

Pensacola, Florida

2021



CIVICCON



Our community is a Strong Towns winner

Great cities begin
with great dialogue

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Re: CivicCon 2021

Dear CivicCon Members:

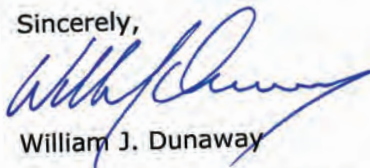
Thank you for being a part of CivicCon. It is amazing how far CivicCon has come in three years. I am excited about where we have been, but more excited about where we are going. In 2021, we are continuing our strong commitment to showing the Pensacola community what right looks like by bringing in experts from a wide range of disciplines to share, celebrate, and challenge us as a Community.

We will hear from local leaders as well as national experts on topics from education, to marketing our community, to best practices in planning, and addressing adequate housing. We have ten speakers already committed and ready to educate and entertain us. These great speakers will share important information with us, but they also are part of our Community's marketing to others. As you can well imagine, by bringing these speakers into our Community and sharing with them what is going on in Pensacola, we are generating ambassadors who are helping to get the word out that Pensacola is a great place to live, grow, work and invest in our families and businesses.

The proof of our success is in the many accolades that our area has received recently. Of significance, our Community bested fifteen other financially strong and resilient cities across the country to be named the 2019 Strongest Town. The remarkable input and commitment of our community in rallying around the Strong Town contest allowed us to highlight the incredible turnaround in the city's fortunes in the last decade that resulted in a growing population, an expanding local economy, and substantially higher tax base due to new businesses and a vibrant downtown.

Raising the Civic IQ is a collective effort. We are only as strong as our most vulnerable community members. Get involved and help us make our Community a better place to live, grow, work and invest through smart planning and civic conversations.

Sincerely,



William J. Dunaway

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Will Dunaway
CivicCon
Board Chair



CIVICCON

Terry Horne
Executive Director, CivicCon

CivicCon is a joint partnership between
the Pensacola News Journal and the Studer Community Institute.

CIVICCON EMAILS	studer.org/newsletter-signup
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ONLINE	pnj.com/civiccon or facebook.com/civiccon

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news journal**
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Raising the Civic IQ: CivicCon docket for 2021

Homelessness, police reform, education and more

CivicCon brings some of the top experts from around the nation – and sometimes from other countries – to share best practices and “what great looks like” in other communities. The goal is to encourage educated public dialogue and civic engagement that leads to positive change in our community. We sometimes refer to the impact of these speaker events as raising “the Civic IQ.”



Jan. 19: Quint Studer, founder of Studer Community Institute, and Clair Kirchharr of Pensacola Young Professionals, providing a review of the annual Quality Of Life survey results at a virtual CivicCon Town Hall. Since 2008,

the Quality of Life survey has measured the attitudes and priorities of community members toward the place they live.



Jan. 26: Dr. Timothy Smith, the new Escambia County School District Superintendent, presenting on the topic “We Must Reach All Students” and sharing his impressions after his initial weeks on the job.



Feb. 4: Andrew Davis, author of Towns Inc., shares how our community can use its improved quality of life ratings by U.S. News and World Report and other sources that rank communities to drive our economy.



March 25: Tim Keane, Atlanta Planning Commissioner and former planning director at Charleston, S.C., discusses the importance of plans and then executing on the plans. He came to Atlanta five years ago

and will detail how planning during that time is already paying dividends to residents. And he will show how plans were integral to Charleston flowering into one of the nation’s most desirable cities to live.



April 19: Rachel Solotaroff is president and CEO of Central City Concern and is a physician and a national voice on services for the homeless. Her non-profit in Portland has partnerships to provide and coordinate not

only housing for the homeless but helping with health and job search needs. It has been touted as a national model for helping communities solve the homeless issue.



May 17: Jill Miller, President of Bethesda Inc., and bi3 in Cincinnati, Ohio. The latter is the grants initiative that invests in innovative ideas with the ability to spark and scale

new approaches to improving community health and healthcare.



June 14: Vincent Brown is CEO and president, V. Randolph Brown Consulting. He will share stories of 30 years of experience creating diverse workplaces and the positive impact of this intentional actions on lives and communities.

These speakers and topics are confirmed and event dates will be announced later on the Pensacola News Journal website: pnj.com/civiccon



Quint Studer is founder of Studer Community Institute, an author, health industry leader and businessman. Covid is impacting our country like an Earthquake. Even after vaccinations there will be

an aftershock. People and communities are feeling the pressure that the challenges and the destruction brought on by Covid. So, what can a person and a community do? Over these past 6 months Quint has been presenting to a wide range of audiences the difference between Stress and Trauma. The presentation fits communities well. The presentation will help individuals assess their own well-being, the mental health of the community and what steps to take to be a healthier person and to help the community be better.



Raymond Gindroz is co-founder and principal emeritus of Urban Design Associates in Pittsburgh. He recently was awarded the Seaside Prize for Innovation and Revitalizing Inner City Neighborhoods and

Transforming Public Housing Projects into Mixed Income Neighborhoods. He taught urban design at Yale University for two decades. Gindroz speaks at events throughout the world and is principal author of The Urban Design Handbook and The Architectural Pattern book.



Dr. Cedric Alexander spoke at a CivicCon event in August 2020 about the need for police reform that creates a culture of guardians rather than warriors. He returns to share thoughts

about the role of citizens and law enforcement working together to create a safer community. He has a doctorate in psychiatry and has served major communities as a chief of police and has been a common source for interviews by cable TV on matters of police, social justice, and bias.



Dana Suskind, MD, is a pediatric otolaryngologist who specializes in hearing loss and cochlea implantation. She directs the University of Chicago Medicine’s Pediatric Hearing Loss and Cochlear Implant

program. She is founder and co-director of the TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health, which aims to create a population-level shift in the knowledge and behavior of parents and caregivers to optimize the foundational brain development in children from birth to five years of age, particularly those born into poverty.

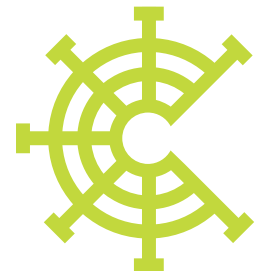


Joseph Minicozzi is an urban planner and principal of Urban3. His firm imagines new ways to think about and visualize land use, urban design, and economics. Joe founded Urban3 to explain and visualize market dynamics created by tax and land use policies.



Dr. John A. List is the Kenneth C. Griffin Distinguished Service Professor in Economics at the University of Chicago. His research focuses on questions in microeconomics, including on early childhood education and interventions, and most recently on the gender earnings gap in the gig economy.

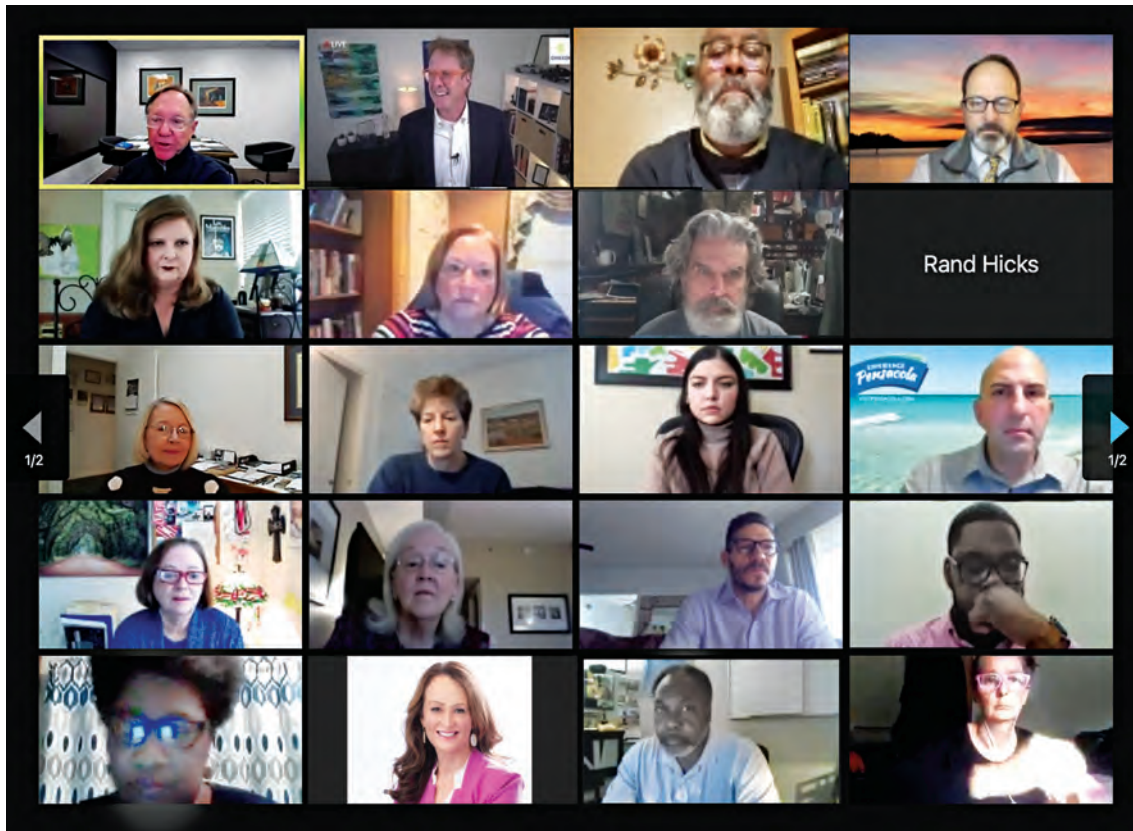
The events are free and open to everyone



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Send your email and a request to be put on the list to thorne@civicconversations.org

CivicCon goes virtual



CivicCon Town Halls in 2020

Experts are needed to share “what great looks like” and to tell us how it has been achieved in other places. But sometimes it is our own community dialogue that is needed.

In 2020, CivicCon held three town halls that allowed for important public dialogue on two of the most important events of the year.

In April and in November the topic was the COVID-19 pandemic. Quint Studer, a health industry leader, joined Pensacola News Journal Editor Lisa Nellesen Savage and CivicCon Board Chairman Will Dunaway in April to moderate a virtual discussion with community members about their concerns.

Studer suggested at the session that it was important to follow Center For Disease Control (CDC) advice and keep a safe distance from each other during a pandemic. But he said he preferred the term “physical distancing” rather than “social distancing.”

“We need social connections more than ever,” suggested Studer.

In November’s Town Hall on the pandemic, we brought together leaders

of the three major hospitals to share with the community the local battle against the pandemic.

Baptist Health Care President and CEO Mark Faulkner, Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital Pensacola President Dawn Rudolph and Community Health Northwest Florida CEO and Executive Director Chandra Smiley spent an hour fielding questions about COVID-19, addressing everything from the capacity of local hospitals, to the pandemic’s mental health impacts on families and health care workers, to the rollout of long-awaited vaccines.

They said there is light at the end of the tunnel in terms of finally moving past the COVID-19 pandemic, but until then, it is critical that we all “stay the course” regarding masks and distancing for prevention.

The CivicCon Town Hall in June focused on the Escambia Board of Education’s search for a new appointed school superintendent. Community members were able to submit questions to Board Chair Patty Hightower and Andrea Messina of the Florida School Board

Association, which was the organization leading the nation-wide search.

The search was the result of moving from an elected school superintendent to an appointed leader selected by the elected school board members. The new superintendent would be held accountable by board members rather than just every four years at an election.

The position is responsible for about 40,000 students as well as 5,000 employees and a \$650 million budget. A successful school system is essential for the future prosperity of students but also for the entire community.

Hightower commented on progress made in the district by retiring superintendent Malcolm Thomas.

“So, what we’re looking for in our next superintendent is someone who ... will move us from better to best,” said Hightower.

Less than three months later the board hired Dr. Timothy Smith as the superintendent. He has been on the job since November of 2020 and is the first speaker of 2021 in the CivicCon Speaker Series on January 26.

We can't have a functioning democracy without working together

By Kevin Robinson

krobinson4@pnj.com

Modern government is marked by intense polarization, widespread mistrust and “wicked” community problems where it seems impossible to find solutions that completely satisfy anyone, let alone everyone.

Often citizens see government as indifferent and out of touch, and often elected officials see citizens as having a laundry list of problems but no solutions to offer.

“Neither of them have confidence in the other, and we can't have a functioning democracy if that's our reality,” Valerie Lemming said at a virtual CivicCon presentation Monday night.

Lemmie, the research director of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation, has spent years studying what effective government looks like and decades working to discover ways to make democracy function more effectively. In the end, she said she believes effective government requires more than just elections, it requires every citizen having a voice and having a meaningful role in improving their community.

“Public distress often appears related to a lack of meaningful citizen influences on institutions,” Lemmie said. “As long as citizens don't see what they say included in the policies and the practices of a government, as long as they express themselves and are ignored, they're not going to come forward in ways that are immediately conducive to getting the work done. People have to be heard.”

Lemmie said the most effective governments have two-way input, meaning institutions and citizens regularly share opinions on what the most important issues of the day are, how they can be addressed and what trade-offs people are willing to make to address them.

As an example, she noted that government in Arlington County, Virginia, developed a program where neighborhood residents were asked what roads they wanted paved instead of having it dictated to them by city engineers.

“What they found in Arlington County is the more often they were able to go



Valerie Lemming

out and talk to people before they did something, the more likely it was to ultimately be approved,” Lemmie said. “When (city staff) just made a decision — or they just simply did a charrette or had a public hearing where they invited people and nobody showed up — then when they started to move dirt, people were up in arms. ... If you start by engaging people in the beginning, you don't have that.”

Before joining the Kettering Foundation, Lemmie served as city manager for the cities of Cincinnati and Dayton in Ohio, as well as the city of Petersburg, Virginia. She said city staff would literally go door to door in communities to hear citizens' ideas for and concerns about public works.

She said a common misconception is that the professionals know what's best for communities because that's what they are trained for. However, she said citizens bring valuable knowledge, skills and energy when they are engaged in ways that are meaningful and genuine.

For instance, she said as a city manager, she go out and ask folks not only what they wanted, but whether they were willing to help make it happen.

“I'd go out and say, ‘So here's this plot of land. What do you think ought to be done with it, and why do you think that? How would you help us do what you think ought to be done? Who else ought to be at the table, talking to us about what we should do with this property?’” Lemmie said as an example. “So, I start there, and then build up.”

She pointed to another example in Norfolk, Virginia, where residents of a neighborhood wanted desperately to stop the demolition of an old high school with deep historic significance to Black community members. Ultimately, citizens and elected officials reached a compromise that the city would maintain the building and pay the insurance, and citizens would staff, program and operate a recreation center.

“They co-produced a solution to what to do with a building that has sentimental and historic value in that community,” Lemmie said. “So it's that kind of project, that kind of work, that we're talking about is the essence of citizen-centered democracy, and that's when it is working at its best.”

Discussing how citizens can be more effective at communicating with government, Lemmie said it's important to build consensus and practice working together. She said beyond just going to city council and saying what “I” want, it is much more swaying to be able to say tell council members that you spoke with 500 of your neighbors and this is what “we” want.

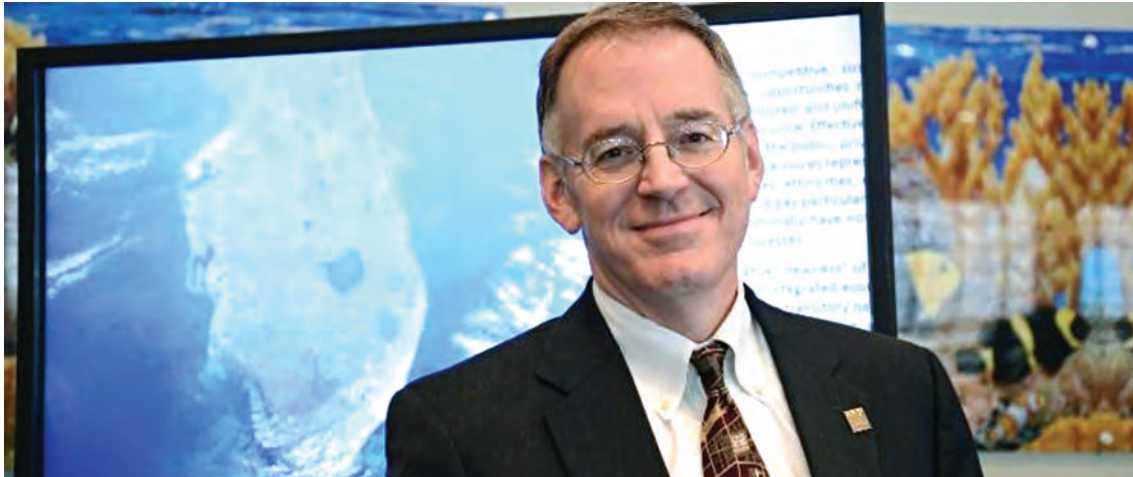
“We have been very successful as public institutions in dividing and conquering, pitting one community against another and allowing voices to be heard in some places and not in others,” Lemmie said. “So, we have to really, I think, atone for that by making sure people are able to come together and talk. Even if one group brings an idea, then open it up to others.”

Lemmie said on the other side, a way to help improve the trust and effectiveness of government is to make citizen participation a valued part of the process, not just a box on a check list.

“It starts first with a commitment from the top of the organization that everybody in this community counts,” Lemmie said.

She said some local governments no longer just accept staff recommendations. Instead, they require staff to identify what members of the community suggested the idea, who else was part of the conversation and what feedback they received from the affected community.

Affordable Housing



Victor Dover

How to build affordable housing with dignity and creativity

By Kevin Robinson

krobinson4@pnj.com

Between the years 2000 and 2017, Florida increased its stock of rental homes from about 1.7 million units to nearly 2.5 million units.

Still, many working class families struggle to find an affordable place to live.

Why? Because those 718,000 new units all have rental prices in excess of \$1,000 a month. And during the same time frame the new, more expensive housing was being built, Florida shed about 44,000 existing homes with rent of \$1,000 or less.

The phenomenon, coupled with the fact that rent prices are increasing way faster than wages, has created a problem where many people are spending so much of their income on housing they're having to scrimp on groceries, medication, health care and other essentials, said Victor Dover, a nationally renowned urban planner from Coral Gables.

"So even with all those additional apartments, we still have a problem," Dover said.

Dover, a principal at Dover, Kohl and Partners, discussed how cities can create a larger, naturally occurring stock of affordable housing during an online CivicCon presentation Monday night.

He stressed that just building new houses isn't enough, and said the housing shortage can only be addressed if we look at improving transportation, the economy, quality of life and creating a variety of housing as part of the same

solution. Dover said his intent was to help communities connect the dots between those different issues.

Dover said an example of a solution that tackled all of those issues was the re-imagining of the Southside neighborhood in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Dover, Kohl and Partners went to work in the community in the late '90s and found that much of the community was rundown and the main street was 90% vacant. Meanwhile, one of the region's largest employers was just a stone's throw away.

Roughly 4,000 workers were commuting through Southside on a daily basis. Alongside the community, the firm decided to try to make Southside a place people wanted to live instead of a place they just drove past.

Through incremental, in-fill development, the firm helped rebuild the community a block at a time. Not just with new buildings, but with new roads, street trees, on-street parking and mixed-income housing. They built single-family homes, duplexes, row houses and apartment complexes and parks, and over time, the neighborhood began to feel like a neighborhood.

"Things we couldn't have imagined a couple of decades ago are now happening all the time, infill development, new hotels, more workplaces, more housing," Dover said. "So that's a model that needs to be replicated in many communities around the country."

Dover said the key to affordable housing is that it shouldn't be "mean-spirited" —

cheap, ugly housing built for the lowest-possible price.

He said it is crucial for homes to have "dignity," and there are ways to keep costs down while still building a place worth living in and loving. He showed examples of attractive, inexpensive housing from around the country ranging from granny flats, to row houses, to apartment complexes that were built in reclaimed spaces like vacant strip malls and parking lots of defunct big box stores.

He noted that in Pensacola, the lack of walkability was a huge problem that contributed the high cost of housing.

Dover said city officials can help create naturally occurring affordable housing by partnering with developers to make lost spaces available for development. They should also set clear expectations on what the look, quality and price of those development should be.

He said in communities where this approach has worked, officials "envisioned what they wanted and coded for it."

Dover said developers could realistically find one geographic area they loved and start making small bets on incremental infill development. He said density is a way to keep costs down, but he said density didn't need to mean high rises. He said duplexes and connected row houses could fill the same need without breaking the bank for developers or tenants.

Employers also have a role to play, both by ensuring workers have decent wages and by coming to the table to help provide housing.

Quality over quantity is the rule of good tree canopies

By Kevin Robinson

krobinson4@pnj.com

In theory, creating a beautiful, urban tree canopy seems pretty simple.

Plant some saplings, give them some sun and water, and watch them grow, right?

The reality is much more complex. Between zoning regulations that prevent or discourage useful trees on many streets, poor soil that keeps trees from thriving and a lack of investment in care and maintenance, many cities actually lose money on the trees they plant.

"I wish planting trees were as easy as just digging a hole and sticking a tree in it, but ultimately they're living organisms, they're living infrastructure and there are certain conditions that they need," said Lysistrata Hall, a planner and arborist. "You can't just regulate (a great tree canopy into existence). You really have to do education and partnerships and ultimately, as a community, it is something that you have to value and be willing to invest in and care deeply about."

Hall discussed some of the strategies and benefits of developing a healthy and productive urban forest Monday night during a CivicCon webinar. Hall is the



founder of Cloud Hall Creative Solutions in Phoenix, Arizona, and she has worked with many communities around the country on tree ordinances and tree plans including work on the green infrastructure around the light rail corridor in Phoenix.

"Trees are really what make a dense, compact, urban landscape livable, as well as beautiful," Hall said. "They're what make our streets walkable. They connect our neighborhoods. They cool our neighborhoods. They infiltrate our stormwater. They clean our air. And they really kind of create a sense of place and a quality of calmness and serenity in our busy cities."

"The way in which we currently go about organizing our zoning or our development standards really are focused on land use

versus design," Hall said. "You end up with a lot of trees that are kind of shoved into spaces that really don't provide the conditions for them to grow."

She noted that most urban trees only live about seven to 10 years, and that municipalities often spend more on them than they provide in benefit.

As an example, Hall showed a small tree planted in 150 cubic feet of soil that cost a municipality \$5,000 to replant multiple times and \$1,212 to maintain. The tree provided about \$2,717 in benefits such as heat reduction and stormwater filtration, for a net loss of around \$3,493.

In contrast, another tree planted in 1,000 cubic feet of high-quality soil cost a community almost \$16,242 to install and maintain, but it provided the city \$41,769 in total benefits. The net gain was \$25,427.

"If you really want a return on your investment, you really need to focus on the quality versus the quantity of trees," Hall said.

She said the best codes provide a balance between predictability — the steps involved in development and the quality of the end product — and flexibility to make the most of any given land parcel.

Restoring local bays and estuaries needs community involvement

By Kevin Robinson

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During the Great Depression, local families lived off the abundance of fish and shrimp and oysters in our local waterways.

Over the years, factors like pollution, development and stormwater runoff have slowly degraded the watershed around Pensacola and Perdido bays to a point that the waterways we see as normal today would be virtually unrecognizable to folks from just a few generations ago.

"The challenge is that baseline has shifted over time," said Christian Wagley, a coastal organizer for the environmental organization Healthy Gulf. "If you go out and look at the bay today for the first time, you don't know what's missing, you don't know how good things used to be."

However, our region has a rare

opportunity to start working toward restoring our local water bodies to their former glory. A new regional estuary program could be folded into a larger, national collaborative that provides tools, funding and expertise to help enhance and protect important waterways.

The key to making it happen will be buy-in, support and participation from the local community, a group of ecological experts said in a CivicCon presentation Monday night.

In a CivicCon webinar, Bill Fisher, a Gulf Breeze resident and an associate director of ecology in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Research and Development, discussed the history and benefits of the National Estuary Program. The program brings together scientists, community advocates,

governments, business interests and other stakeholders to address the ecological challenges affecting estuaries of national significance.

Recently, our region received funding from the EPA and RESTORE to create a similar, smaller initiative to improve and protect Pensacola and Perdido bays and the surrounding watershed. The initiative, the Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program, is not currently part of the national program, but we could be invited to join if the local program gains enough support.

"This potential designation as an NEP for the Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program is an extraordinary and unique opportunity," Fisher said. "The last NEP added was in 2007. That was Puget Sound. And before that, it was Maryland Coastal Bays in 1996, so this does not happen every day. I do know that in order to be designated as an NEP, you really need to demonstrate wide public community participation."

Good policing is about ‘being a guardian, not a warrior’

By Kevin Robinson
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America has watched the past few weeks as police officers around the country have squared off against the citizens they serve.

Spurred by the death of George Floyd at the hands of four Minneapolis police officers, protesters have taken to the streets to call for police reform and accountability. And while many protests have been peaceful and productive, others have ended with citizens and cops on opposite sides exchanging tear gas, rubber bullets, stones and bottles.

Cedric Alexander, a veteran law enforcement executive with 40 years of public safety experience, says in order to realize the police and social reform we all want, we can't stand apart. We must instead come together.

"We've got to push the differences aside. We've got to look at the things that are commonly important to all of us," Alexander said. "I want every police officer out there in this city and across the country to be safe today and tonight when they go out and do their job, and I need communities that help them to be safe. But I also need a police department that is well-trained, well-supervised and one that understands the importance of having compassion toward people. This is about being a guardian and not a warrior."

At an August 4, 2020 virtual CivicCon event, Alexander discussed how as a city and as a nation we can move into the 21 Century with accountable, effective and equitable policing.

A licensed clinical psychologist, Alexander has served more than four decades in law enforcement and public service. He was part of President Barack Obama's 11-member Task Force

on 21st Century Policing and former president of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives. He frequently serves as a consultant to law enforcement agencies on how they can improve their professionalism and their relationship with the community.

Alexander noted that he, like most people, had been appalled by the conduct of the four officers involved in Floyd's death, and wanted the resulting national discussions to bring change instead of more division.

"When you decide to become a police officer ... you must have a passion for people, and you have to have compassion toward people," Alexander said. "You have to have a moral compass, because on May 25, 2020, of this year in Minnesota, we saw officers who did not have a moral compass, who did not have compassion for people, who watched the man begging for his life and even people on the street beg for him, but he died right in front of all of us. We got to have officers who have the ability to understand, 'I'm here to be a guardian. I'm not here with some militarized force where it's us against them.'"

Good policing starts with the types of officers you hire and the culture you establish within the walls of your department.

"I can train you to run and jump and fight and shoot all day," Alexander said. "But what I cannot train you on is how to have compassion for people."

Alexander said improving relationships and building trust between officers and their communities is a daily process.

Discussing what role citizens have in building better relationships with law enforcement, he just asked that they be willing to partner and support their efforts to get better.

Harvard educator Ron Ferguson shares The Basics for helping kids succeed in life

By Kevin Robinson
krobinson4@pnj.com

Research has shown that students from higher socio-economic backgrounds tend to do better in school than kids from poorer backgrounds.

Ron Ferguson, a Harvard researcher and educator who has spent decades researching why, said at an August 4, 2020 CivicCon event that there is really no difference in the children's potential. It is about whether families are maximizing that potential.

When families start reading to their children early, when they spend time engaging them in conversation and critical thinking, when they regularly expose them to new ideas and experiences, they are helping send their children on a pathway to success in education and in life, according to Ferguson.

"Part of what we need to do is share with lower income families some of the things the higher income families know," Ferguson said during an online CivicCon event Friday night. "The higher income families, they've read all the books, they know all the stuff, they're doing everything they can do with their kids. And other people don't know that matters, and they don't even realize that other people will do all these things with their kids."

Ferguson, the director of the Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard University, said that Escambia County now will join more than 40 other communities to use The Basics, an initiative to help level the playing field among the different groups.

The program is centered around five simple concepts that families can use to jumpstart their child's learning.

It encourages parents to engage in back-and-forth conversations with their children from the time they're born, to point out the things they are speaking about, to encourage their kids to count out loud and group things, and to otherwise be a partner in learning.

Ferguson said children who've had a lot of the kinds of interactions emphasized by The Basics get to school ahead of the pack. They are accustomed to learning with adults, and they've already got some skills and knowledge to apply.

He said some of those differences by background aren't really about the income but more about the sophistication of the family and knowing what it is they need to do. And these are things that people can learn. They are things that can be socially supported in the community. These patterns (of some groups of children outperforming others) are not locked in stone, he said.

The goal of the initiative, Ferguson said, is to "saturate communities with what parents need to know," so it's impossible that any parent in the community with a child from birth to age 3 doesn't know about The Basics and doesn't have a contact with a local group that is ready to help and support them.

Diversity expert Mardia Shands says equality isn't always enough

By Kevin Robinson
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On first impression, it only takes people about seven seconds to assess what they think of another person, according to an expert on diversity and inclusion.

As a species, humans are hard-wired to make snap judgments that help them decide when they are safe, when they are in danger and when they should be on guard. Those instincts — that bias — may serve us well when we run into a stranger in a dark alley at night, but it can be a problem when we carry those biases with us into schools, board rooms and neighborhoods.

Mardia Shands, chief diversity officer for the Tri-Health hospital group, said at an Aug. 24, 2020 CivicCon event that to build workplaces and communities where everyone is welcome and everyone has a chance to thrive, we must learn to look beyond the surface.

"We automatically go to those things that we see ... but most of what makes us who we are is not visible to others," Shands said.

She discussed ways people can start to break through their biases and bring more diversity and equity to their work and life circles.

Shands noted that equity is different than equality. She said equality is treating everyone the same. Equity is en-

suring different people have the specific things they need to achieve the same results as everyone else.

Equality is saying everyone will get the same length ladder to pick an apple off the tree, regardless of their height. Equity is ensuring every person has the right length ladder so they can reach their apple.

Discussing how people can create more diversity in businesses and organizations, Shands said it has to be something that is done intentionally. She said when all other things are equal, it comes down to intentionally choosing the person who is different than you rather than the same as you.

Shands said in hiring, for example, many managers and business owners say they have trouble finding minority candidates who are qualified. Shands suggested that rather than going through traditional pipelines, they may try recruiting at colleges and professional organizations whose members are predominantly people of color.

She also suggested that people challenge their notions of why people think a minority candidate may not be a good fit for a position. Shands said she often finds in her position, that minority candidates aren't passed over because they are less qualified, they are passed over because hiring managers often assume someone from the traditional mold would be a "better fit."

and YWCA, noting that they all worked with and welcomed people of all backgrounds.



CivicCon Guide

Watch these videos and more:

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CivicCon brings national experts and local citizens together to improve our quality of life and to make our community a great place to live, learn, work and play. It creates citizen-powered change.

Sept. 26, 2017



Chuck Marohn: Strong Towns

The best investment is not new roads and pipes, but the utilization of vacant land which already has the infrastructure.

— Chuck Marohn is the founder and president of Strong Towns Institute. He is a Professional Engineer and a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).

Jan. 16, 2018



Sen. Bob Graham: Civic Engagements

"We have to have a renewal, a renaissance of citizenship, starting with our younger generation," Graham said.

— Former two-term Governor of Florida and former U.S. Senator of Florida.

Feb. 12, 2018



Tom Murphy: Public Private Partnerships

Cities need four key things in place with elected leaderships: ethics, a plan, transparency and utilizing outside experts in vetting proposed developments.

— Tom Murphy is senior resident fellow at ULI/Klingbeil Family Chair for urban development at Yale. Murphy is a former three-term mayor of Pittsburgh.

March 13, 2018



Ed McMahon: Community Character Counts

The key to economic development isn't building more "stuff," it's building things people care about and places people want to be. "People stay longer, come back more often and spend more money in places that attract their affection," McMahon said.

— Ed McMahon spent 14 years as the vice president and director of land use planning for the Conservation Fund in Arlington, Virginia, where he helped to protect more than 5 million acres of land of historic or natural significance. He is currently at the Urban Land Institute.

April 16-17, 2018



Micheale Pride: Community-Driven Design

Among Pride's suggestions for making neighborhoods healthier and more beautiful included slowing down cars, inviting people to linger, planting trees and gardens, creating housing that is affordable for everyone and engaging the community in creative ways.

— Micheale Pride is a professor of architecture at the University of New Mexico. As an architect and urban designer, she emphasizes principles of consensus, collaboration and public engagement in her teaching, research and professional consulting.

May 9-10, 2018



Emily Talen: Cities and Social Equity

Talen believes that communities can be planned and built in a way that encourages spatial and social equity. By that, she means that all citizens, regardless of race, ethnicity, income or social status have similar access and proximity to "good stuff," like quality schools, safe neighborhoods and other public services.

— Emily Talen is professor of urbanism at the University of Chicago.

May 25, 2018



Dr. Marvin Seppala: Fighting Opioid Addiction

"There's not many places that have such a conversation and that are trying to strengthen a community," Seppala said.

— Dr. Marvin Seppala, chief medical officer at Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation, is one of the world's foremost experts on opioid addiction.

June 4, 2018



Joe Minicozzi: Smart Investments

Minicozzi compared living in a city or county to being a shareholder in a corporation.

— Joe Minicozzi is the principal of Urban3, LLC, a consulting company for downtown Asheville.

July 16, 2018



Andrew Davis: Laws of Attraction

Davis found most successful communities have "staked a claim" and made themselves synonymous with an industry or lifestyle.

— Andrew Davis is a best-selling author and keynote speaker. He's built and sold a digital marketing agency, produced for NBC and worked for The Muppets.

Aug. 20, 2018



Gena Wirth: Creating resilient waterfronts

"It's impressive how many people love the Pensacola waterfront. This is a group of dedicated people that already love the space and want to see positive change."

— Gena Wirth is the design principal at SCAPE, a design-driven landscape architecture and urban design studio based in New York.

Sept. 17, 2018



Jeff Speck: Walkable cities

Cities function best as a collection of small neighborhoods, each with their own places to live, work, shop, worship and go to school.

— Jeff Speck is a city planner and urban designer who advocates internationally for more walkable cities.

Sept. 25, 2018



James Fallows: What successful cities do right

Fallows said at a time when national politics is failing and dysfunctional on all sides, communities are now the "laboratories of democracy."

— James Mackenzie Fallows is a writer and journalist and best-selling author of "Our Towns".

Oct. 9, 2018



Donald Shoup: Getting Parking Right

Parking is the single biggest land use in most cities, and most drivers park free wherever they go, even where land is most expensive."

— Donald Shoup, a distinguished research professor in the Department of Urban Planning at University of California, Los Angeles.

Nov. 5, 2018



Ryan Gravel: Infrastructure of People

Think big, because big ideas are compelling.

— Ryan Gravel is an urban planner, designer, author and consultant whose work focuses on how infrastructure opens up new opportunities culturally, socially and economically for people

Dec. 03, 2018



Jay Walljasper: Great Neighborhoods

"It's really important a neighborhood is a place where everybody feels like they belong there."

— Jay Walljasper was an award-winning author and journalist. He was a popular speaker on the topics of good neighborhoods, urban walking and biking. He passed away on December 22, 2020 after a battle with cancer.

Jan. 28, 2019



SCAPE: Downtown Waterfront Plan

Gena returns with the SCAPE Team to launch discussions with the community of creation of a Downtown Waterfront Plan.

— Gena Wirth is the design principal at SCAPE, a design-driven landscape architecture and urban design studio based in New York.

Feb. 18, 2019



Peter Bazeli: Market research

“You can build something really expensive and fancy because that’s what people say that they want, but unless it’s financially viable, it doesn’t make any sense.”

— Peter Bazeli Principal and Managing Director of Weitzman Associates.

March 18, 2019



Peter Kageyama: Pensacola should grab you by the heart

“When you love something, you go above and beyond for it. You forgive shortcomings. You will fight for it.”

— Peter Kageyama is the author of “For the Love of Cities” and “Love Where You Live”

April 22, 2019



SCAPE with James Lima: Unveiling the Downtown Waterfront Plan

— Gena returns with the SCAPE Team to show with the community their concept of a Downtown Waterfront.

June 17, 2019



Gena Wirth of SCAPE and James Lima, Placemaking Economist

— SCAPE shares its detailed plan for Bruce Beach and the waterfront walkway connector; Lima talks about the investment in the waterfront.

July 22, 2019



Charles Montgomery

What really makes people happy are places that make it easy to connect to others.

— Charles Montgomery is the author of “Happy City” and has spent many years researching why some communities have more satisfied and happy community members

Aug. 12, 2019



Dr. Ronald Ferguson

Why are some student groups doing better in public schools than others? What steps need to be taken to close that achievement gap?

— Dr. Ronald Ferguson is an MIT-trained economist who has researched this topic and is the faculty director of the Harvard University Achievement Gap initiative and author of the widely-used textbook, “Urban Problems and Community Development.”

Sept. 12, 2019



Mikael Colville Anderson

Cities that invest in infrastructure to encourage and protect bicycle riders see an increase in bike usage and a decline in auto traffic, such as Amsterdam and Copenhagen. This promotes health and a better environment.

— Mikael Colville Anderson is an urban designer and urban mobility expert, working with cities around the globe to be more bike friendly

Sept. 17, 2019



Joe Riley

Great cities don’t happen by accident. It takes planning and a commitment to making a place that is special for the people that live there. Charleston, S.C. has become one of those great cities.

— Joe Riley was a 10-term mayor of Charleston, S.C., who challenges cities to strive for quality and excellence. He served in the role for 42 years before deciding not to run for re-election.

Oct. 21, 2019



Dr. Tom McLellan

Communities must rethink its view of drug addiction if they are going to reduce addiction and restore individual addicts. Dr. McLellan says addiction is a disease and not a sign of bad character.

Dr. Tom McLellan has written more than 500 research papers in more than 40 years as a leader in addiction treatment. He served as Deputy Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy in the Obama administration.

Sept. 17, 2019



Janet Pilcher

Pilcher identified and arranged to bring to Pensacola a panel of some of the nation's most successful school superintendents to show "what good looks like" before Escambia County School District completed its search for a superintendent appointed by the school board after decades of electing a school superintendent.

- Janet Pilcher is the founder and executive leader of Studer Education, and a managing director for Huron.

Nov. 18, 2019



Quint Studer

What does a community do when it is declining in population, losing jobs and losing its young people to opportunities elsewhere? It builds a vibrant community.

- Quint Studer is a health care leader and founder of the Studer Community Institute. He is the author of "Building A Vibrant Community: How Citizen-Powered Change Is Reshaping America."

Jan. 27, 2020



Grover Robinson, Janice Gilley

What are the priorities for the City of Pensacola and Escambia County in 2020 and beyond? What can citizens expect to see happen? The event drew 440 people to The Saenger Theatre to find out.

— Grover Robinson is Mayor of Pensacola and Janice Gilley is Escambia County Administrator

May 4, 2020



Victor Dover

Affordable housing is an issue in just about every community that is growing in population and jobs and economic opportunity. But affordable housing shouldn't be "mean-spirited" — cheap, ugly and built for the lowest-possible price. There is a better way.

— Victor Dover is a renowned urban planner from Coral Gables, FL

June 1, 2020



Lyssa Hall

Trees in a community are an investment and too often communities plant the wrong kinds of trees in the wrong locations and waste that investment. She said a quality over quantity is the rule for a good tree canopy.

— Lyssa Hall is a city planner, certified arborist and founder of Cloud Hall Creative Solutions

July 20, 2020



Dr. Bill Fisher

What is the story regarding water quality for our bays and estuaries? What needs to happen? A EPA researcher and a panel of local environmentalists try to answer those questions.

— Dr. Bill Fisher is a researcher for the Environmental Protection Agency. After his message, a panel made up of Christian Wagley, Jane Caffrey and Christian Miller discussed next steps for improving water quality.

Aug. 4, 2020



Dr. Cedric Alexander

Communities need to rethink the approach of its police departments. Officers need to be trained to be Guardians and not trained to be Warriors.

— Dr. Cedric Alexander has held many local, state and national leadership positions in law enforcement, has a PhD in psychiatry and is the author of "In Defense of Public Service" and "The New Guardians: Policing in America's Communities For the 21st Century."

Aug. 24, 2020



Mardia Shands

Equality isn't enough to resolve workplace diversity. The approach must be much more about equity than just equality when a community or a company is trying to get workplace diversity right.

— Mardia Shands is a human resources, diversity, equity and inclusion consultant and former Chief Diversity Officer at TriHealth in Cincinnati, Ohio

Sept. 15, 2020



Marianne Cusato

A community only works if people can actually afford to live there. Communities need to commit to partnerships among local developers, local government and be creative in creating effective solutions.

— Marianne Cusato is a home designer, author and leader in a nonprofit that focuses on disaster and workplace housing solutions. She also teaches in the School of Architecture at Notre Dame University

Oct. 19, 2020



Valerie Lemmie

Good local government is a lot more than making sure the streets are repaired and that refuse is picked up on time. It involves community members in virtually every decision through proactively going where they are to ask for their views and consideration of things that need to be done.

— Valerie Lemmie is research director for the Kettering Foundation, which is dedicated to supporting and educating others about what effective democracy look like

Nov. 6, 2020



Dr. Ronald Ferguson

The Basics is a messaging campaign developed and designed to improve learning outcomes for all families. It focuses on 5 key parenting and caregiving behaviors for children from birth to age three.

— Dr. Ronald Ferguson developed The Basics first in Boston and it is now available in other communities, including its introduction in Pensacola and Escambia County

Nov. 23, 2020



Mark Faulkner, Dawn Rudolph and Chandra Smiley

The Covid-19 Town Hall With Area Hospital Administrators

Jan. 19, 2021



Quint Studer

Quint Studer, founder of Studer Community Institute, and Clair Kirchharr of Pensacola Young Professionals share the results of the annual Quality of Life survey during a virtual CivicCon Town Hall.

Jan. 26, 2021



Dr. Timothy Smith

The new Escambia County School superintendent presentation "We Must Reach All Students" gives a view of a vision for local schools and revealed his impressions after his initial weeks in the community.

— Dr. Timothy Smith was named Escambia County School Superintendent after a nationwide search for the county's first superintendent appointed by the school board after decades of electing the superintendent.

Feb. 4, 2021



Andrew Davis

Our community can use its improved quality of life ratings and other sources that rank communities to drive its economy and attract new opportunities. He suggested the community put a stake in the ground as a leader in cybersecurity due to its existing resources.

— Andrew Davis is an author, keynote speaker and former owner of a digital ad agency with customers from the Fortune 1000 list



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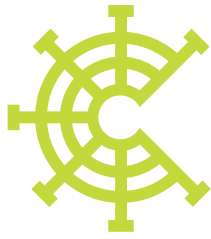


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Let's work together to make this the best place in the world to live.



CIVICCON

CivicCon empowers the Pensacola area through civic conversations by:

- Attracting national experts to a speaker series that explores what “great” looks like and how others have overcome challenges in their communities
- Offering Civic Engagement Courses that increase the knowledge base and skill set for people who want to be engaged in public affairs and work to make this a stronger place to live, invest, grow and prosper
- Mentoring civic-minded individuals and groups to move ahead small and big projects that make life better for others
- Encouraging a Strong Towns approach to our communities to strive for resiliency and an affordable place where “the good stuff” in our community is available to all
- Working to make sure local elected officials understand the importance of transparency with the community members and the power of government encouraging and embracing civic engagement by informed citizens



CivicCon is a partnership of the News Journal and the Studer Community Institute to make our community a better place to live, grow, work and invest through smart planning and civic conversations.

MISSION

CivicCon will create an opportunity for educated civic conversations that will lead the region to become a better place to live, grow, work and invest. It will do this by bringing world-class experts to Pensacola and creating classroom experiences to grow skills for local advocates as well as organizing workshops around critical community issues.



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