

NEVADA PLANNER



American Planning Association
Nevada Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Nevada Chapter of the American Planning Association

SPRING 2022

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Nevada Chapter

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

NATHAN GOLDBERG, AICP
PRESIDENT, NEVADA CHAPTER

Happy Spring, Nevada Planners!

Spring is a season of change: plants are in bloom, we get to up our irrigation schedules, and it's often a time for hiring for agencies as the new fiscal year approaches. In my travels around Southern Nevada, I've taken note of so many positive changes. There are new pedestrian-friendly intersections and various other roadway improvements at all levels. I am seeing new businesses pop-up, and of course residential development continues to be at a sprinters pace. Somewhere in all of these projects and more, there have been planners involved. So, next time you are out and about, take a look around with pride in the work that you have had a hand in. Get out there and support your local businesses, take part in festivals or a kids' carwash fundraiser. Each of these little acts helps build a better community, which is what planners are all about!

Spring doesn't last long in the desert, so make the most of it! I hope to see many of you representing Nevada at the National Planning Conference in San Diego!



PLANNING



NORTHERN SECTION NEWS

FREDERICK STEINMANN
DIRECTOR, NORTHERN SECTION

I look forward to working with you on developing a robust and productive educational platform for our Section and Chapter over the coming year! At the beginning of 2022, we installed new Section officers including Eric Hasty as Assistant Director, Derek Kirkland as Treasurer, and Scott Carey Planning Development Official. Amber Harmon and I will stay on as Secretary and Director.

We begin 2022 with our first educational and social event scheduled for March 30. This educational and social event will kick-off a months-long educational series exploring development-related issues for northern Nevada. Upcoming sessions will feature presentations on transportation issues, infrastructure, housing, economic development, education, and best practices of planning in high-growth areas. Over the coming months, the Section will host a series of special social events as a way for Northern Section and NVAPA members to network. We will also be revamping our efforts to engage with students at the University of Nevada, Reno, Truckee Meadows Community College, and Western Nevada College.

The Section is also working with the Southern Section and the Chapter's Executive Committee to host the **2022 NVAPA Rural Planning Symposium** that will be held August 18 and 19 in Elko! Details will be sent out to Chapter members within the next month. Until then, make sure to save the date! I hope that you will join us in Elko for this one-of-a-kind event!

In January, the Chapter and the Northern Section lost one of our longest-serving and most devoted members, Michael Moreno. As many of you know, Michael worked for the RTC of Washoe County and was a devoted public servant, always an active participant and supporter of the Chapter and the Section. Michael was always willing and able to help grow and support our state's planning community and we join his colleagues at the RTC, and his family, in their sorrow and loss. To remember Michael and his years of service, the Section has started a donation fundraiser for the Food Bank of Northern Nevada in his name. The Food Bank of Northern Nevada was one of Michael's favorite charities and the Section has pledged \$500 in his name. Between now and April 29, the Section will match, dollar-for-dollar, any NVAPA Member donation to the Food Bank up to an additional \$500. To learn more about how you can help remember Michael and make a donation in his name, please see the flyer included in this newsletter.

SOUTHERN SECTION NEWS

ALFREDO MELESIO, AICP
DIRECTOR, SOUTHERN SECTION

Brothers and Sisters,

Allow me to introduce myself: My name is Alfredo Melesio and I am the Assistant City Manager for the great City of North Las Vegas. It may seem odd that your Section Director is an Assistant City Manager, but there are planners in the valley that have taken on Manager, Director and Assistant City Manager roles way before I landed in North Las Vegas 5 years ago. I only follow in the desert dusty path they have trailblazed.

I started as a Planning Intern in the 90's, and after completing my Masters in Planning, I was assigned to the Permit Desk for 10 years. When I say Permit Desk, I really mean the hallway that residents got sent to find an available Planner. As the newest Planner, I got the office most conveniently located near the hallway. I enjoyed the first few years very much. I felt like residents were bringing me their hopes and dreams and I was helping them achieve their goals. Maybe a new garage, fence line, addition, or small commercial plaza aren't in your dreams, but I was invested in making sure my customers went away happy, or at least better informed.


The life of a Permit Desk Planner isn't always the most exciting and after a few years my workload increased and I wanted to spend more time on current and future Planning projects. It was difficult because every few minutes, someone would show up in my hallway who needed help. So without asking permission, I decided to train and deploy the paid Planning Interns to help me with the Permit Desk. That was the birth of my first management job, training Planning Interns who came and went every few months. It was a difficult task but it taught me a lot about how precious public funds could be utilized better. The Planning Interns I trained are now working as Architects and Planners all over the country and I am proud I gave them a valuable intern experience.

Today, I am the most excited and humbled to be your Section Director and look forward to working with all of you. If I can help you in any way please reach out to me. I know the exact setback requirements for residential, commercial and industrial construction if you plan to build in my old hometown in Illinois. Let me know.

CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF MICHAEL MORENO

AMY CUMMINGS, LAUREN BALL,
DAN DOENGES, & LEE GIBSON, AICP

Northern Nevada is grieving the loss of Michael Moreno, who passed away in January of this year. Michael was fiercely dedicated to his family and his community. He served the public throughout his career, while working for Senator Richard Bryan and the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (RTC). Michael was a strong supporter of the Chapter and many other not-for-profit community organizations, such as the Food Bank of Northern Nevada. During his 20 years at the RTC, Michael pioneered innovations and nationally recognized best practices in community engagement. His impact is reflected in the outpouring of praise from people throughout Nevada. Proclamations were made in his honor by the Cities of Reno and Sparks and a flag was flown in his honor over the U.S. Capitol.

Michael was tireless in his efforts to include diverse stakeholders and find creative ways to reach people who might not traditionally be involved in decision-making. He was committed to the principle that all planning and implementation efforts should be founded on robust community engagement. So many of the transformative infrastructure investments in our region were developed with Michael's leadership, including Virginia Street RAPID transit, the SouthEast Connector, the 4th Street/Prater Way Bus RAPID Transit, and Pyramid-McCarran Intersection project, just to name a few. None of these projects were easy, but Michael thrived on his ability to bring people together and work through difficult challenges. He was a wonderful, caring friend and colleague who will continue to be greatly missed. Our challenge is to continue his legacy of commitment to public service, a spirit of partnership, and dedication to excellence in community engagement. 



Remembering and Honoring the Legacy of Michael Moreno

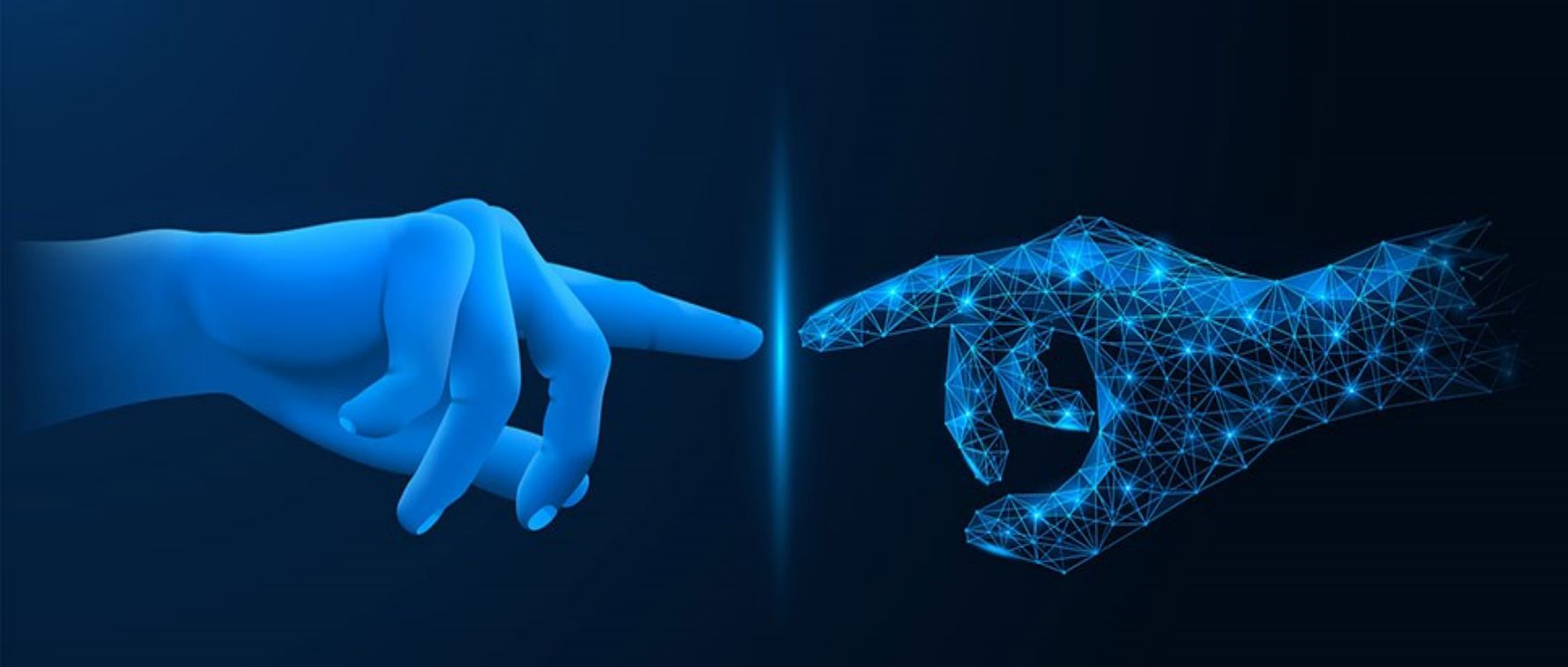


As you may know, Michael Moreno, long-time member and supporter of the Nevada Chapter of the American Planning Association, passed away in January 2022. Michael was a regular participant in Northern Section and Chapter events and had a tremendous positive impact on our state's planning community and profession.

While we are saddened by his loss and extend our thoughts and sympathies to his family and colleagues at the RTC of Washoe County and across Nevada, the Northern Section will recognize and remember his years of service by supporting a fundraising drive for the **Food Bank of Northern Nevada**, one of Michael's preferred charities.

*The Northern Section of the APA Nevada Chapter will donate **\$500** in Michael's name to the Food Bank of Northern Nevada and will match, dollar-for-dollar, any donation made by any Northern Section and APA Chapter Member up to an additional **\$500** between now and April 29, 2022.*

To donate in Michael's name to the Food Bank of Northern Nevada, go to www.fbnn.org and click on the "Give Now" option under the "WAYS TO GIVE" menu at the top of the page. Just complete the GIFT INFORMATION and BILLING INFORMATION sections on this page. Once completed, simply forward your receipt to Frederick Steinmann, APA Nevada Chapter Northern Section Director, by email (fred@unr.edu). After April 29, 2022, all individual gifts to the Food Bank of Northern Nevada will be totaled and the Northern Section will then make a final donation including the initial \$500 pledged from the Northern Section and the dollar-for-dollar match of up to an additional \$500.



DEMYSTIFYING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN PLANNING

**HANNAH SHUMWAY AND
TREY CORDNER**

*(Originally published on APA's website planning.org
Reused with permission from the American Planning Association)*

Does the phrase 'artificial intelligence' evoke for you Hollywood images of dystopian futures filled with menacing cyborgs, sentient operating systems, and ubiquitous surveillance? (Oh my!) If so, you're not alone. Nearly half of the APA members who participated in our recent survey on the subject indicated that they had neither interest nor experience in AI.

As researchers studying prospective applications of AI in urban planning, we recognize the potential for algorithmic bias, invasions of privacy, and other negative consequences. But we believe the best protection for citizens is an informed urban planning profession able to understand and evaluate the risks and benefits of AI applications for their communities.

EVERY DAY USES

Most people encounter AI every day. AI populates your social media feeds, provides recommendations, computes the fastest routes to your destinations, screens your spam calls and emails, and protects your information from hackers behind the scenes. It's no surprise, then, that APA Foresight staff named AI as one of the "[7 Trends Knocking at the Planning Office Door](#)" last summer and listed it for the second year in a row as 'a trend we need to prepare for' in the [2022 Trend Report for Planners](#).

In the private sector, companies deploy AI to save customers time and money, help them navigate complex

processes, and protect them from bad actors.

AI AND PLANNING RESEARCH PROJECT

Could urban planners use these same technologies to benefit our citizens? If so, how do we ensure they lead to more equitable outcomes and don't entrench discriminatory systems?

These are the questions motivating our research as part of an National Science Foundation-funded collaboration between Virginia Tech, APA, and Arlington County, Virginia. Our goals are to:

1. Identify the urban planning and decision-making processes with the greatest potential to utilize AI methods.
2. Develop and test pilot AI-related planning applications.
3. Pay special attention to equitable deployment of these AI methods.

As the painful legacy of redlining and urban renewal reminds us, our traditional tools and techniques are equally capable of perpetuating inequality and enabling abuses of power.

It is our professional duty to ensure that new tools and techniques correct past and present inequalities rather than perpetuate them.

If we as a profession fail to take ownership of these questions when it comes to AI, then technology vendors will determine them for us from a different and possibly incompatible code of professional ethics.

As a first step, we need to understand the current state of

AI in urban planning. In the fall, we invited APA members to answer questions about AI including their familiarity with the topic, their expectations for its impact on cities and planners, and their ideas for its most and least productive uses within the field.

We received 396 responses from a diverse group of planners, geographically, demographically, and with regard to educational background. Consistent with the demographics of APA members, participants more often identified themselves as male (63 percent) and as white (76 percent). Respondents hailed from every part of the country (and a few other countries as well), worked in both public (65 percent) and private organizations, and possessed all levels of experience: 18 percent of the respondents had 0-5 years, while 27 percent had 26-plus years. In this set of [dashboards](#), we present some of our most interesting and important findings.

SURVEY FINDINGS

First off, as we noted earlier, nearly half (47 percent) of planners who responded to the survey rated their 'level of interest or experience with artificial intelligence related to planning' as zero on a zero to five scale, with zero meaning no experience or interest and five meaning expert-level experience or interest.



COMMON WORDS PLANNERS USED IN SURVEY RESPONSES TO DEFINE AI.

All told, more than 80 percent of respondents rated themselves zero, one, or two on the AI interest/experience scale, and just 8 percent rated themselves a five. This disconnect is especially striking given that more than 70 percent of planners indicated that they believe AI will have an impact on urban planning, placing its significance at a three or higher where five denotes 'dramatic' impacts on the profession.

Beyond personal interest and experience, the varied perspectives about AI among APA members were underscored by planners' responses to a survey question asking them to define AI, which included a broad range of

ideas. The word cloud below summarizes the most common words used in planners' personal definitions.

Most respondents explained the concept by considering the relationship between computers, data, and humans. Specifically, they discussed whether and how computers can achieve and even surpass human-level thought and decision making capabilities through complex analytics, algorithms, software programs, and the like.

While we know that many of those surveyed don't yet have much experience with AI, it's clear from their definitions that planners have already begun to form conceptions of what AI is and can do — some general ("using technology to hasten data collection and decision making"), others narrow (autonomous vehicles, code/permit review, AR/VR), and others deeply skeptical ("robot overlords," "privacy invasion").

Amidst this new, uncertain AI frontier, some planners are already implementing AI into their workflows, and they shared their experiences in the survey. The plurality of current applications come in the subfield of transportation planning, which may not surprise you; this was the field that our survey respondents flagged as the area with the highest potential for AI. Applications in this arena include: [analyzing driver behavior](#) from GPS trajectories, predicting areas of high or low [safety for pedestrians and bicyclists](#) from anonymized trips, [traffic monitoring](#), [fleet management](#), and [routing of transit services](#).

UNEXPECTED AI APPLICATIONS

Respondents also described some perhaps more unexpected applications for AI in planning:


- Deploying chatbots on a planning agency's website to answer frequently asked questions.
- Using machine learning to parse public comments into thematic categories and run sentiment analysis.
- Leveraging algorithms to augment the decision making process around siting new land uses like accessory dwelling units and large infrastructure projects (in addition to broader adoption of e-permitting and zoning management software).
- Using advanced visualization techniques, often enabled through drone and LiDAR collection, to model the possibilities for a redevelopment.

Even in this relatively small sample of planners implementing AI, the applications ranged widely and still only skimmed the surface of the possibilities to come.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Artificial intelligence is quickly becoming ubiquitous in our lives, and planners have the chance to shape its adoption and use in cities in a way that promotes an equitable vision for the future. Today, though, as APA's *2022 Trend Report for Planners* highlighted, "Technological shifts and innovations is still the trend category with the lowest preparedness among planners."

planners to begin to engage meaningfully with emerging technologies and grapple with both the prime opportunities to bring AI into our work as well as AI applications that require more skepticism and caution.

APA is collaborating with experts in the field to help you prepare for AI and its potential implications for planning. Stay tuned for more! 

(The survey reported on here was supported through grants from the National Science Foundation's Smart and Connected Communities Program (Award #2125259) and the Virginia Tech Institute for Society, Culture, and Environment (ISCE) Scholars Program.)

Hannah Shumway is a solution engineer at Esri. She serves as a technical expert on Esri's ArcGIS system, including data science, spatial analysis, data management, and mapping capabilities.

Trey Gordner is a graduate student and researcher in Urban and Regional Planning at Virginia Tech. He supports an NSF-funded project led by Dr. Tom Sanchez on the potential for artificial intelligence in urban planning. He is a finalist for a technology fellowship with the U.S. federal government and is leading development for the Hawaii Zoning Atlas, a comprehensive online map of by-right zoning and land use regulations for every parcel in the state.

Top Image: iStock/Getty Images Plus - Ilya Lukichev



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WE ARE HIRING

The position is for our Southern Nevada office located in Henderson. We are looking for someone who enjoys working with others, can think outside the box and wants to have a positive impact on our community. Planning knowledge and expertise is a must as we pride ourselves on being planners looking for win-win solutions. If you can play nice in the sandbox, can manage talking to a group and working on a variety of projects this may be a great fit for you. Please check out our job postings on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/view/3020364680/> or Indeed [Gc Garcia Jobs, Employment in Henderson, NV | Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com/viewjob?jk=3020364680)



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COMING EVENTS

OHIO APA WEBCASTS

[\(Click Here to Register for All Ohio APA Webcasts\)](#)

April 22

10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

[Climate Resilience Includes Health: Planning in Native American Communities](#)

Presented by the Sustainable Communities Division

CM | 1.5 + 1.0 SR

May 6

10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

[TBA](#)

Presented by the Urban Design & Preservation Division

CM | 1.5

May 15

10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

[Technology Tools for Sustainability](#)

Presented by the Sustainable Communities Division

CM | 1.5 + 1.0 SR

May 20

10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

[Planning for Healthier Communities: Consider a Nurse](#)

Presented by the Florida Chapter

CM | 1.5

CM credits can be claimed by looking up the sponsoring Chapter or Division as provider on the [APA website](#).

2022 NATIONAL PLANNING CONFERENCE

[April 30 to May 3, San Diego](#)

PLANETIZEN WEB COURSES

[\(Click here for list of courses\)](#)

All courses are free, available anytime, and are approved for 1 CM.

APA LEARN

[\(Click here for list of courses\)](#)

APA Learn has over 400 courses, including Law and Ethics, all of which are eligible for CMs and available at a low, per-credit cost.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Deputy Director of Development Services

[City of Mesquite](#)

Management Analyst II,

[Long Range/Office Sustainability](#)

[City of Las Vegas](#)

Senior Planner, Advanced and Current Planning

[Clark County](#)



American Planning Association

Creating Great Communities for All



The American Planning Association's
Professional Institute
**American Institute
of Certified Planners**

Creating Great Communities for All

**American Planning Association
Nevada Chapter**

Announcing the 2022 APA Nevada Rural Planning Conference!

***Thursday, August 18, 2022 and Friday, August 19, 2022
Elko, Nevada***

SAVE THE DATE! The Nevada Chapter of the American Planning Association is happy to announce that the 2022 APA Nevada Rural Planning Conference will be held on Thursday, August 18, 2022 and Friday, August 19, 2022 in Elko, Nevada!

Plenary, breakout, and keynote sessions over this day and a half conference will focus on a variety of rural planning issues ranging from the management and use of public lands to community and economic development issues to healthcare, housing, and conservation issues. This conference will also feature a meeting of the Nevada State Land Use Planning Advisory Committee (SLUPAC) during the morning of Friday, August 19, 2022. Additional details regarding the Annual Conference will be sent to Chapter Members within the next few months.

General Admission: \$75

Planning Official: \$50 (Elected and Appointed Officials including Planning Commissioners)

AICP continuing maintenance credits will be offered for all plenary, breakout, and keynote sessions and more detailed session information, including a full agenda for the day and half conference, and information on registration will be announced shortly.



<https://nevada.planning.org/>



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Nevada Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

NEVADA PLANNER

The *Nevada Planner* is a publication of the Nevada Chapter of the American Planning Association, with a circulation of approximately 300 Chapter members, members of APA leadership, and Chapter Presidents. It is published three times per year.

ARTICLES

To submit articles, letters, announcements, events, or photos, please contact Greg Toth, Editor, at greg.toth@cityofhenderson.com. The next issue is planned for this summer.

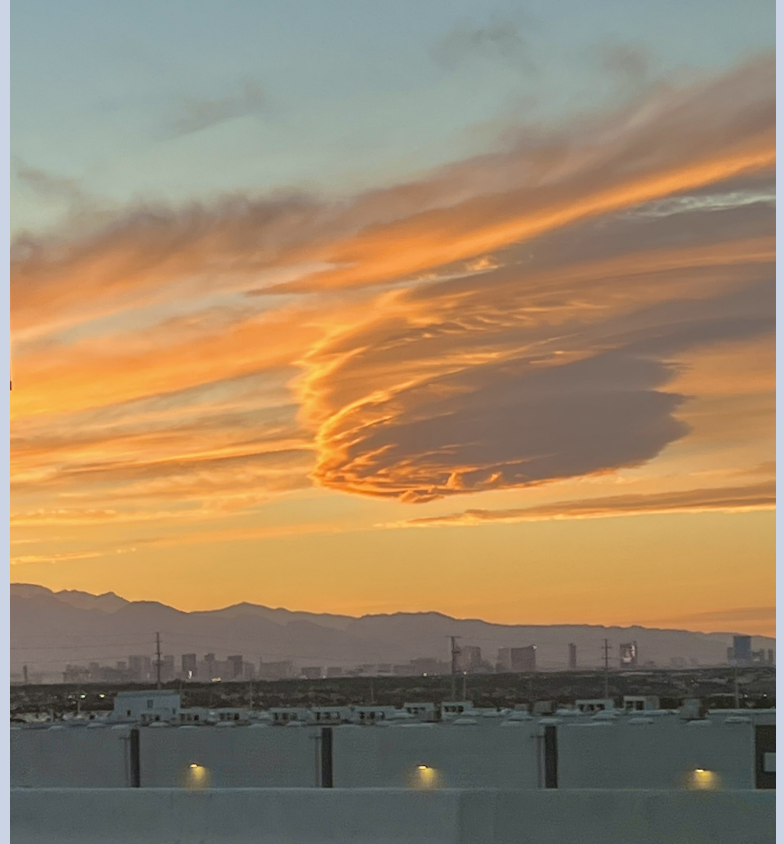
CHANGES OF ADDRESS

The Nevada Chapter receives all member mailing and email addresses from APA's National database. To change your mailing or email address, please log in to your account at **www.planning.org** and update your information there.

CHAPTER-ONLY MEMBERSHIPS

Become a member of the Nevada Chapter! For only \$40 annually, you'll receive all emails, newsletters, announcements, in-state registration discounts, and Chapter voting privileges that National members receive. Visit our website for an application and mail it with your payment to:

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A MOTHER SHIP DESCENDS UPON THE LAS VEGAS STRIP.
PHOTO: GREG TOTH, AICP



BATTLE BORN
ALL FOR OUR COUNTRY



PLANNING CONNECTS US