



American Planning Association
Oregon Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

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Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association **2017 POLICY PRIORITIES**

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) is an independent, statewide, not-for-profit educational organization with 850 members. OAPA provides leadership in the development of thriving communities by (1) advocating excellence in community planning, (2) promoting education about planning issues and citizen empowerment, and (3) providing the tools and resources necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change. Thriving communities are inclusive communities with strong economies, a healthy environment, and healthy people. They provide multiple options to get around as well as recreational, employment, and housing choices for all ages and abilities.

- **Promote and advocate for Oregon’s planning program.** OAPA is dedicated to making sure that state and local governments have the funding, resources, tools, and expertise to foster great communities. We are dedicated to opposing efforts that would weaken Oregon’s statewide planning program. A key provision of this priority is to ensure that Oregon’s residents can benefit from and can effectively participate in community and regional planning efforts.
- **Ensure Oregon’s planning program works in both urban and rural communities.** Great communities are no accident—they are planned that way. Oregon’s planning program is designed to ensure that all cities and counties plan comprehensively and consider the long- term consequences of the decisions and the investments they make. This applies to the impacts that those decisions and investments have today as well as the impacts they will have on future generations. OAPA supports the development of sound state planning policies that support local comprehensive planning throughout Oregon. OAPA supports adequate funding to local governments to support good planning, including the update and maintenance of comprehensive plans and land use regulations.
- **Plan for and fund public works and transportation infrastructure.** Well-planned, efficient, and resilient infrastructure is the backbone of great communities. It’s an investment in Oregon’s future. For example, an integrated, multi-modal transportation system is critical to move people and goods safely and efficiently. Planning for reliable water, wastewater collection and treatment, and, stormwater, is essential for fiscally responsible local governments. OAPA works for more efficient management of regional travel sheds by Metropolitan Planning Organizations and by Area Commissions on Transportation, along with increased state and federal funding to support regional commute and corridor strategies. One of the most pressing challenges for local governments is how to finance infrastructure. Federal, state, and local funding is critical to ensure that infrastructure can be designed and constructed to support local economic and community development. Planning is important to minimize costs and ensure infrastructure is designed to support a community’s immediate and long-term goals.
- **Improve housing affordability.** Oregon’s planning program requires communities across the state to plan for all types of needed housing for residents at all income levels. Our goal is to ensure households and families have adequate, well-located housing choices. OAPA supports programs and policies that ensure there is housing for

everyone in connected, complete communities close to good schools, jobs, shopping and convenient to transit. Funding from federal, state, and local sources is critical to support the development of and increase the stock of housing choices in all neighborhoods.

- **Plan for community resilience to natural hazards.** Oregon is and will continue to be vulnerable to significant natural hazards including: earthquakes, tsunamis, wildfire, floods, drought, landslides, and increasingly severe storms. OAPA supports leadership and deliberate efforts to make communities more resilient. These efforts include reducing or mitigating the risks posed by the impacts from natural hazards and adapting to the ongoing changes in Oregon's climate, geology, and built environment.
- **Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change.** OAPA supports efforts to reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses through good community design, resource protection, and continuing improvement in transit and transportation choice. OAPA recognizes that Oregon is unlikely to avoid climate change impacts in the future. Therefore, we support technical assistance and funding for regions to improve and support transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in urban areas through integrated land use and transportation planning.
- **Support economic development programs and policies.** Oregon's statewide planning program facilitates a variety of economic activities vital to Oregon's prosperity. The program includes provisions to ensure an adequate supply of land for employment (commercial and industrial) development, and the water, sewer, stormwater, and transportation infrastructure needed to support strong local and regional economies. OAPA supports planning policies and programs that meet the needs of urban and rural employers while making Oregon more economically competitive.
- **Update Goal 13: Energy.** OAPA recognizes the need to review and update Goal 13: Energy Conservation for the 21st Century. OAPA supports a comprehensive energy goal that incorporates and balances other goals with the desire to conserve energy, balance impacts of energy development, and encourage development of a sustainable energy supply for Oregon. We support renewable and sustainable energy development, policies, and regulations that balance impacts to resource lands and people. OAPA encourages changes to state law to shift the role of final permitting from state agency super siting to local governments.
- **Ensure meaningful public involvement and engagement.** Oregon's statewide planning program relies on adequate notice and robust community dialogue and decision-making. OAPA supports Statewide Planning Goal 1: Citizen Involvement, and ensuring citizens can meaningfully participate in local planning decisions. OAPA supports timely review and notice of land use decisions. It is critical for both permit applicants and parties to understand how and when to participate. OAPA supports broad and inclusive public outreach for comprehensive and long range planning projects to ensure meaningful citizen involvement where people can express their views and help influence local decision-making. OAPA opposes changes to state law that has the effect of substantially impeding the ability of citizens to participate in local land use planning decisions. OAPA believes that good community engagement results in better decisions.
- **Promote public health through planning.** Oregon planners share a common purpose with public health professionals, to improve the built environment and enhance all aspects of public health. We support programs that promote healthy community design, active lifestyles, open space, increased access to healthy food, increasing physical activity, and safe environments.

- **Improve equity through planning.** OAPA supports a statewide planning program that equitably serves urban and rural communities and distributes benefits among all populations. OAPA supports federal, state, local, private, and non-profit programs and investments that reduce disparities among Oregon’s diverse communities.

OAPA GUIDING PRINCIPLES

OAPA considers the following when taking a position on either legislation or proposed policies:

- **Benefit.** Will the policy advance the goals of the Oregon planning program and the APA objective of “making great communities happen”? Does the policy recommend “best planning practices” for both process and outcomes? Does it facilitate effective and meaningful engagement of citizens; help sustain vital, resilient, and healthy communities?
- **Clarity.** What will the proposed policy require? Is it clear? What are the outcomes and products expected from local, regional, state, and federal agencies, businesses, and citizens? Is this a policy that will help the public understand the benefits of planning?
- **Cost.** How much will the policy cost, to the state, the public, local governments, or others? Does it provide for an efficient and equitable allocation? Who will pay?
- **Creativity.** Can we come up with a more efficient, effective and creative policy that accomplishes the same purpose with broader political and public support? If a policy has negative impacts, can we come up with a way to overcome the harmful effects consistent with the proposal’s intent? Can we think of a way to accomplish the purpose in a way that gets broader legislative support?
- **Demonstrated Need.** Does the change in policy address a demonstrated need or problem? Is there evidence that shows the Legislature needs to act to address a need or solve a problem?
- **Diversity.** Is the policy helpful and balanced to a broad range of citizens rather than narrow special interests? Do all local governments required to implement the change in policy have the resources to do so? Does the policy support and further equity especially communities that have faced historic injustice?