



Diversity Summit Report 2012

This year's APACA Diversity Summit was held on Sunday, October 21, 2012, the first day of the annual planning conference held in Rancho Mirage, CA. We had over 100 conference attendees attend the event.

Agenda

Census Trends for Planning and Policy: Diversity Summit 2012

APA California Chapter Conference

Rancho Mirage, California

Sunday, October 21

4:30-6:00 P.M.

ABSTRACT: *This year's California Chapter Diversity Summit deepen planners' understanding of statewide demographic trends to inform local land use planning and public policy, with particular emphasis on underserved communities, communities of color, and the planners who work in those communities. This session goal was to provide guidance for California planners on how to translate the Census 2010 data into everyday project, program, and policy guidance, providing relevant case studies and resources. Sample areas of focus had included effective public engagement strategies for communities with shifting demographics and navigating the changing fiscal resource landscape. The Summit featured American Planning Association President Mitchell Silver as the opening speaker, setting the national demographic context. The Summit keynote provided by Dr. Leobardo Estrada, PhD, focusing on California's unique planning and policy landscape. Dr. Estrada is Associate Professor of Urban Planning at the UCLA School of Public Affairs, Department of Urban Planning. State Membership Inclusion Directors Connie Galambos Malloy and Anna M. Vidal provided a brief overview of current Chapter diversity initiatives, trends, and opportunities for members to engage at the Section level.*

4:30-4:35

Welcome & Overview - Connie Malloy, CCAPA Membership Inclusion Director – Northern

4:35-4:50

Opening – Mitchell Silver, APA National President

- National context for demographic change that shapes planning & public policy and APA's Diversity efforts.

4:55-5:30

Keynote - Leobardo Estrada , Professor of Urban Planning, UC Los Angeles

- The U.S. Census in California – what did we expect? What emerged as surprises?
- Analysis of five key statewide planning & public policy issues
- Navigating demographic, community, municipal, and political change

5:30-5:50

Moderated Reactions & Reflections - Mitchell Silver, APA National President

5:50-6:00

Diversity Summit Wrap-up - Anna Vidal, CCAPA Membership Inclusion Director – Southern

Notes

After a brief welcome, Connie Malloy introduced APA President Mitchell Silver, AICP, who then began by calling out APA President-Elect Bill Anderson, AICP, and APA Executive Director Paul Farmer from the audience. Mr. Silver then explained that social equity and fairness have been an integral part of urban planning since the profession's inception, as evidenced by their inclusion in APA's past and present principles. Mr. Silver then asked the audience "what is the new normal?", and answered that demographic trends show the rise of the inclusive community, and that while planners are "on the front lines" and are "guardians of the future," APA membership and AICP certification does not currently reflect the new normal. Mr. Silver further elaborated that there are indeed consequences for no action, and that planners should avoid even mentioning sustainability if equity, one of sustainability's three E's, is not seriously considered, a phenomenon he referred to as "equity washing." APA has and continues to address this, according to Mr. Silver, through the Changes Faces of America track at the last national conference, as well as through the Ambassadors Program. Mr. Silver then introduced Dr. Leobardo Estrada, PhD, Associate Professor of Urban Planning at the UCLA School of Public Affairs, Department of Urban Planning.

Dr. Estrada began his keynote presentation with the idea of California as a "great experiment," and shared personal anecdotes of how outside observers are fascinated with how relatively conflict-free this experiment has been. Between the 2000 and 2010 Census in California, Asians and Latinos have increased in population and in "momentum," while Whites and Blacks have decreased in both. There is also a growing elderly population in California, as well as significant changes in household types and homeownership. California also has the highest percentage of foreign-born people in the US, yet that has been the case since the 1860 Census; this poses a tremendous challenge to crisis coordinators and managers, for example, who often must urgently communicate in languages other than English. Part of the great experiment is the lack of programs for immigrant integration, resulting in a "sink or swim"

situation. As for planning implications, current projections show an increase in property values, building permits, and government employment, all resulting in increases in staffing that should reflect the diverse community, as well as increased revenues that should then be spent on development that reflects the diverse community's values. Furthermore, the language and cultural barriers must be considered in public participation and in public safety and crisis planning. The most important takeaway from all of this, according to Dr. Estrada, is simply the need for "understanding" of this diversity - racial, generational, and otherwise - by the planning profession; Mr. Silver had previously explained that diversity is the valuing of different perspectives.

After the keynote presentation, the summit was opened for question/comment-and-answer.

1. The first question was simply how should we move forward to ensure that planners reflect the community, to which Mr. Silver replied that planning is for tomorrow and for the younger generations, for which extra work is needed to ensure that public comment has the proper representation, which includes more use of social media.
2. A Los Angeles County planner then asked how can planners best address the educational and generational gap; Mr. Silver answered that planners need to sell schools and education as economic development in order to change prevailing attitudes, as planners play a role in making our cities competitive in our global economy.
3. The third question was on how to break down the silos within the profession and the community at large, to which Dr. Estrada spoke of the differences in expectations from planning between the first, second, and third generations of immigrants and their varying degrees of exposure to the US system. Mr. Silver elaborated that the mature generations often plan for their own needs, even though it is the younger generations that will implement the plans.
4. APA President-Elect Bill Anderson then asked how to best deal with the trend of people relocating back to the cities, eventually leading to a surplus of single-family housing stock, to which Dr. Estrada explained that different generations have different norms when it comes to density; the demand for sprawl may in fact decline, and thus density must be presented differently.
5. The fifth question was how are business dealing with the demographic trends presented by Dr. Estrada, to which Mr. Silver replied that planners were five years ahead of realtors in predicting higher demand for smaller units and higher densities without necessarily going vertical. Mr. Silver also warned of the ticking time bomb of housing stock quality, as many of the homes built in the recent housing boom are of much lesser quality than those built shortly after World War II. Dr. Estrada then explained that aging-in-place has not been addressed on a large scale, for which the allowance of granny flats/accessory dwelling units can address.
6. The next comment from the audience was on the need to rethink homeownership as a proxy for stability; Mr. Silver shared the results of a bipartisan study that younger generations prefer to rent over owning a home. Dr. Estrada then explained that there is still a correlation between

home ownership and other quality of life factors such as crime, yet this correlation may decrease over time.

7. What about gated communities, asked the next audience member, to which Mr. Silver expressed bewilderment that such communities were allowed in California, as they are not permitted in Raleigh, NC due to the false sense of security. Dr. Estrada explained that gated communities have in fact created a new conflict: HOAs.
8. The next question was on whether second and third generations of immigrants learning English and assimilating still occurs, to which Dr. Estrada explained that this process still continues but is decelerating, since for example, a second or third generation immigrant can live in San Francisco's Chinatown and get by just fine without English.
9. The next three questions were answered in rapid-fire style. First, what resources are available from the California Chapter on this topic, for which past California Chapter President Kurt Christiansen suggested a partnership with AARP.
10. How do planners address the lack of awareness in the value of planning, especially among college students, for which Mr. Silver suggested marketing to the general public planning and economic development as one.
11. Moreover, how do planners address the lack of interest in joining APA within the profession, again especially among college students, for which Anna Vidal expressed the need for strong advocacy for students. Ms. Vidal also announced that the APA website will soon be revamped to include additional resources.

After the Q&A, Ms. Vidal thanked everyone for attending, and wished everyone a productive conference.

Conclusion

We have concluded that since we had a huge success by adding Ethics credits, we will continue the tradition next year. We are researching future topics for the Diversity Summit 2013 and one of the ideas is Food Systems. We will be having a conference call with the Section Membership Inclusion Directors on January 15, 2013, to beginning brainstorming for the 2013 Diversity Summit.

Appendix

A – Welcome & Opening Power Point Presentation

B – Mitchell Silver, Power Point Presentation

C – Leo Estrada’s Presentation