The Colorado Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA Colorado) is an organization of approximately 1,500 professional and citizen planners dedicated to preserving and creating great communities throughout Colorado. Our mission is to provide leadership in the development of resilient, inclusive, sustainable and equitable (R.I.S.E.) communities by advocating for excellence in planning and public policy, promoting professional development, and providing education and citizen empowerment for those who are working to protect and enhance the natural and built environment.

Please find below APA Colorado’s state legislative priorities for 2019. Issues were determined based on the results of a member survey administered in November 2018. After the issues were identified, recommendations were developed by the APA Colorado Legislative Committee. For more information, contact APA Colorado Legislative Committee Chair Susan Wood, AICP (Legislative@APACOLORADO.org; 303.299.2467). Please see www.apacolorado.org for additional information about APA Colorado.

INTRODUCTION

APA Colorado supports the development of equitable mixed-use, mixed-income, safe communities where people choose to live, work, and play. We support choice and opportunity by promoting equitable, efficient, and sustainable land development and redevelopment that optimizes prior infrastructure investments and consumes less land. Less land for urban development provides balance by leaving land available for agriculture, open space, natural systems, and rural lifestyles.

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

This legislative agenda consists of the following major policy items but is not an exhaustive list of critical community planning policies which are important to APA Colorado.

1. Affordable Housing
2. Climate Change
3. Transportation
4. Water
5. Environmental Issues

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

APA Colorado promotes planning, technical assistance, funding, investment and regulations that encourage development of sufficient affordable housing to meet the housing needs of existing community members and a growing workforce across Colorado communities. Promote sustainable and equitable affordable housing at locations near centers of employment, transit, education, health care, and goods and services to provide mobility and access for all people. Similarly, to foster access to opportunity, APA Colorado encourages the inclusion of compatible affordable housing within existing residential communities.
CLIMATE CHANGE
APA Colorado supports means to curtail greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions including: compact development patterns that will result both in fewer vehicle miles traveled and a reduction in overall carbon footprint; the use of green-building materials and techniques; and funding for research. The earth’s climate is warming, most likely in response to GHG emissions that have been introduced to the atmosphere through the consumption of fossil fuels and other human activities. A warmer climate results in measurable effects that negatively impact people, the economy, the environment, and communities. APA Colorado also supports resiliency planning and all good planning practices and regulatory solutions that will address the conditions created by climate change including extreme weather and changing conditions (such as drought, wildfire, storms, and flooding).

TRANSPORTATION
APA Colorado endorses a comprehensive, equitable approach to transportation planning and finance that integrates land use; includes all modes of transportation; and provides connectivity between various modes. Multi-modal transportation infrastructure requires coordination of local, state and national resources to successfully meet the transportation needs of people and to adequately serve current and future development. Roads, highways, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities are underfunded, which results in a deficit of all modes and concerns that not all infrastructure is in a state of good repair. APA Colorado also supports “Vision Zero, a program intended to significantly reduce traffic deaths, in particular pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities. Additionally, provision of infrastructure and siting of facilities must take into account the need to provide mobility, as well as the potential for negative impacts, to all demographic groups including the traditionally underserved.

WATER CONSERVATION PLANNING
APA Colorado promotes efforts to strengthen requirements to provide proof of adequate water supply to serve existing and future development in terms of quantity, quality, and dependability; promote the use of any protective means that are necessary to safeguard drinking water supplies; and promote the integration of land use planning and water planning. Water, which is limited in availability, is a scarce resource in Colorado and the West. However, water is necessary to support communities; preserve quality of life; conserve wildlife habitat and environmental resources; and sustain economic growth and development in Colorado.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
APA Colorado supports environmental stewardship to safeguard Colorado’s natural resources and quality of life. In particular, measures to promote air quality, water quality, and wildlife habitat, such as maintaining urban greenspace and recreation facilities, as well as preserving natural waterways, open space, trails, and wildlife resources are needed to support Colorado values and the Western lifestyle.