



Community Planning Academies & Neighborhood Bootcamps—Reimagining Community Land Use Education

*APA California Conference—Planning at the Crossroads
Fresno, CA (September 19th, 2023)*

Kresge Foundation, Urban Institute, City of Sacramento, Every Neighborhood Partnership



We seek to expand opportunity by promoting effective and inclusive community development practice in American cities.

Through grantmaking and social investing, we support community development efforts:

- at national organizations with community development expertise
- in multi-city initiatives that facilitate peer learning
- in our focus cities of Memphis, New Orleans, and Fresno

Session Agenda

- Setting the Stage—Sidra Fatima, Kresge Foundation
- Laying the Foundation of Community Planning Academies—Joe Schilling, Urban Institute
 - Q&A
- Sacramento Planning Academy—Laura Tuller, City of Sacramento
- Fresno Neighborhood Bootcamps (Fresno CLUA)—Ivan Paz, Every Neighborhood Partnership
 - Q&A
- Discussion

Urban Institute's Typology of Academy Models

Research and Prototyping CPA Models 2021-22



Project Objectives

- *National Research*: explore how existing planning academies could be redesigned, developed, and operated as a forum for facilitating community conversations and community action on revamping local land use, land development and urban planning systems so they are more just, equitable, and inclusive.
- *Fresno Community Land Use Academy (CLUA)*: co-create a community planning academy “prototype” that could expand the “land use literacy” of Fresnans and serve as a catalyst for reforming current land use/land development systems in the City of Fresno so they are more just, equitable and inclusive.

National Scan of Diverse Academy Models



American Citizen Planning Program at MSU



Baltimore Planning Academy



Center for Land Use Education at University of Wisconsin



Greenline Institute Leadership Academy



Nexus Community Partners Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute



Pace Law School Land Use Leadership Alliance Training Program



Philadelphia Citizen's Planning Institute



Sacramento Citizen Planning Academy



Upstate Forever Citizens Planning Academy

Urban Found Three Primary Planning Academy Models

- Community Planning Model
- Planning and Land Use Professional Model
- Community Builder Model

Community Planning Model—CPI Philadelphia

Host	Local Government Planning Agency
Staffing	Planning Staff
Applicants	City or county residents identified as leaders in their community due to their community involvement, organizing, volunteering, or advocacy work
Application	Essays and Interviews
Cohort size	20-30 people
Duration	3-5 months
Topics	Planning/land use basic concepts and local processes, zoning, and special topics such as affordable housing, transportation, etc.

Planning and Land Use Professionals Model—MSU

Host	University-affiliated land use law/policy center or land grant extension office
Staffing	Research Faculty and Extension/Outreach Staff
Applicants	Current local planning officials and planning professionals, such as commissioners, zoning board members Some nonprofits or community-based professionals involved with land use planning
Application	Workshops developed by request <i>or</i> applicants are nominated
Cohort size	10-20 people
Duration	1-2 day workshops or a retreat of a few days
Topics	basics of land use planning/zoning, rules and requirements related to the powers and processes for making land use decisions, public meeting rules, conflict resolution, legal rules and standards.

Community Builder Model—Nexus, Minneapolis

Host	Regional/ local non-profit
Staffing	Non-profit staff
Applicants	Young BIPOC professionals and community-based leaders involved with local policy/neighborhood issues.
Application	Workshops developed by request <i>or</i> applicants are nominated
Cohort size	8-12 people
Format/ Duration	Fellowship Model: 9–12-month fellowship/community policy project Boards & Commissions Model: 3–5-month academy to prepare BIPOC placement on local boards and commissions
Topics/ Focus	Specific projects/topics (land use+) on pressing priorities to the nonprofit and community, includes leadership development skills. Another model focuses on recruiting, training, preparing and placing individuals of color on a wide array of local government boards and commissions.

Academy Characteristics—The Four Features

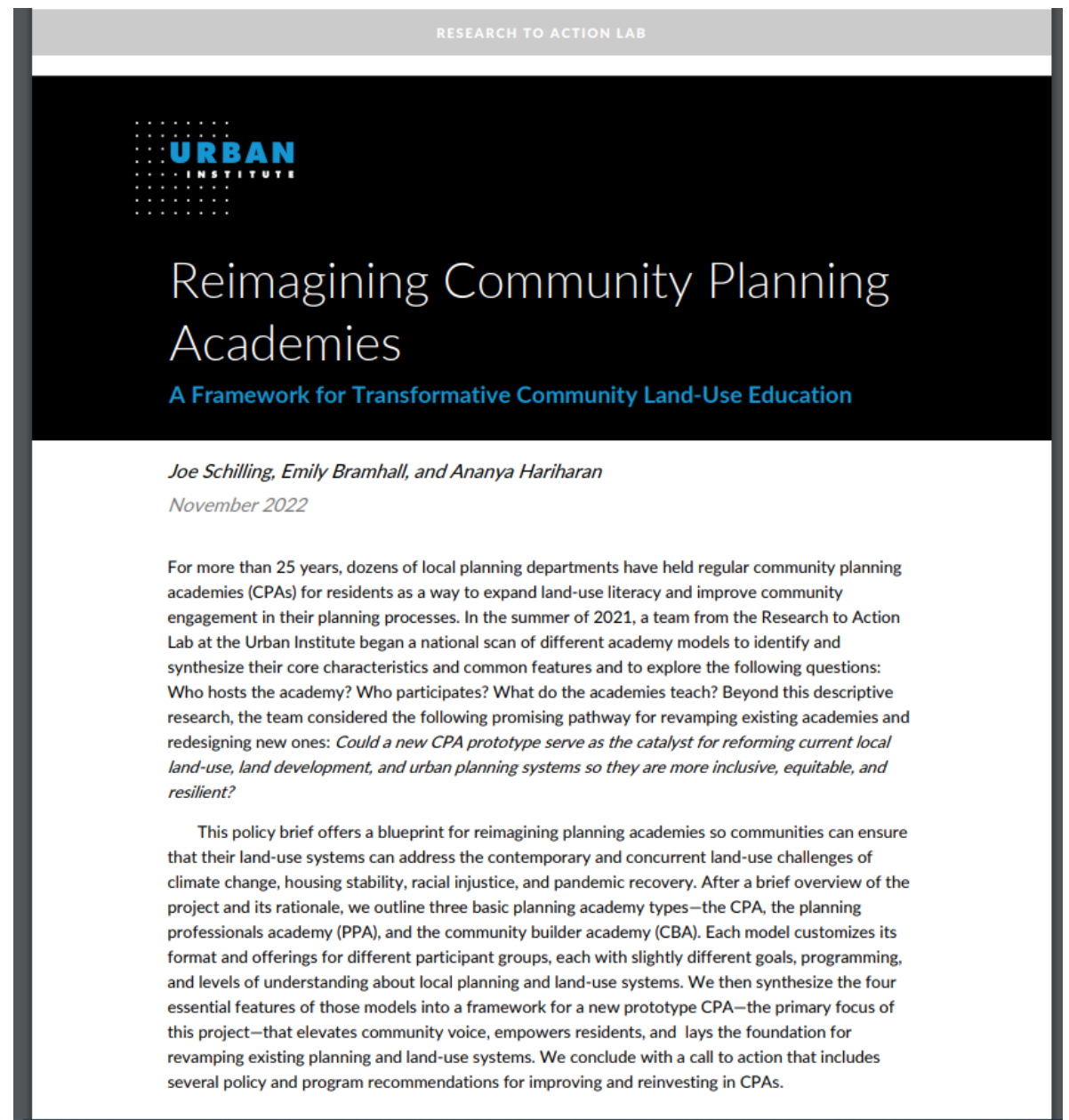
- **Host & Funding**
- **Recruitment & Participants**
- **Curriculum & Delivery**
- **Network Building & Learning to Action**

Essential Goals for the CPA Field

- ***Increases knowledge and resources*** available to community members to engage in land use and zoning conversations, decisions and actions
- ***Unpacks the role of structural racism in land use*** and how it is perpetuated through exclusionary zoning and other racially discriminatory land use policies and practices
- ***Provides space for conversations*** between participants, planning officials, and other land use and development actors on difficult land use topics
- ***Explores change and reforms*** to current land use and land development policies,
- ***Recruits and works with individuals*** who are underrepresented in land use and zoning decision-making including leaders of color
- ***Builds networks*** and pathways for participants to apply insights they learned, collaborate with the people they have met, and advocate for changes to improve existing planning and zoning policies and practices

Promoting CPAs through Policy and Programs

- Expand the scope and scale of CPA programming
- Align multiple academy models through collaborative partnerships and networks
- Support learning networks that lead to action, advocacy and community capacity building
- Elevate structural racism and equitable land use reforms
- Leverage federal/state and philanthropic grants to support community land use education and capacity building



Fresno Prototyping & Pilot Launch



Fresno's Pilot—Community Land Use Academy (CLUA)

Community Bootcamp



- Entry-level for community members
- Focus on how land use affects their neighborhoods/everyday lives and discusses basic land development, zoning and planning concepts
- Delivered in the neighborhood over 6 weeks
- Delivered by community organizers/developers tailored to local land use problems

Planning & Development Academy



- Bootcamp graduates and active/engaged community members
- Focus on city wide and regional land use systems, land development and urban planning more broadly
- Delivered in a 10-week cohort model
- Taught by local land use professionals, practitioners and experts in the field

DISCUSSION

**How can planners advance the
promise and practice of
Community Planning Academies and Neighborhood
Bootcamps?**

For More Information:

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The Baltimore Planning Academy: Community Empowerment Through Civic Education

By Elina Bravve

In 2018, the Baltimore Department of Planning (DoP) launched the Baltimore Planning Academy. The [Planning Academy](#) is a cohort-based, six-week program designed to build community leadership around urban planning, zoning, and development topics (Figure 1).

The development of this program stemmed from five goals embedded in the DoP's Equity Action Plan. The first goal states that the DoP aims to "improve and increase the dialogue between the Department of Planning and underserved communities in Baltimore." The Planning Academy was an action recommended under this goal.

The Planning Academy seeks to elevate the ability of community members to affect the public processes around planning, policy, and urban development and to elevate equitable public engagement as a major goal for the DoP.

This *PAS Memo* explains the vision and goals of the Baltimore Planning Academy, its structure and design, and the impact thus far of the program. The *Memo* also offers recommendations and action steps for planners toward replicating this program in other municipalities.



Figure 1. The Baltimore Planning Academy's 2019 cohort (Baltimore Department of Planning)

Equity and Engagement in Context

Broadly defined, *equity* seeks to redistribute public resources based upon public need. In 2015, DoP staff began exploring what this concept could mean for planning in Baltimore.

That year, a food justice training at the DoP galvanized a small group of staff to create an Equity in Planning Committee. Monthly meetings were attended by at least one member (but often more) of each [internal division](#), and initially involved a process of self-education and discussion, focusing on urban planning and local government policies that have led to inequitable outcomes in Baltimore and so many cities like it. The focus soon shifted to developing an equity action plan with concrete goals and recommendations for the purpose of presenting these ideas to senior leadership.

The Committee worked together over the course of 2015–2017 to develop its own shared language and understanding of equity. This resulted in the following internal definition:

An equitable Baltimore addresses the needs and aspirations of its diverse population and meaningfully engages residents through inclusive and collaborative processes to expand access to power and resources.

The [Equity Action Plan](#) was finalized in 2017. It consists of five overarching goals developed collectively by members of the Equity in Planning Committee, each with a series of specific recommended actions. The five goals are as follows:

1. Improve and increase the dialogue and connections between the Department of Planning and underserved communities in Baltimore.
2. Ensure that the Planning Department staff reflect the demographics of Baltimore City.
3. Use an equity lens to develop, revise, and evaluate City policies.
4. Use an equity lens to prioritize capital investments.

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<https://www.planning.org/publications/report/9273996/>