-racism initiatives, and professional development for underrepresented groups.

Specific:

- Design and deliver workshops on diversity outreach and anti-racism practices for chairs.
- Create resource materials to support the professional development of underrepresented groups.
- Facilitate networking opportunities to connect underrepresented groups with mentors and peers.

Measurable:

- Establish a task force composed of members of the anti-racism committee to plan this work.
- Host at least one workshop annually, reaching a minimum of 20 participants per session.
- Develop and distribute one new resource material (e.g., guides, toolkits, videos) by Year 4.
- Organize a biannual networking event each year at the conference.

Achievable:

- Collaborate with ACSP committees, member schools, and partner organizations to create and deliver content.
- Use virtual platforms and existing conferences to maximize reach and engagement.

Relevant:

- Align with ACSP's mission to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in urban planning education and practice.
- Address gaps in professional development and support for underrepresented groups.

Time-Bound:

- Year 1: Assess gaps and form a task force to design initiatives.
- Year 2: Develop a detailed plan for workshops and pilot the first workshop for chairs.
- Year 3: Launch one networking event.
- Year 4: Develop resource materials, expand offerings for workshops for chairs, evaluate impact, and refine programs based on feedback.
- Year 5: Continue with the offerings to chairs and resources for planners of underrepresented groups and complete a comprehensive review of outcomes.

Goal 4: Innovate Planning Education

Create an online platform to host resources, workshops, and collaborative opportunities on emerging topics like AI, equity, online pedagogy, and global case studies, fostering knowledge exchange, advocacy, and cross-departmental collaboration through co-teaching initiatives.

Specific:

- Design and launch an online platform to provide access to resources, host workshops, and facilitate co-teaching initiatives across departments.
- Include content on topics like AI, equity, online pedagogy, and global case studies.

Measurable:

- Establish a task force to plan this work.
- Launch the platform with at least 10 initial resources by year 3 and add 2 resources a year after that.

- Evaluate usage and feedback with at least 100 participants in the first 12 months.

Achievable:

- Use existing institutional tools and expertise for development.
- Partner with a small group of departments and faculty to pilot co-teaching and resource sharing initiatives.

Relevant:

- Align with institutional goals to promote innovation in education and collaboration.
- Address high-priority topics while ensuring scalability for future growth.

Time-Bound:

- Year 1: Form the task force, identify potential platforms, cost, etc.
- Year 2: Create the platform and develop a detailed plan for the first courses.
- Year 3: Develop and launch the pilot platform with initial content and workshops.
- Year 4: Assess pilot outcomes and decide on expansion or modifications.
- Year 5: Finalize the platform and establish a routine for hosting workshops and updating resources.

Goal 5: Elevate Planning Visibility

Enhance the visibility of planning programs through marketing, collaborative public campaigns, and promoting the Planning Guide as a key resource.

Specific:

- Develop standardized marketing tools and social media templates to promote planning programs.
- Partner with organizations such as APA, PAB, AESOP, ULI, etc. to design and execute public campaigns highlighting the value of planning.
- Direct stakeholders, students, and faculty to the Planning Guide as a central resource for understanding the profession and its opportunities.

Measurable:

- Create and distribute marketing materials to academic institutions within Year 1.
- Launch two collaborative public campaigns annually that incorporate references to the Planning Guide.

- Track the usage and visibility of the Planning Guide through campaign analytics and feedback surveys.

Achievable:

- Leverage existing institutional resources and partnerships with professional organizations for campaign development.
- Use digital platforms, conference venues, and workshops to maximize outreach and engagement, while embedding references to the Planning Guide in all campaigns.

Relevant:

- Align with institutional goals to attract students, enhance public awareness, and demonstrate the importance of planning in addressing societal challenges.
- Ensure the Planning Guide is recognized as a foundational tool for learning about planning programs and careers.

Time-Bound:

- **Year 1:** Develop marketing tools, integrate references to the Planning Guide, and pilot the first public campaign in collaboration with APA.
- **Year 2:** Expand campaign efforts to include partnerships with ULI, AESOP, and others, and refine materials based on feedback.
- **Year 3:** Host at least one annual workshop or webinar to train faculty and students on using the Planning Guide in outreach and recruitment efforts.
- **Year 4:** Evaluate the impact of campaigns, marketing tools, and Planning Guide usage on enrollment and program visibility.
- **Year 5:** Adjust strategies based on evaluation, establish a sustainable model for ongoing campaigns, and further embed the Planning Guide into all promotional efforts.

Goal 6: Ensure Operational Excellence

Strengthen operational excellence through sustainable financial strategies and long-term capacity building.

Specific:

- Develop and implement revenue-sharing models and secure grant funding to ensure financial sustainability.

- Create a long-term organizational growth plan focused on HR strategies, resource development, and operational efficiency.

Measurable:

- Secure two new funding sources (e.g., grants or revenue-sharing partnerships) within three years.
- Increase organizational capacity by hiring and retaining staff to support long-term goals.

Achievable:

- Leverage institutional resources and partnerships to develop and execute financial strategies.
- Use strategic planning to align HR and resource allocation with organizational needs.

Relevant:

- Align with institutional priorities for financial sustainability and operational efficiency.
- Focus on long-term growth to support the organization's mission and goals.

Time-Bound:

- **Year 1:** Identify potential funding sources and develop a comprehensive HR strategy.
- **Year 2:** Secure the first funding source and implement initial HR initiatives.
- **Year 3:** Secure a second funding source and evaluate the impact of capacity-building efforts.
- **Year 4:** Refine financial and HR strategies based on feedback and outcomes.
- **Year 5:** Conduct a comprehensive review of financial and capacity-building strategies and finalize a sustainability plan.

Goal 7: Strengthen Partnerships

Build and sustain partnerships with key organizations to enhance curriculum, support professional development, and increase the visibility of planning programs.

Specific:

- Collaborate with organizations such as APA, AESOP, ULI, ESRI, funders, and think tanks to co-develop initiatives that address curriculum enhancement, professional development, and visibility efforts.
- Include partnerships that focus on aligning educational programs with industry needs and promoting planning through public campaigns.

Measurable:

- Establish formal collaborations with at least three new organizations (e.g., ULI, ESRI, or a think tank) within three years.
- Launch two joint initiatives annually that promote curriculum development, professional growth, or visibility campaigns.
- Host at least one co-branded event or campaign each year with partner organizations.

Achievable:

- Leverage existing relationships with APA, AESOP, and other professional organizations to initiate partnerships.
- Utilize conferences, digital platforms, and mutual goals to align efforts and resources for collaboration.

Relevant:

- Align with institutional priorities to advance planning education, increase public awareness, and connect academia with industry.
- Address the need for stronger ties between planning programs and professional networks to ensure relevance and impact.

Time-Bound:

- **Year 1:** Identify potential partner organizations and initiate collaboration discussions.
- **Year 2:** Launch the first joint initiative and host one co-branded event with a key partner.
- **Year 3:** Expand partnerships to include at least two additional organizations and evaluate the impact of joint initiatives.
- **Year 4:** Refine partnership strategies and increase the number of co-branded events or campaigns.
- **Year 5:** Conduct a comprehensive review of partnership outcomes and publish a report highlighting successes and future opportunities.