

Planning for Housing using the APA Housing Policy Guide

APA Policy Tools

Instruments to guide your implementation of APA policies locally

- Policy guides
- Policy principles
- Legislative priorities

- And more...

What are APA Policy Guides

APA's official position on issues central to building communities of lasting value

Created for policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels

30 policy guides adopted to date

4 guides currently underway:

- Climate Update

- Equitable Economic Development & Inclusive Growth

- Hazard Mitigation

- Legacy Cities

More information available at www.planning.org/policy/guides/

APA Housing Policy Guide

- Merged multiple housing topical guides in 2006
- Created guide committee and then white paper in 2017 with intent to fully update guide by 2018
- Created Planning Home in 2018
- Adopted Policy Guide at 2019 Delegate Assembly

- **Reasons for this guide:**

- All types of communities experience a lack of available and affordable housing
- Land use planning and zoning are a way to proactively address these issues
- Planners and the profession have tools and skills to address these issues today
- Local, state, and federal housing policies can impact many other planning topics

- **Purpose of this guide:**

- Set policy for APA as an organization and in doing so provide guidance to members, chapters, divisions, and leadership
- Provide planners with actionable policies that can be implemented to ensure housing opportunities are available, accessible, and affordable to all
- Educate and influence elected officials, leaders, allied professionals, and communities on housing principles and policies
- Aligned with other policy guides: Equity, Transportation, ...

- ***Introduction***

- ***Emerging trends the guide aims to address:***

- *Housing supply and housing conditions*
 - *Affordability*
 - *Housing Location*
 - *Housing Needs for All (Universal Design and Visitability, Aging in Community, Cost Burdened, Future Homeowners, Immigrant communities, Sustainability, People Experiencing Homelessness)*

- **Position 1**

- Modernize state and local laws to ensure housing opportunities are available, accessible, and affordable to all
 - *Position 1A – modernize state planning laws, binding comprehensive plans or housing plans, allow inclusionary zoning, and state agency to oversee and help implement local housing policy*
 - *Position 1B – modernize local zoning bylaws/ ordinances to address mixed-use, multi-family, higher densities, reductions to minimum lot sizes, minimum dwelling requirements, greater heights allowances, eliminating or minimizing off-street parking requirements*
 - *Position 1C – fair share across regions*

• **Position 1**

- Modernize state and local laws to ensure housing opportunities are available, accessible, and affordable to all
 - Position 1D – housing at a range of price points in rural locations, particularly workforce and market-rate housing
 - Position 1E – housing near existing and new economic opportunities
 - Position 1F – states allow inclusionary zoning
 - Position 1G – states allow multi-family, mixed-use development by-right
 - Position 1H – enabling design for all housing; require for federally-subsidized housing
 - Position 1I – transform engagement process

- **Position 1**

- Modernize state and local laws to ensure housing opportunities are available, accessible, and affordable to all
 - Position 1J – combat housing discrimination, dismantle exclusionary zoning
 - Position 1K – set flexible housing occupancy standards
 - Position 1L – reform local plans and codes

• **Position 2**

- Preserve existing housing to maintain the quality and overall supply of affordable housing
 - *Position 2A – preserve existing, naturally occurring affordable owner- and renter-occupied units*
 - *Position 2B – preserve existing deed-restricted affordable housing; develop without displacement*
 - *Position 2C – monitor, maintain, and modernize existing deed-restricted affordable housing*
 - *Position 2D – create housing options for older adults*
 - *Position 2E – create homeownership opportunities*

• **Position 3**

- Encourage environmental sustainability and resiliency as critical elements of housing availability and affordability
 - *Position 3A – amend zoning and building requirements to allow net-zero, passive, renewable homes with sustainable systems*
 - *Position 3B – housing location should align with supporting low-carbon choices and goals*
 - *Position 3C – incorporate green infrastructure into compact development*
 - *Position 3D – incorporate sustainability and resilience goals into all housing types*

- **Position 4**

- Ensure that public and private finance keeps pace and innovates to support increased housing availability and affordability
 - Position 4A – advocate for increased resources from a range of federal housing programs
 - Position 4B – reform private financial market resources and make standards more flexible to support preservation and production goals, and support less traditional development formats, including mixed-use
 - Position 4C – support programs such as RAD to drive market support of new affordable housing development
 - Position 4D – support innovative approaches to homeownership financing and models
 - Position 4E – increase coordination across funding sources and in planning for expenditures (Consolidated Plans)

- **Position 4**

- Ensure that public and private finance keeps pace and innovates to support increased housing availability and affordability
 - Position 4F – support innovative governmental assessment and tax policies; support low-income and middle-income housing tax credit
 - Position 4G – support financing and subsidies for accessory dwelling units
 - Position 4H – support reforms to Qualified Allocation Plans, including amending locational preferences
 - Position 4I – support ongoing creation of housing trust funds
 - Position 4J – cultivate new partnerships to leverage many resources to develop affordable housing, including arts, education, and healthcare institutions

- **Position 5**

- Support funding and program flexibility to provide services, shelters, and permanent supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness, veterans, immigrants, and the formerly incarcerated
 - *Position 5A – reauthorize and provide full funding for these populations, including the National Housing Trust Fund, Continuum of Care grant programs, and new resources for people who are extremely low-income*

- ***From guide to action***
 - *Advocacy in your community, region*
 - *Support through Chapters/ Divisions*
 - *APA National role*

“Deep Dive”

- Deep Dive

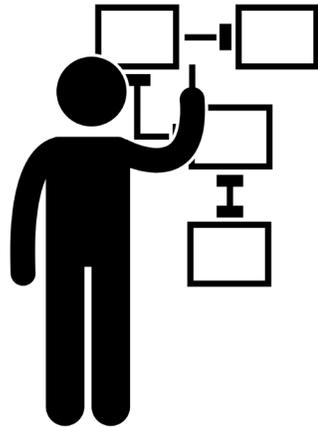
Turning policy positions into an action plan

- Position 1A: Modernize state laws
- Position 1B: Modernize local zoning bylaws & ordinances
- Position 1E: Housing supply as an economic development strategy
- Position 1G: Multifamily housing
- Position 2C: Monitoring affordable housing
- Position 4E: Consolidated Plan

The American Planning Association and its Chapters and Divisions support the modernization of state planning laws to ensure that state statutes for zoning promote local planning efforts and provide housing resources to solve our most pressing affordability challenges. State involvement and resources are needed to ensure consistency and universal participation among municipalities.

Policy Position
1A:
Modernize
State Zoning
Laws

- ***Policy Position 1A: Modernize State Zoning Laws***



- Home Rule or Dillon's Rule?
- Does your state require comprehensive plan consistency? Is the statewide planning process effective?
- Does your state allow, require, or prohibit inclusionary zoning? Or is the statute silent?
- What mechanisms are in place to encourage or require an equitable distribution of affordable housing in every region? What is the role of regional planning?
- Does your state require members of planning boards/commissions, zoning boards, others to complete a training program?

- ***Policy Position 1A, cont'd***

- **Partners You Need**

- APA state chapter
- Statewide league of cities and towns or municipal association
- City solicitors and town attorneys
- Homebuilders association
- ULI, other development and land use organizations
- Graduate planning schools in your state
- Advocacy groups for affordable housing and fair housing
- Media



The American Planning Association and its Chapters and Divisions support the modernization of local zoning bylaws and ordinances to increase housing production, while taking local context and conditions into account. While challenging to confront and, ultimately, amend or dismantle exclusionary zoning, rules, and practices, planners must take the lead in modernizing zoning.

Local jurisdictions should adopt bylaws or ordinances, policies, and incentives that facilitate a range of housing types and densities and that serve a diversity of housing needs.

***Policy Position
1B: Modernize
Local Zoning
Bylaws &
Ordinances***

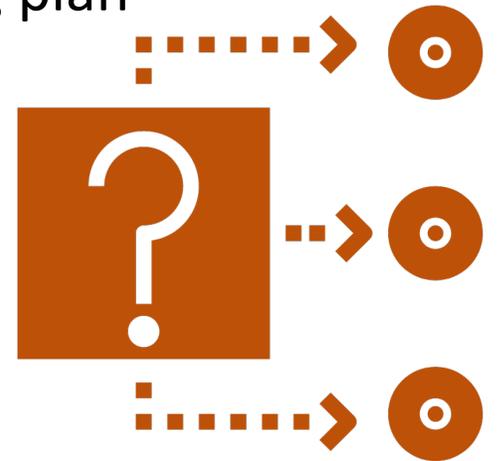
- ***Policy Position 1B: Modernize Local Zoning Bylaws & Ordinances***

- Modernize your zoning, yes – but be sure to prepare your housing plan

- *Needs assessment*
- *Goals*
- *Action plan*

- Inclusionary Zoning

- *Have you engaged developers in the conversation about IZ?*
- *Do you need a feasibility study?*
- *Have you thought about the nexus?*
- *What will make it work in your jurisdiction?*
- *How will you ensure that units created will be available on a fair and open basis?*



- ***Policy Position 1B, cont'd***

- Zoning for multifamily development
 - *Public education*
 - *Myth-busting*
 - *Building an advocacy corps*
- Check your parking requirements (they're probably too high)
- Where would lot size and frontage reductions make sense?
- Accessory dwellings
 - As-of-right
 - Special permit



- ***Policy Position 1B: Partners & Tools***

- What would help?
 - Trained, reliable advocacy corps
 - Community land trust
 - Predictable permitting
 - Funding and help for new housing trusts
 - Development projects (seeking funding or approval)
 - ADUs
 - **Public education**
- Tax incentives
- Land donations



The American Planning Association and its Chapters and Divisions emphasize the importance of having an adequate supply of housing, and especially affordable housing, in economic development strategies. State and local jurisdictions should engage with business leaders to provide public messaging on the importance of housing and housing development to meet the needs of economic growth.

***Policy Position
1E: Economic
development***

Position 1E: Economic development

- *Housing is a critical economic development issue*
- Economic growth depends on access to labor force
- Young workers want more than a housing unit ... they want amenities
- Seniors who spend money in your business district stores want access to services
- Demand for rentals is up (build and they may come)
- Housing can be the driver of placemaking
- How to get the best outcomes for your community>?



- ***Position 1E: Partners & Tools***

- Economic development plan
- Local economic development council, chamber of commerce
- Major employers and employers in service/support industries
- Young professionals club or organization
- Developers
- Regional colleges/universities/education collaborative
- Community colleges, vocational schools

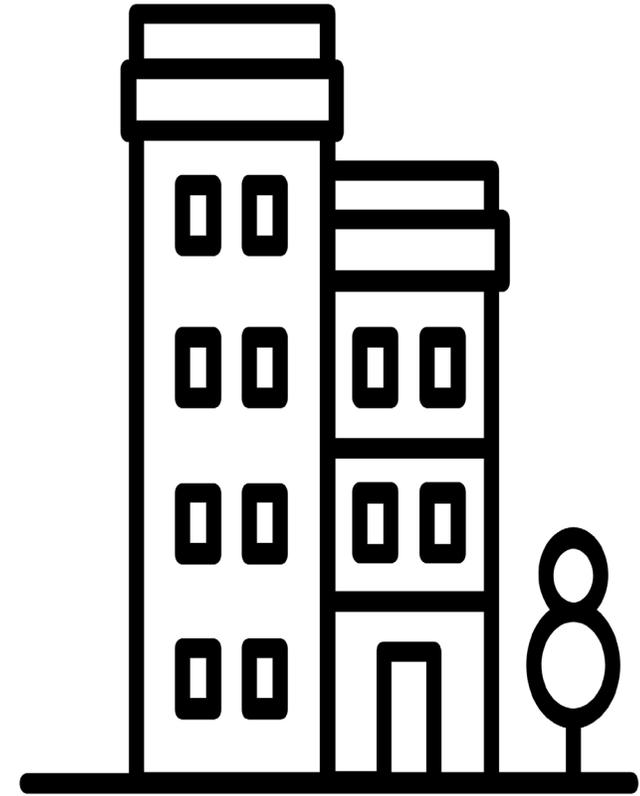


The American Planning Association and its Chapters and Divisions should eliminate barriers to affordable and multifamily housing development and exclusionary zoning, rules, and practices, especially in areas where such development is supported by the necessary transportation, social, cultural, utility, and economic infrastructure. Local jurisdictions should allow multifamily, mixed-income housing as a by-right use and reduce permitting barriers that create development uncertainty, increase the cost of land and development, and stimulate opposition.

***Position 1G:
Multifamily
housing***

- ***Policy Position 1G:
What we know***

- Community housing plan ...
 - Needs assessment
 - Goals
 - Action plan
- Prohibitions against multifamily housing have a disparate impact on low-income, minorities, families with children
- Excessive requirements and complicated/time-consuming permitting discourage multifamily development, create barriers to inclusionary housing



- ***Policy Position 1G: Common myths & perceptions***

- Traffic!
- Density
- Impact on public schools
- Higher taxes
- Loss of open space
- Impact on town character
- Lower property values
- Increase crime
- Social engineering
- Badly designed, cheap housing



- ***Policy position 1G: Partners and Tools***

- Local advocates
- Housing services organizations
- Economic development director or coordinator
- Local Fair Housing Commission
- Fact sheets to combat common myths
- Developers, property owners
- Neighborhood Association
- “Panel of experts”
- Case studies



The American Planning Association and its Chapters and Divisions support increased coordination among existing federal planning programs, such as the Consolidated Plan required for HUD funds, with state and local plans. Planners should support the alignment of funding cycles among different programs and matching regulatory requirements to simplify developer compliance and to expedite both reviews and approvals of funding applications.

***Position 4E:
Five-Year
Consolidated
Plan***



Policy Position 4E: Timely Topic

- Most HUD grantees are updating their Five-Year Consolidated Plans now.
- Citizen Participation, the heart of the ConPlan process:
 - Needs Assessment. How has CDBG/HOME/ESG/HOPWA funding benefited your community? *Tell the story.*

- ***Policy Position 4E: Consolidated Plan***
- Citizen Participation Plan
- Mine the data!
 - Housing mix, housing age
 - Housing costs and income
 - Who is leaving your community?
 - Who is moving in?
 - Trends in demand for multifamily/affordable housing
 - Trends with rents and housing sale prices
- To what extent to existing city/town policies interfere with meeting local needs?
- How have decreases in federal funding affected your community?

- ***Policy Position 4E: Consolidated Plan***



- **Housing Market Assessment**

- What is being built in your community today?
- How fast is new stock moving?
- Who benefits?
- Income gap: market-rate homebuyers
- To what extent do local zoning and other policies constrain development of new housing supply?
- How should the Analysis of Impediments address local regulatory barriers?

- *Policy
Position 4E:
Partners &
Tools*



- Housing services providers
- Disability services
- Homelessness CoC
- Social service organizations and local schools
- City/town staff
- Local/regional banks (first-time homebuyer, commercial loan products)
- Business round table
- Educational sessions: city or town council, commissioners, city staff
- **Analysis of Impediments**

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