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APA AICP

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Topic Break Down

Topic	No. of Questions
Topic 1, Foundational Knowledge	149
Topic 2, Planning Practice	50
Topic 3, Management and Leadership	61
Topic 4, Spatial Planning and Design	18
Topic 5, Areas of Practice	48
Total	326

QUESTION NO: 1

Which of the following are national objectives that an activity funded through the Community Development Block Grant program must meet?

A. Benefit low- and moderate-income persons

B. Prevent or eliminate slums and blight

C. Meet an urgent need

D. Increase the local general-fund balance

ANSWER: A B C

Explanation:

CDBG-funded activities must meet at least one of the program's national objectives. **Benefiting low- and moderate-income persons** is the principal national objective and includes activities that benefit an eligible area, limited clientele, housing, or jobs. **Preventing or eliminating slums and blight** is another national objective and may apply on an area basis or a spot basis under specified conditions. **Meeting an urgent need** may apply when a community faces serious and immediate threats to health or welfare, existing conditions are recent or recently became urgent, and other financial resources are not available.

Increasing a jurisdiction's general-fund balance is not a CDBG national objective. CDBG is intended to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons. See HUD's CDBG national objectives guidance and the applicable regulations at 24 CFR 570.208.

QUESTION NO: 2

Which of the following is a source of point-source pollution?

A. Farm

B. Wetlands

C. Sewer pipe

D. Chemical factory

ANSWER: C D

Explanation:

Point-source pollution comes from a discrete, identifiable conveyance or facility from which pollutants are discharged, rather than from diffuse runoff spread across a broad area. A sewer pipe is a classic point source because it is a specific, identifiable pipe that conveys wastewater or sewage to a receiving waterbody. The Clean Water Act's definition of a point source expressly includes "any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit," and similar discernible conveyances.

A chemical factory can also be a point-source pollutant source when its industrial process wastewater, cooling water, stormwater, or other regulated effluent is discharged from an identifiable outfall. Industrial facilities that discharge pollutants through such outfalls are central examples of sources regulated through National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits. For planners, distinguishing these discrete discharge locations is important in watershed planning, environmental review, infrastructure planning, and coordination with water-quality regulators. See the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Water Act Section 502 definitions and its overview of the NPDES permit program.

QUESTION NO: 3

Which of the following are appropriate practices in preparing and maintaining a capital improvements program?

A. Identifying project costs and funding sources

B. Considering operating and maintenance costs

C. Updating the program regularly

D. Excluding projects that require future operating expenditures

ANSWER: A B C

Explanation:

Identifying project costs and funding sources, **considering operating and maintenance costs**, and **updating the program regularly** are appropriate CIP practices. A capital improvements program helps a local government prioritize major public investments over a multiyear period and align them with adopted plans, service needs, anticipated revenues, debt capacity, and project timing. Capital projects create ongoing obligations beyond initial construction, including staffing, utilities, maintenance, rehabilitation, and replacement. A CIP should therefore be coordinated with the annual budget and financial forecasting process rather than treated as a list of projects without financial analysis. See the Government Finance Officers Association guidance on capital planning and budgeting.

QUESTION NO: 4

All of the following constitutional amendments have proven significant to planning practice except the:

A. First.

B. Second.

C. Fourth.

D. Fourteenth.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

Second. is the best answer because, in the core constitutional-law framework used in planning practice, it is not a general source of authority or limitation governing routine land-use decision-making. The Second Amendment protects an individual right to keep and bear arms, as recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court, but that right does not ordinarily provide the procedural and substantive rules planners apply when preparing plans, administering development regulations, conducting inspections, or making quasi-judicial land-use decisions. Its relevance may arise in occasional specialized contexts, such as regulation of firearms-related uses, but it has not had the broad, recurring role in everyday planning law associated with constitutional protections for expression, inspections and searches, due process, and equal treatment. The amendment's text and historical legal purpose concern the right to keep and bear arms rather than the planning powers and procedural safeguards that structure most local land-use practice. See the text of the amendment at Constitution Annotated: Second Amendment and the Supreme Court's discussion of its individual-rights holding in District of Columbia v. Heller.

QUESTION NO: 5

A private sector planner is preparing a site plan. He intends to secure local government approval for his client's development project since it could lead to additional work for him in the subsequent phases of the project. According to the AICP Code of Ethics:

A. This constitutes a conflict of interest

B. There is no conflict of interest in this case.

C. The Code has no provision for conflict of interest.

D. There is a conflict of interest only if the planner holds a law degree.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

There is no conflict of interest in this case. A private-sector planner's effort to obtain approval for a client's development proposal is part of the professional service the planner has been retained to provide. The possibility that successful completion of the current assignment may lead to later phases of work does not, by itself, create a competing interest or impair the planner's professional judgment. The planner's interest in potential future work is aligned with completing the client's authorized project effectively and lawfully.

The AICP Code of Ethics applies to all AICP members, including planners in private practice, and requires them to act with integrity, serve the public interest, provide accurate information, and disclose actual conflicts when they arise. In this scenario, there is no indication that the planner has a separate financial interest in a governmental decision, is representing incompatible parties, or is using an undisclosed relationship to influence the approval process. The planner must still present information honestly and comply with all applicable procedures while advocating for the client. See the APA's AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and its Ethics resources.

QUESTION NO: 6

Which of the following actions can help a local government affirmatively further fair housing?

A. Analyzing patterns of segregation and access to opportunity

B. Engaging residents and organizations representing protected classes

C. Adopting policies that reduce barriers to housing choice

D. Limiting review to whether the jurisdiction intended to discriminate

ANSWER: A B C

Explanation:

Analyzing patterns of segregation and access to opportunity, **engaging residents and community organizations that represent protected classes**, and **adopting policies that reduce barriers to housing choice** can all support a jurisdiction's fair-housing responsibilities. The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing and directs federal agencies and recipients of certain federal housing and community-development funds to affirmatively further fair housing. In planning practice, this can involve examining zoning barriers, housing affordability, access to transportation and schools, displacement risk, and the geographic distribution of publicly supported housing. Simply avoiding intentional discrimination is necessary but does not alone constitute an affirmative strategy for expanding fair housing choice. See HUD's Fair Housing resources and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing information.

QUESTION NO: 7

Which of the following practices can improve the inclusiveness of a public-participation process?

A. Providing interpretation and translated materials

B. Offering meetings at varied times and formats

C. Using accessible meeting locations and participation methods

D. Relying exclusively on a single public hearing during business hours

ANSWER: A B C

Explanation:

Providing interpretation and translated materials, **offering meetings at varied times and formats**, and **using accessible meeting locations and participation methods** can reduce barriers to public involvement. Effective

engagement recognizes that residents may face barriers related to language, disability, work schedules, child care, transportation, technology access, and prior experiences with government. A single legally noticed hearing may satisfy a minimum procedural requirement in some cases, but it is not by itself a complete strategy for meaningful and broad participation. APA's ethical principles emphasize giving citizens meaningful opportunities to participate, especially including people who may lack formal organization or influence. See the APA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and APA's public participation resources.

QUESTION NO: 8

What did *Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Council* establish?

A. A regulation that deprives property of all economically beneficial use may constitute a categorical taking

B. All development exactions must be paid in cash

C. Zoning ordinances are an invalid exercise of police power

D. Historic-preservation regulations always require compensation

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

A regulation that deprives property of all economically beneficial use may constitute a categorical taking is correct. In *Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Council* (1992), the U.S. Supreme Court held that when a land-use regulation eliminates all economically beneficial or productive use of property, compensation is generally required under the Takings Clause unless the prohibited use was already barred by background principles of state property law or nuisance law. The decision is distinct from the balancing approach of *Penn Central*, which applies when some economically viable use remains. For planners, *Lucas* is important because environmental, hazard-mitigation, and growth-management regulations should be evaluated in light of the remaining uses and property interests available to an owner. See the Supreme Court decision in Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Council.

QUESTION NO: 9

What concept is Ebenezer Howard Associated with?

A. City Beautiful

B. PUD

C. CIP

D. Garden City

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

Ebenezer Howard is associated with the Garden City concept. In his 1898 book *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, later republished as *Garden Cities of To-morrow*, Howard proposed self-contained, planned communities that would combine the advantages of urban and rural life. His model envisioned compact settlements surrounded permanently by agricultural greenbelts, with employment, housing, civic institutions, and open space organized to support a balanced and healthy community. Howard's diagrams, including the influential "Three Magnets" illustration, framed the Garden City as an alternative to both congested industrial cities and isolated rural living. The idea was intended not merely as a physical design style but as a social and economic framework, including community control of land value and carefully managed growth. Howard's principles directly influenced the development of Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City in England and later informed new-town planning and greenbelt policies internationally. For planning-history questions, the Garden City movement is therefore the defining concept linked to Howard. The American Planning Association's planning-history resource discusses Howard's role in the Garden City movement: https://www.planning.org/timeline/ebenezer-howard/. The Garden City Collection at Letchworth provides further historical context: https://www.gardencitycollection.com/.

QUESTION NO: 10

Which of the following are common regulatory tools for protecting flood-prone areas?

A. Floodplain development standards

B. Requirements to elevate or floodproof structures

C. Preservation of floodway conveyance capacity

D. Unrestricted filling in flood storage areas

ANSWER: A B C

Explanation:

Floodplain development standards are a primary local tool for limiting or conditioning development in areas subject to flooding. **Requirements to elevate or floodproof structures** can reduce damage risks for buildings located in flood hazard areas, subject to applicable building and floodplain-management standards. **Preservation of floodway conveyance capacity** helps avoid increases in flood elevations and protects the ability of a river or stream to carry floodwaters.

Allowing unrestricted filling in flood storage areas is not a flood-hazard protection tool. Fill may displace floodwater, reduce storage capacity, and increase hazards on or near a site unless carefully evaluated and regulated. FEMA's floodplain management resources describe the role of local regulations, maps, building standards, and mitigation measures in reducing flood risk.

QUESTION NO: 11

Which is the smallest level at which all data released?

A. Urban cluster

B. Census block group

C. Census block

D. Census tract

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

Census block is the correct answer because it is the Census Bureau's smallest standard geographic unit used to tabulate and release decennial census data. Blocks are generally bounded by visible features, such as streets or streams, and by legal or administrative boundaries. They nest within block groups, which nest within census tracts, allowing planners to aggregate block-level counts into broader geographic areas for neighborhood, corridor, district, and jurisdictional analysis.

For planning practice, this granular geography is especially valuable when examining the distribution of population and housing at a very localized scale. The Census Bureau notes that blocks are the smallest geographic entities for which it tabulates decennial census data, although data availability can vary by Census Bureau program and disclosure-protection requirements. This distinction matters when selecting a geography for demographic analysis: the relevant dataset's documentation should always be checked for the variables and release level available.

See the Census Bureau's geographic terms and concepts glossary and its Census Blocks guidance for the official definition and use of census blocks.

QUESTION NO: 12

The most important contribution to city design in the United States made by Charles L'Enfant's grand plan for the federal capital city was:

A. A grid street pattern.

B. A central open space.

C. A pattern of radial streets connecting major locations.

D. An orientation toward the waterfront.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

A pattern of radial streets connecting major locations. is correct because Pierre Charles L'Enfant's 1791 plan for Washington, D.C., overlaid broad diagonal avenues on a rectilinear street grid. These avenues created radial connections among significant civic and symbolic destinations, including the President's House, the Capitol, public reservations, and major squares. Their intersections formed circles and plazas that provided visual termini, sites for monuments, and settings for public buildings. This integrated arrangement made movement through the capital legible while also expressing the national importance of its institutions through long vistas and formal civic spaces.

L'Enfant's use of radial avenues to link major landmarks became a foundational American example of monumental urban design. It influenced later efforts to use coordinated street systems, vistas, parks, and civic centers to give cities an intelligible public structure, particularly during the City Beautiful movement. The National Park Service describes the plan's combination of a grid with diagonal avenues and its intended connections among key sites; the Library of Congress documents L'Enfant's original plan and its civic design principles. See the National Park Service overview of the L'Enfant Plan and the Library of Congress record of L'Enfant's plan.

QUESTION NO: 13

Who assisted in creating Pierre L'Enfant's plan for Washington, D.C.?

A. Benjamin Banneker

B. Frederick Douglass

C. Robert Robinson Taylor

D. Booker T. Washington

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

Benjamin Banneker is the appropriate answer in the context of planning-history survey questions. Banneker was a free Black mathematician, astronomer, almanac author, and surveyor who joined Major Andrew Ellicott's 1791 surveying team for the new federal district. The team established and documented the boundaries of the District of Columbia, providing essential geographic groundwork during the same period that Pierre Charles L'Enfant developed his plan for the federal city. Banneker's participation is significant because it places a highly skilled Black surveyor and scientist within the foundational work that enabled the nation's capital to be laid out. His field observations and calculations also contributed to the scientific work of the boundary-survey expedition. It is most precise to describe Banneker's contribution as assistance with surveying the federal district rather than as authorship of L'Enfant's urban design. Nonetheless, his surveying role is why he is associated with the creation and early physical establishment of Washington, D.C. The National Park Service describes Banneker's service on Ellicott's boundary survey at Benjamin Banneker — National Park Service. The Library of Congress provides historical context on L'Enfant's 1791 city plan at Plan of the City Intended for the Permanent Seat of the Government of the United States.

QUESTION NO: 14

Which practice would significantly enhance the accessibility of public transit for people of all ages and abilities?

A. Offering discounted fares for transit users regardless of income

B. Providing free parking at transit hubs for senior and low-income residents

C. Implementing universal design principles into the development of transit stations

D. Introducing congestion pricing in the downtown area to support transit expansion

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

Implementing universal design principles into the development of transit stations is correct because it makes the transit environment usable by the broadest range of people without requiring special adaptations after construction. In a station context, universal design can include step-free paths from the street to platforms, ramps or elevators, detectable warning surfaces, tactile and visual wayfinding, audible announcements, readable signs, adequate lighting, accessible fare equipment, seating, and boarding areas that accommodate mobility devices. These features benefit riders with physical, sensory, cognitive, or temporary disabilities while also improving usability for older adults, children, parents using strollers, and travelers carrying luggage.

This approach addresses accessibility at the point where people must enter, navigate, wait for, and board transit. It therefore advances equitable mobility and supports the Americans with Disabilities Act's requirement that public transportation facilities and services be accessible to individuals with disabilities. The U.S. Access Board's ADA Accessibility Standards transportation guidance describes accessibility requirements relevant to transportation facilities, including stations and platforms. The Federal Transit Administration also provides ADA guidance for transit providers, emphasizing accessible public transportation for riders with disabilities. Designing stations inclusively from the outset is a durable, systemwide practice that improves independent access for people of all ages and abilities.

QUESTION NO: 15

Which of the following are best management practices for reducing nonpoint-source pollution from urban runoff?

A. Bioretention facilities

B. Permeable pavement

C. Vegetated riparian buffers

D. A direct industrial discharge pipe

ANSWER: A B C

Explanation:

Bioretention facilities, **permeable pavement**, and **vegetated riparian buffers** are best management practices that can reduce nonpoint-source pollution. Nonpoint-source pollution is generated by diffuse runoff that carries sediment, nutrients, oil, metals, and other contaminants from streets, parking areas, lawns, and developed sites into water bodies. These practices can slow runoff, increase infiltration, filter pollutants, and protect receiving waters. A direct industrial discharge pipe is a point source because it is an identifiable conveyance; it is regulated through a different framework than diffuse stormwater runoff. See the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency overview of nonpoint-source pollution and EPA's green infrastructure resources.

QUESTION NO: 16

Which component of zoning regulations would address equitable access to housing?

A. Establishing an administrative process for reasonable accommodation requests

B. Establishing both parking minimums and parking maximums

C. Classifying assisted living facilities as a commercial use

D. Expanding areas zoned for single-family residential use

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

Establishing an administrative process for reasonable accommodation requests directly advances equitable access to housing because it gives people with disabilities a defined path to seek necessary flexibility from otherwise applicable zoning, land-use, or occupancy requirements. Under the Fair Housing Act, housing providers and local governments may need to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices, or services when the accommodation is necessary to afford a person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling. In a zoning context, this can include considering a modification to a rule that prevents a resident from using a needed accessibility-related feature or receiving disability-related residential support. A clear, accessible, consistently administered process helps ensure that requests receive individualized consideration rather than being excluded by a one-size-fits-all land-use rule. This is an important implementation tool for planners because equitable housing policy requires not only permitting a range of housing, but also administering regulations in a manner that provides meaningful and nondiscriminatory access to housing opportunities. HUD and DOJ's Joint Statement on Reasonable Accommodations under the Fair Housing Act explains this obligation, and HUD provides further Fair Housing Act guidance at Fair Housing Act Overview.

QUESTION NO: 17

Which of the following are required components of an environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act?

A. Environmental impacts of the proposed action

B. Adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided

C. Alternatives to the proposed action

D. A guarantee that the least costly alternative will be selected

ANSWER: A B C

Explanation:

An environmental impact statement must address the **environmental impacts of the proposed action**, **adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided**, and **alternatives to the proposed action**. NEPA requires federal agencies to take a hard look at the environmental consequences of major federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. The alternatives analysis is particularly important because it provides decision-makers and the public with a comparative basis for considering ways to avoid or reduce impacts. An EIS is a procedural disclosure and analysis document; it does not itself require selection of the environmentally preferable alternative or guarantee that a project will be denied. See the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency overview of NEPA and the Council on Environmental Quality NEPA regulations.

QUESTION NO: 18

What is the median of the following: 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 5, 5, 6, 6?

A. 3

B. 4

C. 5

D. 4.5

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

The median is **4**. The median is the middle value in a data set after the values have been arranged in numerical order. Here, the values are already ordered: 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 5, 5, 6, 6. Because there are nine observations, an odd number, there is one exact middle observation. Its position is calculated as (9 + 1) ÷ 2, which equals the fifth position. Counting to the fifth value gives 4. Therefore, 4 divides this ordered set so that four observations lie below it and four observations lie above it. Median is a useful measure of central tendency in planning and demographic analysis because it identifies the center of an ordered distribution without being disproportionately affected by unusually high or low values. The U.S. Census Bureau uses median measures in reporting various community characteristics, including household income, because the measure represents the midpoint of a distribution. For additional background on median calculations, see the U.S. Census Bureau's guidance on median income and the Encyclopaedia Britannica definition of median.

QUESTION NO: 19

Which of the following would best represent the annual success of a planning department's work program?

A. Number of applications processed in a year

B. Percentage of benchmarks achieved in a year

C. Average amount of time reduced in accomplishing key planning initiatives

D. Percentage of annual budget returned to the general fund

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

Percentage of benchmarks achieved in a year is the best representation of annual work-program success because it measures the degree to which the department delivered the commitments and milestones it established at the beginning of the year. A planning work program typically translates adopted goals, statutory responsibilities, capital-planning tasks, plan updates, public-engagement activities, and implementation actions into specific, trackable benchmarks. Comparing completed benchmarks with the total planned benchmarks provides decision-makers with a direct, understandable indicator of goal attainment across the department's full portfolio of work.

This measure also supports accountable management: staff and elected officials can review progress periodically, identify delayed commitments, consider reasons for changed priorities or capacity constraints, and make adjustments to future work programs. Useful benchmarks should be specific, measurable, time-bound, and tied to adopted departmental priorities—not merely counts of routine activity. This approach aligns with public-sector performance-management practice, which emphasizes measuring progress toward intended results and strategic objectives. APA's AICP exam resources identify administration and management as a core competency area, including work-program development and implementation. See the APA AICP Certification Exam resources and the federal government's Performance.gov guidance on performance management.

QUESTION NO: 20

Which of the following actions are subject to transportation conformity requirements in an area designated as nonattainment or maintenance for a transportation-related National Ambient Air Quality Standard?

A. Metropolitan transportation plans

B. Transportation improvement programs

C. Federally funded or approved transportation projects

D. Local comprehensive plans

ANSWER: A B C

Explanation:

Transportation conformity applies to **metropolitan transportation plans**, **transportation improvement programs**, and **federally funded or approved transportation projects** in applicable nonattainment and maintenance areas. The conformity process demonstrates that planned transportation investments are consistent with the State Implementation Plan for attaining or maintaining the relevant air-quality standard. It also ensures that projected transportation emissions do not exceed the emissions budget established in the State Implementation Plan.

A local comprehensive plan may influence transportation and land-use decisions, but its adoption alone is not a transportation conformity determination under the Clean Air Act. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency explains the requirements in its transportation conformity guidance, and the Federal Highway Administration provides an overview of the transportation conformity process.

QUESTION NO: 21

Any time a federal agency develops a new rule, policy, or directive, or takes any action that might impact tribal nations, what are the obligations and requirements?

A. The agency must engage in official consultations with affected tribal nations early and often during the decision-making process.

B. The federal government must defer to the State in which the affected tribal nation(s) are geographically located to engage in the government-to-government relationship.

C. The Bureau of Indian Affairs is the sole entity permitted to officially consult with affected tribal nations on policy, regulatory, or planning matters.

D. The Supreme Court decision(s) and executive orders do not require federal agencies to engage with affected tribal nations.

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

The agency must engage in official consultations with affected tribal nations early and often during the decision-making process. This reflects the federal government's government-to-government relationship with federally recognized Tribal Nations. Executive Order 13175 directs federal agencies to maintain an accountable consultation process that provides meaningful and timely input from tribal officials when developing regulatory policies with tribal implications. Consultation is intended to occur while the agency is still considering alternatives and before it has made decisions that would effectively preclude tribal input. In this context, "early and often" emphasizes a continuing, good-faith process rather than a one-time notice or outreach event. Meaningful consultation allows tribal governments to identify effects on tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, trust resources, cultural resources, lands, and community needs, and enables those perspectives to inform the federal action. The White House's government-wide guidance further directs agencies to conduct regular, meaningful, and robust consultation with Tribal Nations on federal policies with tribal implications. These requirements recognize tribes as sovereign governments and require direct federal engagement with affected tribal governments. See Executive Order 13175 and the White House memorandum on Tribal consultation.

QUESTION NO: 22 - (SIMULATION)

Scenario

You are a planner in a city that has recently opened a new shelter for homeless people. The shelter opens each evening during the winter and provides a place for people to sleep during the night in dormitory-style rooms with cots. Some community members would like the shelter closed because they feel that the large number of people who congregate on the sidewalks near the shelter as they wait for it to open pose a threat to public safety. Your planning director decides to address these concerns by classifying the shelter as a hotel. The planning director knows that the zoning ordinance specifies that a hotel must provide private sleeping quarters, which the shelter does not. By classifying the shelter as a hotel, the planning director is taking steps to close the shelter based on the ground that it is in violation of the zoning ordinance. What might you do first?

ANSWER: See the explanation for the answer

Explanation:

First, gather facts and discuss the issue with the planning director before taking further action.

Clarify the director's reasoning for classifying the shelter as a hotel and verify the applicable zoning definitions and facts. The shelter appears not to meet the ordinance's private-room requirement, but calling it a hotel solely to create a basis for closure may be an inappropriate use of the ordinance rather than an objective land-use determination.

Determine whether the shelter has a more appropriate use classification under the zoning ordinance.
Identify the actual public-safety concerns, their evidence, and whether they can be addressed without closing the shelter.
Explore feasible alternatives, such as an indoor waiting location, staggered admission, security or outreach services, or another suitable shelter site.
Ask whether shelter operators know about and can use these alternatives.

Use the information obtained to decide the appropriate next step, while ensuring that professional planning advice is based on accurate facts, applicable regulations, and the public interest—not on a pretext to close the shelter.

QUESTION NO: 23

Which of the following are characteristics of an effective complete streets approach?

A. Accessible curb ramps and pedestrian crossings

B. Transit stops connected to safe pedestrian facilities

C. Bicycle facilities appropriate to roadway conditions

D. Exclusive emphasis on high-speed vehicle movement

ANSWER: A B C

Explanation:

An effective complete streets approach considers the needs of people who walk, bicycle, use transit, drive, make deliveries, and travel with mobility devices. **Accessible curb ramps and pedestrian crossings** support safe and usable pedestrian travel, including for people with disabilities. **Transit stops connected to safe pedestrian facilities** improve access to public transportation. **Bicycle facilities appropriate to roadway conditions** can provide safer and more practical connections for bicyclists. The appropriate design response depends on street function, context, traffic speed and volume, adjacent land uses, and the needs of the people using the corridor.

Designing every street exclusively for high-speed vehicle movement is inconsistent with the complete streets principle because it disregards the safety and access needs of other users. The Federal Highway Administration describes complete streets as an approach to planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining streets for all users in its Complete Streets resources.

QUESTION NO: 24

Local residents are concerned about the increased consumption of energy. The city council has directed the planning staff to make recommendations to limit or reduce energy use by the city and its residents. For this study, the best statement of the city council's goals would center on the:

A. Residents' concerns about rising energy usage and prices.

B. Need to improve ridership on the bus system.

C. Need to reduce municipal energy expenditures.

D. Need to reduce energy use throughout the city.

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

“Need to reduce energy use throughout the city.” is the best statement of the council’s goal because it expresses the intended communitywide outcome in terms that match the direction given to planning staff. The directive explicitly includes energy use by both municipal operations and residents. A properly framed planning goal therefore establishes a broad, enduring desired condition—lower overall energy consumption across the jurisdiction—rather than limiting the scope to one government function or one implementation tool. This citywide framing gives staff a sound basis for evaluating a coordinated range of future policies, programs, development standards, transportation initiatives, building-efficiency actions, and municipal operational measures. It also permits performance measures to be developed for total community energy use while recognizing that the city can lead through its own facilities and operations. APA’s energy policy guidance supports local planning approaches that reduce energy demand and integrate energy considerations across land use, transportation, buildings, and public decision-making. The U.S. Department of Energy likewise identifies efficiency improvements in homes, commercial buildings, transportation, and public-sector facilities as key components of reducing energy consumption. See the American Planning Association Energy Policy Guide and the U.S. Department of Energy’s energy-efficiency resources.

QUESTION NO: 25

Which of the following data sources can help a planner evaluate local housing needs and housing-market conditions?

A. American Community Survey data

B. Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data

C. Residential building-permit data

D. Annual precipitation records

ANSWER: A B C

Explanation:

American Community Survey data provide estimates on household income, tenure, housing costs, overcrowding, vacancy, age of housing stock, and other characteristics relevant to housing needs. **Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data** can help evaluate mortgage lending patterns, loan applications, denials, and lending activity in protected communities. **Building-permit data** provide information about the location, type, and scale of recently authorized residential construction. These sources can be supplemented by local property records, rental-market surveys, homeless-service data, and stakeholder engagement.

Annual precipitation records may inform stormwater, drought, and hazard planning, but they are not ordinarily a primary source for analyzing housing-market conditions. The Census Bureau provides American Community Survey data, while the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau provides access to HMDA data and resources.

QUESTION NO: 26 - (SIMULATION)

Scenario

The owner of the local NFL football team tells the mayor through the press that he will relocate his team unless the city builds a new stadium and practice field. The mayor wants the team to stay because his campaign platform included a promise to keep the team in the community. He asks you, the planning director, to evaluate the costs and benefits of building a new stadium. The planning staff does the analysis and demonstrates that large-scale public investment in a new stadium makes no economic sense and may lead to bankruptcy. What might you do?

ANSWER: See the explanation for the answer

Explanation:

Recommended action: Verify the staff analysis, its assumptions, and the procedures used; then prepare and maintain an accurate, professional report even though its conclusions are politically inconvenient.

Brief the mayor privately before public release, explaining the fiscal risks and long-range public consequences of the proposed stadium investment.

Recommend alternatives, such as renovation of the existing facility, and, if the issue is highly politicized, suggest an independent consultant review the analysis and present the findings.
Do not alter, suppress, or misrepresent the analysis merely to support the mayor's campaign promise.
Do not use the information for personal political advantage, including trying to influence the mayor's reelection prospects.

If the mayor insists on proceeding, refuses to disclose the analysis, or pressures staff to produce a favorable but inaccurate report, first seek reconsideration and verify that the evidence is sound. If the action would create a substantial injury to the public, such as likely municipal bankruptcy, disclosure to appropriate parties or the media may be ethically justified despite the professional risk. Resignation is also an appropriate option if you cannot perform your duties honestly.

This approach fulfills the planner's duty to provide accurate information, protect the public interest and long-range consequences of governmental actions, and avoid using privileged information for personal gain.

QUESTION NO: 27

Which of the following would be included as an element of a comprehensive plan?

A. Land Use Plan

B. Demographics

C. Historic Preservation

D. Implementation Schedule

ANSWER: A C D

Explanation:

A comprehensive plan establishes a community's long-range policy framework and is ordinarily organized around substantive plan elements plus a program for carrying out the plan. **Land Use Plan** is a foundational element because it expresses the desired future pattern, intensity, and location of land uses, generally through policies and a future land-use map. **Historic Preservation** may be included as a functional element to identify historic and cultural resources, establish preservation goals, and coordinate land-use and development decisions with resource protection. **Implementation Schedule** is also a core component: it connects plan recommendations to specific actions, responsible parties, timing, funding, regulatory tools, and ongoing monitoring or updates. These components make the plan both policy-directed and actionable. Demographic information is important supporting data for assessing existing conditions, forecasting needs, and developing plan policies, but it is generally part of the plan's factual base or community profile rather than a plan element itself. The American Planning Association's comprehensive-planning policy guidance emphasizes that plans should address land use, include implementation mechanisms, and be tailored to locally relevant topics such as historic preservation. See the APA Policy Guide on Comprehensive Planning and APA's Comprehensive Planning knowledge resources.

QUESTION NO: 28

What percentage of Americans lived in urbanized areas in the 2000 Census, the shortest since 1820?

A. 86%

B. 78%

C. 68%

D. 50%

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

68% is correct because the Census 2000 urban-rural classification found that approximately 68.3% of the U.S. population lived in urbanized areas. An urbanized area is the Census Bureau's higher-population urban designation: it consists of densely developed territory with a core population of at least 50,000, together with qualifying adjacent territory. This is

distinct from the broader category of all urban territory, which also includes smaller urban clusters. In Census 2000, about 79% of the population lived in urban territory overall, but the portion specifically residing in urbanized areas was about 68%, which is the measure asked for here. The Census Bureau's Census 2000 brief reports both figures and identifies urbanized areas as the predominant form of urban residence at that time. See the Census Bureau's Urban and Rural Population: 2000 Census 2000 Brief. For the Census Bureau's explanation of how urbanized areas are defined and delineated, see Urban and Rural Areas.

QUESTION NO: 29

Which of the following is not a characteristic of New Urbanism?

A. Design principles that are reinforced through the architectural mix

B. Reduced environmental impacts of a development

C. Connected street grid linking residential and commercial uses that are located in separate areas of a development

D. Smaller residential lots, more open space, and an emphasis on transit-oriented neighborhoods

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

"Connected street grid linking residential and commercial uses that are located in separate areas of a development" is not a characteristic of New Urbanism because it retains a land-use separation that conflicts with the movement's central emphasis on mixing complementary uses within compact, walkable neighborhoods. New Urbanist design does value a connected street network: frequent connections create direct routes for walking, bicycling, transit, and local vehicle trips. However, connectivity is intended to work alongside an integrated neighborhood pattern in which homes, shops, workplaces, civic buildings, parks, and services are located close enough to support daily trips without depending on a car. Describing residential and commercial uses as being in separate areas signals a conventional, segregated development pattern rather than the fine-grained mix of uses promoted by New Urbanism. The Charter of the New Urbanism specifically calls for neighborhoods to be "compact, pedestrian-friendly, and mixed-use," while recognizing that the neighborhood is a fundamental building block of development. This combination of mixed uses and walkable connections helps create active public spaces, support transportation choices, and reduce the distance required for everyday needs. See the Charter of the New Urbanism and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Smart Growth principles.