



American Planning Association
Washington Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

December 1, 2018

Welcome to the Legislative Committee of the Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association

Welcome to the Legislative Committee, and thank you for your interest in participating in this exciting, dynamic, and impactful committee. Committee co-chairs [Esther Larsen](#) and [Yorik Stevens-Wajda](#) drafted this orientation page to give a quick overview of how the committee operates and how you can best get involved.

The Legislative Committee takes the lead on behalf of APA and the Washington Chapter to engage in the state legislative process and advocate for policies, laws, and budgets that help planners *Make Great Communities Happen*.

Committee Activities

The committee prepares a [legislative agenda](#), [reviews legislative bills](#), gives testimony on legislative matters of concern to the chapter, works to advance [bills sponsored by the chapter](#), engages strategically with other stakeholders to achieve common goals, provides presentations to various audiences and forums, coordinates with National APA on [advocacy and policy issues](#), and informs the chapter's Board of Directors and chapter membership about pertinent legislative issues.

The committee meets weekly via conference call at noon on Fridays during the state legislative session to review and discuss proposed legislation, receive updates from our chapter lobbyist and provide direction for commenting on legislation (see the [legislative committee website](#)). The calls are led by one of the committee co-chairs, generally alternating weekly, and follow an agenda posted prior to the call on the [Legislative Committee Basecamp Project Page](#), which is the main communication tool for committee (let one of the co-chairs know if you'd like access). Prior to each call the chapter lobbyist posts a list of bills for discussion and/or which need review for upcoming hearings.

Committee members list their areas of interest and expertise on the committee membership roster on Basecamp, and agree to review bills and make recommendations on a position, if any, the chapter should take on a particular bill. The bill reviews are posted on Basecamp to allow for ongoing comments and discussion. Position letters ([like this one](#)) are drafted and signed by the Chapter President on bills of significance, and the letters are generally sent to the House or the Senate Committee(s) in which the bill is receiving a hearing. Legislative Committee members and/or other chapter members also testify in person at hearings on bills when available and when the chapter lobbyist recommends that a planner with expertise would best carry the message. The chapter also has an ad-hoc [bill proposal subcommittee](#) through which chapter members can [propose legislation](#) for the chapter to consider sponsoring.

The legislative committee publishes electronic articles ([LEAD: Legislative Education, Advocacy and Direction – Close to the Lege](#)) to provide chapter members and others with succinct and timely information regarding bills, status updates, action alerts, and other



American Planning Association
Washington Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

legislative news. During the 2017 legislative session, the committee published seven LEAD articles, but only two during the 2018 session. The legislative committee also regularly publishes longer newsletter articles, including a preview before (e.g. [2017 session preview](#)), and a recap after (e.g. [2016 session recap](#)), each session.

How to get involved

If you're a member of APA-WA, let one of the committee co-chairs know that you're interested in participating. The first thing we'll do is get you access to the [Legislative Committee Basecamp Project Page](#), which is the committee's tool for communication and collaboration. You'll see a calendar with planned conference calls and other committee meetings and activities. Once you're in, participate in conversation threads, tune into conference calls, volunteer to review bills and draft position statements, and help shape the chapter's advocacy efforts. All told, a typical committee member spends 1-3 hours per week during the legislative session and a fraction of that outside of the session. A small price to pay to help your chapter and your state *Make Great Communities Happen*.

Thank you for your interest in the Legislative Committee, and we look forward to your input and participation.

Esther Larsen (esther.larsen@comcast.net) and
Yorik Stevens-Wajda (y Stevenswajda@gmail.com)