

Programs in Community Planning

The Bouchillon Institute for Community Planning was established for the purpose of providing educational opportunities for planning commissioners, board of adjustment members, elected officials, and anyone otherwise involved with local growth issues. One of the primary goals contained in the Institute's strategic plan is the development of a "Certified Planning Official Training Program." Since most people appointed to the Planning Commission and the Board of Adjustment come to those bodies with little or no understanding of what will be required of them in their new posts, it is intended that this Program provide those appointed Officials with a solid foundation in the operations of the Commission and Board.

Certificate in the Fundamentals of Local Planning (CFP) - complete 20 hours of training by attending Institute sponsored workshops and seminars (no expiration).

Certified Planning Official (CPO) - complete 30 hours of training. Certificate is valid for 24 months. Continuing educations totaling 6 hours annually maintains certification.

Current Course Offerings

- 1) **PL 101 - Foundations of Planning and Zoning (2hrs)** - This workshop will provide local officials with a basic understanding of the historical, statutory, and constitutional framework for planning and zoning in Mississippi. Topics include: what is community planning and why is it important; the historical development of community planning; the roles of the various public bodies in the planning process; and constitutional issues impacting land use planning and regulation.
- 2) **PL 102 - Powers, Duties and Responsibilities of the Planning Commission and the Board of Adjustment(2hrs)** - This workshop is designed to familiarize officials with powers, duties, and responsibilities of the Commission and Board. Topics will include: the legal authority under Mississippi law for planning commission and board of adjustment members; where the planning commission's authority ends and the board of adjustment's authority begins; the relationship between both bodies and the board of aldermen; the importance of planning commission make up, officers, bylaws and rules of procedure, legal responsibilities and meeting protocol.
- 3) **PL 103 - The Comprehensive Plan** - When a community decides to adopt zoning and subdivision regulation ordinances, enabling legislation in Mississippi requires the preparation of a comprehensive plan. Preparation of a comprehensive plan is mandatory. Topics for this workshop will include: what is the comprehensive plan; mandatory and optional elements of a comprehensive plan; the formulation of a comprehensive plan; the

importance of public input in the planning process; the statutory requirements to adopt or update a comprehensive plan; and the political implications of the plan as a public statement of the City's development policies.

- 4) **PL201 - The Zoning Ordinance** (2hrs) - The zoning ordinance is one of a community's most important implementation tools of the comprehensive plan. It provides the means to define the type and intensity of uses permitted on any piece of property within the community. Topics for this workshop will include: the statutory basis of zoning; the relationship between zoning and the comprehensive plan; different zoning systems and mechanisms; the organization of the typical zoning ordinance; zoning safety valves; requirements for the adoption of a zoning ordinance; and major legal issues being raised in current land use litigation.
- 5) **PL202 – Design Controls and Subdivision Regulations** (2hrs) - A community's subdivision regulations also implements the comprehensive plan by governing the manner in which land is platted into streets, blocks, and lots, in preparation for development. They are very important in establishing the street pattern of a community and the types of improvements that must be made as land is brought into urban use. Topics for this workshop will include: the historical background and statutory foundation for subdivision regulation; the relationship of subdivision regulation to the comprehensive plan; the relationship of subdivision regulation to the zoning ordinance; the definition of subdivision; the subdivision approval process; plat specifications and subdivision design standards; performance guarantees; variance/waivers; and recording subdivisions.
- 6) **PL 301 - Meeting Management and Dispute Resolution** (2hrs) - The effectiveness of a Planning Commission's or Board of Adjustment's decision making can often be significantly impacted by how each body's meeting is managed. Topics for this workshop include: how to keep a meeting flowing, well-organized and professional, practical and proven means to manage meetings, how to defuse unruly or disruptive attendees; how best to manage large crowds; how to deal with the media on politically charged issues; simple and proven mediation techniques for managing contentious issues, as well as techniques to resolve conflicts amicably.
- 7) **PL – 302 – Current Issues in Planning** (2hrs) – Methods, techniques, issues and concerns are continually changing. This overview provides a discussion of current issues and trends in community planning and development.
- 8) **PL – 303 – Electives** – Participants mayll select up to 9.5 hours of electives in community planning. Those elective may be provided by the Bouchillon Institute or other approved planning education provider.

Current Schedule

Course	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	Fall 2010	Spring 2011	Fall 2011
PL101	X		X		
PL102	X		X		
PL201		X		X	
PL202		X		X	
PL301			X		X
PL302			X		X
PL303	X	X	X	X	X

Specific times and places for the above offerings will be announced. The schedule is subject to change.