

Principles for Support of Enforceable State Policy
APA RI – January 2019

1. APA RI supports enforceable policy, including legislation, that respects the importance of self-governance (i.e., home rule) at the municipal level, while acknowledging that some issues require state standards, enabling authority and guidance.

What this means:

- Legislation and other enforceable policy adopted by the state must be consistent with the Rhode Island Constitution and must respect the right of municipalities to make policy decisions at the local level. Policy should be established in consideration of the needs and desires of all Rhode Island municipalities, whether urban, suburban or rural.
- Certain issues require goals to be set by the state. APA RI will support enforceable policy aimed at achieving state goals when municipalities are given the flexibility to achieve those goals in a way that is pragmatic and reasonable for each municipality.
- APA RI acknowledges that in some cases state standards are necessary to establish equitability and socio-economic justice. APA RI is committed to working with the state to craft standards where setting individual municipal standards may be impracticable or counter to the state's equitability and socio-economic justice goals.

2. APA RI supports legislation that is consistent with the State Guide Plan (SGP).

What this means:

- APA RI supports the long-term vision of the SGP, and supports legislation and other policy that takes a long-term view of the future.
- APA RI acknowledges that some elements of the SGP may be dated, no longer providing desirable goals, policies and actions. In such cases, APA RI supports updating the SGP, which may include interim policy corrections if needed.
- In particular, APA RI supports legislation that takes the state and all its municipalities closer to the vision of the land use element of the SGP, Land Use 2025.

3. APA RI rejects unfunded and unsupported mandates.

What this means:

- APA RI rejects state mandates that require municipal action without offering necessary financial and technical support.

4. APA RI supports a holistic approach to legislation and policy.

What this means:

- APA RI rejects legislation and other policy that is drafted to respond to singular situations or actions without consideration of context, repercussions, and collateral issues. Where such policy is proposed, APA RI will work through the broader implications and will promote alternatives that address the core of the issue, and not just a singularity.
- Specific to policy related to land use, APA RI acknowledges the need for an appropriate balance among competing land uses. APA RI will not support legislation that allows one land use to dominate any other.

5. APA RI supports legislation and policy that values an efficient planning process responsive to the needs of the public.

What this means:

- APA RI will reject policy that requires actions or processes that do not account for public input or a public-planning process, or that prioritize time and money over people and communities.

6. APA RI supports policy that is technically correct and consistent with existing law.

What this means:

- APA RI will strive to do its own research and “homework” for any legislation it puts forth or promotes, to ensure that it is based on the best available data, and that it is consistent with existing policy (or points out where existing policy should be adjusted).
- APA RI will also strive to offer alternatives for proposed policy related to planning and land use that is NOT technically correct or based on the best available data.