



2022 POLICY PRIORITIES & STRATEGIES

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) is an independent, statewide, not-for-profit educational organization of more than 800 planners from across the state who work for cities, counties, special districts, state agencies, tribes, community-based organizations, universities, and private firms. We provide leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in community planning, promoting education and resident empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change. OAPA supports sustainable communities and works to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations by helping to create and stabilize places that are equitable, healthy, and resilient and provide ongoing economic, environmental, and social benefits.

Below are **OAPA's 2022 policy priorities** that are intended to guide the Chapter's participation in policy development and rule-making at the state and federal levels. The policy priorities are not listed in order of importance. OAPA supports policies, rules, programs, and technical and financial resources that advance the policy priorities, including the following specific actions or intentions.

A. Promote equitable community engagement

Historically, planning processes and community engagement in Oregon have failed to meaningfully incorporate the voices and perspectives of people of color, low- and moderate-income residents, people with disabilities, renters, and other underrepresented groups. This has resulted in inequitable outcomes that persist today. Community engagement processes and resources must be updated to empower and help underrepresented communities access planning policy and decision-making processes. In addition, assistance must also be provided in encouraging their inclusive participation to help shape planning and investment decisions at all levels of government.

- Update Goal 1 (Citizen involvement) to:
 - Explicitly elevate the voices of communities of color and other traditionally underrepresented or excluded groups and ensure they have the opportunity to participate in land use planning and decision making;
 - Require equal and fair notice to Native American tribes and tribal communities and provide consultation and mutual concurrence when land use decisions impact lands and natural resources that are owned or managed by a tribal government;
 - Incorporate practices to engage all members of the affected community on climate justice, environmental justice and equity in land use and planning decisions; and
 - Incorporate modern technologies and mediums to enhance access to information and improve communication between local government and the public, including disadvantaged groups.



B. Advance racial equity

Anti-racism must be centered in policy and planning work in Oregon, with an emphasis on intersectionality. A deliberate effort needs to be made to advance racial equity and combat systemic racism in the state.

- Ensure state and local planning work and projects incorporate community benefits that bring measurable, permanent improvements to the lives of affected residents, particularly those in lower-income neighborhoods and communities of color; and minimize or mitigate disproportionate negative impacts on communities of color, lower-income residents, and other underrepresented or disadvantaged groups.
- Collaborate with community organizations to better understand and advocate for policies and programs that increase access to resources and opportunities, support community development, and otherwise empower Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities.

C. Confront climate change

Oregon needs to act now to confront climate change. More needs to be done to mitigate climate change and to help communities prepare for, adapt to, and become more resilient to its impacts, while addressing the inequitable impacts of climate change on vulnerable community members.

- Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through integrated land use and transportation planning; resource and habitat preservation, protection and enhancement; increased equitable access to and investment in transit, commuter rail, and active transportation projects; increased investment in shared mobility projects and innovative micromobility projects; and increased investment in infrastructure improvements for electric vehicles.
- Implement state climate legislation and rulemaking that ensures that the planning program works to achieve the objective of arresting and reversing climate change.
- Add a Goal 20 to the Statewide Land Use Planning Goals to address climate change, including the need to reduce GHG emissions, promote carbon sequestration, and mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts. Incorporating the new goal into local comprehensive plans means that as communities plan for a future that includes climate change, the impacts and implications of climate change will be understood and addressed in planning and land use decisions.
- Collaborate with frontline, impacted, or allied groups to advocate for State actions and appropriations of federal funding that prioritize environmental justice, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. State actions, including appropriation of federal funding, should emphasize investment in green projects that benefit and elevate impacted communities and low-income households; support low carbon and local economic development; encourage community amenities that improve health outcomes; create climate-friendly jobs that provide for professional and living wages; help increase participation in job training and job placement, including increasing the percentage of job training and climate-smart training programs and targeting participation from disadvantaged communities; and ease the transition to a low carbon economy.
- Work collaboratively with other west coast APA state chapter's and national efforts to coordinate climate change work.



D. Address the housing crisis

There is a housing crisis in Oregon, and it is critical that efforts continue to increase housing supply, affordability, and choices for all Oregonians across the state. The need to ensure access to temporary and permanent housing is especially acute in communities that are recovering from the wildfires of 2020.

- Preserve or increase the supply of housing that is affordable to moderate- to lower-income residents, including rental and ownership opportunities.
- Promote housing stability and mitigate or minimize the displacement of residents, with attention to historically and systematically marginalized communities.
- Promote housing in connected, complete communities – close to quality schools, jobs, services, food and household necessities, cultural centers, places of worship, recreation, open space – with convenient access to transit and other transportation options.

E. Promote equitable resiliency and recovery

Oregon is facing unprecedented challenges – including the coronavirus pandemic, economic crisis, wildfires, and extreme weather events such as extreme heat – that require immediate and ongoing action to help communities prepare, recover, and rebuild. There is an increased urgency to ensure all Oregon’s communities can withstand and bounce back from natural hazards and other disasters, with an emphasis on minimizing vulnerability.

- Develop and implement equitable integrated strategies at the state and local level to reduce risk and improve the ability of all 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.
- Increase community resilience and facilitate equitable and smart rebuilding in fire-damaged communities, making them less vulnerable to future disasters.
- Reduce barriers to equitable local innovations that increase community resilience, such as distributed renewable energy; sustainable food systems; net-zero water, energy, waste development or redevelopment; diverse economic structures; and smart cities.
- Align with frontline, impacted, or allied groups to ensure that policies advance environmental justice to address inequities and prioritizing vulnerable communities in recovery and resiliency strategies.
- Develop or update local and regional evacuation planning efforts as well as hazard mitigation planning.

F. Plan for and develop equitable, resilient infrastructure

Well-planned, equitable, efficient, and resilient infrastructure is the backbone of vibrant communities for all. Planning for infrastructure - transportation; drinking water; wastewater collection and treatment; solid waste disposal; schools, parks, and recreation facilities; and stormwater - is essential for fiscally-responsible local governments. However, reliable, sustainable, and sufficient funding for infrastructure remains a challenge. Access to financial and technical resources is important to ensure infrastructure is designed to support a community’s immediate and long-term goals, particularly in light of climate change impacts and increased occurrence of extreme weather-related events and other natural disasters.



- Ensure that infrastructure can be well planned, designed, constructed, and maintained at the local and regional level to support local economic and community development, livability, sustainability, and resilience.
- Encourage communities to make infrastructure decisions that advance equity, prioritize accessibility and pedestrian and bicyclist safety, integrate green infrastructure, and conserve financial and natural resources.

G. Advocate for Oregon’s planning program

Oregon’s planning program helps to ensure cities and counties comprehensively plan for today and for future generations. Governments at all levels need funding and resources to support good planning and foster great communities.

- Increase funding and technical resources for local, regional, and state agencies engaged in planning work, including the Department of Land Conservation and Development and the Land Use Board of Appeals.
- Develop and implement initiatives that set a high standard for good planning with authentic engagement.
- Maintain land use decision-making at the local level.
- Improve state agency coordination that accomplishes these goals.

H. Partner with APA to advocate for planning at the federal level

Engage with APA’s Advocacy team to ensure that the needs of all Oregonians are being met in line with the Chapter’s priorities (A to G) and the following related areas of concern: federal land, clean and safe drinking water, and natural resource and habitat (forest, range, rivers, wetlands, coastal) issues; federal electric power production, marketing, and environmental restoration; farm and land conservation programs; community and economic development; multi-modal transportation planning; and census and federal data.

- Track and participate in federal policymaking.
- Engage with Oregon’s Federal delegation, including key committee members, to advocate for sound policy and reliable, sufficient, and sustainable funding sources to maintain, enhance, protect, and/or develop equitable, efficient, and sustainable local and state solutions.
- Advocate for benefits from federal investments for federal covered programs¹ in Oregon to flow to disadvantaged communities².
- Encourage active participation of all OAPA members in APA’s Advocacy Network.

¹ Covered programs and disadvantaged communities as defined in the implementation guidance for the Justice40 Initiative, a critical part of the Federal Administration’s whole-of-government approach to advancing environmental justice: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/M-21-28.pdf>.



LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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

- **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 urban, rural, and Tribal 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?
- **Collaboration.** Does the policy support partnerships, integration of strategies, or prioritize cooperative opportunities that increase capacity and meet multiple mutually agreed upon objectives?
- **Cost.** How much will the policy cost – to the state, a region, the public, local governments, or other relevant partners? Does it provide for an efficient and equitable allocation? Who will pay? Do all local governments and their partners 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 collaborative 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, Inclusion, and Accessibility.** 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 historical 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.)

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