

CREATING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

American Planning Association Community Town Hall

September 11, 2020 – Online via Zoom

COVID-19 IMPACT ON PERSONAL GROOMING

The COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in new grooming habits for those who work from home. Often those who work from home dress professionally only from the waist up with Shoes and socks optional. Others have not experienced any change—especially if they are in work environments that still require them to go into the office.

The new informality has impacted the way people engage with each other. Some people are more comfortable expressing their opinion virtually while others speak less and engage less.

Virtual meetings allow for more participation by people who would otherwise not have attended meetings. Although their participation tends to be passive listening.

So they may be more informed although we are nor always hearing their thoughts and input on public matters. When they do weigh in, the online format can cause some people to be harsher than they would be in person.

While technology has some benefits with increased passive participation, it can create barriers, especially for older residents of our communities. It can also be more challenging to get input through body language and other nonverbal means.

CURRENT EVENTS AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

The COVID-19 pandemic and rising daily temperatures on Arizona have highlighted the need to address several areas for long range planning

Rural areas always have a shortage of healthcare providers. The pandemic has highlighted this disparity to access of care. It has also raised concerns about economic aspects that relate to tourism and winter visitors.

Rising temperatures mean that we need to address water needs and how to plan for public spaces. This may include for example, what plants to use for public landscapes and how to water them.

Given rising temperatures, planners should continue to encourage homeowners to use drought tolerant plants, trim trees, and take actions that reduce wildfires. To reduce the possibility of fires, we should look at volunteer groups who can assist residents in clearing their property support such volunteer groups as much as possible. We also should consider planning for wildfires, should they occur. Such planning includes how to effectively manage evacuations.

Rural areas of Arizona do not seem to have as many discussions or concerns about racial justice. These discussions appear to be more focused in the urban areas of Arizona.