

# EDUCATION

The Michigan Association of Planning educated 2,191 individuals in 2006-2007 fiscal year, a forty percent increase from last year. Our educational programming is constructed to meet the discreet needs of two diverse audiences: the professional planner and the local elected or appointed official. MAP's professional development events are established anew each year, to ensure that topics are timely, relevant, and useful. Events that cater to the educational requirements of the professional planner include Spring Institute, the annual *Planning Michigan* Conference, and specialty training programs offered periodically throughout the year. Seasoned local officials often attend these higher level events as well. Programming for local elected and appointed officials ranges from basic training for the new official, to higher level, advanced sessions offered at our Elected and Appointed Officials Institute.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Spring Institute

One hundred and fifteen community leaders and professional planners attended MAP's Spring Institute program in March 2007 to learn how to jumpstart Michigan's lagging economy. Experts from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) explained new state initiatives and tools to improve communities. Lou Glazer from Michigan Future, Inc. challenged attendees to attract talent to Michigan by thinking outside of the box. And the ever popular Charles Ballard regaled the audience with predictions about Michigan's economic future.

### Student Conference

MAP revived the long dormant student conference this year, and reinitiated a program that for many years was organized by the students. With the assistance of students and professors, MAP tailored a one-day program presenting topics identified by students. Several tracks were offered, including a hands-on site plan review course. Student presentations provided the opportunity to practice public speaking, and MAP coordinated a panel of experts who offered constructive feedback. In

addition, professional planners from various disciplines were convened, providing an opportunity for students to receive one on one advice.

### Annual *Planning Michigan* Conference

The 2006 annual planning conference was held in Detroit for the first time in decades. The conference committee created a program that included a variety of sessions, many with an urban bent. First rate keynote speakers motivated participants to work with their local school districts to help with the school siting process; to utilize a combination of new and existing tools to redevelop downtowns; and to collaborate with neighboring communities to pool resources. The feedback from conference goers was excellent, and Detroit's urban backdrop and visible renaissance generated excitement and inspiration for conference attendees.

### Smart Michigan: Tools for Creating Healthy, Vital, Sustainable Communities

With funding from People and Land (PAL), several specialized workshops were designed, reinforcing information presented in MAP's *Smart Growth Tactics* articles. The programs focused on uniting local officials with the development community to provide best planning practices which emphasize social equity and economic prosperity through Green Communities for affordable housing and Redevelopment Readiness (RR). Two "Green Communities" workshops were offered in Grand Rapids and Lansing in September 2007, with representatives from the homebuilder, affordable housing, and financial industries in attendance. In early 2007, two "Redevelopment Ready Communities" workshops were offered including "Enhancing the Development Review Process to Attract Economic Development" and "Creating and Redevelopment Plan/Strategy."

## TRAINING FOR ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS

MAP offers a variety of workshops designed specifically for elected and appointed planning and zoning officials. Instructed by MAP's certified instructors, these programs cover basic and advanced topics and are de-

signed to increase participants' knowledge, helping them make better, more informed land use decisions.

### Regional Workshops

In spring 2007, MAP held 10 training workshops throughout the state: Clinton Township and Flint in the east; Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, and Holland in the west; and Petoskey and Marquette in the north.

The 2007 regional workshops offered:

*Basic Training*—a full-day class for planning commissioners and zoning board of appeals members. It covers roles and responsibilities, site plan review, comprehensive planning, zoning ordinances, and standards for decision making.

*Advanced Zoning Board of Appeals*—this half-day class is an interactive, case-study based workshop, going into greater depth on issues such as practical difficulty and unnecessary hardship, interpretations and nonconformities, recent case law, and procedural requirements.

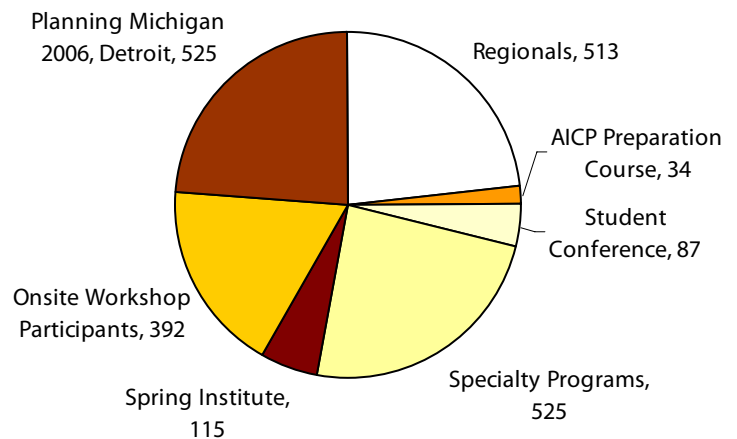
*Site Plan Review*—also a half-day program, this hands-on workshop provides practical tools and techniques to improve site plan review skills. Design principles, ADA compliance, inspections, and landscaping are discussed.

Over 200 individuals attended MAP's regional workshop series. Evaluations submitted by attendees were very favorable. In response to an evaluation question, 100 percent stated they would attend another MAP workshop, citing the quality of instruction and usefulness of the workshop training materials.

### Elected & Appointed Officials Institute

This annual event, which focuses on a different, timely topic each year, was created to provide advanced educational opportunities for citizen planners. Conducted in May, the timely topic of risk management was explored. More than 100 people attended workshops in Port Huron, Lansing, and Grand Rapids and discussed issues such as discretionary standards during land use reviews, reasonable expectations of developers, and conflicts of interest.

## 2006-2007 Educational Program Attendance



### On-site Workshops

Growing increasingly popular among members and non-members alike, MAP conducted 13 on-site workshops in the 2006-2007, drawing close to 400 participants. On-site workshops allow groups or municipalities to host a MAP workshop in their community, thereby saving money on travel costs and providing more people access to the education. MAP arranges for a speaker and sends the necessary workshop materials to the site. Basic Training continues to be the most popular topic for on-site workshops.

### Filling the Gaps

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality provided grant funding to create and launch a brand new program to instruct elected and appointed officials how to protect inland streams, lakes, coastlines, and wetlands. Held at locations throughout the state, almost 250 participants attended this well received program.