



For Immediate Release

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BUDA ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER RECEIVES TOP HONOR FROM AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

BUDA, TX - Nov. 6, 2017 - Assistant City Manager Chance Sparks was recently recognized with the prestigious Texas Chapter President's Award from the American Planning Association (APA). The award is presented to a planner based on outstanding service to the planning profession.

The Chapter President's Award is decided solely by the Chapter President. Over the last two years, the Texas Chapter President has placed particular emphasis on advocating for good planning. Sparks was instrumental in that effort as it pertains to the Texas Legislature.

"Chance was right there during the special session, looking out for planning and municipal interests. He made an impression on legislators and helped prevent bad bills from being passed. We know his experience will help us be better prepared for the next legislative session," said Kim Mickelson, Former APA Texas Chapter President.

Sparks, who has been with the City of Buda for seven years, was promoted to Assistant City Manager in December of 2016. Prior to his current role, he served as Planning Director.

"This award, while an individual award and shared with Craig Farmer out in Weatherford, is really about the efforts of several people throughout the state that actively seek to put the planning profession's best foot forward in telling the story of why planning matters in Texas," said Sparks. "Whether it be in the form of Legislative outreach in partnership with Texas Municipal League, as is the case of Craig Farmer and me, or it be other professional planners throughout the state reaching out to the public to explain why planning is important in shaping their respective communities, it is critically important for citizens and public officials to understand and learn how effective city planning enriches the lives of the public and makes great communities happen."

During his time with the City, Sparks has overseen planning, development services, code enforcement, building services and tourism. Upon his hiring, he was tasked with creating a department and implementing best practices in the face of tremendous growth in Buda.



(L-R) Craig Farmer, Planning & Development Director, Weatherford, TX, Kim Mickelson, Former APA Texas Chapter President, Chance Sparks, Assistant City Manager, Buda, TX



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This year alone, he successfully led the implementation of the new Main Street Program and completed a tedious revision of the Unified Development Code (UDC). The UDC was successfully passed by the Buda City Council.

He has also led the adoption or revision to several long-range plans, including:

- Buda 2030 Comprehensive Plan, which won the 2012 Comprehensive Planning Award for Texas
- Downtown Master Plan
- Transportation Master Plan
- Facilities Master Plan & Space Needs Assessment
- Historic Preservation Design Standards & Guidelines

“I’m excited to see that Chance has risen to the top as a leader in his profession,” said Buda City Manager Kenneth Williams. “This speaks well for the sacrifices he has made not only for himself and the Texas Planning Association, but for the City of Buda in bringing the spotlight to all of us. We wish him a hearty congratulations.”

Sparks currently serves as President-Elect of the Texas Chapter of the APA.

“I’m appreciative of the leadership in Buda in supporting the implementation of sound city planning practices. It is the leadership that allows me to tell the planning story using local examples in a way people can relate to. While facts and statistics are important, it is the personal connection and community examples that make good planning practices relevant,” said Sparks.

Sparks holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Geography — Urban and Regional Planning and a Master of Public Administration from Texas State University. He holds a certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners and is an Accredited Member of the Congress for the New Urbanism.