



Measuring Impacts Using Ripple Effect Mapping and Survey Evaluation Techniques: MSU Extension’s Citizen Planner Program

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Introduction

As issues in planning increase in complexity, so have efforts to improve the decision-making of officials. At the forefront of these efforts is the Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) Citizen Planner Program.

An earlier Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station (now AgBioResearch) report (Cullen, Norris, Beyea, Geith, & Rhead, 2006) explored what planners in Michigan seek to improve within their skill sets. The study revealed that 71% believe professional development must be a requirement for planning officials. The report also revealed the training formats preferred, a demand for an online program and an interest in a process to document mastery of educational material. As a follow-up to these findings, this report will revisit some of those early investigations in a more recent study and proceed further to explore a process to evaluate impacts of the Citizen Planner Program on elected and appointed officials across Michigan.

Adult education programs that train elected and appointed officials are gaining momentum, with five states mandating training for officials that serve on boards and commissions (Samson, 2008). However, it is crucial for stakeholders to evaluate the effect these programs have on participants and on their communities. By evaluating impacts, stakeholders can streamline and improve these opportunities, which in turn will lead to better management of resources, as well as better decision-making in local communities. The social sciences have models in theory that evaluate impacts, but these models do not apply well to the Citizen Planner audience.

While the most prevalent methods of measuring impacts such as the input-output model, Social Return on Investment (SROI) or Impact Reporting and Investment Standards (IRIS) measure possible monetary gains, the Citizen Planner Program is intended to improve leadership and decision-making within local communities. The core values of such a program are, therefore, social and rather difficult to quantify into meaningful data. Keeping this core value in perspective, this report will build upon the earlier Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station report using the following research questions (RQ):

RQ 1: Are there any changes in professional development and information needs of elected and appointed planning officials from 2006?

RQ 2: What kinds of impacts does the Citizen Planner Program have in local communities within the Community Capital framework?

RQ 3: Which classroom training format (one-time or continuing education) shows significantly more impacts?

In addition, this report will document the process of evaluating program impacts by using a combination of focus group interviews and a survey. Focus group discussions followed a framework known as Ripple Effect Mapping (REM) and were conducted in three different locations across Michigan. Statements made during REM sessions were subsequently used to inform the design of a survey instrument, which was sent out to Citizen Planner graduates across Michigan. This report will describe that process in detail, highlight challenges faced by the team and recommend future directions in evaluating impacts of the program.

A Longitudinal Snapshot

Michigan is a state where elected and appointed officials have access to several opportunities for training on a voluntary basis. Organizations that offer such training include, but are not limited to, private planning consultants and municipal attorneys, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension (including the Citizen Planner Program), MSU Planning and Zoning Center, Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) (the Michigan chapter of the American Planning Association), Michigan Municipal

League (MML), Michigan Townships Association (MTA), some state planning regions and some county planning departments. While these training programs follow different models based on the organizations offering them, most are centered on the needs of elected municipal officials. The MSU Extension (MSUE) Citizen Planner Program, however, bases its model on the training needs of citizens that are appointed to serve on local land use planning commissions and zoning boards, and the majority of program participants are appointed officials with fewer elected officials in attendance. The MSUE Citizen Planner Program also offers an advanced Master Citizen Planner credential as well as additional seminars and workshops. The targeted audience, therefore, are “citizen planners” who intend to improve the quality of life in their communities. (Read articles from a December 2014 issue of *Planning & Zoning News* covering the history of the Citizen Planner Program and stories of program impacts, and a December 2015 issue providing more detail on the long-term impacts of the Citizen Planner Program and the Master Citizen Planner credential. Find both PDFs on the *Planning & Zoning News* website at the following link: pznews.net/2604.html.)

Nearly two decades ago, research was first conducted using a survey technique to measure attitudes for education and training among planning officials around the Grand Traverse Region in Michigan (Wiesing, 1996). These survey questions were re-used in a study involving similar participants in a sample group throughout Michigan by Cullen et al (2006) and were used again in a recent study with a sample group of Citizen Planners leading to this report. **Table 1** shows data from these separate sample groups regarding educational attainment. Data indicate that the largest group of 2015 respondents hold graduate degrees, while the largest group of respondents had some college experience both in 2006 and 1996. Data regarding self-reported skill levels show that the largest group of respondents identified with the statement “I can do what I need to do, but there’s more I need to learn” both in 2006 and 2015 (**Table 2**). However, responses in 2015 are more spread out over the other categories compared to responses in 2006. With regard to attitudes toward continuing education in elected and appointed officials, data show a trend toward more hours in continuing education as well (**Table 3**).



Table 1. Educational Attainment of Respondents.

Educational attainment	2015 sample n = 395	2006 sample n = 394	1996 sample n = 183
High school.	5.1%	12.7%	12.6%
Some college.	21.8%	29.4%	32.3%
Associate’s degree.	9.6%	12.2%	12.6%
Bachelor’s degree.	20.8%	24.4%	12.0%
College courses beyond bachelor’s degree.	10.9%	N/A	30.6%
Graduate degree.	31.9%	19.4%	N/A

Table 2. Self-Reported Skill Level.

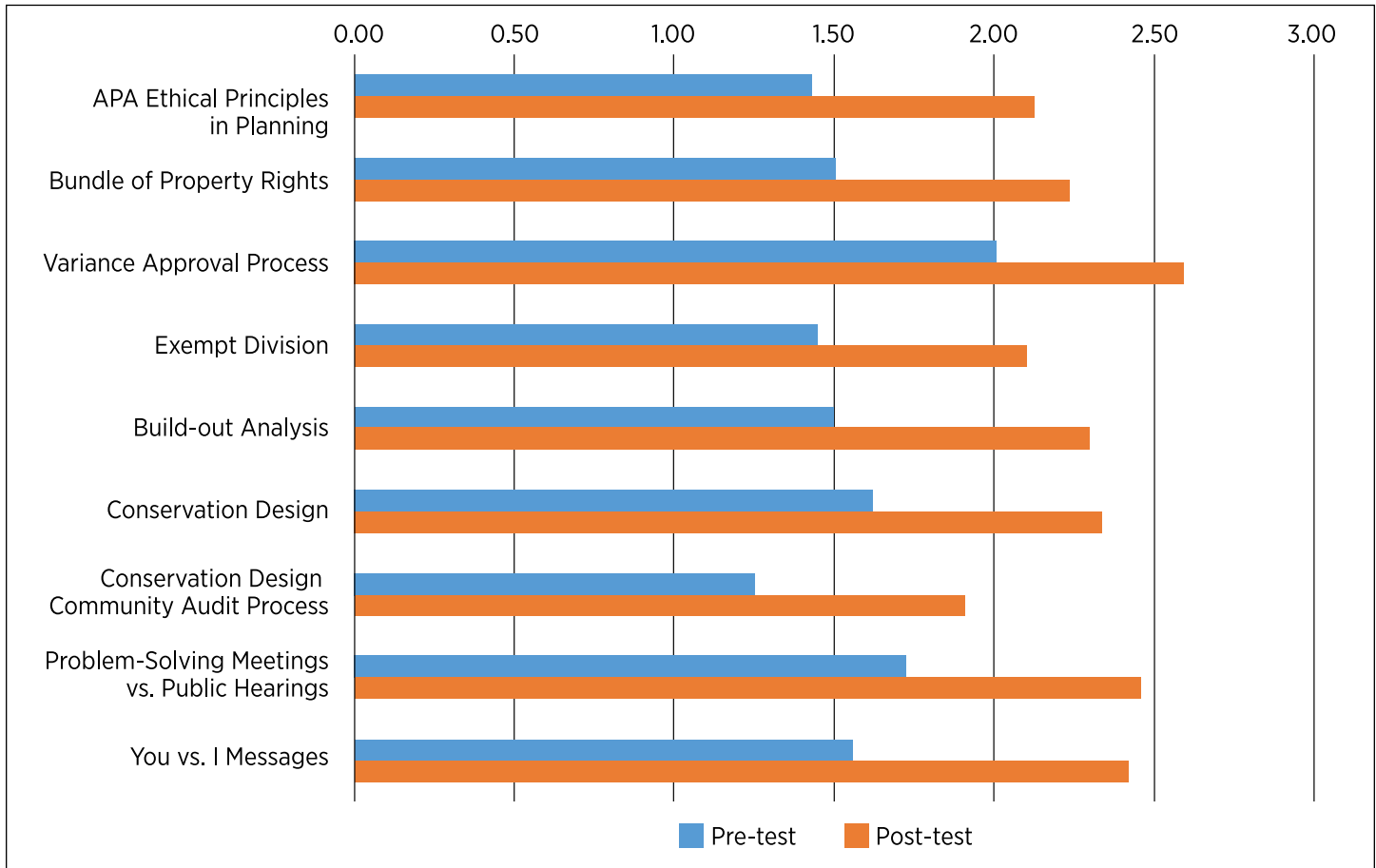
Skill level	2015 sample n = 382	2006 sample n = 389
I’m just starting out.	12.3%	12.0%
I can do what I need to do, but there’s more I need to learn.	47.9%	63.0%
I have a broad range of knowledge.	25.7%	23.0%
I have in-depth and significant knowledge.	14.1%	2.0%

Table 3. Attitudes Toward Continuing Education in Planning.

Continuing education	2015 sample n = 315	2006 sample n = 347
1 to 5 hours / year	32.7%	49.0%
6 to 10 hours / year	42.5%	33.0%
11 to 15 hours / year	11.7%	10.0%
16 to 20 hours / year	7.6%	5.0%
More than 20 hours / year	5.4%	3.0%

The program was also designed to measure change in knowledge, through questionnaires at the start and end of each session. Results from these tests are recorded in the program’s annual reports. A snapshot of this longitudinal data from 2006 to 2009 has been compiled for this report to present information on impacts of the Citizen Planner Program (**Figure 1**). Results show that there is an increase of knowledge during this time period on all nine topics measured. These include the American Planning Association (APA) ethical principles in planning, bundle of property rights, variance approval process, exempt divisions (part of Michigan’s Land Division Act), build-out analysis, conservation design, conservation design community audit process, problem-solving meetings vs. public hearings, and communication messages (“You” vs. “I”).

Figure 1. Change in Knowledge 2006-2009.



Ripple Effect Mapping

While data collected annually measure change in knowledge and attitudes of participants that complete the MSUE Citizen Planner Program, these statistics fall short on documenting the breadth of impacts resulting from the program at the community level. To further investigate this, a work group of MSUE educators that focus on government and public policy in collaboration with faculty from the MSU School of Planning, Design and Construction, devised a two-pronged approach to measure program impacts.

The first approach was a series of three focus group interviews conducted in three different Michigan communities. The focus group interviews followed the REM process explained by Hansen Kollock, Flage, Chazdon, Paine, and Higgins (2012) in combination with the Community Capitals framework developed by Flora and Flora (2008). The REM sessions engaged approximately 50 people in facilitated conversations about the impacts of the Citizen Planner Program.

The second evaluation approach was a survey based on observations at the REM sessions and the learning goals of the Citizen Planner Program. The online Qualtrics survey was sent to 3,402 people with a response rate of 9.8%. Data from both approaches are reported here to give readers a comprehensive idea of impacts observed. This report will highlight results, document processes used, point to some key challenges and make recommendations for future research.

REM is a qualitative process that captures stories and statements about experiences associated with the phenomenon being measured. The process was executed in two phases – focus group mapping and content coding. The first phase consisted of focus group interviews facilitated by two neutral facilitators and one Extension educator familiar with the program observing. Alumni of the Citizen Planner Program were invited to be participants and were asked to bring one person also serving on a board or commission that had not been through the program. Focus group sessions



took place in the Michigan counties of Manistee, Kalamazoo and Oakland. Participants at each focus group were from the respective county and surrounding counties.

Facilitators prompted participants in the focus group interviews to talk about impacts, in this case, related to seven constructs known as “Community Capitals” (Flora & Flora, 2008). The seven constructs of Community Capitals include natural, cultural, human, social, political, financial and built capital (Iowa State University, 2016). Once a participant made a statement, facilitators probed further with appreciative inquiry techniques to draw out the context of the stories the participants reported. Based on the ensuing dialogue, if the impacts could be attributed to the program, those stories were summarized and mapped in real time using a mind mapping software called XMind. This process enabled participants to report other impacts that might be characterized as “ripple effects.” Ripple effects are intended and unintended changes resulting from an “intervention” such as Extension programming (Hansen Kollock, Flage, Chazdon, Paine, & Higgins, 2012). Facilitators recorded participant comments by entering the comment into the mind mapping software, which was projected on a screen at two of the three sites. If facilitators made an observation that was inaccurate, participants corrected them and collectively designed the map (**Figure 2**). As a variation to the technique, the session in Oakland County used note cards instead of a real-time projection.

The three Michigan locations selected were chosen because of the relatively high number of Citizen Planner Program graduates within the region. For each session, the process began with the project overview and introductions in which participants shared individual success stories as well as examples of increased community and professional connections associated with their involvement in the Citizen Planner Program. Focused participant questioning and discussion followed with facilitators using a detailed facilitator guide (**Appendix A**).

The first questions facilitators asked participants were about shared stories with others including highlights, successes, achievements, new connections or relationships experienced as a result of the program. To the extent possible, facilitators entered exact responses into the mind map. Facilitators then reviewed participant comments and placed them in the associated Community Capitals.

Focused participant questioning and discussion followed as facilitators asked a series of questions to explore other possible impacts (ripples) of the Citizen Planner Program. Sheets were posted around the room to remind participants to think about:

- New knowledge or skills.
- New relationships or connections.
- New or improved ways of engaging community members in planning.
- New financial/economic opportunities.
- Strengthened or new creative placemaking or arts and culture efforts.
- New or improved uses of technology.
- Strengthened or new efforts to conserve the natural environment.

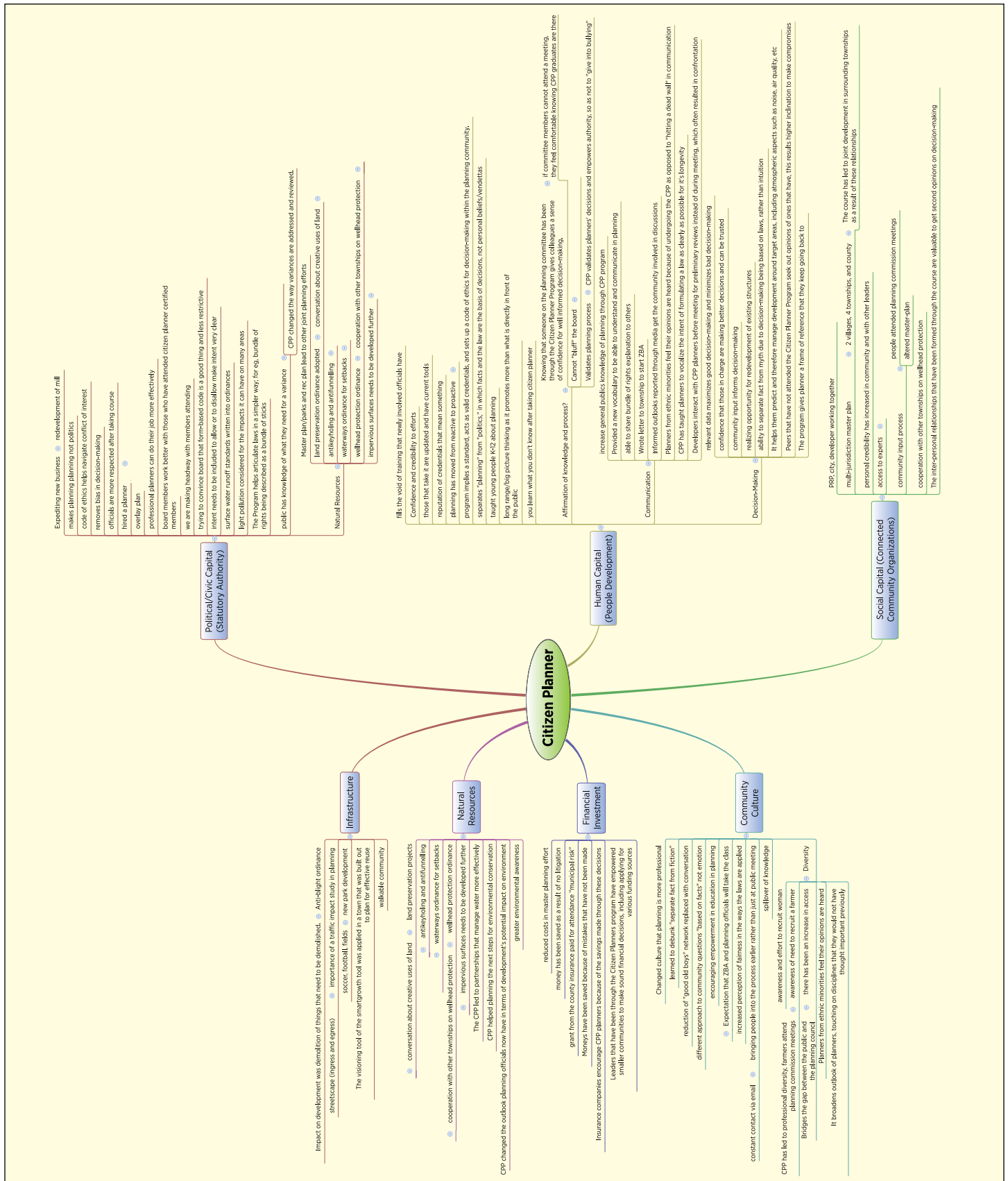
Focused discussion continued on aspects of knowledge and learning, community involvement and community impacts. Facilitators then asked about additional impacts, including efforts to promote diversity on any level (age, cultural background, economic background) within the community.

Focused discussion ended by reflecting on any other issues not yet mentioned. Participants also discussed what someone else in the community would have to say about the Citizen Planner Program.

During the first REM session (Manistee County), the Community Capitals were not described or visible to participants during initial sharing of success stories and new connections and relationships. Participant comments were quickly paired by facilitators with the associated Community Capital during a short break. In the second REM session (Kalamazoo County), Community Capitals were posted in the participants’ view during the initial sharing of impacts with the motivation to streamline the process and type the initial impacts directly into the associated Community Capital and avoid the need for an early break to reorganize the initial mind map.

The Oakland County session was structured and recorded differently, with a large blank sheet of paper posted in front of the room with the Community Capitals posted around the outside of the sheet. Participants were asked to write brief comments on large index cards to be grouped with the corresponding Community Capital while they shared an associated impact story.

Figure 2. Ripple Effect Map.





The intent was to stimulate participants’ thinking of additional impacts when hearing from others and provide them with note cards for easy recording of their thoughts and posting on the mind map. However, instead of participants continuing to write comments on note cards in front of them, they eventually began to share stories of individual and community impacts and then relied on facilitators to write comments for posting. Facilitators discovered it was more difficult to use this “low-tech” approach of generating the mind map – posting comments to multiple Community Capitals and developing associated ripples – where participants wrote on note cards rather than using the mind mapping software applied in the Manistee and Kalamazoo counties REM sessions.

The second phase of the Ripple Effect Mapping process was to account for the various impacts reported across the seven Community Capitals. While the final ripple map itself is a way to report or demonstrate impacts resulting from the program, evaluators will find it useful to determine how many impacts clustered in each Community Capital. This process is referred to as “coding” the impacts to the Community Capitals framework.

To code the impacts detailed on the ripple map, each statement or impact was given one point for each of the seven capitals to which it was related. Statements received multiple points if they were related to multiple capitals. The final scores were tallied to determine the relative importance of the Citizen Planner Program impacts across the seven Community Capitals based on all reported impacts (Table 4).

Ripple Effect Mapping is an excellent technique to record the Community Capital impacts of the Citizen Planner Program. It serves as a strong foundation for further, more rigorous techniques of investigating impacts. It also presents impacts in a story format giving insight that is more personal as well as giving context to participants’ stated program impacts.

Survey

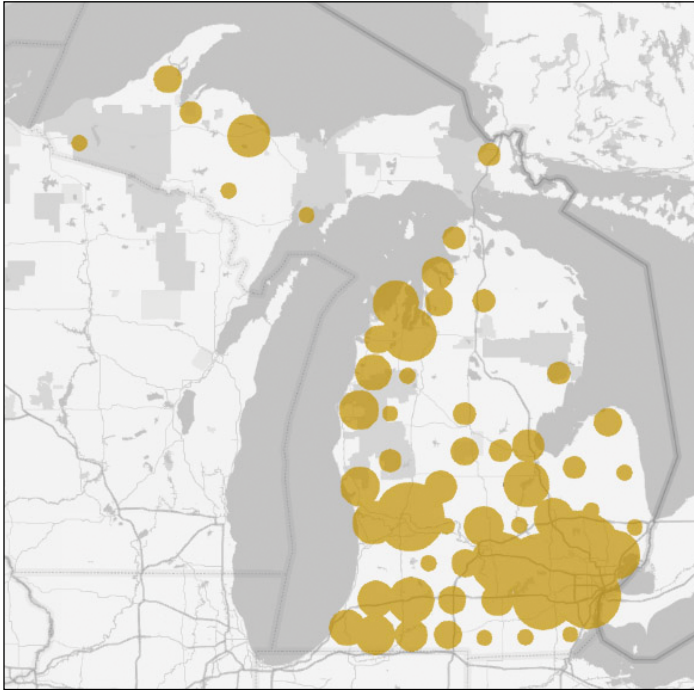
While data on change in knowledge coupled with REM give insight to the nature of impacts the Citizen Planner Program and Master Citizen Planner credential have on communities at the grass root level, these statistics do not do so quantitatively. For this reason, the team of investigators felt the need to also measure perceived impacts using a survey technique (Appendix B). Not only would this method cross-check the validity of observations made at the focus group sessions, but it would also act as a gateway for future research on impacts.

The survey was sent online to 3,402 people throughout Michigan. From this sample, a total of 333 surveys were completed out of the 1,217 emails that were opened. The circles in Figure 3 represent frequency of responses by location. Based on the original number of emails sent out (and not ones that were opened) the response rate was calculated as 9.8%. The survey was designed to measure perceived impacts using primarily two blocks of questions. Participants were asked to rate impacts using a Likert scale in each block.

Table 4. Share of Ripple Effect Mapping Impacts per Community Capital Relative to Total Impacts Reported.

Community	Community capital						
	Natural	Cultural	Human	Social	Political	Financial	Built
Manistee County	3.45%	9.20%	41.38%	19.54%	21.84%	3.45%	1.15%
Kalamazoo County	6.00%	4.50%	40.00%	15.00%	26.50%	3.50%	4.50%
Oakland County	6.40%	11.20%	30.40%	12.00%	28.00%	7.20%	4.80%
Total Average	5.28%	8.30%	37.26%	15.51%	25.45%	4.72%	3.48%

Figure 3. Map of Michigan Showing People that Answered the Survey. (The size of the circles represent the frequency of responses by the location.)



One set of questions asked people to rate impacts based on the ten goals of the program, which are listed in **Table 5**.

Table 5. Intended Goals of the Citizen Planner Program.

	Intended program goals
1.	Improve land-use decision making.
2.	Increase awareness of existing land use tools.
3.	Provide locally focused, current, and on-going land use education.
4.	Nurture alumni to promote “good practices” in land use.
5.	Increase length of time served on local boards and commissions.
6.	Increase satisfaction of serving on local boards and commissions.
7.	Improve continuity/institutional memory at the local level regarding land use and decisions.
8.	Enhance the understanding and responsibility of local officials in relation to ethics and conflict of interest issues.
9.	Improve working relationships and citizen involvement within and among communities.
10.	Reduce local litigation and liability through improved risk management practices.

Another set asked people to rate impacts based on seven key observations made during REM sessions (**Table 6**). Results revealed that people that opted for continuing education, vis-à-vis the Master Citizen Planner credential, reported higher impacts compared to people that stopped training at the completion of the Citizen Planner Program (**Tables 7 & 8**).

Table 6. Observed Impacts from REM Sessions.

	Impacts from REM Sessions added to 2015 Survey
1.	Changes in collaboration/partnerships between different units of government.
2.	Changes in how commissions or boards function.
3.	Changes in the way local officials are interacting with local planning officials or planning consultants.
4.	Reduction in litigation exposure.
5.	Increase in education or training opportunities.
6.	Increase in efforts to preserve natural resources.
7.	Increase in diversity of people (Professional background, ethnic background, etc.) involved in the decision making process.



Table 7. Impacts Based on Ten Program Goals.

Master Citizen Planner (MCP) Citizen Planner (CP)		Mean	n	Standard deviation	Significance (p)	Wald
Improve land-use decision making	MCP	2.48	105	1.030	0.027*	4.880
	CP	2.75	201	1.050		
Increase awareness of existing land use tools	MCP	2.40	105	1.040	0.060	3.527
	CP	2.65	202	1.059		
Provide locally focused, current, and on-going land use education	MCP	2.75	104	1.153	0.018*	5.570
	CP	3.06	200	1.011		
Nurture alumni to promote “good practices” in land use	MCP	2.88	104	1.217	0.038*	4.322
	CP	3.16	199	1.145		
Increase length of time served on local boards and commissions	MCP	3.06	104	1.290	0.003**	8.704
	CP	3.52	195	1.211		
Increase satisfaction of serving on local boards and commissions	MCP	2.53	104	1.190	0.001**	10.945
	CP	3.00	198	1.166		
Improve continuity/institutional memory at the local level regarding land use and decisions	MCP	2.69	105	1.153	0.001**	10.839
	CP	3.13	200	1.056		
Enhance the understanding and responsibility of local officials in relation to ethics and conflict of interest issues	MCP	2.45	105	1.110	0.003**	9.067
	CP	2.84	198	1.102		
Improve working relationships and citizen involvement within and among communities	MCP	2.72	105	1.131	0.015*	5.956
	CP	3.05	198	1.107		
Reduce local litigation and liability through improved risk management practices	MCP	3.12	104	1.280	0.534	0.387
	CP	3.22	195	1.179		
* p value of .05 or less, ** p value of .01 or less						

Table 8. Impacts Based on REM Sessions.

Master Citizen Planner (MCP) Citizen Planner (CP)		Mean	n	Standard deviation	Significance (p)	Wald
Collaboration/partnerships between different units of government	MCP	2.26	104	0.890	0.059	3.570
	CP	2.46	197	0.917		
Changes in how commissions or boards function	MCP	2.04	104	0.812	0.015*	5.964
	CP	2.31	193	0.899		
Changes in the way local officials are interacting with local planning officials or planning consultants	MCP	2.17	103	0.793	0.003**	8.568
	CP	2.51	192	0.927		
Reduction in litigation exposure	MCP	2.63	103	1.163	0.260	1.267
	CP	2.81	189	1.200		
Increase in education or training opportunities	MCP	2.12	104	0.855	0.272	1.209
	CP	2.29	192	0.985		
Increase in efforts to preserve natural resources	MCP	2.31	103	0.970	0.081	3.041
	CP	2.51	189	0.971		
Increase in diversity of people (Professional background, ethnic background, etc.) involved in the decision making process	MCP	2.64	104	1.014	0.011*	6.442
	CP	2.99	190	1.005		
* p value of .05 or less, ** p value of .01 or less						

One key challenge in developing the survey was finding similar studies on impact in the literature that could be replicated for this specific study. Instead, researchers used program goals coupled with REM statements, and employing a Likert scale, had participants rate the degree of impact each goal or statement had on them personally or on the community. Another challenge was in the sampling method. Due to limited time and resources, researchers used a sample of email addresses of past participants. As a result, the impacts found could not be generalized to the larger population of Michigan; however, the survey successfully measured impacts based on the type of training that participants experienced (Citizen Planner Program or Master Citizen Planner credential). Future directions of research could include the same research design using random sampling in REM as well

as using a survey instrument. A further step could be investigating impacts based on other training formats such as classrooms with online learning or workshops with seminars.

Conclusion

A combination of using longitudinal data, qualitative REM and survey data gives MSUE broad insight into the impacts of the Citizen Planner Program within reasonable interpretation. The study investigated impacts by posing three key questions. These questions were given in the Introduction. Each is discussed in this section.

RQ 1: Are there any changes in professional development and information needs of elected and appointed planning officials from 2006?



Education level in the sample population has increased between 1996 and 2015 (**Table 1**). Self-reported skill levels of respondents in 2015 indicate they are more confident about their roles as planning and zoning officials compared to data collected in 2006 (**Table 2**). In parallel, respondents expressed a greater number of hours annually required for continuing education in 2015 compared to 2006 (**Table 3**). Furthermore, data collected annually suggest there is a consistent change in knowledge for people that enrolled in the Citizen Planner Program (**Figure 1**). The seven modules of the Citizen Planner Program have an immediate impact on participant's understanding of their role as a planning or zoning official.

RQ 2: What kinds of impacts does the Citizen Planner Program have in local communities within the Community Capital framework?

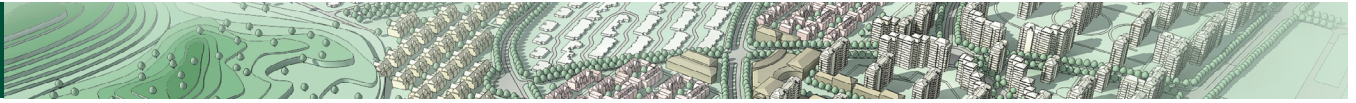
REM results show that the highest area of impact across the three different counties evaluated is Human Capital (**Table 4**). Human Capital addresses leadership's ability to "lead across differences," to be participatory and inclusive, focus on assets, and be proactive about the future of a community or group (Flora & Flora, 2008). This suggests a large portion of impacts reported by people is regarding their ability to lead their communities better through the skills they have learned. Heightened Political Capital (improved board or commission processes) and Social Capital (more professional relationships with the public, the development community and other interests) are also major impacts of the Citizen Planner Program. These three Community Capitals taken together demonstrate that the Citizen Planner Program results in improved knowledge and decision-making skills while strengthening the ability of participants to interact with other government bodies and the public.

In contrast, the lowest impact computed using the REM process was Built Capital. Built Capital is a focus on community development through infrastructure: roads, sewer and water systems, main streets, industrial parks and similar physical assets. Although Built Capital scores are low, the most complete stories captured during the REM process were accounts of Citizen Planner Program capstone projects regarding community infrastructure. These stories were directly attributed to the Citizen Planner Program and Master Citizen Planner credential.

RQ 3: Which classroom training format (one-time or continuing education) shows significantly more impacts?

Survey results show that those with the Master Citizen Planner credential reported higher impact compared to Citizen Planners when asked to rank various statements on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being great impact and 5 being no impact (**Tables 7 & 8**). Master Citizen Planners reported significantly higher impacts compared to Citizen Planners on eight out of 10 program goals (**Table 7**). Impacts include an increased satisfaction of serving on local boards and commissions, improved continuity/institutional memory at the local level regarding land use and decisions, increased length of time served on local boards and commissions, enhanced understanding and responsibility of local officials in relation to ethics and conflict of interest issues, and improved working relationships and citizen involvement within and among communities. The program also impacted Master Citizen Planners significantly more than Citizen Planners by providing locally focused, current and on-going land use education and nurturing alumni to promote "good practices" in land use. In addition, Master Citizen Planners reported significantly higher impacts compared to Citizen Planners on three out of seven impact statements captured from REM sessions (**Table 8**). Impacts include changes in the way local officials are interacting with local planning officials or planning consultants, an increase in diversity of people (professional background, ethnic background, etc.) involved in the decision-making process and changes in how commissions or boards function. This strongly suggests that Citizen Planners that opt for continuing education report significantly higher impacts compared to people that do the training on a one-time basis.

In conclusion, based on evidence from longitudinal data, REM sessions and a survey, it is clear that people that volunteer to choose continuing education are impacted significantly more compared to people that volunteer to do the training on a one-time basis. The most likely type of impact would be related to Human Capital, or people's ability to lead a community based on their skills and knowledge. The Citizen Planner Program builds these skills using a hands-on approach where participants develop a capstone project to benefit their community. This in turn leads to ripple effects for communities in Michigan at the grass roots level.



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Appendix A – Ripple Effect Mapping Facilitator Guide

Citizen Planner Program Focus group questions and script

I. Introductions and Brief Overview (10 minutes)

Michigan State University Extension is hosting this session to better understand the **impacts** of the **Citizen Planner Program**.

You are invited here because you have connections to the program – you may have **been a participant** or you are a **local official** who **knows a participant** from your community.

We are sure that all of you have something to share about **things that have happened as a result of the program**. We thank you for taking the time and making the effort to be with us.

Let's take a moment to get to know each other. Please share your name and how you're connected to the Citizen Planner program. We'll go around the whole room.

Today's session will use a visual "mind mapping" method to help you to reflect upon and visually map **intended and unintended changes** – we call them "**ripples**," produced by the Citizen Planner Program. We will explore individual and community changes that have taken place as a result of Citizen Planner. We start at the individual level and then group and categorize to the organizational and community levels.

To bring:

- Agendas for participants
- Facilitator script
- Laptop with XMind mapping program loaded and working
- LCD projector
- ½ sheets of paper ("anything else" question and back up if computer doesn't work)
- Sticky wall (for back up)
- Black sharpies (for back up)

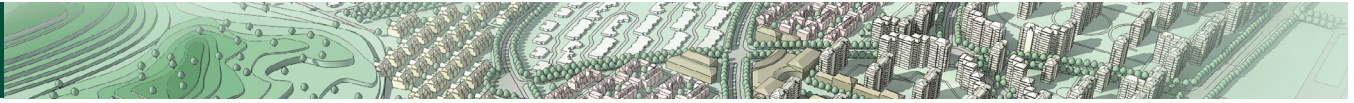
II. Appreciative Inquiry Interview (10 minutes)

- a. Find someone you don't know well to interview
- b. **Share a brief story about your experience with Citizen Planner** either as a participant or interacting with someone who completed with program using one of these questions: (these questions are also on your agenda) **(after 5 min/ring bell and ask to discuss other question)**
 - Talk about a success, achievement, or highlight you've had based on your involvement in Citizen Planner.
 - What new connections or stronger relationships with others, (like planning commission members in other communities, planning professionals, etc.) do you now have?
 - **"I believe the Citizen Planner program is valuable, because..."?? (notecards at dinner)?**

(Note: gathering information from these interviews happens in the next, mapping, section)

III. Mapping (85 minutes)

In this phase of conversation, we focus on **how the Citizen Planner program has impacted you and your community**. You can think of this as a "so what" conversation – as in, "you participated in the Citizen Planner program, so, what difference did it make for you? For your community?"



Appendix A – Ripple Effect Mapping Facilitator Guide *(continued)*

For those of you who participated in the program, I'll ask questions about things you **learned**, have **used**, and **done** for yourself and your communities as a result of the Citizen Planner program. As you share, we'll map your comments to see what connections emerge –

For you who didn't participate in the program, **YOU know how the program and participants' experience led to things happening in communities** around the area, and we want you to **share your observations** too. We'll map your comments as well.

Questions during the mapping exercise are intended to help draw out and categorize different types of “ripples,” such as

- new knowledge or skills,
- new relationships or connections,
- new or improved ways of engaging community members in planning,
- new financial/economic opportunities,
- strengthened or new creative placemaking or arts and culture effort,
- new or improved uses of technology,
- strengthened or new efforts to conserve the natural environment.

Guidelines for a good map

- Review the way your comments show up on the map. We invite you speak up if it doesn't reflect what you've said, either in the wording or connections.
- At first, comments on the map may seem “all over the place.”
Over time, it gets clearer as we hear how things are connected – the “ripples” between things.
- We'll take time to review the map later, so if you see words or connections that could be tweaked or improved, we'll give you a chance to do that.

We'll start by mapping things you've just shared in your interviews – things that touched on highlights and successes, things you're proud to share, and connections with others that you've made as a result of your contact with Citizen Planner.

So, let's go around the room to hear brief reports from your interviews and we'll start to map them as the first “so what's” or ripples of the program

(Go around to each participant to get short reports on what they shared. Record each on the map, likely unconnected to anything else since these are the first comments)

(Once the interview reports are done, use the potential questions below to probe potential impacts of the program. Ask additional questions that you think of as the conversation unfolds as needed)

20 minutes for 15~ participants (to share brief reports)

Appendix A – Ripple Effect Mapping Facilitator Guide *(continued)*

5 minute stretch break while participant initial comments are reviewed for potential categorization and alignment on the XMind program display.

6:45 reconvene promptly

Ok, now I'd like to follow up with additional questions to explore possible other impacts or ripples of the Citizen Planner program.

1. Think back to things you learned through the Citizen Planner program...

Knowledge impacts

What kinds of things (knowledge and learning) have you shared with others? *[social impact]*
 - anything from formal presentations to informal conversations with other planning officials or community residents.

What have others/you observed in the Citizen Planner participants that you feel is directly related to their involvement in the program? *[non-participant specific]*

2. Think back to your experience with the Citizen Planner program...

Community involvement

How has this experience (Citizen Planner) influenced your **local community involvement**?

- Are **you more involved** in community decision-making? How? Doing what?
- ... in organizational decision-making? How? *[civic impacts]*

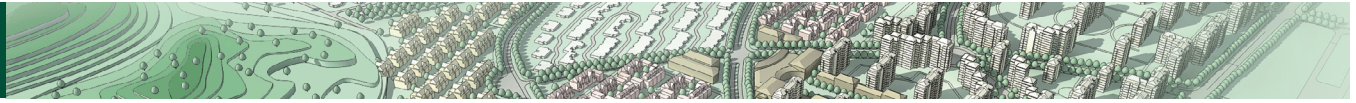
How has Citizen Planner affected the **way you work** with others in the community?

- How has this program changed the way **members of your board or commission** work with **each other**? *[civic impacts]*
- *and, how* **community members engage** with your board or commission? *[civic impacts]*

Community impacts

What, if any, **building or infrastructure projects** have happened in your community that you feel were affected by Citizen Planner? *[building/infrastructure impacts]*

What, if any, **funding** has your community received that you feel is related to Citizen Planner?
[economic impacts]



Appendix A – Ripple Effect Mapping Facilitator Guide *(continued)*

Since the program, can you think of any **changes in planning and zoning** aimed at **protecting natural resources** that you feel are related? Please share...

- Did any of those efforts **result in more protection** of natural resources than before?
[*natural resources impacts*]

How have you improved your local **community or region connections**? [*social impact*]

- What has **happened as a result** of any of those relationships?
- What **new collaborations and networks** with other organizations or communities have formed as a result of your Citizen Planner experience? Please describe... [*civic impacts*]

What **impact**, if any, has Citizen Planner had on efforts to **promote diversity** on any level in your community (e.g., people of different ages, different cultural backgrounds, different economic backgrounds, etc.)? [*cultural impacts*]

Additional impacts

What are **negative aspects** or “down sides” of the Citizen Planner program?

- Are there **things that happened** as a program ripple that you wish hadn’t happened?

Are there **any other impacts** that haven’t been mentioned you would like to add?

IV. Reflection (10 minutes)

Have we missed anything really important? **Are there any issues** that no one has mentioned?

What would “someone else” in the community have to say about the Citizen Planner Program?

What is most interesting about the map to you?

At the end of this time, if there is still something we did not have time to get to, please write it down on a piece of a paper in as much detail as you are able, along with your name, and we will try to incorporate it into the map afterwards.

V. Closing (5 minutes)

- We may want to follow up with some of you for more details on the impact of the Citizen Planner program
- You will get a final copy of this map
- **THANK YOU** for your help here today and for your efforts in your communities!

8:00 ADJOURN – THANKS FOR YOUR TIME THIS EVENING~!!!

Appendix B – Survey Instrument

The MSU Citizen Planner Program is designed to enhance local planning through individual growth and improved community planning activities and processes. Through an on-line survey of program graduates, the goal of this work is to identify categories of impacts, describe frequency and degree of impacts and if they change over time. This research will aid in identifying the impacts of the Citizen Planner program in local communities and improving our program delivery. Participants will be asked a series of questions about their Citizen Planner Program experience. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You are free to not answer any question or stop participating at any time. The survey responses are anonymous. Future use for reporting, publication or presentation of the data will be in aggregate. If you have any questions about this study you may contact the lead researcher Dr. Pat Crawford at crawf203@msu.edu, or 101 Human Ecology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, or (517) 432-0704. Do you agree to participate?

- Yes

Q1 What is your education level?

- High school degree
 Some college
 Associates degree
 Undergraduate degree
 Some graduate courses
 Graduate/professional degree

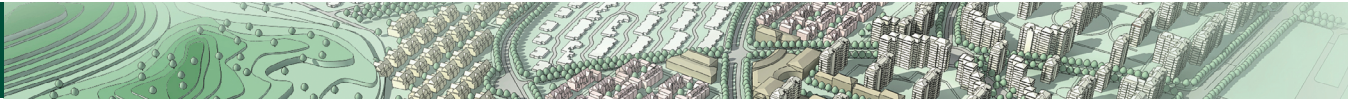
Q2 Which of the following best describes your skill level as a current planning official? (Check one)

- I'm just starting out and have much to learn
 I can do what I need to do quite well, but there's more I need to learn
 I have a broad range of knowledge and experience in this field
 I have in depth and significant knowledge and experience in this field

Education and Training Opportunities. The purpose of this section is to help us learn about the kinds of education and training opportunities that are useful to Michigan planning officials.

Q3 From which organizations have you received planning-related education and training? (Check all that apply)

- American Planning Association (APA)
 Michigan Association of Counties (MAC)
 Michigan Farm Bureau/Farmland & Community Alliance
 Michigan Municipal League (MML)
 Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) [Michigan chapter of APA]
 Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) (or Citizen Planner)



Appendix B – Survey Instrument *(continued)*

- Michigan Townships Association (MTA)
- MSU Planning and Zoning Center
- Your county planning commission/department
- Your state planning and development region/council of governments/Michigan Prosperity Region
- MSU Land Policy Institute
- Other (describe) _____

Q4 Would you, yourself, be willing to participate in additional workshops, webinars, online courses, conferences or other educational activities as a requirement for continuing as a planning official?

- Yes
- No

Q5 In your opinion, how many hours of required continuing education per year is appropriate for continuing as a planning official?

- 1-5 hours / year
- 6-10 hours / year
- 11-15 hours / year
- 16-20 hours / year
- More than 20 hours / year

Q6 Have you completed the Citizen Planner Program?

- Yes
- No, but I have attended one or more classes
- No
- Other _____

We would like to learn more about ways the Citizen Planner Program has had an impact in local communities. Some of these are new partnerships, ways of functioning, and interactions.

Appendix B – Survey Instrument *(continued)*

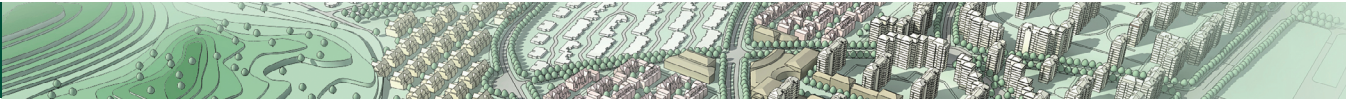
Q7 How much impact would you attribute to each of the changes that has occurred in your community because of the Citizen Planner Program? Please check all that apply. If there are changes that we did not list, please name and describe each in the "other" box and rank.

	Great impact	some impact	very little impact	no impact	does not apply
Collaboration/partnerships between different units of government (Explain more).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Changes in how commissions or boards function (Explain more).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Changes in the way local officials are interacting with local planning officials or planning consultants (Explain more).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduction in litigation exposure (Explain more).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase in education or training opportunities (Explain more).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase in efforts to preserve natural resources (Explain more).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase in diversity of people (Professional background, ethnic background, etc.) involved in the decision making process (Explain more).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix B – Survey Instrument *(continued)*

Q8 The Citizen Planner Program has ten key goals. How do you feel participating in the program impacted you or your community in respect to each of the program goals?

	No impact	some impact	medium impact	large impact	great impact
Improve Land-use decision making.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase awareness of existing land use tools.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide locally focused, current, and on-going land use education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nurture alumni to promote “good practices” in land use.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase length of time served on local boards and commissions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase satisfaction of serving on local boards and commissions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve continuity/institutional memory at the local level regarding land use and decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enhance the understanding and responsibility of local officials in relation to ethics and conflict of interest issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve working relationships and citizen involvement within and among communities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduce local litigation and liability through improved risk management practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Appendix B – Survey Instrument *(continued)*

The next section contains questions aimed at capturing the impacts of the Citizen Planner Program. It is important for us to learn this through your comments.

Q10 What are the most important changes that have occurred which have affected your personal growth during the Citizen Planner Program? (Example: land use applications, making land use decisions, professional network, type of private development, support through public investments to assist private development, interaction with developers, planning and zoning standards, etc.)

Q11 What are the most important changes that have occurred which have affected how your board or commission works together as a result of the Citizen Planner Program? (Example: land use applications, making land use decisions, professional network, type of private development, support through public investments to assist private development, interaction with developers, planning and zoning standards, etc.)

Q12 What are the most important changes that have occurred which have had an impact with/in the community as a result of the Citizen Planner Program? (Example: land use applications, making land use decisions, professional network, type of private development, support through public investments to assist private development, interaction with developers, planning and zoning standards, etc.)

Q13 Is there any other important change(s) that have occurred as a result of the Citizen Planner Program?

Q14 Did you complete the Master Citizen Planner Program by taking the online exam and completing a capstone project or presentation?

- Yes
- No

Appendix B – Survey Instrument *(continued)*

This section asks about the capstone project or presentation you completed to become a Master Citizen Planner.

Q15 Which year did you complete your capstone project / presentation?

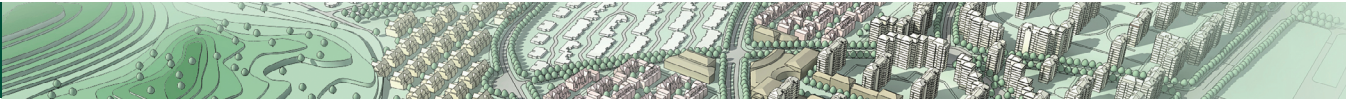
- before 2007
- 2007
- 2008
- 2009
- 2010
- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
- 2014
- 2015

Q16 Which county(s) did your capstone project / presentation impact? Please list county(s) or indicate state wide.

The section contains questions aimed at capturing the impacts of the MCP capstone project/presentation. It is important for us to learn this through your comments.

Q17 Please describe (or title of) your Capstone Project or presentation?

Q18 What impacts do you attribute to your capstone project or presentation? (For example: creation of jobs, hiring of consultants, new types of development, grants & contracts, tax base, multiplier effects, dollar savings, streamlining the planning process, etc.)



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