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.

Our 2022 Legislative Priorities were determined through direct feedback from our members through a survey conducted in October 2021. After the issues were identified, recommendations were developed by the APA Colorado Legislative Committee.

Contact Information
APA Colorado Legislative Committee Co-Chairs: Shaida Libhart, AICP or Scott Bressler, AICP at legislative@APAColorado.org.

Go to: www.apacolorado.org to learn more.

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.

Position on Equity
APA Colorado supports the ongoing efforts to encourage restorative environmental justice for impacted communities as part of the larger mission to increase equity state-wide. The American Planning Association and APA Colorado are committed to promote equity and explicitly remove barriers in policies and regulations that perpetuate inequity in the United States. We support measures and policies to both address the inequities that exist today in urban, suburban, and rural settings and to prevent the creation of new inequities. Disparities or inequities in health, income, opportunity, mobility, and choice are apparent in every community irrespective of their size or location. As a result, entire groups of people, due to their income, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, religion, and/or disability experience limited access to opportunity and advancement.

Legislative Priorities
APA Colorado’s legislative priorities for 2022 consist of the following five major policy topics*. Important information regarding the perspective and desired actions on each of the priorities can be found on the following page. We support legislative actions that address these areas of community need at the state and local levels and are happy to provide resources and further information to advance these topics in this legislative session.

1. Affordable Housing
2. Climate Change & Energy Planning
3. Transportation
4. Water Planning & Conservation
5. Infrastructure Development & Coordination

*Additional Planning Topics of Importance
We recognize that it is important to identify our members’ top priorities while also informing our legislators of the wide range of planning topics that our members are involved with on a regular basis to make our communities and state stronger. In addition to our top 5 Legislative Priorities, please recognize the following topic areas as important to planning efforts across Colorado.

- Sustainability & Healthy Communities
- Economic Development & Resiliency
- Local Government Planning & Regulations
- Regional Cooperation
- Hazard Planning
- Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Trails

CLIMATE CHANGE & ENERGY PLANNING

APA Colorado supports reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through compact development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled and our overall carbon footprint; the use of low embodied carbon and green-building materials and techniques; and funding for research and data collection. We recognize the importance of resiliency planning, practices and regulatory solutions that address the conditions created by climate change including extreme weather and changing conditions (such as drought, wildfire, storms, and flooding). APA Colorado supports planning and policy to enable development of efficient, renewable energy systems, including the appropriate infrastructure to harness and distribute it to and within our communities. Recognizing its outsized contribution to climate change, APA Colorado supports efforts that encourage and use technologies, practices, and certifications to minimize methane emissions.

WATER PLANNING & CONSERVATION

APA Colorado promotes integrating land use and water planning to implement the objectives of the Colorado Water Plan and effectively plan for the future of Colorado communities. APA Colorado supports continued efforts to incorporate water planning in comprehensive master plans, adopt water conservation policies and drought management plans, and strengthen requirements to provide proof of an adequate water supply for existing and future development. This includes expanding convenient, safe mobility options for all people in our communities. APA Colorado supports “Vision Zero,” to significantly reduce traffic deaths, in particular pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities.

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 infrastructure requires coordination of local, state and national resources to meet the transportation needs and adequately serve current and future development. We support policies that build on SB21-260 to address multimodal needs, transportation network deficiencies, and integrate technology for projects at the local, regional, and state levels. This includes expanding convenient, safe mobility options for all people in our communities. APA Colorado supports “Vision Zero,” to significantly reduce traffic deaths, in particular pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities.

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. We support sustainable and equitable affordable housing near employment, transit, schools, health care, and goods and services to provide mobility for all, while fostering access to opportunity. APA supports continuing to build on policies and investments that incentivize and enable more affordable housing to be developed with flexibility to meet the needs of communities across Colorado.

Infrastructure Development & Coordination

APA Colorado supports infrastructure development that is well-planned and integrated with community goals. Infrastructure investments are a catalyst for economic growth, long-term prosperity, and access to opportunity. Infrastructure policy and funding should be driven by key principles of good planning that considers investments with an equity lens. This requires considering the importance of location, helping communities fully leverage investments, and connecting infrastructure to related issues like resiliency, housing, transportation, and economic development. Infrastructure programs should prioritize support for projects that offer multiple public benefits. As technology evolves, the definition of infrastructure must reflect the integration of technology, including roadways, tele-communications, energy transmission, and more. APA Colorado supports funding and policies that prioritize equitable infrastructure investments that advance needs across Colorado and allows all communities to thrive.