

2019 Legislative Priorities

Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association

1. **Support for and restoration of local zoning authority.** Pre-emption bills such as 2017 Act 67 interfere with local decision-making and apply one-size-fits-all standards to the entire state, resulting in unintended consequences and land use conflicts (e.g. cell tower conflicts). Planners support democracy at the local level, which requires local tools and decision-making authority. APA-WI supports:
 - a. Restoration of local control over cell phone tower locations.
 - b. Restoration of local control over nonconforming structures.
 - c. Protection of local regulation of mining operations.
 - d. Respect for and deference to local decision making authority, while acknowledging the importance of statewide minimum health & safety standards.
 - e. Transparency and fairness during the review & approval of new state legislation.
 - f. Repeal of 2017 Act 67 language relating to Conditional Use Permits, which includes vague and subjective language that may inadvertently increase zoning litigation statewide and force local governments to reclassify many current conditional uses as prohibited uses.
2. **Support for property tax fairness and transparency at the local level.** APA-WI supports:
 - a. Elimination of the Dark Store and Walgreen's loopholes, which increase taxes upon homeowners and small businesses while national retailers fail to pay their fair share. These tax avoidance moves increase homeownership costs statewide.
3. **Opposition to unnecessary and unfunded bureaucratic state-imposed reports.** Unfunded mandates such as the Housing Affordability Report and New Housing Fee Report in 2017 Act 243 are duplicative and unnecessary. The Comprehensive Planning law already requires an analysis of housing affordability during periodic updates to the housing chapter, and the open records law requires public access to local fees. The Housing Affordability Report alone requires a parcel-by-parcel report of development potential and cost, which is effectively forcing local planners to conduct site selection activities for the private sector. This mandate applies to all communities with over 10,000 residents, and will take several months to prepare depending upon staffing levels. By taking valuable time away from a planner's development review priorities, these unfunded mandates may inadvertently increase development review times without addressing the need to improve housing affordability through proven planning tools and emerging best practices. APA-WI supports:
 - a. Repeal of Housing Affordability Report requirement in Sec. 20 of 2017 Act 243.
 - b. Repeal of New Housing Fee Report in Sec. 20 of 2017 Act 243.
4. **Support for multi-modal transportation options and long-term funding solutions.** APA-WI supports the #JustFixItWI movement's call for stable, long-term funding solutions to the state's infrastructure crisis and our over-reliance upon debt. Our communities and local economies require bold infrastructure solutions and action. APA-WI supports:
 - a. Any or all of the user-based revenue solutions proposed by the "Filling Potholes" report by the Local Government Institute of WI and the "Keep WI Moving" report by the WI Commission on Transportation Finance and Policy. Revenue solutions should include restoration of gasoline tax indexing, miles-driven registration fees, and tollways.
 - b. Authorization of Regional Transit Authorities to give local regions the choice of self-funding their own transit systems.
 - c. Repeal of the prohibition on using eminent domain to acquire land for complete streets, bike paths, sidewalks, and recreational trails that was tucked into the last state budget.