

AICP Exam

Application Tips + Preparation



www.ohioplanning.org/aicpexam

OUTLINE

- Introductions
- Why AICP?
- Exam Overview
- Applying to Take the Exam
- The AICP Exam – What to Expect
- Exam Preparation
- Certification Maintenance



INTRODUCTIONS

- Eric Anderson, AICP
- Christine Dersi Davis, AICP

WHY AICP?

- Distinction among your peers and the public
 - Advocate and advance the field of planning
 - Be recognized for achieving professional level of skills

- Enhanced opportunities for employees and consultants
 - “AICP preferred” in job postings
 - Required within a certain time frame by employers
 - Distinguish yourself from the competition

- Enhanced salaries
 - AICP members earn median salaries \$16,000 more than non AICP members. (2018)

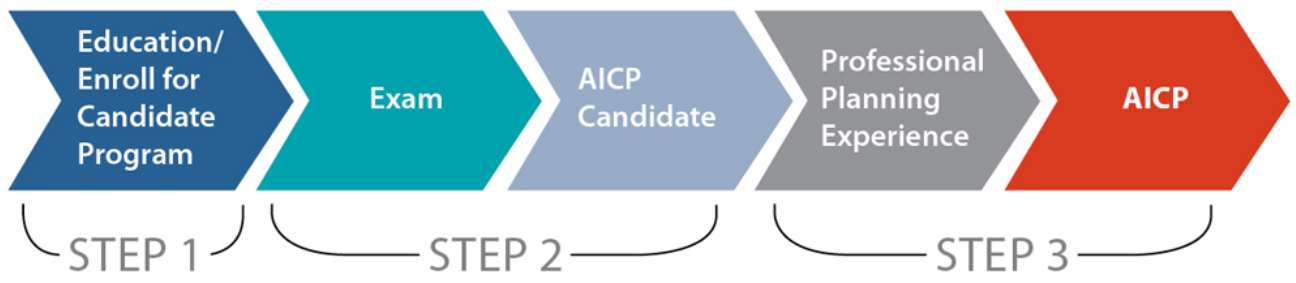
www.planning.org/aicp/why

PATHS TO AICP

Traditional Sequence



AICP Candidate Pilot Program Sequence



PROFESSIONAL PLANNING EXPERIENCE

Level of Education*	Total Number of Years of Professional Planning Experience Required
Graduate degree in Planning from a program accredited by the PAB	2
Bachelor's degree in Planning from a program accredited by the PAB**	3
Graduate degree in Planning from a program not accredited by the PAB	3
Any other post-graduate, graduate, or undergraduate degree***	4
No college degree	8

* The education may be obtained before, during, or after the experience.

** Accredited degrees have been determined by the Planning Accreditation Board to meet standards approved by the American Institute of Certified Planners and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning or recognized by the Canadian Institute of Planners. AICP gives educational credit to applicants holding these degrees if the degree was received (1) during the period the university has been accredited (or previously recognized), and (2) by the time that an application for member is filed. If you are unsure about the status of your planning degree, consult the Planning Accreditation Board's list or contact AICP.

*** Non-accredited undergraduate planning degrees and degrees in related and other disciplines (i.e. Geography, Architecture, History, Music, etc.) at undergraduate and post-graduate levels.

THE APPLICATION

Professional Experience

- Only include positions needed to meet the minimum eligibility requirements
- Include positions for which you can provide the strongest responses
- When possible, do not include jobs that were held for a short amount of time (i.e. less than 6 months)

THE APPLICATION

Employment Verification Tips

- Give your employer(s) ***ample*** time to complete a verification letter on your behalf
- Provide your employer (current and former) with the sample verification letter:
 - www.planning.org/certification/pdf/samplejobverification.pdf
- If you have a special circumstance, email aicpexam@planning.org with questions

THE APPLICATION

General Tips

- **Read** the Exam Candidate Bulletin & use the Criterion Response Checklist
 - www.planning.org/certification/bulletin
- **APPLY EARLY!**
- Proofread
- Ask an AICP co-worker or supervisor to review your responses before submitting
- Write your essays in a Word document before submitting responses + keep copy

APPLICATION CRITERION RESPONSES

General Tips

- Craft responses that are between 250 and 500 words
- Speak in first person - don't speak to what "the team" did
- Refrain from bulleted lists and incomplete sentences
- **REMEMBER** – Reviewers are required to base their decision on your criterion responses. Do not assume your application will be approved just because you have a lot of planning experience.
- Avoid "filler" information

APPLICATION CRITERION RESPONSES

General Tips

- Only include **completed** project examples in your responses. *Assumptions about project outcomes cannot be used to verify experience already gained.*
- Only one essay is required per criterion.

APPLICATION CRITERION RESPONSES

Specific Tips

Criterion 1: Involve a Professional Level of Responsibility and Resourcefulness while Applying a Planning Process Appropriate to the Project or Situation.

- Discuss how **you** applied a planning process STEP BY STEP appropriate to the situation through one of the three sections of professional planning content
- AND how **you** were a responsible and resourceful professional when applying that process.
- Choose ONE of 3 topics to write about

APPLICATION CRITERION RESPONSES

Specific Tips

Criterion 2: Employ An Appropriately Comprehensive Point of View.

- Describe **your** role(s) in a project(s) and how **you** were able to employ a comprehensive point of view, rather than simply describing project outcomes.
- Describe how **you** *employed* a comprehensive point of view, not how the project/process itself or outcomes were comprehensive.

APPLICATION CRITERION RESPONSES

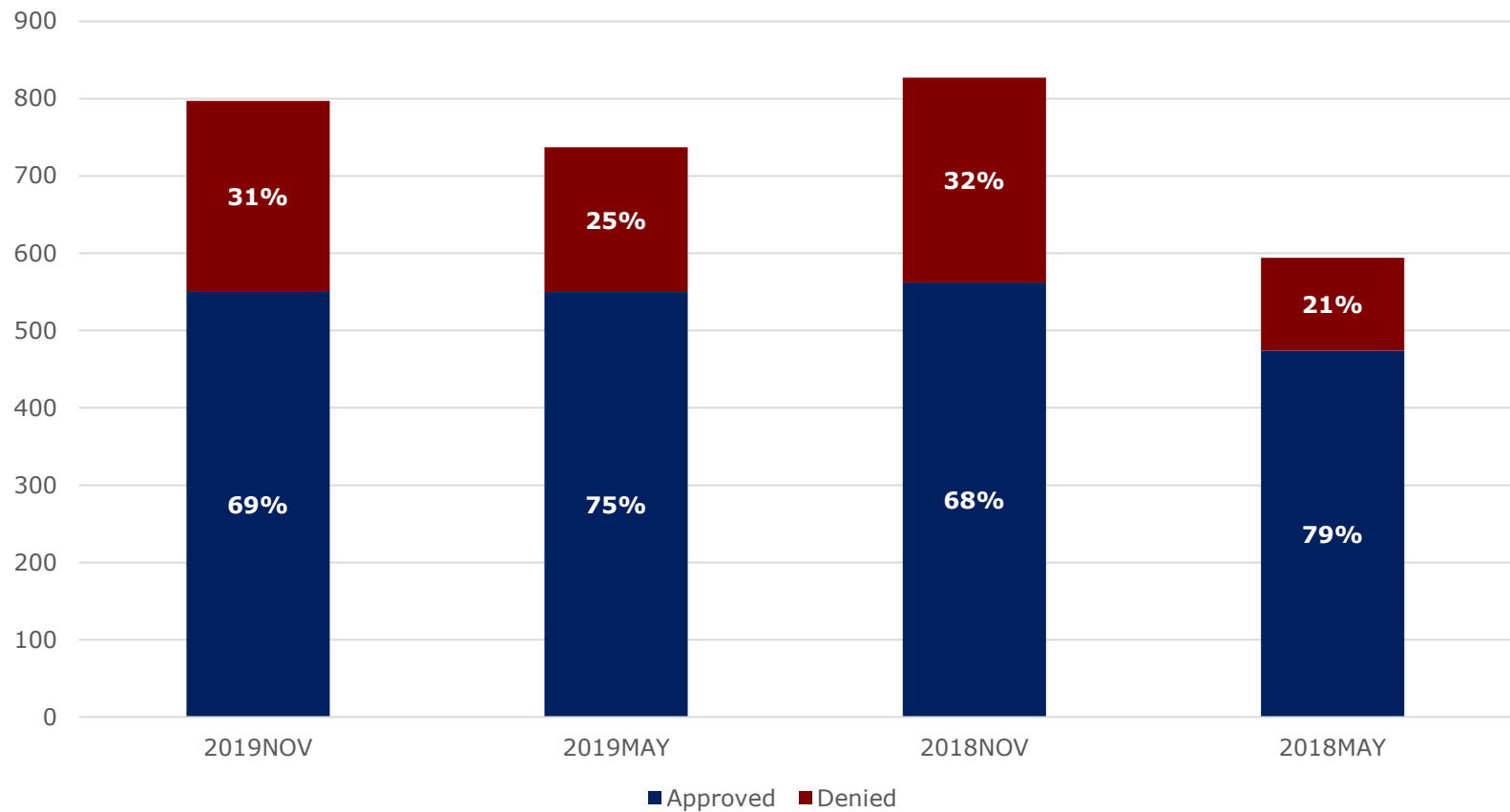
Specific Tips

Criterion 3: Influence Public Decision Making in the Public Interest.

- There are two parts to this criterion you must answer:
 - 1) *Discuss how **you** have been responsible to the public.*
 - 2) *Discuss how **you** have influenced public decision making in the public interest.*

APPLICATION APPROVAL RATES

AICP Application Approval/Denial Rates



EXAM OVERVIEW

- Offered twice a year: May & November
- Each exam window lasts 14 days
- Tests are administered electronically at Prometric testing centers
- You may take the test only once during each exam window
- You must register each time you wish to test
- Eligibility lasts for three years upon application approval

IMPORTANT EXAM DATES

- Application is online only at www.planning.org/aicp
- Upcoming Dates:
 - **November 2019 Testing Window**
 Application Window: Closed
 Registration Deadline: October 31
 Testing Window: November 4-18
 - **May 2020 Testing Window**
 Application Window Opens: December 2
 Early Bird Deadline: December 9
 Final Application Deadline: December 30
 Testing Window: May 11-23

EXAM SCORING

- Official score provided immediately after completing the computerized exam (thank you!)
- Scores are reported on a scale of 25-75, with 55 as the passing score
- Official letter sent out about one month later



EXAM PASS RATES

- [INSERT HERE]

THE EXAM

Overview

- 800 questions in the pool
- 170 questions on the test
 - Only 150 are scored – 20 are “feelers”
- 2 versions of each test at all times
- You are given 4 hours to complete the exam:
 - 15 minutes at the start to read directions
 - 3 ½ hours to take the exam
 - 15 minutes at the end to complete a survey
 - You must complete the survey before seeing your score on the screen. 😊

THE EXAM

Ahead of the Exam

- Confirm your appointment with your testing center at least one week ahead of time
- If you don't know where your testing site is, do a drive by ahead of time
- Bring two forms of ID (see Exam Bulletin for list)
- Call the testing center ahead of time to get their packaging policy if you plan to use earbuds
- Get sleep the night before. Seriously!
- Maintain your normal eating/drinking routine the day of

THE EXAM

The Exam Center

- Get to the testing center 15 minutes early to sign waver and provide ID's
- You'll be asked to remove any layered clothing and may be asked to lift pant legs. You may also get wanded. 😊
- Lockers/key are available
- Bring extra layers if you get cold easily
- You may not bring anything into the room besides a sweater, your locker key, your ID, and the materials provided to you
- You may exit the testing room for beverage/snack/bathroom (clock keeps ticking)
- You will receive a scratch paper booklet, a sharpened pencil, and a basic calculator and you must return all three upon completion of the exam

THE EXAM

During the Exam – The Testing Space

- There will be sound blocking headphones at your seat and white sound pumped into speakers
- You're in a room full of people taking various tests
- Proctors circle the room every 15 minutes
- Utilize the Computer-based Examination Tutorial to become familiar with the computer program ahead of time

www.planning.org/certification/examprep



EXAM PREPARATION

APA Resources

- Recommended Reading List (Dauntingly Lengthy)
- Computer-based Exam Tutorial (Must do!)
- APA Policy Guides (25 PDF's)
- APA PAS Reports (now FREE to APA members)
- AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
- CPC Study Manual: \$15
- Planning Magazine
- JAPA/Zoning Practice: \$40-\$60

www.planning.org/certification/examprep

EXAM PREPARATION

Other Resources

- *Local Planning: Contemporary Principles and Practice: \$125*
- *APA Planning and Urban Design Standards: \$110*
- *Everyday Ethics for Practicing Planners: \$35*
- Planetizen AICP Exam Prep (All Online): \$245-\$720
 - www.planetizen.com/store/aicp

EXAM PREPARATION

Unofficial Resources > Beware!

- www.planningprep.com
- www.studystack.com
- www.quizlet.com
- www.flashcardmachine.com

EXAM PREPARATION

Unofficial Resources > Don't Beware!

- Planning Webcast Series
www.youtube.com/planningwebcast
- Ohio Chapter
www.ohioplanning.org/aicpexam
- Northern New England Chapter
www.youtube.com/watch?v=3XLGIvqJQSI
- Florida Chapter
www.floridaplanning.org/treasurecoast/aicp_links.pdf
- Georgia Chapter
georgiaplanning.org/aicp/aicp-exam-reviews

THE EXAM

Exam Content

- **Fundamental Planning Knowledge**
38 Questions (25%)
- **Plan Making & Implementation**
45 Questions (30%)
- **Areas of Practice**
45 Questions (30%)
- **Leadership, Administration & Management**
7 Questions (5%)
- **AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct**
15 Questions (10%)

THE EXAM

Study Tips

- Review the five content categories and determine your greatest weaknesses and start studying there
- Create a study plan – when, where, how often
- Read up on current trends
- Take sample tests (but be beware of tests you take)
- Study how YOU study best
- Get a study buddy

THE EXAM

Approaching a question

Typical public health topics in the comprehensive plan include:

- I. Aging
- II. Active Transportation
- III. Planned Parenthood
- IV. Environmental Health

- A. *I and II only*
- B. *II and IV only*
- C. *I, II, and IV only*
- D. *All of the above*

THE EXAM

Approaching a question

A community with an aging population is reconsidering its land use and housing policies to promote aging in place. Such considerations may include:

- I. Promoting granny flats
- II. Relaxing development standards for nursing homes
- III. Improving transit services to residential neighborhoods
- IV. Providing loans and grants for accessibility improvements at homes

- A. *I and IV only*
- B. *I, II and III only*
- C. *I, III, and IV only*
- D. *All of the above*

THE EXAM

Approaching a question

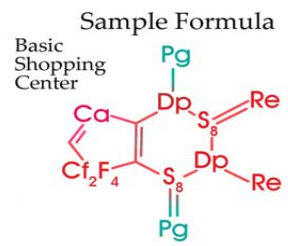
The most appropriate method to eliminate an existing adult use is:

- I. A taking
- II. A moratorium
- III. An amortization
- IV. A non-conforming use

QUESTIONS

Periodic Table of City Planning Elements

1 Ci City Hall																	2 O Office
3 Po Post Office	4 Co Community Center																
11 H Hospital	12 Li Library																
19 Mu Museum	20 Cu Cultural Center	21 Fi Fire Station	22 St Streetscape	23 Nu Nursery School	24 P Park	25 Sf Single Family Residential	26 Cc Child Care	27 Ph Pharmacy	28 Re Restaurant	29 De Deil	30 By Bakery	31 S Shop	32 At Amphitheater	33 Sw Swimming Pool	34 Ho Hotel	35 W Warehouse	36 Dt Dental Clinic
37 Bu Bus Stop	38 Bt Bus Terminal	39 Pd Police Station	40 Pa Public Art	41 El Elementary School	42 Ts Townsquare	43 To Townhomes	44 Sc Senior Care	45 Os Office Supplies	46 Bk Bookstore	47 Ms Music Store	48 Cy Candy Shop	49 Sm Supermarket	50 Th Theater	51 Ap Amusement Park	52 Rv Rec. Vehicle Park	53 In Industry	54 Lb Laboratory
55 Tr Train Station	56 Ma Marina	57 Hb Historic Structure	72 Hi High School	73 Mi Middle School	74 Bg Botanical Garden	75 Cm Condominium	76 Eh Elderly Housing	77 Cs Clothing Store	78 Lr Laundromat	79 Sa Beauty Salon Barber	80 Fl Florist Shop	81 Gd Garden Shop	82 Dp Department Store	83 Tp Theme Park	84 V Visitors Center	85 Ei Eco-Industrial Park	86 Bp Business Park
87 Sp Seaport	88 Ap Airport	89 Lm Landmark	104 Pv Private School	105 Cg Community Garden	106 Zo Zoo	107 As Apartments	108 Mh Mobilehome Park	109 Dc Dry Cleaner	110 As Antique Store	111 Fs Furniture Store	112 Hc Home Improve. Ctr	113 Hs Hardware Store	114 Fg Fitness Gym	115 Aq Aquarium	116 Cv Convention Center	117 Pw Power Station	118 Bs Broadcast Studio



58 Wo Place of Worship	59 Pg Parking	60 Ce College	61 Gc Golf Course	62 Hs Homeless Shelter	63 My Mortuary	64 Ac Animal Care	65 Pr Printer	66 Ga Gas Station	67 A Auto Service	68 Cw Carwash	69 F Fast Food	70 Sv Street Vendor	71 Cn Casino
90 He Heliport	91 Jl Jail	92 U University	93 La Landfill	94 Ce Cemetery	95 Au Adult Use	96 Ni Nightclub	97 Ba Bar	98 Pb Pub	99 Ls Liquor Store	100 Wi Winery	101 Ps Pawn Shop	102 Tt Tattoo Parlor	103 Tp Treatment Plant