



American Planning Association
Louisiana Chapter
Legislative Committee

Legislative Committee

2019 Policy Priorities

Topic:	Coastal restoration
Support:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported by legislative committee member survey completed on October 4, 2018 • Supported by APA LA membership survey completed on October 31, 2018 • Adopted by APA LA Executive Committee on February 1, 2019
Resources:	APA: “Policy Guide on Wetlands”
Policy:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support a statewide approach to coastal protection and restoration that is rooted in public participation, scientifically sound data and methods, and the mitigation of coastal land loss and flood risk. 2. Support a sound compensatory wetland mitigation policy based on science, which includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Using a watershed approach in determining appropriate mitigation for the loss of wetlands. b. Enforcement of permit conditions and requirements. 3. Enhanced mapping, classification, and identification of wetlands and other sensitive coastal areas at all levels of government. 4. Support education and research focused on coastal protection and restoration, coastal environments/biology, and wetland health and functions. 5. Support policy that incentivizes or otherwise encourages or supports public and private investment in coastal protection and restoration.
Background:	<p>Coastal restoration serves a critical function in Louisiana, as a significant proportion of homes, businesses, vulnerable population, and the integrity of the storm protection system relies on the natural functions of the coastal environment. Threats such as sea level rise, subsidence, saltwater intrusion, development of wetlands, and the existing legacy of environmental damage via insufficiently regulated industrial development and extraction of natural resources must be addressed through long-term coastal planning and policy interventions.</p> <p>As per the APA policy guide on wetlands, “Wetlands in their natural state perform ecological functions, which are vitally important to the environment and economic health of the nation and impossible or costly to replace. Wetlands protect the quality of surface waters by retarding the erosive forces of moving water. They provide a natural means of flood control providing damage protection by reducing flood peaks, thereby protecting against the loss of life and property. Wetlands improve water quality by intercepting and filtering out waterborne sediments, excess nutrients, heavy metals and other pollutants.”</p>



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Topic:	Hazard mitigation
Support:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported by legislative committee member survey completed on October 4, 2018 • Supported by APA LA membership survey completed on October 31, 2018 • Adopted by APA LA Executive Committee on February 1, 2019
Resources:	APA: “Policy Guide on Hazard Mitigation”
Policy:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the production and development of high-quality data and predictive models for hazards. 2. Support the development of resiliency standards for materials, construction techniques, siting of critical facilities/infrastructure, and development patterns. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. This includes support for the adoption of regulatory standards that may exceed those building or development standards currently adopted on a national, state, or local level. b. This includes support for robust code enforcement and inspection processes in order to fully implement such standards. 3. Support policy and actions that make grant funding available for nonstructural mitigation of flood hazards, and encourage increased funding availability for nonstructural mitigation. 4. Support land use planning that preserves areas providing natural floodplain functions and encourages growth in areas not subject to substantial flood risk.
Background:	<p>Louisiana has historically received significant damage from natural and man-made hazards. Repetitive cycles of disasters cause extensive loss of life and property and often have a disproportional impact on vulnerable populations or weaken community and institutional support structures. Louisiana has often been the testing ground and the model for the development of best practices in hazard mitigation, however, there remains a need for hazard mitigation in the state, as adaptation and resilience strategies do not always keep pace with the threat or impact of natural hazards. A resilient and adaptive approach, including considerations of changing risk profiles, land use, and development patterns must be further implemented and adequately funded in order to truly address natural and man-made hazards in Louisiana.</p> <p>Louisiana’s most common hazard source is flooding, via rainfall, coastal, and riverine sources. Due to its flood risk profile, Louisiana’s property market is also highly dependent on the availability and cost of flood insurance (largely provided through the National Flood Insurance Program).</p> <p>As per the APA policy guide on hazard mitigation, “Hazard mitigation plans form the foundation for a community’s short and long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of inappropriate building, disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. They provide benefits in the form of increased capacity to deal with hazards among stakeholders and the public and improved coordination between different levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, and private</p>



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	<p>businesses. Overall, the hazard mitigation planning process can aid governments at all levels in saving lives, property, and money, speeding recovery from disasters, reducing risks and future vulnerability to disasters, expediting the receipt of grant funding, and demonstrating a firm commitment to improving community health, safety, and welfare.”</p>
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Topic:	Bicycle and pedestrian policy
Support:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supported by legislative committee member survey completed on October 4, 2018• Supported by APA LA membership survey completed on October 31, 2018• Adopted by APA LA Executive Committee on February 1, 2019
Resources:	APA: “Policy Guide on Surface Transportation”
Policy:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Support a hierarchy of metropolitan mobility that begins with an emphasis on pedestrians (including elderly, young, and disabled pedestrians) as the foundational element of mobility and access.2. Support bicycling as a viable transportation mode that includes development of connected on-road and off-road facilities designed to accommodate all types of users.3. Support the integration of transportation policy goals with broader sustainability goals.4. Support diverse multi-modal transportation within regions.5. Support inclusive transportation options that address users of diverse backgrounds, cultural needs, and transportation demands.6. Support complete and green streets.7. Support policies and land use proposals that locate housing located in close proximity to community services and employment centers in order to encourage pedestrian and bicycle mobility.
Background:	<p>Bicycle and pedestrian transportation methods offer effective, sustainable transportation, and are generally accessible to those within a wide range of socioeconomic situations. These modes of transportation play a vital role in the urban and regional landscape and should be prioritized and adequately funded. Further, policy addressing these issues should seek to remove impediments to bicycle and pedestrian transportation and must provide transportation options to a variety of users, including elderly, young, and those travelers subject to disabilities.</p> <p>It should be noted that the success of bicycle and pedestrian transportation options is highly linked with the larger regional transportation framework and the availability of other modes of transportation. Based on this consideration, support of multi-modal transportation networks is necessary to further the end of providing extensive bicycle and pedestrian access.</p> <p>As per the APA policy guide on surface transportation, “Walking is the one required element of all trips. Regardless of the mode used to travel the greatest distance or time, every trip starts and ends with a walk. Because walking is required for all transportation, transportation planning should accommodate the pedestrian as a foundational element of mobility and access...It is also important to recognize that not all pedestrians are the same, and the emphasis on pedestrian access should take into account the special needs of certain classes of pedestrians.”</p> <p>As per the APA policy guide on surface transportation, “Bicycles provide an extremely efficient means of transportation, requiring less right-of-way space than vehicles.</p>



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	Bicycles also extend the reach of the non-motorized network to maximize geographic coverage without emitting greenhouse gases.”
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Topic:	Infrastructure Planning & Financing
Support:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported by legislative committee member survey completed on October 4, 2018 • Supported by APA LA membership survey completed on October 31, 2018 • Adopted by APA LA Executive Committee on February 1, 2019
Resources:	APA: “Principles for New Federal Infrastructure Investment Policy”
Policy:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the development of sustainable infrastructure systems with regards to multi-modal transportation, water, energy, and communications. 2. Support local and regional decision-making and planning to guide infrastructure investments. 3. Ensure that infrastructure funding is put on a sustainable and predictable path, including the consideration of gas taxes, carbon taxes, and progressive tax reform to provide such funding. 4. Expand opportunities for private investment that benefits communities and regions economically, provided it advances the right projects and the public interest. Policy should ensure that projects without a steady or obvious revenue stream provide public transparency and include new tools to expand the pool for investment without shifting costs to local communities. 5. Support repair and modernization of existing infrastructure systems, including the prioritized repair of such systems that inadequately provide drinking water and other services that directly impact community health.
Background:	<p>Inadequately planned/maintained and insufficiently funded infrastructure indicates a lack of efficient planning and exposes communities to unnecessary hardship. Planners in Louisiana must take an equitable, long-range, sustainable approach to infrastructure planning and must take advantage of redevelopment and infrastructure upgrade opportunities.</p> <p>As per the APA policy guide on “Principles for New Federal Infrastructure Investment Policy”, “...well-planned infrastructure projects strengthen communities, boost the economy, and expand opportunity. They also promote a return on the public investment, in contrast with unplanned infrastructure that can waste public funds, damage communities and the environment, and otherwise lead to inefficient growth.”</p> <p>Further, “Too often in our past, infrastructure programs have exacerbated inequality, harmed low-income and minority neighborhoods, imposed disproportionate environmental impacts on vulnerable communities, and failed to advance broad-based prosperity. The legacy of some past infrastructure decisions continues to impose a social cost on many communities. A new program has the opportunity and the obligation to support social equity goals and advance economic and social opportunity for all. This requires robust public engagement and intentional strategies for incorporating equity.</p>



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	<p>As per the APA policy guide on Smart Growth, “The American Planning Association recognizes that maintaining, expanding, and optimizing the use of existing or prior public infrastructure investments resulting in more rational and efficient use of limited public resources and helps to preserve the natural environment.”</p>
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Topic:	Sustainability
Support:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supported by legislative committee member survey completed on October 4, 2018• Supported by APA LA membership survey completed on October 31, 2018• Adopted by APA LA Executive Committee on February 1, 2019
Resources:	APA: “The Sustainability Policy Framework” EPA: “Sustainability Primer”
Policy:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Support development and stewardship of communities that exemplify sustainable living practices with features such as:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. higher densities that support high capacity transit use and walkability;b. open spaces and habitat connections;c. complete streets;d. diverse housing including a variety of housing types in local government development codes (e.g., accessory dwelling units, co-housing, multiplexes, row houses, and mixed-use buildings) for neighborhood residents of all ages, with different incomes, needs, and physical abilities;e. local employment;f. neighborhood schools and other appropriate community facilities; andg. local-serving businesses that meet the daily needs of residents and reduce vehicle trips and Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG emissions).2. Support transportation practices and new transportation investments that will limit impacts to the natural environment by reducing single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel, limiting long commute distances, reducing the reliance on fossil fuels, and increasing transit, biking, and walking.3. Minimum parking requirements in development regulations are eliminated and replaced with parking maximums to manage traffic.4. The use of cleaner fuels such as natural gas and electricity for both transit and automobiles is highly incentivized, and the adequate construction and siting of alternative fueling facilities and charging stations is completed.5. State, regional, and local adoption of Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs and other sustainable infrastructure financing mechanisms for water, stormwater, and transportation improvements at district, neighborhood, and residential scales of development.6. Infill development and revitalization investment, including building on and expanding Downtown/Main Street efforts and linking them to adjacent neighborhoods for revitalization.7. Equitable access to affordable housing, employment, healthcare, education, child care, and a healthy environment, through collaborative and comprehensive planning.8. Development of strong social networks to ensure communities are more resilient to disasters and other types of crisis, with a special focus on vulnerable populations.



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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. Meaningful community engagement in planning efforts that incorporates analysis of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of land use and community development decisions.10. Neighborhoods that welcome diversity (ethnically, economically, intergenerational, etc.) and provide equitable benefits of growth to existing community residents (e.g., nondisplacement policies).11. Creating a robust community policy context for living wage jobs.12. Greater use of urban growth boundaries that can be expanded for planned compact, development.13. Determining development densities at the watershed scale to ensure more efficient, coordinated, and context-sensitive development patterns that have less impact on regional water resources.14. Provision of mass transit facilities such as rail, local and commuter bus, and bus rapid transit (BRT) through funding, incentives, and grant opportunities, in order to provide an alternative to SOV travel and improve mobility, as well as producing environmental benefits such as reduced congestion, air pollution, and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).15. Protection of communities from the negative impacts of resource extraction technologies such as hydraulic fracturing, deepwater oil drilling, chemical refining, and hazards associated with the transmission of volatile product over long distances and the mass storage of volatile products.
Background:	<p>Louisiana has a planning and development history fraught with inequity and environmental degradation that has caused far-reaching harm to multiple generations. Louisiana residents deserve sustainable processes going forward. Sustainable development and planning practices should address and attempt to balance social, environmental, and economic considerations, and should seek to create a built environment and social systems that fulfil the needs of present and future generations.</p> <p>As per the APA Sustainability Policy Framework, “The impacts of exponential population growth, resource consumption, and loss of place will require a range of physical infrastructures to support urban living, including energy, transport, water, waste, communications, and buildings. Additionally, there is broad recognition that demographic and economic shifts are spurring lifestyle and preference changes with respect to what people want out of their communities, and therefore what they expect from the planning and design professions...This also corresponds to an increasing recognition that the Post World War II sprawling development patterns in this country are not sustainable: financially, environmentally, or socially.</p> <p>Historically, the environmental, economic and social impacts of development have been disproportionately negative on low income communities, particularly communities of color. To be truly sustainable it is important to incorporate ways to more equitably share the benefits and burdens of development in community planning decisions.</p>



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	There is also a growing consensus that there is a need to further diversify our country's energy portfolio with increasingly affordable renewable sources of energy (wind, solar, and hydro) at a variety of scales."
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Topic:	Affordable Housing
Support:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopted by APA LA Executive Committee on February 1, 2019
Resources:	<p>APA: “Policy Strategies for More Just, Healthy, and Prosperous Communities”</p> <p>APA: “Policy Principles for the Nation’s Housing Crisis”</p> <p>APA: “APA Policy Guide on Housing”</p> <p>APA: “Planning Home: American Planning Association Housing Initiative”</p> <p>APA: PAS QuickNotes : Inclusionary Housing</p>
Policy:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce housing stratification and support the provision of housing opportunities to households of all ages, rages, and income levels, including the preservation of existing affordable housing. Eliminate existing regulations that have disparate or discriminatory impacts on certain groups or household types. Identify and reform or remove planning policies and zoning regulations at the state and local levels that impede the provision of affordable housing. “Educate and actively encourage local lending institutions to provide funding opportunities for affordable housing developments¹.” “Educate elected officials and citizens on housing needs and issues and defuse community opposition to housing proposals that is driven by prejudice and fears².” “Connect with the development industry, including nonprofit developers, to better understand the opportunities and obstacles to constructing affordable housing³.” Support policies that enable the provision of “affordable and more diverse housing, such as: accessory apartments, cluster housing, elder cottages, manufactured housing, mixed-income housing, shared residences, accessory dwelling units, and single room occupancy (SRO) developments, and provide regulations allowing these strategies⁴.” Encourage increased housing density and the provision of additional housing stock in areas that benefit from access to community services and are not subject to natural or man-made hazards. Support the provision of public funding and financing mechanisms and innovative financing, including grant programs, low-interest bonds, revolving loans, and tax credits to enable the development of affordable housing stock. Support policies that mitigate the effects of gentrification and rising housing costs on existing residents via required minimum percentages of affordable housing units, density bonuses, and other mandates and/or incentives. Support policies that remove barriers to attaining housing and policies that enable continued and long-term tenancy for those at risk of homelessness or eviction.

¹ APA: [“APA Policy Guide on Housing”](#)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.



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Background:

Income inequality and disparity in housing opportunity is a long-standing and self-perpetuating societal problem in Louisiana. Affordable and fair housing is the basis for a more just social system. Louisiana planners must work toward policy that enables affordable housing for all demographic sectors and household types. Planners must also actively work to eliminate structural inequities and discriminatory housing policies and practices that remain all too common in the US and within Louisiana.

As per the APA “Policy Principles for the Nation’s Housing Crisis,” “Many of our nation's cities have been dubbed "high cost" and metropolitan areas are struggling to maintain their workforce due to stagnant wages. Small towns and rural communities face unique housing issues that deserve attention and investment such as improving housing quality and options. Production has not kept pace with demand. Preservation of existing affordable homes, whether through existing affordability restrictions or market forces is also critical. It is not an appropriate goal to provide affordable homeownership options to all; rental is now and will remain an important part of the mix of housing options. Planners are well-positioned to address these issues due to their close-proximity to development activities, permitting, and policy-setting at all levels of government.”

As per APA “Planning Home: American Planning Association Housing Initiative,” “Many local zoning codes are still based on an almost 100-year-old framework that prioritizes best practices from a previous generation. Practices like separating uses and encouraging more space for automobiles than people are still far too common... Communities need to review and modernize codes and planners need resources to make updates happen. Outdated codes paralyze sound planning efforts, leading to income disparities, uncoordinated development, poor land use and, inevitably, housing problems. Communities should adopt or revise codes to enable mixed uses, offer a variety of housing types and price points, and increase the number of places to build while attending to equity and resiliency... In practice, this may mean reducing or eliminating minimum lot-size requirements, allowing greater height and density, allowing accessory dwelling units, and reducing off-street parking requirements. Modernized codes incorporate the principles of transit-oriented development with emphases on locating housing near public transportation and existing infrastructure and expanding opportunities for non-traditional housing types. These include micro-apartments and accessory dwelling units.”

Further, as per APA “Planning Home: American Planning Association Housing Initiative,” “Across America, in communities of all types, single-family housing is still the preferred development type, often allowed by-right. Meanwhile, multifamily housing development frequently requires a specific permit, variance, or other special action. Special permitting processes can create development uncertainty, increase the cost of land and development, and stimulate opposition. They benefit few, and harm people who need an affordable place to live. Local jurisdictions can change this by allowing mixed-income, multifamily housing as a by-right use and establishing higher



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	thresholds that are subject to special permit reviews. When the proposed developments coincide with identified housing needs and demand, the approval process should be streamlined.”
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