



PLANNINGRAM

From the President . . .

Wow, it has been a busy year for NDPA and there is more to come. Last November, we started with our first "Planning Made Easy" class. We planned to complete this course by the end of 1999, and actually completed the second half of the training in April during our Community Development Month conference. Both of these conferences were well attended by our members and other interested parties.

Now we are beginning to plan for our next annual conference. **Mark your calendars now for November 2 and 3 for this conference.** We are looking at possible topics such as mitigation planning; Renaissance Zone (new legislation that can help communities with a planning component); the AICP test (if you ever wanted to take this course but have text anxiety, hopefully this can help); Strategic Planning Pilot Projects (the State's first pilot community could be close to completing their plan); CERAtown (a new technological way communities can plan and expand for the future); GIS systems; and the SHARP program (an Internet tool that can help you gather community data). We are also looking for other ideas from our members. *Please give any officer a call with additional suggestions.*

NDPA played a large role in the State's Strategic Planning process and in developing the Strategic Planning tools. We helped underwrite the Strategic Planning workshop that was held at the end of June and attended by nearly 60 people with planning interests. The intense three-day training taught the attendees how to facilitate this process. Three tools (in draft form) have been developed to assist in this process. The facilitator's manual (I like to call it the "teacher's guide") reviews the process in detail and includes examples and answers. The second manual, the community leaders' manual, is the "student guide". This manual can be used by communities who want to complete this process on their own without the assistance of the facilitator. And the third manual, the "cliff notes" for the other two, is a checklist for the strategic planning process. These three manuals should be in their final form after the two pilot projects are completed. We hope to have this process in statewide use shortly after the first of the year.

I hope to see you at the annual conference in November.

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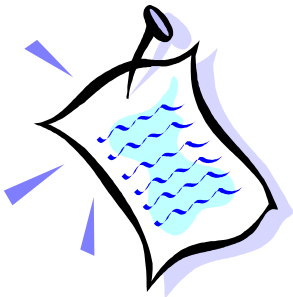
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*Michael
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NDPA Update

Our April Community Development conference was a great success, and has been the kickoff point for strategic planning in the state. We registered 62 for the first day, and 123 for the second day of the two-day conference, even though it was an absolutely beautiful April (golfing) day. Approximately 40 people attended both "Planning Made Easy" sessions and received certificates.

For those of you who attended the April Community Development conference, Dr. Rathge and Mr. Wyckoff sent a copy of all their overheads. If there are particular ones you want, call me at 328-2386 to obtain copies. We still have a few Planning Made Easy manuals available at \$25 for members and \$35 for non-members.

The Executive Board met on June 30 to discuss the dues structure and the fall conference. Dues will be increased to \$40 for a single membership, and organizational memberships will be computed at \$30 per member. These new dues go into effect on January 1, 2000.

I updated the Western Planner subscription list in mid-February. If you are not receiving this magazine and would like to, please give me a call.

Barb Owens



The Survivors from the Planning Made Easy class!

What's SHARP?

The **Statewide Housing Assessment Resource Project (SHARP)** is being developed by the two North Dakota Multi-Regional CHDOs – Eastern Dakota Housing Alliance (EDHA) and Affordable Housing Developers, Inc. (AHDI), with assistance from Dr. Richard Rathge at the State Data Center. It is intended as an information tool for North Dakota. It is being developed in two phases: building a database of primary and secondary data related to housing and community development, and then making it accessible through a web site.

With financial assistance from the North Dakota Community Action Association, phase one of the SHARP strategy has been implemented and the SHARP web site is up and running. Through this web site, a user can run a standard profile or customize a profile for any city, county or planning region in the state of North Dakota. The information included in the database is the most recent information from the State Data Center.

In coordination with the Leadership Initiative for Community Strategic Planning committee, EDHA and AHDI are working to ensure that the information communities need for their planning process can be included in the data profiles. They also anticipate that primary data gathered for the planning process can be added to the database to provide a more accurate "snap shot" of communities.

The developers are requesting your assistance as the site is expanded. Visit the **SHARP** web site at <http://www.sdc.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/house/>