

Information for the AICP Comprehensive Planning Examination

This bulletin contains valuable information regarding the AICP examination. Read it and all forms and communications sent to you carefully before addressing questions to Prometric and AICP.



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

BULLETIN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION.....	4
American Planning Association.....	4
Prometric	4
AICP Certified Planners	4
AICP COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING EXAMINATION.....	5
APPLICATION PROCESS	6
Application Process Overview	6
Application/Exam Fees	7
Early-Bird Application Window.....	7
Application Lifespan (Returning Applicants)	7
Incomplete Applications	8
Disapproved Applications	8
Candidates Outside of the United States and Canada	9
Special Testing Arrangements	9
Additional Application Information	9
VERIFICATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION	10
Employment Verification Letters.....	10
Employment Verification Letters for Principals and Consultants.....	11
Education Verifications	11
SCHEDULING TEST APPOINTMENTS.....	12
Test Center Locations	12
Where to Take the Examination	12
Scheduling Your Examination Appointment.....	12
Additional Scheduling Information.....	13
TRANSFERS, CANCELLATIONS, REFUNDS AND APPOINTMENT CHANGES.....	14
Changes to Your Test Appointment.....	14
Transfers to Next Exam Window	14
Cancellations and Refunds.....	14
Late Cancellations or Missed Appointments	15
If You Never Schedule an Appointment	15
TAKING THE AICP EXAMINATION	16
Identification Requirements	16
Acceptable Differences in ID.....	16
Exam Day.....	17
Testing Procedures	17
Computer-based Examination Tutorial.....	17
Reporting Test Center Irregularities	18

Some Notes on Computer-based Testing	18
Taking the Examination	18
Exit Survey.....	18
Candidate Misconduct	18
SCORING THE EXAMINATION.....	19
Score Validity Review.....	19
Score Reports	19
Diagnostic Scores	19
Equating	19
Scaling	19
Reliability.....	19
Standard Error of Measurement	20
If You Have a Complaint.....	20
If You Retake the Examination.....	20
AICP CERTIFICATION EXAM OUTLINE.....	21
AICP EXAMINATION ILLUSTRATIVE QUESTIONS	22

GENERAL INFORMATION

American Planning Association

The American Planning Association (APA) brings together thousands of people—practicing planners, citizens, elected officials—dedicated to making great communities happen. APA is a nonprofit public interest and education organization committed to urban, suburban, regional, and rural planning. APA’s professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), provides leadership in professional development, ethics, and the standards of planning practice.

American Planning Association
American Institute of Certified Planners
205 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1200
Chicago, IL 60601
p. 312-431-9100
f. 312-786-6700
aicpexam@planning.org
www.planning.org

Prometric

APA works with Prometric to administer the Comprehensive Planning Examination. Prometric is the recognized global leader in testing and assessment services, providing computer-based, Internet, and paper-and-pencil testing solutions. It offers a fully integrated testing system that includes test development, test delivery, and data management capabilities. On behalf of more than 600 current clients in the academic, professional, government, corporate, and information technology markets, Prometric develops and delivers assessments through a global network of testing centers in 131 countries, as well as direct to candidates via the web.

Prometric
AICP Program
2000 Lenox Pike Corporate Center
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648
800-853-6769
www.prometric.com/aicp

AICP Certified Planners

AICP Certified planners are members of APA’s professional institute, AICP. They have demonstrated a commitment to high standards of professional practice and a mastery of theories and tools of planning. To become certified, an APA member must meet requirements for education and experience, pass the AICP Comprehensive Planning Examination, and pledge to uphold ethical standards and engage in ongoing professional development. The AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct helps certified planners uphold those ethical standards. AICP’s Certification Maintenance program helps them engage in ongoing professional development. Under the Certification Maintenance program, certified planners engage in 32 hours of professional development every two years.

Details about the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct are at www.planning.org/aicp.
Details about the Certification Maintenance program are at www.planning.org/cm.

AICP COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING EXAMINATION

The AICP Comprehensive Planning Examination tests the knowledge and skills of candidates eligible for membership in AICP. The examination has been developed by committees of experts in the field of planning with the help of Prometric test specialists. An examination committee oversees the program to ensure its continuing professional relevance.

The examination is administered in a computer-based format at more than 300 Prometric test centers in the United States and Canada and in a paper-based format at numerous locations internationally. The examination is given during two test windows in May and November. The test deals with basic knowledge areas and the skills of planners. The general content areas of the examination are outlined later in this bulletin. The number of questions from each area of knowledge is distributed randomly throughout the examination.

The examination is made up of 170 multiple choice questions, of which 150 are scored and 20 are sample questions being considered for future examinations and therefore not scored. The exam is timed and candidates are given 3 ½ hours to complete the examination.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application Process Overview

1. Bring Your APA Membership Up-to-Date

All AICP applicants must be current members of the American Planning Association. Please make sure that your APA and Chapter dues are up-to-date before you start your application.

2. Review the Requirements for AICP Membership

Applicants must be approved for AICP membership before they will be permitted to take the AICP examination. All AICP applicants must meet APA's [eligibility requirements](http://www.planning.org/certification/eligible.htm) for AICP membership before submitting an application for the AICP examination (www.planning.org/certification/eligible.htm).

3. Submit the Online Application and Pay Fees

Applications can only be submitted for the upcoming exam window. All applicants must complete and submit the online application and exam fee by the application deadline posted at www.planning.org/certification. You are strongly encouraged to apply early because applications submitted on or near the deadline may take longer to process due to high volume.

4. Upload Verification Documents

Applicants for the AICP examination must submit verifications for each job and degree listed in the online application. Verifications may be uploaded in PDF format through the [Application Status](#) page. All verifications *should* be uploaded by the day that you submit the online application, but *must* be uploaded no later than the Final Application Deadline. Your goal should be to make sure that all of your verification documents are received within 1 week of application submission so that APA can begin the review of your application within 2 weeks of application submission.

Please be sure to review the requirements for acceptable forms of employment and education and review all of your verification documents for accuracy prior to uploading them through the Application Status page. Remember that AICP will not be able to begin the review of your application until acceptable verifications have been received. Applicants who wait until the end of the application window to apply or submit verifications may not have an opportunity to correct issues should they arise. (See [Verifications of Employment and Education](#) for full details.)

5. Make Sure Your Application is Complete

Applicants for the AICP examination must use the [Application Status](#) page to track which verification documents have been received by APA (www.planning.org/certification/statuscheck/). Your Application Status page will reflect that a verification document has been received immediately after uploading. Please note that the initial posting is only to let you know that a particular document has been received. Updates to your Application Status page will be made as your verification documents are reviewed for validity (see [Incomplete Applications](#) for more details).

Please continue to monitor the Application Status page frequently until you receive the final decision on your application. Watch for messages indicating a problem with any of your verification documents. APA will use the Application Status page to notify you of any problems with your verifications discovered during the review of your application. This is extremely important because in most cases you will not receive direct notification regarding issues with your verification documents. Applicants who apply early may have time to submit corrected verifications, but those who apply later in the application window may not have the same opportunity.

6. Wait for an Approval E-mail

APA will begin reviewing your application to determine if you are eligible for AICP membership once your online application and all of your verifications are received. Normal processing and review time is approximately 8-10 weeks; however, this is a rough estimate and some applications will take longer to review than others. If you apply during the Early-Bird Application Window and all of your verifications are submitted within the specified timeframe, you will be notified of application approval or denial by the Early-Bird Notification Deadline (see [Early-Bird Application Window](#) for more details). All other applicants will be notified of application approval or denial by the Final Notification Deadline (relevant deadlines are posted at www.planning.org/certification as they are set). Please note that applications submitted on or near the application deadline may take longer to process and review. Late or invalid verifications can also cause a delay in review and notification, or may result in an incomplete application for the exam cycle.

Once your application is reviewed, your application status will be updated on your Application Status page and you will receive an e-mail notifying you of your application approval or a letter notifying you of application denial.

7. Schedule with Prometric

Approved applicants will receive an Authorization to Test (ATT) via e-mail. The ATT will include instructions for scheduling the appointment to take the examination at a Prometric testing center of the applicant’s choice (choosing a test date, start time, and test center location). Proper photo ID is required to enter the test center (see [Identification Requirements](#)).

Application/Exam Fees

(Fees subject to change. See website for up-to-date information)

	Application (New Applicants)	Exam (All Applicants)	Late Cancellation	Late Transfer	No-Show
U.S. and Canada*	\$70 (non-refundable)	\$425	\$150	\$150	Full exam fee. No refund.
International**	\$70 (non-refundable)	\$530*** (non-refundable)	Full exam fee. No refund.	Full exam fee. No refund.	Full exam fee. No refund.

*Computer-based

**Pen-and-paper only

***\$425 paid at application submission, \$105 invoiced later

Early-Bird Application Window

The Early-Bird Application Window is designed to encourage applicant’s for the AICP exam to apply early in the application window. Applicants who submit their online application by the Early-Bird Application Deadline and whose verifications are uploaded the same day as application submission or by the Early-Bird Application Deadline will be considered Early-Bird applicants. Early-Bird applicants receive the benefit of early notification of application approval or denial by the Early-Bird Notification Deadline (relevant deadlines are posted at www.planning.org/certification as they are set). Early-Bird applicants who do not receive approval or denial notification by this date will be contacted to inform them that their application requires additional review. Applicants in this situation will be given first priority in the review queue and will receive their approval or denial notice shortly thereafter. Early notification allows approved applicants more time to study and prepare for the exam. It also allows approved applicants to participate in chapter sponsored exam preparation courses and study sessions—events that often occur several months before the start of the exam window.

NOTE: Applicants who submit their application before the Early-Bird Application Deadline but do not submit all verification materials in time to be reviewed with the other Early-Bird applicants will be treated as regular applicants.

NOTE: Applicants who submit their application before the Early-Bird Application Deadline but submit invalid employment or education verifications will be disqualified as Early-Bird applicants and treated as regular applicants.

Application Lifespan (Returning Applicants)

The AICP examination is given during two exam windows of 14 days each in May and November. Approved applications have a lifespan of two years, the equivalent of four consecutive exam windows. During the three subsequent exam windows you are considered a returning applicant and you do not need to reapply. Instead, you will need to review the application we have on file for you, use the online application to register your intent to take the examination, and pay the exam fee before the application deadline.

After an application expires (after four exam windows or two years) you must reapply even if you never took the examination. This includes submitting a new application, resending employment and education verifications, and waiting for application review and approval.

Incomplete Applications

If you receive notice that your application is incomplete and your application status changes from Pending to Incomplete on the Application Status page, this is the final decision for the exam cycle. Candidates whose applications are incomplete will receive a refund of their exam fee (less the \$70 non-refundable application fee) and can reapply for the next exam cycle.

If you receive notice that your application is incomplete, please review your Application Status page to determine why your application is incomplete (i.e. problems with verifications received or missing verifications). In most cases there will be a message that will give an indication of what is wrong with a particular verification document (not on letterhead, no job description, no dates of employment, not an official transcript, un-notarized diploma, etc.) You can upload a new or revised employment or education verification that contains the missing information. However, please be aware that submitting new or revised verifications after your application has been marked incomplete will not overturn the decision. Additional verification submitted after your application has been marked incomplete will be kept on file for the next exam window should you choose to reapply. Please note that Early-Bird applicants may have the opportunity to submit corrected verifications, but applicants who apply later in the application window may not be afforded the same opportunity.

If it is unclear what is wrong with your verifications or why your application is incomplete, please contact AICP staff for assistance at aicpexam@planning.org or 312-431-9100.

Disapproved Applications

Disapproved applicants will receive notification via letter. The letter will include a message to address the specific reasons behind the denial decision. If you receive notice that your application has been denied, that is the final decision for the current exam cycle, and you will receive a refund of your exam fee (minus the \$70 non-refundable application fee). Depending on your situation, you may need to wait to gain more professional planning experience, or simply reapply with a new application containing more focused statements that better describe how your work experience meets the professional planning experience criteria required of the application. Your application will remain in our files, so if you choose to reapply, the online form will be pre-populated with your previous application information.

Disapproved applicants also have the right to appeal the denial decision. Appeals can take several months to process and therefore are not processed for the same exam window in which you applied. Appeals will be considered in cases where the denial reasons cited cannot be corrected by writing more focused statements that better describe how your work experience meets the professional planning experience criteria. If you wish to appeal, please write a letter to address the denial reasons cited in your denial letter and e-mail it to aicpexam@planning.org by the deadline specified in your denial letter. Please include any supplemental information to address the denial reasons cited in the letter.

Candidates Outside of the United States and Canada

The computer-based format of the examination is currently offered only in the United States and Canada. The examination will be administered in pencil-and-paper format to candidates outside of the United States and Canada during the same May and November testing windows. The examination can be administered at Prometric international sites or prearranged sites such as embassies or universities. Prometric may require 60-90 days notice to make arrangements for an international exam, so candidates who wish to take the examination outside the United States and Canada should *apply early* and contact AICP staff as soon as they receive notice of application approval:

American Planning Association
205 N. Michigan Ave.
Suite 1200
Chicago, IL 60601
Attn: AICP Exam

312-431-9100
aicpexam@planning.org

Please note that candidates who request international testing must pay a non-refundable \$105 fee in addition to the standard \$425 exam fee. (The additional fee will be collected as arrangements for international testing are made). Candidates who request an international exam are not eligible for a refund of their exam fee and cannot transfer to another exam window after the request for international testing is made.

Special Testing Arrangements

Candidates with documented visual, physical, hearing, or learning disabilities that would prevent them from taking an examination under standard conditions may request special testing accommodations and arrangements.

Prometric requires written documentation of the disability from the candidate's doctor or another qualified medical professional. This written documentation should specify the accommodations needed by the applicant and must accompany the application form when it is submitted to AICP. Candidates requesting special testing accommodations should contact APA at 312-431-9100 prior to application to arrange documentation submittal. There is no extra fee for making these arrangements.

In considering a request from an applicant for special accommodations, APA and Prometric are guided by a sense of fairness. Special accommodations are granted to give a candidate the opportunity to be tested in an equivalent manner with other candidates, but not to provide an advantage over other candidates.

Additional Application Information

Complete the examination application online at the APA website at www.planning.org/certification. Before you begin the application process, please note the following:

1. Apply as early as possible before the scheduled deadline date. If you did not meet the deadline date for the upcoming exam window, you may apply for the next exam window. For more information please visit www.planning.org/certification.
2. It is very important that you complete the application form carefully and accurately. The contact information in your application should match the information in your APA record. AICP and Prometric will use the information you provide on this form to deliver your Authorization to Test (ATT) and to inform you of your test results. Also, please make sure the name on your application matches the photo identification you will present at the test center.
3. By submitting the online application, you are authorizing Prometric to release your scores to APA.

VERIFICATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

Applicants for the AICP examination must submit verifications for each job and degree listed in the online application. Applicants are **solely** responsible for ensuring that acceptable verifications are received by APA. Unverified experience and degrees will not be considered.

Applicants may upload verification documents in PDF format through their [Application Status](#) page only after submitting the online application. All verifications *should* be uploaded by the date that the online application is submitted, but *must* be uploaded no later than the Final Application Deadline. Your goal should be to make sure that all of your verification documents are received by APA within 1 week of application submission so that APA can begin the review of your application within 2 weeks of application submission.

NOTE: Any verification uploaded through the Application Status page must be a PDF of the original *printed* document. APA will **not** accept verifications submitted to APA via post mail, e-mail or fax (unless special permission is given by APA staff).

IMPORTANT: Review all verification documents for accuracy prior to submission. Verifications that contain inaccurate information or that do not meet requirements may cause a delay in application review or an incomplete application for the exam cycle.

Employment Verification Letters

Employment verification letters are used to verify the professional planning experience claimed by the applicant in the online application. The signed letter, on department/company letterhead, should come from either an immediate supervisor, principal of the firm, or human resources department.

Each letter must include:

- Your name,
- Your APA ID number (provided by you to the employer)
- Your position/title,
- Your dates of employment (e.g. February 2000 through November 2005) and
- A brief summary of your duties as a professional planner.
- The name, title, and phone number of the letter writer should also be noted.

A sample employment verification letter is available online at: www.planning.org/certification/pdf/samplejobverification.pdf

Additional Requirements:

Current Employment: If the letter is verifying current employment, the letter **must be dated**. Employment verification letters can only be used to verify experience up through the day they were written.

Part-time Employment: The dates of part-time employment must be specified in your verification letter (e.g. full-time February 2000 through November 2005 and part-time December 2005 through March 2006). Unless otherwise specified in the employment verification letter, part-time experience is assumed to be 50% of full-time experience.

Multiple Positions: Letters verifying multiple positions at the same company must address each position separately (i.e. position/title, dates of employment, and summary of duties).

Intern Experience: Verifications for intern experience must confirm that the experience was not completed for academic credit and was not part of coursework for a grade (i.e. that the experience was separate from your education). This includes any work completed while working toward a degree, even if your actual title was not "intern."

Letter Author: All employment verifications must come from the employer. If your former immediate supervisor is no longer employed with the organization, the verification letter must be written either by human resources or the principal of the firm. Employment verification letters written by a former immediate supervisor now working for another organization will not be accepted.

Defunct Employer: If your former employer has gone out of business or no longer exists, you will still be required to provide acceptable verification for the experience. Applicants in this situation should contact AICP staff for assistance. Unverified experience will not be considered.

Employment Verification Letters for Principals and Consultants

Some applicants for the AICP exam who work as independent consultants or as principals of their own small firms may not have an employer or human resources department to write an employment verification letter. Applicants in this situation will need to provide a letter that contains the information required in the standard employment verification letter, as well as a project-client list that includes:

- Your role in each project,
- The dates that you were involved in each project, and
- Client contact information for each project (minimum of contact individual and phone number).*

This option is only for individuals who do not have an employer to verify their experience. Principals of large firms who have a human resources department to verify employment should submit the standard employment verification letter.

**APA will not use the client contact information for any other purpose than to confirm your work experience.*

Education Verifications

Education verifications are used to confirm that the applicant has received their degree, when the degree was conferred, and if the degree was in Planning. The degree must already be conferred at the time you submit the online application (i.e. have your diploma in hand), and reviewers will only consider degrees for which APA has received acceptable verifications. APA will accept education verifications in one of the following three forms:

- Official transcript
- Notarized photocopy of diploma *
- Letter from school dean, registrar, or program director confirming that degree was conferred **

** The Notary Public is confirming the copy is a true replica of the original diploma.*

*** The letter must be printed on school/university letterhead and include the letter writer's title and contact information.*

Note on Planning Degrees: Your verification must confirm that your degree is in Planning (if applicable). Otherwise, you will be subject to the eligibility requirements for applicants with non-planning degrees.

SCHEDULING TEST APPOINTMENTS

Test Center Locations

All U.S. and Canadian candidates may schedule, reschedule and cancel appointments online at www.prometric.com/aicp. Please note that center locations change infrequently. The website lists current test center locations, contact information for each site, and directions.

Where to Take the Examination

Test centers are located throughout the United States and Canada, and internationally. Review the test center list online at www.prometric.com/aicp and select the most convenient city, regardless of whether it is in the state where you live. Prometric will make every effort to assign you to the center of your choice. There may be times, however, when more examinees apply for one center than can be accommodated. Examination candidates who attempt to schedule at a test center already at capacity will have the opportunity to select another date within the exam window or a test center as near as possible to the requested location.

Scheduling Your Examination Appointment

You must have the information contained in the Authorization to Test (ATT) e-mail and follow its instructions in order to schedule an appointment to take the examination. Candidates must take the examination during the testing window indicated on the ATT.

Schedule your appointment in one of the following ways:

- First, attempt to schedule your appointment on Prometric's website at www.prometric.com/aicp. This site also includes directions to the test centers.
- If you are unable to schedule your appointment online, call either Prometric's Candidate Service Call Center (CSCC) at 800-796-9853 or the Prometric test center of your choice.

NOTE: Most candidates should schedule their exam appointment online at www.prometric.com/aicp. Prometric's online scheduling system is the most accurate, efficient, and effective way to ensure a candidate gets his or her first choice for an exam appointment. However, candidates who need to make special testing arrangements under ADA rule should first contact AICP staff to make sure the special accommodations request has been communicated to Prometric, and then schedule via telephone with Prometric's CSCC at 800-967-1139. International exam candidates will need to work with Prometric to make arrangements for an international testing. AICP staff will help facilitate this process.

Additionally:

- You must make your appointment at least 48 hours before the test window.
- The AICP examination is not the only examination administered at the Prometric testing centers, and seats fill quickly.
- Make sure you have your ATT on hand when you make your appointment because you will be asked to supply your candidate identification number.
- If you lose your ATT, contact APA at 312-431-9100 to request a duplicate authorization.
- Individual test center hours of operation typically range from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Saturday hours vary by test center.
- If your first test center choice is unavailable, you will be offered an alternative as close as possible to your first choice.
- Once your examination has been scheduled, you will receive a confirmation number via e-mail. You will not receive a confirmation of your appointment by regular mail. Do not lose this number as you will need it if you need to make any changes to your appointment.
- If you require directions to the Prometric testing center, you can connect to the Prometric automated direction line, 800-796-9853, or visit Prometric's website at www.prometric.com for door-to-door directions.

Additional Scheduling Information

1. Authorization to Test. AICP and Prometric will e-mail an approved candidate an Authorization to Test (ATT) several weeks after the date your application is approved. The ATT will include a list of instructions on locating and scheduling your appointment. ATTs for a particular testing window are not released until the previous window has passed and all administrative reporting has been completed. If you do not receive your ATT two weeks before the examination, please contact AICP staff via e-mail at aicpexam@planning.org.
2. Review your ATT carefully. Be certain all information is correct. This will facilitate rapid and efficient processing at your test appointment. Contact APA at 312-431-9100 or e-mail aicpexam@planning.org if you need a correction.
3. Prometric will charge APA for the number of candidates who schedule an appointment to test. If after scheduling an appointment, you do not take the examination during the assigned testing window, you will be required to pay the exam fee again in order to be rescheduled for the next testing window (unless you contact AICP to cancel or transfer prior to the applicable deadlines).
4. Please note that if you never schedule an appointment to test, you will still be required to contact APA to request a transfer or cancel your registration by the applicable deadlines. There may be fees to transfer or cancel depending on how far in advance you submit your request.

TRANSFERS, CANCELLATIONS, REFUNDS AND APPOINTMENT CHANGES

Candidates who register to take the AICP examination and later decide not to test during that exam window must contact AICP to either cancel their exam registration for a refund or to transfer to the next exam window even if the candidate never schedules a testing appointment at Prometric.

Changes to Your Test Appointment

In order to change an appointment within the same exam window, you must cancel your scheduled appointment time and reschedule your appointment with Prometric. Log onto www.prometric.com/aicp or contact the center directly by noon at least two full business days prior to your scheduled appointment. You may reschedule your appointment within the same exam window or change your test location. Leaving a message on an answering machine is NOT an acceptable method of canceling or rescheduling your appointment to test.

Transfers to Next Exam Window

Candidates may transfer their current exam registration and fee to the next exam window only, and only within the two-year lifespan of an approved application. Back-to-back transfers are not allowed. Only written transfer requests will be considered. Candidates should submit a transfer request to AICP before the start of the exam window, but must submit a transfer request to AICP before the application deadline for the next exam window at the latest (this is not recommended as staff may not have sufficient time to process your request before the deadline). Transfer requests should include the candidate's name and APA ID number, and must be sent to aicpexam@planning.org, the APA Chicago office, or faxed to 312-786-6700. E-mail is preferred.

Transfer Deadline: The transfer deadline for the upcoming exam window is posted at www.planning.org/certification. There is a \$150 late transfer fee for transfer requests received after the deadline.

IMPORTANT: Candidates who wish to transfer must contact Prometric to cancel their testing appointment prior to submitting a transfer request to AICP (if an appointment has already been scheduled). AICP staff will not be able to accept a transfer request or set-up the transfer if the candidate still has a testing appointment scheduled. Any appointment made at Prometric must be cancelled by the candidate by noon at least two (2) full business days prior to the scheduled appointment; otherwise, the candidate will be considered a "no-show" and they will forfeit their exam fee. Any "no-show" candidate will not be allowed to transfer to the next exam window, and must register their intent to sit for a future examination and repay the exam fee before the relevant application deadline.

NOTE: Only transfers to the next exam window will be processed. Further transfer requests, and transfers outside the two-year lifespan of an application will be processed as refunds.

Cancellations and Refunds

Candidates should submit all cancellation/refund requests to AICP before the start of the exam window, but must submit all cancellation/refund requests to AICP before the application deadline for the next exam window (at the latest). Only written cancellation requests will be considered. Candidates who submit a cancellation request to AICP by the cancellation deadline will receive a full refund of their exam fee, minus the \$70 application fee. Candidates who submit a cancellation request after the cancellation deadline will receive a refund of their exam fee, minus the \$150 late cancellation fee and the \$70 application fee. Cancellation requests should include the candidate's name and APA ID number, and must be sent to aicpexam@planning.org, the APA Chicago office, or faxed to 312-786-6700. E-mail is preferred.

Cancellation Deadline: The cancellation deadline for the upcoming exam window is posted at www.planning.org/certification. There is a \$150 late cancellation fee will for refunds requests received after the deadline. The fee is deducted from your refund.

IMPORTANT: Candidates who wish to cancel must contact Prometric to cancel their testing appointment prior to submitting a cancellation request to AICP (if an appointment has already been scheduled). AICP staff will not be able to accept a cancellation request or process a refund if the candidate still has a testing appointment scheduled. Any appointment made at Prometric must be cancelled by the candidate by noon at least two (2) full business days prior to the scheduled appointment; otherwise, the candidate will be considered a "no-show" and they will forfeit their exam fee. If it is too late for a candidate to cancel a test appointment at Prometric, it is also too late to cancel the candidate's exam registration and request a refund.

Late Cancellations or Missed Appointments

You will be considered a “no-show” candidate and will forfeit all registration fees if:

- You miss your appointment.
- You cancel with Prometric less than two (2) business days prior to the scheduled appointment.
- You arrive 15 minutes past your scheduled appointment.

In the cases listed above, you will not be allowed to reschedule your examination within the current exam window, and you must remit another full exam fee for a future exam window.

If You Never Schedule an Appointment

If you never schedule an appointment to test, you will still be required to contact AICP to request a transfer or cancel your registration by the applicable deadlines. There may be fees to transfer or cancel depending on how far in advance you submit your request. Your exam fees will not carry over between exam windows if you do not request a transfer. The \$150 cancellation fee will still be deducted for refunds requested after the cancellation deadline, even if a test appointment was never scheduled.

TAKING THE AICP EXAMINATION

Identification Requirements

To be admitted to the examination, you must have two forms of identification bearing your name and your signature. One or more must be a primary form of identification and must include a recent photo.

- Primary forms of identification include: a valid passport, valid driver’s license, or a photo-bearing employee ID card.
- Secondary forms of identification include: military ID card, citizenship card, valid credit card with signature, Social Security Card, or bank automated teller card.
- You may not use a draft classification card or student identification.

Keep both forms of identification with you at all times. If you leave the testing room for any reason, you will be required to show the Test Center Administrator (TCA) your identification to be readmitted to the room. If you do not bring the appropriate identification to the test center, you will not be able to test within that testing window. Please note that your name as it appears on your identification must match the name on the Authorization to Test. Therefore, if any information on your ATT is incorrect, contact AICP staff at aicpexam@planning.org or call 312-431-9100 **prior to making your appointment to test.**

Acceptable Differences in ID

Each candidate must bring two forms of ID on exam day, both containing signatures, one with a photo. If there is a discrepancy in a candidate’s name as it appears on the photo identification and the ATT form, please at least refer to the examples of acceptable name variations listed below. If the name variation is listed, the candidate may call and make an appointment to test. If the name variation is not listed in the examples of acceptable name variations shown below, the candidate must contact APA via e-mail at aicpexam@planning.org before making an appointment to test. AICP staff will update the candidate’s record and forward the updated record to Prometric. A new ATT form will be mailed or faxed to the candidate or the candidate will be notified once the appropriate changes have been made. The candidate must wait 48 hours before making an appointment in order for the updated file to reach the Prometric test centers.

Allowable Name Discrepancies	Examples
A single-letter discrepancy exists in examinee’s name.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single letter difference: Johnson vs. Johmson • Single letter transposition: Alexander vs. Alexandre • Single letter omission: Schultz vs. Shultz • Single letter addition: Miller vs. Mialler or Miler
One version of examinee’s name has a middle initial or middle name while other does not.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John E. Smith vs. John Smith • Mary R. Abernathy vs. Mary Rose Abernathy
First name is provided formally on one document, but a typical variation is used on another document.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Jones vs. Mike Jones
Incorrect letters are used in a name on one document but correct letters are used on another document.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diller vs. Ditter • Dutton vs. Ditton
Maiden name is used as a middle name on one document, while given middle name is used on another document.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Elizabeth Smith vs. Mary Jones Smith
Names are shown in LastName, FirstName format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russell, Evan vs. Evan Russell
Suffixes to name should be ignored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example: Jr., Sr., II, III
<p>If the names on examinee’s record on computer and ID differ because examinee has made a legal name change, you must present one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • marriage certificate • divorce decree • legal name change 	
<p>Important: Substitution of another name for either the first or last name or both names (e.g., Smith to Jones or Smith to Smith-Jones, or John to James) is not permitted.</p>	

Exam Day

Plan to be at the test center for four hours. Arrive early and bring proper ID. You must arrive at the test center 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment to complete the required admission process before testing begins. Late arrivals will not be admitted.

After you are admitted, the Test Center Administrator (TCA) will give you a short orientation then escort you to a work-station. You must remain in your seat during the examination, except when authorized to leave by a test center staff member. Candidates may not leave the testing room without the TCA's permission.

You will have access to a calculator on the computer. The TCA will provide you with scratch paper, which may be replaced as needed during testing. You may not remove the scratch paper from the testing room at any time. You will not be allowed to bring your own scratch paper, pencil, or calculator into the testing room.

Raise your hand if you:

- Have a problem with your computer.
- Need more scratch paper.
- Need to take a break (no extra time will be given to take the examination).
- Need the TCA for any reason.

When you have finished with the examination and a post-examination survey, the TCA will collect all your scratch paper.

Testing Procedures

To ensure that all candidates take the examination under comparable conditions and achieve fair and accurate results, a standardized testing environment will be maintained.

The following regulations and procedures will be observed at every test center:

- You must follow the instructions given by the TCA.
- You will be provided a multi-functioning calculator. It will be a basic, non-programmable, non-printing, four function calculator with percent and square root buttons. You must use this calculator during the examination. No other calculator will be allowed in the testing room.
- Do not bring books or other reference material into the testing room. The TCA will not permit anyone found possessing such materials to continue the examination.
- You will be provided a secured locker to store personal possessions and materials not allowed in the testing room. You may reclaim these items when you leave the test center.
- Visitors are not permitted at the test center.
- You may not bring scratch paper into the testing room. The TCA will give you scratch paper.
- If you wish to leave the room during the examination, you must secure the TCA's permission.
- You will not be permitted to continue the examination beyond the 3 ½ hour time limit. An on-screen clock will count down your time remaining.

Computer-based Examination Tutorial

A brief tutorial precedes the examination. The tutorial is designed to familiarize you with the computer and the testing software. You will have up to 15 minutes to complete the tutorial. This is in addition to the 3 ½ hours allotted to take the examination. The tutorial will teach you how to select answers, move from one question to the next, and use testing features such as "Item Review," as well as how to use the mouse and keyboard. By familiarizing you with the operation of the computer, the tutorial will make it easier for you to concentrate on completing the examination. You do not need to be concerned with the answers you select during the tutorial; it is intended for practice only and there is no penalty for incorrect answers. Once you exit from the tutorial, you may not return to it. We strongly encourage you to take the tutorial.

As a convenience, APA offers a sample tutorial on our website at www.planning.org/certification/examprep. The online sample tutorial is available to candidates at any time.

Reporting Test Center Irregularities

While at the test center, should you experience a delay in taking your examination or encounter any technical problems, please make sure that this irregularity is documented by the TCA. The TCA will file a written report with Prometric and APA.

Some Notes on Computer-based Testing

You do not need extensive computer experience to take the examination. On-site assistance includes:

- An online tutorial to guide you through how to use the computer.
- Computer workstations equipped with a mouse, standard keyboards, and 17-inch monitors for optimum viewing.
- Fully trained Test Center Administrators (TCAs) available during your examination for technical assistance. TCAs will not assist with examination content.

Among the benefits of computer-based testing are:

- Ability to mark questions for later review.
- Ability to track and display the time remaining on the examination.

Taking the Examination

Your scheduled appointment time is four hours. You will have 3 ½ hours to answer 170 examination questions. 150 of the questions will be scored; 20 are questions being considered for future examinations that will not be scored. This is the standard format for computer-based testing. Scored and un-scored questions and content areas are distributed randomly throughout the examination.

You will have 15 minutes prior to the exam for an online tutorial and 15 minutes after the exam to answer a brief computer-administered exit survey at the end of the examination.

During the examination, you will have the opportunity to review all questions. You may change answers or mark or skip questions and then go back to complete your answers. This system allows you to use your time efficiently. Answer the questions you are sure of first, leaving your remaining time for the more difficult questions.

Should your time expire while taking the examination, all answers, regardless of how they are marked, will be calculated into your score. Once your allotted time has expired or you exit the examination, you cannot see or review the questions again.

Exit Survey

At the conclusion of the examination, you will be asked to complete a brief on-screen survey, which will provide APA and Prometric with an evaluation of your testing experience. All comments will be reviewed after the close of the testing window and will remain confidential.

Candidate Misconduct

The following are examples of behaviors that are considered to be misconduct and will not be tolerated:

- Giving or receiving assistance of any kind.
- Using any unauthorized references.
- Attempting to take the examination for someone else.
- Failing to follow testing regulations or the instructions of the Test Center Administrator.
- Creating a disturbance of any kind.
- Copying, removing, or attempting to remove examination questions or scratch paper from the testing room.
- Tampering with the operation of the computer or attempting to use it for any function other than taking the examination.
- Leaving the testing room without permission.
- Using electronic communications equipment, such as cellular phones or beepers.
- Bringing in a calculator or PDA.

SCORING THE EXAMINATION

Score Validity Review

In the absence of observed misconduct, it should be noted that Prometric and APA routinely conduct post-test administrative review of the validity of the test scores. If irregularities are found as a result of these reviews, the candidate will be contacted and notified of procedures to resolve any validity issues concerning his or her score.

Score Reports

Your scores are confidential and are released to APA by Prometric. Unofficial score reports will be issued to candidates before leaving the test center. Your unofficial score report will show a total scaled score and will indicate whether you have passed or failed.

To protect candidates' privacy and to maintain the confidentiality of test results, score information for individual candidates will not be given over the telephone. If you have specific questions or concerns about your scores, you may write to APA. Requests for duplicate score reports must be made in writing. Electronic score data files will be retained by Prometric for two years. APA retains this information in perpetuity. APA will mail out official score reports about six to eight weeks after the exam window closes.

Diagnostic Scores

For diagnostic purposes, failing candidates are informed of how many questions they answered correctly (raw score) in each of the examination content areas. Do not expect diagnostic scores to average out to the total score. Raw score information is intended only to assist the candidate in preparing for reexamination by indicating the areas in which the candidate had the most difficulty. Failing candidates should review those areas in which they scored comparatively low before retaking the examination.

Equating

The computerized version of the examination pulls the 150 scored questions from a larger pool of questions, meaning that there are different versions of the examination. Equating makes statistical adjustments to test scores to compensate for differences in the relative difficulty of different versions of the examination.

Suppose you and your colleague are equal in your mathematical abilities. You both take a mathematics test. Both tests are intended to cover the same type of mathematics questions; however, the test you take is harder than the one your colleague takes. You answered 35 questions correctly on your test. Your colleague answered 40 questions correctly on his test. It would not be accurate or fair to conclude, on the basis of the test scores, that you were not as proficient in mathematics as your colleague. The difference in the scores was not due to your mathematical abilities, because our first assumption was that you and your colleague were of equal ability. The difference in your scores was due to the fact that one test was harder than the other. Equating allows us to determine that a 35 on the test that you took represents the same level of mathematical knowledge, skills, and abilities as a score of 40 on the test that your colleague took.

Scaling

Scaling allows scores to be reported on a common scale. Instead of having to remember that a 35 on the test that you took is equivalent to a 40 on the test that your friend took, we can use a common scale and report your score as a scaled score of 55. Since we know that your friend's score of 40 is equal to your score of 35, your friend's score would also be reported as a scaled score of 55.

Important note: Scaled scores are not percentage scores. They allow us to report different raw scores that represent the same kind of knowledge, skills, and abilities as the same scaled score.

The scaled scores in the AICP Comprehensive Planning Examination range from a low of 25 to a high of 75. A scaled score of 55 or greater indicates a pass. The passing score was set by the AICP examination committee using a standard established statistical procedure.

Reliability

Reliability is a concept that refers to the accuracy of test scores, such as the scaled scores derived for the AICP Comprehensive Planning Examination. All test scores are affected by sources of error to some extent; the smaller the effect, the higher the

reliability. Examples of error sources include an unclearly worded test question or even a momentary spell of boredom. Hypothetically, if you could take the same test an infinite number of times, while remaining unchanged (physically and psychologically), your scores would vary. The average of these scores would be your true score, which would be free of error. If a test were perfectly reliable (not affected by error), each time you took the test you would receive the same score and there would be no difference between your test scores and your true score. For a highly reliable test, your test scores would vary, but would all be close to your true score. The concept of reliability is expressed statistically as a reliability coefficient. Reliability coefficients range from 0 (absence of reliability) to 1 (perfect reliability).

Standard Error of Measurement

Since no measure of test performance is perfectly accurate, you might ask: “How accurate is my AICP Comprehensive Planning Examination scaled score?” This question is not directly answerable since it requires knowing what your score should be (true score). Your true score can never be known. The difference between your actual test score and your true score would be the “error of measurement” associated with this administration of the examination. Since errors of measurement vary from one test administration to another, it would be convenient to estimate how much these errors can be expected to vary. Such an estimate can be calculated without administering the examination to any examinee more than once. This estimate is called the standard error of measurement (SEM). If a test could measure basic elements of the subject matter without error, the value of the SEM associated with that test would be zero, in scaled score units. Although the SEM will invariably exceed zero, its value should be small. APA and Prometric closely monitor the SEM of each test form to ensure reasonable accuracy for the AICP Comprehensive Planning Examination.

If You Have a Complaint

If you have a complaint or wish to make a comment about test center facilities or supervision, examination content, or any other matter related to the testing program, please write to APA at:

American Planning Association
205 N. Michigan Ave.
Suite 1200
Chicago, IL 60601
Attn: AICP Exam

312-431-9100
aicpexam@planning.org

In all correspondence, be sure to give your name, address and APA ID number. If your questions or comments concern an examination you already have taken, also include the name of the examination, the date you took the examination, the location of your test center, and your examination number. APA will investigate each complaint and respond within a reasonable amount of time.

If You Retake the Examination

If you decide to take the examination again, you should be aware that, without any change in your level of knowledge, your test score may increase or decrease slightly. This slight change may be caused by something as simple as the way you feel on the day of the test or the temperature of the room in which you take the test. To increase the probability of significantly improving your test score, increase your knowledge of the subject material. You cannot retake just one part of the examination; you must retake the entire examination again and pay the full exam fee.

AICP CERTIFICATION EXAM OUTLINE

Changes Starting with the May 2008 Exam

The AICP Comprehensive Planning Examination consists of 170 multiple choice questions (20 of which are pre-test and do not count toward the final score). The items listed below under each of the major areas are intended to be representative and not inclusive of all subject matter known to the planning profession.

Candidates should note that exam questions do not precisely follow the order listed below. Questions are randomly distributed in the examination to provide an even distribution of questions with respect to degrees of difficulty relative to an individual candidate's education and experience.

The specifications are:

I. History, Theory and Law [15%]

- A. History of planning
- B. Planning law
- C. Theory of planning
- D. Patterns of human settlement

II. Plan Making and Implementation [30%]

- A. Visioning and goal setting
- B. Quantitative and qualitative research methods
- C. Collecting, organizing, analyzing, and reporting data and information
- D. Demographics and economics
- E. Natural and built environment
- F. Land use and development regulations
- G. Application of legal principles
- H. Environmental analysis
- I. Growth management techniques
- J. Budgets and financing options
- K. GIS/spatial analysis and information systems
- L. Policy analysis and decision making
- M. Development plan and project review
- N. Program evaluation
- O. Communications techniques
- P. Intergovernmental relationships
- Q. Stakeholder relationships
- R. Project and program management

III. Functional Areas of Practice [25%]

- A. Community development
- B. Comprehensive or long range planning
- C. Development regulation or administration
- D. Economic development and revitalization
- E. Economic analysis and forecasting
- F. Educational, institutional, or military facilities planning
- G. Energy policy
- H. Food system planning
- I. Growth management
- J. Hazard mitigation and disaster planning

- K. Historic preservation
- L. Housing
- M. Infrastructure
- N. Labor force or employment
- O. Land use
- P. Natural resources and the environment
- Q. Parks, open space and recreation
- R. Planning law
- S. Policy planning
- T. Public services
- U. Social and health services
- V. Transportation
- W. Urban design

IV. Spatial Areas of Practice [15%]

- A. Planning at national level
- B. Planning for multi-state or bi-state regions
- C. Planning for state
- D. Planning for sub-state region
- E. Planning at county level
- F. Planning for urban areas
- G. Planning for suburban areas
- H. Planning for small town
- I. Corridors
- J. Neighborhoods
- K. Waterfronts
- L. Historic districts or areas
- M. Downtowns

V. Public Participation and Social Justice [10%]

- A. Public involvement planning
- B. Public participation techniques
- C. Identifying, engaging, and serving underserved groups
- D. Social justice issues, literature, and practice
- E. Working with diverse communities
- F. Coalition building

VI. AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct [5%]

AICP EXAMINATION ILLUSTRATIVE QUESTIONS

The following questions illustrate the style of questions and answers in the multiple-choice examination. These questions are not in the examination and do not represent the range of content or the level of difficulty of the questions that are on the examination. They show only the different forms that questions take. You will find an answer key at the end of this section.

Directions:

Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by four suggested answers or completions.

1. Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of a flat organization?

- A. Few middle managers
- B. Program-based budgets
- C. Shared responsibility for program implementation
- D. Employees empowered to make decisions

2. In the 1930s, states started a functional classification system for highways that included all of the following EXCEPT?

- A. interstate
- B. primary
- C. secondary
- D. local

The next two questions refer to the following list of authors.

Kevin Lynch
Saul Alinsky
Ian McHarg
Richard Babcock

Select from the list of authors the one who has directly contributed to each of the following specified fields of knowledge. A selection may be used once, more than once, or not at all.

3. Analysis of the intrinsic suitability of land for urban development

- A. Kevin Lynch
- B. Saul Alinsky
- C. Ian McHarg
- D. Richard Babcock

4. Urban design and the form of the city

- A. Kevin Lynch
- B. Saul Alinsky
- C. Ian McHarg
- D. Richard Babcock

Industry	Local Employment	National Employment
X	3%	6%
Y	10%	7%
Z	11%	3%

5. Listed above are two types of employment percentages for industries X, Y, and Z in a metropolitan area. The local employment for each industry is listed as a percent of total local employment, and the national employment in each industry is listed as a percent of total national employment. Under the location quotient method, an economic planner can assign which of these industries to the export sector of the metropolitan area?

- A. X only
- B. Y only
- C. Z only
- D. Y and Z only

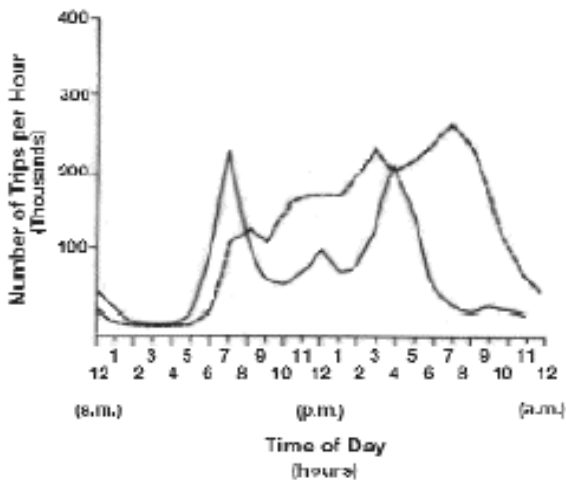
6. Ebenezer Howard is best known for the concept of self-sufficient towns with mixed economies which are called?

- A. new towns
- B. garden cities
- C. planned unit developments
- D. suburbs

7. The new town of Columbia, Maryland, has which of the following planned features?

- I. Neighborhood clusters
- II. A rail commuter system
- III. Prior land assembly
- IV. Prohibition of industry

- A. II only
- B. I and III only
- C. II and IV only
- D. I, III, and IV only



8. The two lines on the graph on page 11 best represent which of the following combinations of travel behavior in a metropolitan area of 2 million population?

- A. Transit and private automobile trips
- B. Weekday and weekend trips
- C. All work and non-work trips
- D. Office and retail-generated trips

The next two questions refer to the following information. The desirability and feasibility of a proposed shopping center are to be evaluated. The primary concerns are that conditions of the city zoning ordinance be met and that the project be a profitable venture. The developer owns a 30-acre parcel and proposes to construct a 250,000-square-foot leasable area with 1,300 on-site parking spaces. The shopping center will serve a trade area that contains 20,000 households. The average household disposable income is \$12,000. The shopping center will have a 50:50 split of square footage between convenience and shoppers' goods.

9. Which of the following would be appropriate in a shopping center of this size?

- A. A major grocery and a drug store as prime tenants
- B. Either a department or discount store as the anchor tenant
- C. Three department stores of approximately the same size
- D. A series of smaller stores rather than an anchor tenant

10. If an average of 400 square feet is needed to accommodate each parking space and associated driveways, what would be the approximate acreage of the blacktop area of the site?

- A. Less than 10 acres
- B. Between 10 and 15 acres
- C. Between 15 and 20 acres
- D. More than 20 acres

11. In preparing a physical plan for a site within an urban center, which of the following types of maps would be LEAST useful?

- A. Topographic map
- B. Utilities map
- C. USGS map
- D. Parcel map

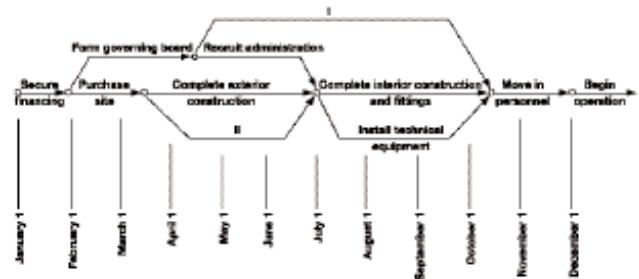
12. The location of cellular phone towers is determined by which of the following?

- A. The Federal Communications Commission
- B. State utilities commissions
- C. Local government jurisdictions
- D. Metropolitan planning organizations

13. The rational comprehensive method for decision making requires all of the following EXCEPT:

- A. clarification of values
- B. consideration of extensive data
- C. anecdotal information
- D. consideration of all relevant factors

14. The next two questions refer to the implementation schedule illustrated in the chart below.

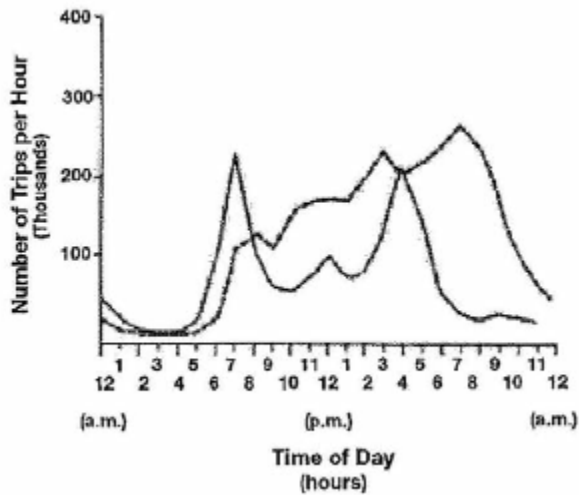


Line II on the chart above indicates the best time to?

- A. order equipment
- B. calculate annual operating costs
- C. hire operational staff
- D. publicize the project to generate public use

15. Which of the following types of buildings does the implementation schedule above most probably imply?

- A. A municipal police station
- B. A community-based health clinic
- C. A waste-disposal facility
- D. A shopping center



16. Green County, shown in the map above, contains some of the best farmland in the state. Which of the following steps should the Green County planner recommend to protect this valuable farmland from industrial or commercial development?

- A. Zone all of Green County as farmland and invite farmers to be members of the zoning board of appeals.
- B. Propose a moratorium on sewer connections for Green County.
- C. Identify priority farmland areas in Green County and modify the zoning ordinances appropriately.
- D. Promote construction of another limited access highway between Industrial City and Bay City to lower development pressures.

17. Detailed information about a community's debt would be vital for carrying out which of the following tasks?

- A. Establishing assessed values for property in the coming year
- B. Applying to HUD for Section 8 funds
- C. Presenting a venture-capital fund to area financial institutions
- D. Requesting a change in bond rating

18. Which of the following land-use models describes the pattern of axial growth along lines of least resistance?

- A. Multiple nuclei model
- B. Concentric zone model
- C. Sector model
- D. Negative exponential population density model

19. The planning director of a small city wants to get as much public input as possible on a city-wide study. Which of the following would be the LEAST effective method of stimulating citizen participation?

- A. Contacting neighborhood leaders, advising them of the study, and asking them to report neighborhood reaction
- B. Completing the study, printing the final report, and asking for citizen comments on it
- C. Preparing press releases that give the general scope of the study and asking for comments from the general public
- D. Offering to address interested neighborhood or other civic groups on the subject of the study

Answer Key:

- | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. B | 11. C | 16. C |
| 2. A | 7. B | 12. C | 17. D |
| 3. C | 8. C | 13. C | 18. C |
| 4. A | 9. B | 14. A | 19. B |
| 5. D | 10. B | 15. B | |