



## The American Planning Association

*Making Great Communities Happen*

---

### ***Who we are***

The American Planning Association is a nonprofit public interest advocacy, education and research organization representing more than 38,000 planners, elected officials, and citizens involved with urban and rural planning issues. Our members include planners working in local, regional, and state agencies, consultants in private practice, university teachers and researchers, individuals appointed to serve on planning commissions, and leaders in the development and conservation communities.

APA's members strive to include citizens in the process of developing a vision for how they want their community and its surrounding region to evolve over time — what attributes are important to protect and where new development should be encouraged. The success of this process depends on listening, discovering shared values, and recognizing how the parts of a neighborhood, a city, or a region relate to one another and contribute to its overall vitality. Planners then work with a variety of partners in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to craft policies, land use regulations, and incentives to help the community achieve its goals.

### ***Where we are***

APA's office in Chicago houses the conference, education, membership, publications, and research departments. The Washington, D.C., office houses government affairs, public affairs, and outreach, as well as the American Institute of Certified Planners, the professional development and credentialing program. In addition, APA members across the country are organized into 46 state and regional chapters and 19 topical or special interest divisions. APA's website ([www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)) helps users access information about current projects, publications, upcoming conferences, and links to chapters and other useful sites.

### ***Resources to Make Great Communities Happen***

APA has available a wide array of resources, research, publications and services to help elected officials, civic leaders, and others create communities where residents enjoy economic vitality, environmental quality, and social equity. APA is working to support smart growth reform efforts throughout the nation and federal policies to help build stronger communities. APA publishes a variety of policy resources, including *Public Policies to Make Great Communities Happen*. This handy booklet provides an overview of the policies and programs needed to strengthen and promote good planning. APA's greatest resource, of course, is its members. We encourage you to reach out to them as allies for your endeavors. From research to advocacy, APA and its members are actively working on behalf of policies at the federal, state and local level to improve quality of life and planning practice in the nation's communities.

For more information, write or call the American Planning Association at:

1776 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20036 ▪ 202-872-0611  
122 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 1600, Chicago, IL 60603 ▪ 312-431-9100  
[www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)



## Federal Policy Agenda for the 109th Congress

---

Americans believe that the federal government can be a vital partner in promoting community livability and smart growth. APA calls on Congress to take these steps to help make great communities happen:

- Support reauthorization of the nation's transportation laws based on principles of increased choice, access, equity, flexibility, and livability through planning;
- Maintain the Community Development Block Grant as an independent program providing direct and flexible funding to communities with sufficient funding at no less than current levels;
- Address the nation's affordable housing crisis by adopting new tools such as a national housing trust fund and tax incentives and preserving HOPE VI;
- Reject efforts to undermine national rail passenger service and provide additional support for Amtrak;
- Support urban parks, recreation and open space by fully funding the Title VIII Conservation Trust Fund, including the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery program;
- Reauthorize the Coastal Zone Management Act with new provisions to improve land use planning in coastal regions and include support for planning in ocean policy reform;
- Enact a Community Safety Block Grant program to provide resources for local governments to improve mitigation planning, modernize planning and building regulations, conduct critical infrastructure threat assessments, and acquire technology for advanced visualization and scenario planning;
- Ensure adequate implementation of national flood insurance reform and continue to support key disaster mitigation programs, such as flood map modernization and pre and post disaster mitigation funding;
- Provide full funding for federal brownfields redevelopment programs;
- Increase support for repair and modernization of vital existing municipal infrastructure;
- Enact comprehensive postal reform legislation that includes provisions ensuring adequate notice and coordination provisions for communities affected by postal closures and relocations;
- Ensure that BRAC-affected communities receive adequate redevelopment assistance by urging the Department of Defense to provide rapid transfer of property, reasonable environmental remediation to facilitate reuse, and planning assistance;
- Include support for energy conservation and efficiency initiatives and reject attempts to weaken local land use authority in any comprehensive energy legislation.