

REQUEST FOR IDEAS

The Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association (NNECAPA) is pleased to host its 2021 Conference from Wednesday October 13th thru Friday October 15th in downtown Burlington, Vermont at the Hilton. The theme for this year's conference is:

NNECAPA 2021: Virtual | Reality *Envisioning a New Normal*

"Virtual Reality is a simulated experience that can be similar to or completely different from the real world." - Wikipedia

While VR is often about tech, this year's theme is more about how we see the world and our communities: in reality, as we imagine them, and ultimately in how the two views intersect.

Events of the past several months have shone a bright light on many complex challenges that have persisted in our communities but have largely gone unrecognized or unresolved. At this year's Conference let us explore the ideas and events that have guided and challenged our perceptions of what is both real and possible and consider how we can respond to post-pandemic opportunities while shaping a better future than we could have imagined before.

The Conference Committee is seeking your ideas for presentations that will provide our conference attendees with an **inspirational, interactive, and informative program!** We hope to benefit from a real, face-to-face gathering this fall in Burlington, and reflect on the gains and losses from our extended period of virtual work.

We are looking for ideas for a range of conference session types covering the following issues:

- How has life during the COVID-19 pandemic affected us and what new normal will emerge? Let us explore some of the trends that we have seen over the past year related to land use, demographics, tourism, economy, equity and more, and explore what may be lasting vs. fleeting.
- How can we overcome often entrenched and sometimes hidden barriers to achieving meaningful equity and social justice across the entire community?
- How do we communicate ideas and inspire change; collect, use, and share data; and consume information, especially when confronted with widespread misinformation and entrenched perceptions?
- What new (or not so new) ways have we learned to engage the public as a result of COVID, including access to and meaningful forms of engagement?

Submissions can cover any and all planning issues that are relevant to the range of New England communities, from urban to rural. We highly encourage collaboration--including other communities from across our region with similar challenges, opportunities, and solutions.

The Committee is soliciting session ideas in a way that allows you to let us know what you have to share with conference-goers, as well what you would like to gain from the conference. Feel free to share general thoughts on session ideas with the Conference Committee without requiring a fully formed proposal.

Session Formats

We look forward to offering conference attendees a highly engaging conference experience. In particular, we strongly encourage session proposals and formats that: share and prioritize lessons learned, inspire attendees with a new way of thinking about or doing the work of planning, are solutions-based and offer meaningful take-aways,

and engage attendees in brainstorming and problem-solving. The Committee is seeking a diverse mix of session types and lengths for our program. Session formats may be in any of the following forms:

- Presentation with Q&A
- Panel Discussion
- On-site or Mobile Workshop (mini, ½ day, or full day)
- Rapid, Multi-part presentation (i.e. pecha kucha, “shorts”)
- Peer-to-peer Discussion
- “Deep Dive”
- Other

Submit your Pitches!

Send your ideas to the Conference Committee by **April 23, 2021** using the link below. Remember, these do not have to be fully formed session proposals (but they can be!). The Conference Committee will review the ideas and develop a program that best reflects the conference theme and incorporates feedback from previous conference surveys.

<https://forms.gle/QjWXtKVq44n8B2c98>

Speaker Information & Other Info

Once a general program has been established, the Conference Committee may reach out to those who have identified themselves as speakers for additional information or a preview of the presentation to ensure it fits with the conference theme. Final presentation materials will be due in digital format to the Conference Committee by Friday, October 8 at 12:00pm. This will help ensure that we can troubleshoot any IT needs and manage smooth transitions between sessions. By submitting a session proposal, you are acknowledging this deadline.

Due to the limited budget for the conference, we are unable to offer complimentary registration or hotel rooms for session speakers. Speakers who are not NNECAPA members will be eligible for registration at the early-bird member rate for the days they attend the conference. By submitting a session proposal, you are acknowledging this policy and understand that you will be responsible for covering the cost of your attendance if you are selected to present.

Please submit questions about this Request for submissions or general conference inquiries to Nancy Kilbride, NNECAPA Administrator at eventsyourway@comcast.net

Thank you in advance for sharing your ideas and contributing to the success of the Conference!
NNECAPA 2021 Host Committee