

NCAPA Legislative Committee

2013 – 2014 Legislative Agenda

The North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-NC) is an organization of more than 1,500 professional and citizen planners dedicated to preserving and creating great communities throughout North Carolina. Below are APA-NC's state legislative priorities for 2013 – 14 as adopted by the APA-NC Executive Committee in December 2012. Initial recommendations were developed by the APA-NC Legislative Committee after a process of issue identification, discussion, and voting.

APA-NC will reach out to state legislators and others to promote these issues and support appropriate state legislation. Primary issues are those in which APA -NC is a logical lead organization. Secondary issues are no less important, but areas where APA-NC's role is one of partnership and support. If you have questions or comments, please contact APA -NC Legislative Chair, Ken Bowers (kenbowers@me.com; 919/412-3404). For more information about APA-NC, please visit our website at www.apa-nc.org.

PRIMARY AGENDA

■ Tools for Urban Growth Areas

Preserve municipal ETJ authority, but promote beneficial reforms to enhance representation of ETJ residents, link ETJ to specific planning requirements, and strengthen the collaborative relationship between cities and counties in planning for ETJ. Strengthen the role of ETJ residents in the planning process. Pursue clean up legislation in the wake of changes to annexation law, with a specific focus on donut holes in municipal boundaries.

■ Comprehensive Community Planning

Look for opportunities to encourage all NC localities to prepare (and keep up to date) Comprehensive Plans that include minimum elements (to be clarified) and authorize dedicated new funding sources to help communities prepare these Comprehensive Plans. Such plans should identify both priority growth areas as well as areas for conservation. These changes are essential for communities to adequately monitor, predict and address local growth, environmental protection and infrastructure issues.

■ Transportation & Infrastructure Funding

Establish equitable, performance-based funding for multi-modal transportation facilities and facility maintenance, including pedestrian infrastructure. Any initiative to transfer more responsibility for secondary roads to the county or municipal level must include authorization for adequate new funding sources and project delivery capacity. New funding sources beyond gas, sales and property taxes are needed to fund the infrastructure to accommodate the rapid population growth of North Carolina.

SECONDARY AGENDA

■ Design for Sustainable Communities

Preserve local authority to implement design standards that promote community, walkability, and resilience while conserving local character. Promote a Complete Streets approach to street design, including NCDOT roadways, to facilitate and encourage biking and walking. Preserve the ability of local governments to make sustainability and resiliency core objectives of local plans and policies.

■ Healthy Communities

Promote legislation for planning and infrastructure investment for North Carolinians in all communities to provide safe, convenient amenities that help them lead more active lives. Partner with public health organizations and Eat Smart Move More. Promote the availability of healthy eating opportunities by promoting community-supported agriculture, community gardens, and efforts to address “food deserts” in disadvantaged communities. Use tools such as Health Impact Assessments to address the health impacts of infrastructure investments and planning decisions.

■ Affordable Housing

Authorize major new funding and policies to help communities provide adequate affordable ownership and rental housing and ensure that all residents have a safe, decent, affordable place to live with access to jobs, schools, shopping and transit.

SPECIFIC BILLS

■ Great Places Recognition

Draft and identify a sponsor for a bill officially recognizing places awarded NCAPA’s Great Places designation.

■ Electronic Public Notices

Seek to allow web page publishing of public hearings in lieu of expensive newspaper legal ads.

STANDING/STUDY COMMITTEES

■ Disaster/Hazard Comprehensive Planning

Promote planning, provide guidance, and develop policy towards comprehensive disaster planning. This includes but is not limited to issues such as climate change and sea level rise, fire, hurricane, and man-made disasters in local, regional and state hazard assessments, infrastructure planning, construction, and long term funding decisions.

■ Planning & Military Installations

Promote coordination between local planning agencies and military bases and facilities. Study potential enabling legislation to address the unique needs of such facilities, i.e., dark skies near airbases.