

PLANETIZEN AICP PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. In what year did the American Planning Association form through consolidation?**
 - A. 1978
 - B. 1985
 - C. 1969
 - D. 1992
- 2. In a large development project with on-site infrastructure, which mechanism best clarifies what infrastructure will be provided as part of the development?**
 - A. Impact fees
 - B. Development agreement
 - C. Zoning ordinance
 - D. Building permit
- 3. Which statement best describes the difference between Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Councils of Governments (COGs)?**
 - A. MPOs focus on water quality; COGs have broader scope
 - B. MPOs govern municipalities; COGs focus on housing
 - C. MPOs and COGs are identical
 - D. MPOs focus on transportation planning; COGs have broader scope
- 4. Which item is NOT a physical feature of a site?**
 - A. Land Value
 - B. Geology
 - C. Hydrology
 - D. Microclimate
- 5. What planning tool best supports virtual collaboration for residents in a large planning area?**
 - A. Paper surveys
 - B. Public hearings
 - C. Groupware
 - D. Zoning

- 6. In the same context, the state's authority to regulate for public health, safety, and welfare is known as what power?**
- A. Commerce Power
 - B. Police powers
 - C. Tax Power
 - D. Elastic Clause
- 7. Clarence Perry's Neighborhood Unit Concept (1929) was published in which plan?**
- A. Regional Plan of New York.
 - B. Regional Survey of New York and Its Environs.
 - C. Plan for the City of Chicago.
 - D. Regional Study of New York.
- 8. What did the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 accomplish?**
- A. It tightened restrictions on ADA coverage.
 - B. It overturned two Supreme Court decisions and broadened scope.
 - C. It introduced new architectural design standards.
 - D. It only applied to employment rights.
- 9. Which statement about costs of community services (COCS) is accurate?**
- A. COCS is a broader term that uses fiscal impact analysis.
 - B. COCS is the same as fiscal impact analysis.
 - C. COCS applies only to capital expenditures.
 - D. COCS ignores revenues.
- 10. Which item could be legally discussed in a Planning Commission's closed session?**
- A. Public hearing on a development proposal
 - B. Drafting a zoning ordinance
 - C. Negotiating a contract with a potential consultant
 - D. Approving the budget for next year

Answers

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1. A
2. B
3. D
4. A
5. C
6. B
7. B
8. B
9. A
10. C

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Explanations

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1. In what year did the American Planning Association form through consolidation?

A. 1978

B. 1985

C. 1969

D. 1992

The year the profession joined under one national umbrella. In 1978, the American Institute of Planners and the American Society of Planning Officials merged to form the American Planning Association. This consolidation unified practitioners and policymakers in a single national organization, enabling consistent standards, resources, and advocacy across the planning field. The other years are simply not the year of this unification.

2. In a large development project with on-site infrastructure, which mechanism best clarifies what infrastructure will be provided as part of the development?

A. Impact fees

B. Development agreement

C. Zoning ordinance

D. Building permit

A development agreement is the binding tool that clearly lays out exactly what infrastructure will be provided as part of the project, by whom, and when. It's a negotiated contract between the developer and the city that specifies on-site improvements (roads, utilities, drainage, parks, transit facilities, etc.), who funds them, how they will be phased, and who is responsible for ongoing maintenance and operations. It also ties these commitments to approvals and entitlements, offering enforceable guarantees and remedies if obligations aren't met. This level of specificity and binding commitment isn't provided by impact fees, which are general charges to fund system-wide infrastructure rather than particular project commitments; zoning ordinances, which set general land-use rules and standards but don't spell out a detailed, project-specific infrastructure package; or building permits, which authorize construction but don't define the integrated infrastructure obligations of the development.

3. Which statement best describes the difference between Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Councils of Governments (COGs)?

A. MPOs focus on water quality; COGs have broader scope

B. MPOs govern municipalities; COGs focus on housing

C. MPOs and COGs are identical

D. MPOs focus on transportation planning; COGs have broader scope

Regional planning bodies are defined by their planning focus. Metropolitan Planning Organizations are specifically tasked with transportation planning for urbanized areas, framing and approving long-range transportation strategies and programs (like the Long-Range Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program) and coordinating with state departments of transportation and local agencies on roads, transit, and other mobility projects funded with federal dollars. Councils of Governments, on the other hand, are broader regional bodies that bring multiple local governments together to address a wider array of issues—housing, land use, economic development, environmental concerns, and overall regional planning—billing themselves as forums for coordination across sectors rather than focusing solely on transportation. So the best description is that MPOs concentrate on transportation planning, while COGs have a broader, multi-issue regional scope. The other statements don't fit because they either misstate the primary focus or claim the two are identical.

4. Which item is NOT a physical feature of a site?

A. Land Value

B. Geology

C. Hydrology

D. Microclimate

The main idea here is distinguishing physical characteristics of a site from economic or market attributes. Geology describes the rock and soil conditions that affect stability and construction, hydrology covers water-related aspects like drainage and flood risk, and microclimate involves local climate effects such as sun exposure and wind patterns caused by the land's shape and features. These are all intrinsic physical aspects of the site. Land value, however, is an economic measure reflecting market conditions, accessibility, zoning, and development potential, not a physical attribute of the land itself. Therefore, land value is not a physical feature of a site.

5. What planning tool best supports virtual collaboration for residents in a large planning area?

A. Paper surveys

B. Public hearings

C. Groupware

D. Zoning

To support virtual collaboration across a large planning area, you need a tool that lets many residents participate remotely, share documents, discuss ideas, and track progress. Groupware does exactly that by providing online spaces for messages, documents, calendars, and project workflows, enabling asynchronous input and transparent coordination regardless of location. While paper surveys are physical and slow, public hearings require live attendance, and zoning is a regulatory instrument rather than a collaboration platform, groupware best fits the need for scalable, accessible collaboration.

6. In the same context, the state's authority to regulate for public health, safety, and welfare is known as what power?

A. Commerce Power

B. Police powers

C. Tax Power

D. Elastic Clause

Police powers are the state's authority to regulate for the health, safety, and general welfare of its residents. This reserved power, rooted in the Constitution's federal structure, lets states set rules for things like zoning, building codes, sanitation, licensing, and local safety standards. It empowers local and state governments to tailor regulations to their communities' needs, independent of federal control, while still respecting any federal laws that preempt conflicting state rules. In practice, this means states can enact stricter protections or more specific requirements to protect residents, neighborhoods, and the environment.

7. Clarence Perry's Neighborhood Unit Concept (1929) was published in which plan?

- A. Regional Plan of New York.
- B. Regional Survey of New York and Its Environs.**
- C. Plan for the City of Chicago.
- D. Regional Study of New York.

Clarence Perry's Neighborhood Unit concept is a planning idea that envisions creating self-contained neighborhoods organized around a central elementary school, with a walkable radius and integrated residential, commercial, and recreational uses to foster community and efficient land use. This concept was published in the Regional Survey of New York and Its Environs, a regional planning study that examined how growth around New York should be directed and how neighborhoods could be designed to fit into a larger urban region. The survey presented Perry's ideas as a practical building block for shaping the form and function of communities within the broader plan for the New York region. The Chicago plan and other options relate to different contexts or later, broader plans, not this specific publication.

8. What did the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 accomplish?

- A. It tightened restrictions on ADA coverage.
- B. It overturned two Supreme Court decisions and broadened scope.**
- C. It introduced new architectural design standards.
- D. It only applied to employment rights.

The main idea is that the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 changed disability protections by broadening how disability is defined and interpreted, undoing earlier narrowing decisions. The Act explicitly reversed court decisions that had narrowed who qualifies as disabled, notably cases like Sutton v. United Airlines and Toyota Motor Manufacturing v. Williams, and it directs courts to interpret disability more broadly. It rejects the idea that an impairment must be extremely severe or that mitigating measures (such as medications or devices) must be ignored when determining disability. It also covers episodic or in remission conditions and includes a wide range of major life activities and bodily functions. The result is that more people fall under the protections of the ADA, not fewer. So the best answer is that the Act overturned two Supreme Court decisions and broadened the scope of who is protected. It didn't tighten restrictions, introduce new architectural design standards, or apply only to employment rights.

9. Which statement about costs of community services (COCS) is accurate?

- A. COCS is a broader term that uses fiscal impact analysis.**
- B. COCS is the same as fiscal impact analysis.
- C. COCS applies only to capital expenditures.
- D. COCS ignores revenues.

COCS examines the full financial implications of new development for a community, and uses fiscal impact analysis as a tool within that broader framework. It goes beyond simply tallying capital costs by also considering operating costs for services like police, fire, schools, sewage, roads, and parks, along with potential revenue streams such as taxes and fees. By evaluating both costs and revenues, COCS provides a net fiscal picture that helps determine whether a development will financially support itself or require subsidies. Because of this broader scope, COCS is not identical to fiscal impact analysis, which tends to focus more narrowly on whether projected revenues balance or exceed costs. It also isn't limited to capital expenditures, and it doesn't ignore revenues—the revenue side is integral to understanding the true fiscal effect.

10. Which item could be legally discussed in a Planning Commission's closed session?

- A. Public hearing on a development proposal
- B. Drafting a zoning ordinance
- C. Negotiating a contract with a potential consultant**
- D. Approving the budget for next year

Closed sessions are allowed for a few specific purposes under open meetings rules, mainly to protect confidential information and bargaining positions. Negotiating a contract with a potential consultant fits this, because it involves confidential terms and the ability to negotiate without public disclosure until a contract is awarded. The other items—holding a public hearing, drafting a zoning ordinance, or approving next year's budget—are parts of the public decision-making process and must be conducted in an open meeting so the public can participate and stay informed. So a contract negotiation with a prospective consultant is the item that could legally be discussed in a closed session.

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Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://planetizenaicp.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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