



## 2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

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, which balances Statewide Planning Goals to foster 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 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.

Following are the OAPA legislative priorities for 2020:

- **Improve housing affordability and availability.** OAPA supports planning for all types of housing for Oregonians at all income levels. Our goal is to ensure households and families have adequate, well-located housing choices in diverse, inclusive neighborhoods and communities in all corners of the state, including emerging and innovative housing types. Addressing housing equity challenges and promoting fairness, affordability, and choice are key elements of more prosperous and equitable communities. OAPA supports programs and policies that ensure housing in connected, complete communities – close to quality schools, jobs, shopping, cultural centers, places of worship, and parks and recreation opportunities – with convenient access to transit and other transportation options. As the cost of housing continues to rise statewide, OAPA is 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 Analysis. 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 communities, balanced with policies and programs that address stability and displacement of residents and provide for ongoing affordability.
- **Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to mitigate the effects of climate change and implement strategies that support a transition toward low-carbon communities.** OAPA supports efforts to reduce GHG emissions through land use and community design, natural resource protection and enhancement, and continuing improvement in transit and transportation choice. OAPA supports unified State actions, programs, and resources to address climate change, including technical assistance and funding for planning and to implement, improve, and support transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation projects, operational efficiencies, and programs, 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, with an emphasis on environmental justice and lessening impacts on vulnerable communities, including rural Oregonians. Legislation should prioritize implementation of existing adopted strategies, such as the adopted Statewide Transportation Strategy (for GHG reduction), and earmark funds for this purpose. Specifically, legislation should require the planning, development or implementation of land use and transportation scenarios by local governments and metropolitan planning organizations that have been approved by the Land Conservation and Development Commission. Additionally, legislation should recognize and prioritize impacted communities and eligible Indian tribes in determining projects and funding as well as recognize the importance of natural and working lands for funding allocation.
- **Plan for and implement strategies to improve the health, safety, and resilience of our communities.** Oregon is already experiencing impacts due to 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

community members, neighborhoods, businesses, and built and natural infrastructure to withstand challenges — environmental, economic, and social. A healthy and resilient community is one that can bounce back, move forward, and become stronger over time. Natural resource conservation, farm and forest land preservation, and access to local parks and recreation opportunities are vital to advancing community health, safety, and resilience. OAPA supports policies, funding for planning and coordination, and technical assistance that help state, regional, 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. OAPA supports using an environmental justice approach to address inequity and advance healthier, safer, and better prepared communities, centering the voices of frontline and vulnerable communities, including low-income households, tribal members, communities of color, people with disabilities, renters and older adults. OAPA supports land use policies that reduce barriers to and encourage local innovations that increase community health and resilience, such as access to healthy and sustainable foods; distributed renewable energy; net zero water, energy, and waste development; diverse economic structures; and smart cities.

- **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 safe and 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. Federal, state, and local funding is critical to ensure that infrastructure can be designed, constructed, and maintained to support local economic and community development, livability, resilience, and environmental quality. 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, increased occurrence of weather-related and other natural disasters, and technological advances and innovations with impacts on land use and community livability. OAPA supports policies and the allocation of resources that allow communities to make infrastructure decisions that advance safety, human and ecological health, and 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. Specifically:
  - OAPA is dedicated to opposing efforts that would weaken Oregon's statewide planning program and supports policies that strengthen it.
  - 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 in a meaningful way. In order for this to occur, OAPA supports policies that maintain land use decision-making and prioritization for planning and community development at the local level.
  - OAPA supports state initiatives that allocate technical and financial resources for local, regional, and state planning efforts and that set a high standard for good planning.
  - OAPA opposes legislation that fails to recognize local and regional differences and/or proposes unduly preemptive policies at the state level related to land use, housing, or community development.
  - For 2020, OAPA will continue to focus on tracking bills that may weaken the statewide planning program and will advocate for technical assistance, processes, and funding opportunities that are scalable, allowing communities to plan and design to fit local conditions. Additionally, the capacity and ability of small cities and counties to implement legislation and opportunities for resource building will be considered.

## 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 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