

Chair

Elizabeth "Libby" Tyler, FAICP

I would like to enthusiastically express my interest in serving a second term as Chair of the Planning and Women Division. I look forward to continuing to work with the women and men in the Division and throughout APA to help promote the critical interests of women, children, and families in the practice and profession of planning.

Now entering its fourth decade since being formed in 1979, the issues faced by the Planning and Women Division have certainly changed, but the core mission to support women in planning remains the same. Since taking office as Chair in April 2007, and working closely with my fellow officers and member volunteers, our Division has been able to achieve a tremendous amount. We have established and accomplished many of the goals set forth in our two-year work plan, revitalized the newsletter with the help of Editor Shannon Malik, sponsored fascinating conference sessions under the leadership of Vice Chair Vicki Taylor Lee (including the best attended of all Division-sponsored sessions at the Las Vegas Conference!), updated our website onto the APA-sponsored platform, amended our by-laws, and employed solid fiscal stewardship in the capable hands of our Treasurer Ramona Mattix. With the help of Secretary Kathleen Pagan and Past Chair Patsi Petrie, we have continued to provide members with regular communications and information sharing on topics of interest.

But much more remains to be done. As Chair, I would like to work with the executive committee and overall membership to continue to upgrade and strengthen our communications (including our newsletter, website, and e-mails), conduct a survey to determine member interests and needs, and to stabilize and grow our membership. In particular, over the next two years, I would like to work to promote a generational exchange between those of us who have been in the profession for a while and our younger female colleagues who may be facing challenges as they seek to grow and advance in their careers.

At the broader APA level, I have represented the division as a member of the APA Board's Diversity Subcommittee where I am assisting in the development of a new National Planning Award for planners of color and am working with the Illinois Chapter on a pilot application of the APA's Ambassador's program to help attract a diverse young audience to the profession. As a member of the Divisions Council Task Force on Divisions' Future, I worked hard to advocate for the interests of the population based divisions and was able to help convince the Council of the importance of protecting the sustenance of the smaller divisions who have fewer than 300 members. As a member of the Divisions Council, I will continue to work hard for improved resources and promotion of all divisions as a vital component of APA. I believe that improving the support of APA's divisions is more important than ever given the huge growth experienced in overall APA membership in recent years and the need to tap into the expertise areas of the divisions as a component of Certification Maintenance.

I have 30 years of experience as a professional planner in Colorado, California, and Illinois. I am a Charter member of the APA and was elected to the 2008 Class of Fellows for AICP. I received my Ph.D. in Regional Planning in 2000 with a research focus on public participation and environmental values. Currently, I serve as the Community Development Director/City Planner for the City of Urbana, Illinois. I am married to Rob Olshansky, AICP, a Professor in the Planning Program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. We have two sons - Alex, a Junior at Claremont McKenna College and Jacob, a Freshman at Haverford College.