



Washington State has one of the strongest community planning statutes in the nation, which has enabled our citizens, businesses, elected leaders, and our profession to “make great communities happen” across the state. APA will continue work to promote sustainable development patterns, conserve farmland, build a resilient economic base, and save taxpayer dollars. Below are the priorities of the Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association for the 2020 legislative session, many of which were informed by the new Road Map to Washington’s Future report.

2020 Session Legislative Priorities

Housing & Homelessness

In order for communities to function, there must be an adequate supply of housing in proximity to employment, public transportation, and community facilities, such as schools. The housing stock must include affordable and accessible for sale and rental units, not only to meet social equity goals, but in order to ensure community viability. The development of a diverse and affordable housing stock must be carried out without sacrificing sound regulations that are in place to protect the environment and public health.

- **APA Washington supports strengthening requirements for comprehensive plan housing elements to provide more specific direction to cities, counties, and regions, as well expanding technical assistance and financial support from the state, which will together make comprehensive planning a more effective tool for providing housing for all economic segments of the population.**
- **APA Washington supports the Housing Affordability Response Team [2017 Recommendations](#) and the Affordable Housing Advisory Board [2020 Legislative Agenda \(Dec. 4 draft\)](#).**
 - Provide planning grants and require local governments to plan for housing at every income level, especially for lower-income households, and require accountability.
 - Encourage communities to facilitate the development of more affordable housing.
 - Seek responsible changes to development-related statutes to facilitate housing development.
 - Provide stable and dependable funding for affordable housing.
- **APA Washington supports passage of SB 5812/HB 1797 to expand the availability of accessory dwelling units in urban areas around the state.**
- **APA Washington requests the legislature fix the graduated REET to apply per unit to avoid unfairly penalizing multi-unit buildings.**

Climate change

Washington needs to act. Reducing our carbon footprint is a moral obligation to future generations, as well as a wise investment in resiliency and the state’s economy. Preparing for a warming world is also an unfortunate necessity.

- **APA Washington supports updating, clarifying, and strengthening the state’s statutory greenhouse gas emission reduction benchmarks, as well as action to establish mechanisms, such as pricing carbon pollution, that will achieve those benchmarks.**
- **APA Washington supports legislative efforts to pursue climate action plans, regulatory measures, incentives, technical standards and specifications, and mitigation and adaption measures in comprehensive plans.**
- **APA Washington supports incorporating climate impacts, indicators, and benchmarks in comprehensive plans, environmental impact analysis, and development reviews.**

Support for planning

Planning creates value. Planners need funding, planning requirements, and technical and policy support from the state; in return, effective planning can provide better communities, better health, a better economy, and more participation, fairness, efficiency, and innovation. The need to provide local governments with the tools to adequately fund planning remains a high priority for APA Washington. Good planning pays ongoing dividends through efficient and effective provision of public services, a healthy tax base, and engaged communities.

- ***APA Washington supports state funding for upcoming local comprehensive plan periodic updates and other targeted planning work.***

Inclusive planning

The American Planning Association seeks social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration.

- ***APA Washington supports an approach of equity in all policies to address community engagement and empowerment, access to opportunity, safe, fair, and affordable housing, and health equity.***

Planning for schools

School facilities have the potential to be positive centers of community life and to provide important neighborhood amenities like recreation and space for physical activity. When improperly located, they can also create permanent demands on school district and family transportation budgets; create and incentivize sprawl and threaten farm, forest, and rural land; and make inefficient use of public infrastructure. Washington APA continues to prefer that schools serving urban populations continue to be located in urban areas, with a focus on healthy site planning and priority for safe walking and bicycle paths between school facilities and adjacent neighborhoods.

- ***APA Washington supports public facilities serving primarily urban populations, including schools, locating within urban growth areas, near the communities that they serve.***
- ***APA Washington supports funding for collaborative efforts between school districts, local governments, and others (such as the Clark County Quality Schools Task Force) to address siting challenges and support smart and healthy site planning in a positive and thoughtful way.***

Road Map to Washington's Future

The Ruckelshaus Center's recently released report contains a wealth of perspectives and ideas for improving the state's planning framework. While it will take a minimum of several years, and substantial resources, to implement the key reforms and transformational and systemic changes identified in the report, the state would be better off for it and it's worth the effort.

- ***APA Washington supports implementation of the key reforms and transformational & systemic changes identified in the Road Map to Washington's Future report.***
- ***APA Washington offers the expertise and experience of our organization and membership to the task of implementing the Road Map to Washington's Future.***

Infrastructure

The legislature has made strides but more steps are needed to address infrastructure deficits. Local governments need tools like the Public Works Trust Fund and revenue options. The state should also establish mechanisms to ensure funding decisions reflect state, regional, and local plans and policies.

- ***APA Washington supports loan programs, local funding authority, and state appropriations to address infrastructure needs that align with state, regional, and local plans and policies.***

Annexation reform

A core principle of the state's planning framework is that urban growth areas should transition to municipal governance, providing local government that is more local, flexible, and fiscally sound. However annexation and incorporation activity in many urban growth areas has stalled.

- ***APA Washington supports a state program of incentives and regulatory simplification to facilitate and encourage annexations in urban growth areas.***

Transportation

Transportation is closely linked with land use, and transportation facilities and services are best provided using a structured, objective, and transparent project selection and development process. Planning for transportation must incorporate multimodal solutions, connectivity, safety, context-sensitivity, and maintenance needs.

- ***APA Washington supports a performance-based, outcome-driven transportation planning and funding process that supports the state's transportation policy goals.***
- ***APA Washington supports development of sustainable transportation funding sources to replace the gas tax as fuel consumption decouples from vehicle miles travelled.***
- ***APA Washington supports projects and programs that will significantly reduce transportation-related deaths and injuries, especially among vulnerable, lower-income, and historically-marginalized populations that are overrepresented in deaths, injuries, and impacted health.***
- ***APA Washington supports a statewide requirement to evaluate and report levels-of-service for transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities.***
- ***APA Washington supports a fix-it-first focus on keeping our transportation facilities in a state of good repair and carefully considering long-term maintenance and operations costs for new and expanded transportation facilities.***