



American Planning Association
Iowa Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

APA Iowa 2023 Legislative Agenda

The American Planning Association Iowa Chapter (APA Iowa) is a membership organization of approximately four hundred professional planners, planning educators, planning commissioners and planning students from across the state of Iowa. APA Iowa's state legislative priorities for 2023 are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list of critical planning policies important to APA Iowa, but rather reflects items that may be considered during the upcoming legislative session. For more information, please contact APA Iowa Legislative Program Chair Steven Van Steenhuysse, AICP (svansteenhuysse@masoncity.net, 641-421-3626). To learn more about APA Iowa, please visit <https://iowa.planning.org>.

Policy Item	APA Iowa Position
Economic Development	Recognizes that tax increment financing is an important tool for local governments (rural and urban) and supports the flexibility provided under current law. Supports legislation, policies, programs, and funding that allow communities to encourage sustainable development and remove blight, such as brownfield/grayfield tax credits and other funding programs, and to attract and sustain quality jobs that provide livable and equitable wages to the workforce.
Environmental Protection, Climate, and Conservation	Supports funding and programs that facilitate and encourage nutrient reduction in Iowa's water bodies and watershed-level planning that addresses urban and rural water quality, flood mitigation, and water recreation. APA Iowa supports state policies that encourage and incentivize use of sustainable energy from renewable sources, programs that prevent or mitigate the impacts of climate change, and programs that protect the environment.
Smart Planning Principles	Supports comprehensive planning and the Smart Planning Principles outlined in Iowa Code, including funding incentives for communities to adopt them, and opposes any legislation to remove or weaken the practice of sound planning in Iowa's communities.
Local Control of Planning Issues	Believes local jurisdictions should have control on planning issues and opposes legislation that mandates regulations or limits local planning and zoning powers. Examples include regulation of adult-oriented businesses, residential occupancy restrictions, fireworks, home occupations, and cellular tower/small cell placement.
Recreation and Cultural Programs	Supports programs and funding or incentives that provide a higher quality of life to attract and retain residents. This includes support and additional funding for the Enhance Iowa program, historic preservation, and cultural programs such as Iowa Great Places.
Livable Communities	Supports state policies that seek to improve quality of life by promoting development of safe, accessible, and vibrant environments. Policies could address sustainable land use, mixed use developments, multigenerational and affordable housing, multi-modal transportation, and efforts to help residents age in place. APA-Iowa supports legislation to enable land banking and similar community-based programs to address blight and disinvestment. APA Iowa also supports legislation that promotes a culture of equity and inclusion that helps to transform Iowa into a place that honors our diversity as a strength.
Housing	Supports increased investment in affordable housing programs, including the State Housing Trust Fund, Workforce Housing Tax Credits, and other programs that provide quality housing for low and moderate income families, reduce barriers to homeownership, and support the modification of homes to help people age in place. Supports funding to help local communities plan for their housing needs.
Transportation and Infrastructure	Supports investment in healthy modes of non-motorized transportation, including funding for local communities to plan for trails and bicycle routes. APA Iowa supports efforts to fund and encourage use of public transit. APA Iowa also supports efficient and environmentally friendly renovation of existing infrastructure, particularly roads, bridges, and utility systems.