



GENERAL COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DESIGN

ALABAMA COMMUNITIES OF EXCELLENCE (ACE)

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MISSION

The ACE program is a comprehensive three-phase approach to economic and community development for cities with populations between 2,000 and 12,000. With the mission of helping Alabama's smaller communities to plan, grow and prosper, ACE partners from the private sector, governmental agencies, and universities work with each community to successfully achieve the vision and goals created during the ACE program.

OVERVIEW

ACE is a coalition of partners working together to provide Alabama communities with the community development programs and tools needed to ensure their long term success. It is a 501 (c)(3) organization with partners including:

- Alabama Association of Regional Councils
- AL Department of Economic and Community Affairs
- Alabama Development Office
- AL Historical Commission
- AL League of Municipalities
- AL Municipal Electric Authority
- Alabama Power Company
- ALACOM Finance
- Alagasco
- AU Economic & Community Development Institute
- Bradley Arant Rose & White
- EDAA
- Goodwyn, Mills & Cawood
- Merchant Capital
- PowerSouth Energy Cooperative
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- UA Center for Economic Development
- USDA Rural Development

WHAT ACE DOES

ACE provides technical assistance to select communities in order to strengthen their long-term economic success. Its comprehensive three-phase approach targets communities with populations ranging from 2,000 to 18,000. Communities are selected based on the level of local commitment to the ACE program and the community's capacity to support the ACE program.

Phase I: Assessment

Includes application process, selection process and detailed community assessment by ACE team members. A comprehensive "report card" detailing community assets, weaknesses and recommended strategy and actions is prepared.

Phase II: Leadership Development and Strategic Planning

Includes creation of ongoing Leadership Development Program and development of strategic plan.

Phase III: Implementation and Comprehensive Planning

Addresses comprehensive planning, commercial business development, education enhancement, infrastructure, health and human services, retiree attraction, tourism, economic development, and quality of life/recreation issues.

Graduation

Upon completion of all three phases, communities are designated an “Alabama Community of Excellence” and receive a grant for further community/economic development efforts.

AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION – ALABAMA CHAPTER (AAPA)

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MISSION AND GOALS

The purposes of the Chapter are to carry out the purposes and objectives of the American Planning Association (APA); to consider, confer on and make recommendations to the Association on matters of National Association policy; and, more specific to the Chapter area, to help residents of the State improve the quality of their lives through a rational and comprehensive approach to physical, economic and human resource planning. This mission is accomplished by:

- Promoting planning approaches in response to developmental and social opportunities and challenges facing the State
- Increasing awareness of the planning process, the planning profession and the benefits that both can bring to the State of Alabama
- Supporting planning education and fostering the growth of professional planners’ knowledge and skills
- Encouraging the exchange of planning information and experience in Alabama; and
- Working with other organizations in the State to foster common goals.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- The *Alabama Planner* is the AAPA newsletter. This quarterly publication highlights Chapter activities, job postings, and planning related articles. AAPA members receive the newsletter via postal service as part of their membership privileges. Anyone may view the *Alabama Planner* online.
- The *Jobline* is available to all visitors of our website. Planning job postings should be submitted via email to the webmaster, as indicated on the instructions available at the AAPA website.
- The “*On the Web*” section of the AAPA Web site includes hyperlinks to “all things planning.”
- The “*Planning Legislation*” section of the site contains information about new planning legislation.
- The *AAPA Web site* includes information about and a link to the Alabama Planning Institute.
- The “*Kidstown, Alabama*” portion of the website is designed with children in mind and provides information about what a planner is and what planners do, as well as links to other planning sites.

ALABAMA PLANNING INSTITUTE

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PURPOSE

The Alabama Planning Institute serves the municipalities and counties of Alabama, providing training and professional development programs in the broad area of planning and urban development. The Institute was established in the mid-1980's as a collaborative effort of the Alabama League of Municipalities and the Alabama Chapter of the American Planning Association. In 2001 its 21 seminars and workshops offered at numerous locations across the state served more than 750 planning commission members of boards of adjustment, council persons, mayors, local and regional planning staff and others. The Institute is administered by the University of North Alabama on behalf of the two co-sponsors.

AUBURN UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN STUDIES (URBAN STUDIO)

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OVERVIEW

The Urban Studio (more formally known as the Auburn University Center for Architecture and Urban Studies) was founded in 1991 by Associate Professor Franklin Setzer as a teaching and outreach venue for Auburn's School of Architecture. Setzer, along with CADC Dean Daniel Bennett conceived a place for students of architecture to be immersed in an urban environment, in direct and engaged contact with practicing professionals and in active pursuit of the design of great places.

The Urban Studio has an ongoing commitment to teaching, intern partnerships with local architects, and studio work focused in the city of Birmingham. In addition, the Urban Studio maintains an ongoing commitment to work with communities to identify those positive assets that can be the basis of a sound master plan for physical and economic vitality - creating distinctive opportunities for building a higher quality of life, broader prospects in the community and a better place to live.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- **Small Town Design Initiative:** <http://www.yourtownalabama.org/smalltown.htm>: Through its Small Town Design Initiative, the Urban Studio partners with small towns and communities across the state to help them recognize their potential and establish a vision for the future. The Studio's founder also founded the Small Town Design Initiative in 1998 to assist civic leaders and

citizens in small towns in preserving those things that made their towns special while preparing for revitalization, growth and improved quality of life. Since that time, the Studio has worked with over 40 communities to develop long-range visions and strategic plans for revitalization.

- Your Town Alabama (<http://www.yourtownalabama.org/>): The Urban Studio also played a key role in founding YourTownAlabama, an organization that provides leadership training workshops for citizen leaders across the state. To date, YourTownAlabama has held 16 workshops for citizen leaders across the state. To date, Your TownAlabama has held 16 workshops with more than 500 citizen leaders from 100 towns and counties. The organization's goal is to cultivate leadership that understands the value of planning, knows where and how to find technical assistance and expertise and has the confidence to take action on a local level. Urban Studio continues to be an active partner in this effort.
- Projects Around Birmingham: Urban Studio students have also worked on several projects around Birmingham, including in the Ensley, Woodlawn and Rosedale communities, as well as the Birmingham Historical Society's Buddy-Up Program. Midtown Housing, Railroad Reservation Park, Sloss Furnaces Master Plan, Lakeview and Richard Arrington Jr. Boulevard in-fill are a few of the other projects the Urban Studio has been involved with through the years.

DESIGN ALABAMA, INC.

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MISSION

Design Alabama, Inc. works to increase awareness and the value of the design disciplines that influence our environment. Their work is based on a belief that the quality of life and economic growth of Alabama are enhanced through attention to and investment in good design.

OVERVIEW

Design Alabama works from the capitol city of Montgomery, Alabama and works as a statewide partner of the Alabama State Council on the Arts to deliver a variety of design programming across the state. Led by one employee, Gina Clifford, Executive Director, the organization continues to be the lead organization for design arts in Alabama.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- Mayor's Design Summit
- *Design Alabama Journal*
- Small Town Design Initiative
- Other Projects and Programs

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA), PLANNING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

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PURPOSE

The Planning and Technical Assistance division of the EDA works to enhance community success in attracting private capital investment and lucrative job opportunities. In fulfilling its mission, EDA is guided by the basic principle that distressed communities must be empowered to develop and implement their own economic development and revitalization strategies.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Based on these locally- and regionally-developed priorities, EDA works in partnership with state and local governments, regional economic development districts, public and private nonprofit organizations, and Indian tribes. EDA helps distressed communities address problems associated with long-term economic distress, as well as sudden and severe economic dislocations including recovering from the economic impacts of natural disasters, the closure of military installations and other Federal facilities, changing trade patterns, and the depletion of natural resources.