

The Michigan Association of Planning Presents:

MAP Your Career: LinkedIn

LinkedIn is more than just an online resume. It can boost your personal brand and connect you with those in the planning community. You can land your first internship or your dream full-time planning job using LinkedIn. Here are a few tips on how you can begin using the platform to its full potential:

1. Work on Your Profile

Professional Photo: Use a high-quality, professional-looking headshot. Don't want to get your photo taken? Platforms such as Canva now offer a free AI headshot generator, but results may vary.

Headline: Go beyond "Urban Planning Student." Try incorporating your interests. An example is something like: "Aspiring Urban Planner | Passionate About Sustainable Cities and Housing Policy."

About Section: Craft a brief, compelling summary. Highlight your interests, projects, and what type of work you're seeking.

2. Show Your Work

Portfolio: Upload or share links to presentations, GIS maps, design work, projects, or published articles. You can add this in your "About" section or the "Experience" section if you want to display the work you did in specific roles.

Featured Section: Pin top posts, articles, or projects to your profile to display your work and interest. To do this, click the three dots on the top right of one of your posts and select "feature on top of profile." This creates a box below the "About" section.

3. Build Your Network

Connect: Connect with professors, peers, and professionals who share the same interests as you do. If necessary, send a personalized connection request explaining why you are looking to connect.

Hesitant to send that connection request? Don't be. The person you're considering connecting with likely joined LinkedIn for the same reason you did — to connect, learn, and grow professionally.

Join Groups: Groups are another place to find valuable insights, collaborations, and opportunities. MAP Maintains one ("Michigan Chapter | American Planning Association") but there are many others.

4. Engage Thoughtfully & Stay Informed

Comment and Repost: Engage with posts related to your interests. Just remember to maintain a professional tone.

Share Insights: LinkedIn is the perfect space to share your takeaways from conferences, research findings, or planning projects.

Follow industry leaders and organizations: This is a great way to keep up with trending topics. Many planning organizations (i.e. MAP, APA, Planetizen, Strong Towns) maintain a LinkedIn page.

5. Look for Jobs

Set Job Alerts: Use LinkedIn's job board to set alerts for new open positions. Keep in mind that many positions have similar jobs but different names. For example, don't just set alerts for "Urban Planner." Set alerts for similar terms used by organizations such as: City Planner, Town Planner, Municipal Planner, Regional Planner, Community Planner, or even simply, Planner.

Ask for Informational Interviews: This can be a great way to learn about a professional's career path. The right connections can transform your career — *but only if you take that first step.*

Want more info? Contact **MAP** at (734) 913-2000 or Andy Larsen at alarsen@planningmi.org.