



## Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association **POLICY PRIORITIES & STRATEGIES**

June 2019

### Policy Priorities

- Improve housing affordability and availability for all Oregonians.
- Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to mitigate the effects of climate change and implement strategies that support a transition toward low-carbon communities (mitigation).
- Plan for and implement adaptation strategies to build resilience and reduce vulnerability.
- Fund planning for and the development of infrastructure.
- Promote and advocate for an Oregon planning program that works for all communities.
- Support economic development programs and policies.
- Update Goal 13: Energy.
- Promote public health through planning.
- Conduct Federal policy oversight.

### Background

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) is an independent, statewide, not-for-profit educational organization with more than 950 members. Our mission statement is: *Relevant Resources, Better Planners, Exceptional Communities*. OAPA promotes the art and science of planning in Oregon that fosters social equity, economic viability, and protection and regeneration of the natural environment, with emphasis on creating more resilient and adaptable people and places today and for a more sustainable future. OAPA provides leadership in the development of thriving communities by (1) advocating excellence in community planning, (2) promoting education about planning issues and community empowerment, and (3) providing the tools and resources necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change.

OAPA's policy priorities provide guidance for evaluating new or existing policies and rulemaking activities at the state and federal level and serve to focus volunteer and staff resources. Regular updates, intended to gain consensus on Chapter positions, include review by members of the Legislative and Policy Affairs Committee and the Policy Subcommittee followed by Board review and approval, consideration of new policy issues, alignment with APA National policies where appropriate, and planning-related parts of the Governor's and other state level policy agendas, as appropriate. Additionally, OAPA's legislative and policy guiding principles, included at the end of this document, provide an additional set of lenses for evaluation and prioritization.

### Policy Priorities & Strategies

OAPA will track and participate in policy development and rule-making in support of the following priorities:

- **Improve housing affordability and availability for all Oregonians.** OAPA supports planning for all types of housing for residents at all income levels. This includes housing for rent and for sale for young families just starting out, in communities around the state. Our goal is to ensure households and families have adequate, well-located housing choices, including emerging and innovative housing types. OAPA supports programs and policies that ensure housing in connected, complete communities – close to quality schools, jobs, shopping,

cultural centers, places of worship, recreation, open space – with convenient access to transit and other transportation options. As the cost of housing continues to rise statewide, we are especially interested in fostering access to housing for those below the local median household income, and recognize that planning for rental markets is an increasingly important element of Housing Needs Analyses. Funding from federal, state, and local sources is critical to support the development of new housing and increase the range of housing choices in all neighborhoods, balanced with policies and programs that address stability and displacement of residents; retention of existing, naturally occurring affordable housing; and ongoing affordability.

**Strategy:** Work with local, regional, state, and federal policy makers and agencies and aligned organizations to fine-tune implementation of 2019 legislation at the nexus of land use planning and housing through participation in rule-making advisory committees, work groups, and other collaborative opportunities to develop implementation strategies or refine legislative concepts.

- **Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to mitigate the effects of climate change and implement strategies that support a transition toward low-carbon communities (mitigation).** OAPA supports efforts to reduce GHG emissions through land use and community design, resource protection and enhancement, and continuing improvement in transit and transportation choice. OAPA supports unified State actions, programs, and resources to address climate change from the land use and transportation sectors, including technical assistance and funding for planning and to implement, improve, and support transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation projects and programs; evaluate and integrate technological advances, such as Mobility as a Service; make operational system efficiencies; as well as to better integrate land use and transportation planning in urban areas. OAPA understands that the intertwined challenges of climate change, social inequity, economic uncertainty, degraded natural systems, and the rising cost of living demand responses that go far beyond cutting carbon and supports integrated solutions to address these challenges.

**Strategy:** 1) Educate members and planners across the state about available resources and adopted strategies to incorporate climate change mitigation into local plans, policies, and programs. 2) Engage in implementation of state climate legislation to advocate for planning and implementation funding to local governments, regions, and State agencies to ensure that the planning program works to achieve the objective of arresting and reversing climate change. 3) Collaborate with front-line, impacted, or allied groups to advocate for a State climate action program that supports a just transition and environmental justice, prioritizing efforts that address diversity, equity, and inclusion, with an emphasis on investing in projects that benefit and elevate impacted communities and low income households, support low carbon and local economic development, create living wage jobs, and ease transition to a low carbon economy.

- **Plan for and implement climate adaptation and hazard mitigation strategies to build resilience and reduce vulnerability.** Oregon is already experiencing the impacts of climate change and increased vulnerability to many natural hazards and human-caused risks, increasing the urgency of building resilience and reducing the vulnerability of our neighborhoods, businesses, and built and natural infrastructure to withstand challenges — environmental, economic, and social. OAPA supports policies, funding for planning and coordination, and technical assistance that help state and local government to develop and implement integrated strategies to reduce risk and improve the ability of individuals, communities, economic systems, and the natural and built environments to withstand, recover from, and adapt to changes from natural hazards, climate change, human-made disasters, and economic shifts. A resilient community is one that can bounce back, move forward, and become stronger over time.

**Strategy:** 1) Educate members and planners across the state about available resources, strategies, and funding opportunities to integrate and incorporate climate adaptation and resilience strategies, natural hazards mitigation, and related preparedness and response work into local and regional comprehensive and capital improvement planning and implementation. 2) Through education, outreach, and involvement in policy development and rule-making, encourage adoption of land use policies that reduce barriers to and encourage local innovations that increase community resilience, such as distributed renewable energy; sustainable food systems; net zero water, energy, and waste development; diverse economic structures; and smart cities. 3) Align

with front-line, impacted, or allied groups to ensure that policies increase the abilities of vulnerable populations within our communities, including low-income households, communities of color, people with disabilities, renters and older adults, to better prepare for and recover from the impacts of natural hazards, economic disruption, and climate change.

- **Fund planning for and the development of infrastructure.** Well-planned, efficient, and resilient infrastructure is the backbone of great communities. It's an investment in Oregon's future. Planning for reliable transportation, water, wastewater collection and treatment, and stormwater is essential for fiscally responsible local governments. One of the most pressing challenges for local governments is how to finance infrastructure. Access to financial and technical resources is important for successful planning to minimize costs and ensure infrastructure is designed to support a community's immediate and long-term goals, with increasing complexity related to infrastructure operation, maintenance, and planning in light of climate change impacts and increased occurrence of weather-related and other natural disasters.

**Strategy:** 1) Track and advocate for federal and state resources for local and regional expenditures critical to ensure that infrastructure can be designed, constructed, and maintained to support local economic and community development, livability, and resilience. 2) Support policies and the allocation of resources that allow communities to make infrastructure decisions that advance equity.

- **Promote and advocate for an Oregon planning program that works for all communities.** Oregon's planning program is a partnership between the state and local and regional governments. It is designed to ensure that all cities and counties plan comprehensively, informed by authentic community engagement, and consider the long-term consequences of the decisions and investments they make, for today and for future generations, in a manner consistent with statewide planning laws. OAPA is dedicated to making sure that state agencies and local and regional governments have the funding, resources, tools, and expertise to support good planning and foster great communities, including the update and maintenance of comprehensive plans and land use regulations.

**Strategy:** 1) Support policies that maintain land use decision-making and prioritization for planning and community development at the local level. Oppose efforts that would weaken Oregon's statewide planning program and support policies that strengthen it. 2) Support state initiatives that allocate technical and financial resources for local and regional planning efforts that set a high standard for good planning. 3) Advocate for technical assistance, processes, and federal and state funding opportunities that are scalable, allowing communities to plan and design to fit local conditions. 4) Consider convening a process to engage with a broad and diverse cross-section of planners, allied professionals, community organizations, students, and other stakeholders to evaluate the values upon which Oregon's Statewide Planning Program is based and explore if changes are needed. 5) Support efforts of the Land Conservation and Development Commission to take a hard look at Goal 1 Citizen Involvement, to ensure community members can engage with and influence the development of plans and projects, including projects led by other state, regional, and local agencies and entities in a meaningful way, with a focus on culturally responsive community engagement and place-making strategies to ensure more inclusive, just, and equitable communities. 6) Work with OAPA committees to build community capacity via education and outreach, relationship building and peer mentorship, and to increase access to trainings.

- **Support economic development programs and policies that encourage inclusive and equitable growth.** 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 and workers while making Oregon more economically competitive in a manner that supports ecological and human health.

**Strategy:** Support policies that move toward a low-carbon economy and foster employment growth, competitiveness, and equitably distributed household prosperity.

- **Update Goal 13: Energy.** OAPA recognizes the need to review and update Goal 13: Energy Conservation for the 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

**Strategy:** 1) Support implementation of an update to Goal 13 as an outcome of the 2019 Legislative session if HB 2322 passes through education of members and planners across the state, promotion of public input opportunities, and participation in subsequent rule-making. HB 2322 proposes updates to land use planning goals to better support policies that further encourage the development of renewable energy facilities and reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, helping to meet state energy and climate priorities. 2) If HB 2322 does not pass this session, continue to advocate for future updates to Goal 13.

- **Promote healthy communities through good 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 nutritious and fresh foods, increased physical activity, and safe environments, as well as policies that help to avoid or minimize negative health impacts.

**Strategy:** 1) Support policies that limit and ultimately reduce air pollution in Oregon, increase resiliency to the climate-related health challenges we face, and create new job opportunities through investment in green energy economy. 2) Support public health-related policies that help communities advance educational success and involvement, family well being, and health equity – especially for economically disadvantaged children and their families and communities of color. 3) Utilize Health Impact Assessments as an element of all comprehensive, transportation, and related community plans, based on best practices developed by the Oregon Health Authority.

- **Conduct Federal policy oversight.** Ensure that the needs of Oregonians are being met in the following areas of concern:
  - Federal lands, water, and resource issues (forest, range, rivers, coastal);
  - Transportation and infrastructure, including innovation and preparation for new technologies;
  - Federal power production, marketing, and environmental restoration;
  - Farm and conservation programs;
  - Energy and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
  - Natural hazards mitigation planning, response and resilience;
  - Housing and community development; and
  - Census and federal data.

**Strategy:** 1) Track and participate in federal policy making. 2) Engage with Oregon's federal delegation, including key committee members to advocate for sound policy and sufficient funding to maintain, enhance, protect, and/or develop local and state solutions. 3) Actively participate in APA's Advocacy Network.

## OAPA LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles were considered in the development of OAPA’s Policy Priorities. If a priority has not previously been identified, OAPA also considers these when taking a position or identifying a strategy.

- **Benefit.** Will the policy advance the goals of the Oregon planning program and the APA objective of “creating great communities for all”, in keeping with OAPA’s mission and vision? Does the policy recommend “best planning practices” for both process and outcomes? Does it facilitate effective and meaningful engagement of all community members? Does it help sustain vital, resilient, and healthy communities? Does it provide for processes and resources (e.g. access to technical assistance and funding opportunities) that benefit both urban and rural communities or place an unfair burden on a geographic area or type of community?
- **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 residents? 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? Do all local governments required to implement the change in policy have the resources to do so?
- **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? Are local and regional governments better suited to address these needs in the absence of state legislation?
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.** Is the policy reflective of and responsive to Oregon’s diverse people and places? Does the policy further equity and inclusion or reduce disparities and remove barriers, especially for communities that have faced historic injustice? Does the policy seek 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? Does it alter policies, institutions, and decisions that oppose such needs? (Adapted from the American Institute of Certified Planners Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.)
- **Collaboration.** Does the policy support partnerships, integration of strategies, or prioritize opportunities that increase capacity and meet multiple objectives?

### ***How does OAPA define diversity, equity, and inclusion?***

***Diversity*** is an inclusive concept that “encompasses, but is not limited to race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexuality, ability, educational attainment, spiritual beliefs, creed, culture, tribal affiliation, nationality, immigration status, political beliefs[,] veteran status”, and geographic location. “With greater diversity, we can be more creative, effective and just, and bring more varied perspectives, experiences, backgrounds, talents and interests to the practice of planning and to the communities we serve. We recognize that achieving diversity and inclusion is an evolutionary process that requires an ongoing renewal of our commitment.” (Adapted from APA’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, Adopted April 2018)

***Equity*** is “just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Unlocking the promise of the nation by unleashing the promise in us all.” (PolicyLink Equity Manifesto, 2018)

***Inclusion*** means that everyone can participate and everyone belongs. Inclusion applies to all components of the planning process – from how we do planning in alignment with Oregon’s Statewide Planning Goal 1: Citizen Involvement to how we comprehensively plan for, design and build, and manage our communities, farm and forest lands, and natural spaces and resources.

Source: OAPA Strategic Plan 2018 Update