



American Planning Association  
**Iowa Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

## **APA Iowa 2021 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. Please find below APA Iowa's state legislative priorities for 2021. 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 Steenhuyse, AICP ([svansteenhuys@masoncity.net](mailto:svansteenhuys@masoncity.net), 641-421-3626). For more information about APA Iowa, please visit [www.iowa-apa.org](http://www.iowa-apa.org).

Policy Item	APA Iowa Position
Economic Development	Recognizes that tax increment financing is an important tool for local governments and supports the flexibility provided under current law. Supports legislation, policies, programs, and funding that allow communities to attract and sustain quality jobs that provide livable and equitable wages to the workforce.
Water Quality and Conservation	Supports funding and programs that facilitate and encourage nutrient reduction in Iowa's water bodies and improve Iowa's water quality. Furthermore, APA Iowa supports watershed-level planning that address urban and rural water quality, flood mitigation, and water recreation.
Smart Planning Principles	Supports comprehensive planning and the Smart Planning Principles outlined in Iowa Code, and opposes any legislation to remove or weaken the practice of sound planning in Iowa's communities.
Recreation and Cultural Programs	Supports programs and funding or incentives that encourage economic development and 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.
Brownfield/Grayfield Redevelopment	Supports efforts and funding to enhance the Brownfield and Grayfield Redevelopment programs to encourage sustainable development and to revitalize blighted and distressed areas.
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, firework legalization, and cellular tower/small cell placement.
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, alternative 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.
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.
Environmental Sustainability and Climate	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.