



APA-NC Legislative Committee

2023 Strategic Plan

This document is the Appendix to the APA-NC Legislative Committee’s Strategic Plan. It was included with the 2020 version of the Strategic Plan and was relocated to a separate document as part of the update to the 2023 version of the Strategic Plan.

It includes the results of the APA-NC Legislative Committee member survey completed in March 2019.

The Appendix also includes a brief summary of best practices from legislative committees across eight other states.

There is also a brief history of the APA-NC Legislative Committee from 1985 to 2018.



PART 6: APPENDICES

These appendices provide information that was used to assemble this plan’s vision, goals, and objectives. It includes the results of an on-line survey of around 200 APA-NC Chapter members conducted in early 2019, the results of a series of 6 interviews of Legislative Liaisons from other APA chapters across the country in pursuit of national best practices, and an overview of the Legislative Committee’s recent history as described by previous Committee Chairs.

MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

In March of 2019 the Legislative Committee prepared an online survey for Chapter membership intended to gauge support for the work of the Legislative Committee, and seek input from Chapter members about how the work program of the Committee could be revised for better effectiveness. The survey included 10 basic questions, and we received 225 responses – about 15% of the Chapter membership. The questions are listed below, and the results from the survey are provided on the following pages.

Q1 - 1. How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement? “Changes to planning law passed by the North Carolina Legislature impact my day-to-day work.” (0 indicating strongest disagreement, and 10 indicating strongest agreement)

Q2 - 2. How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement? “Having a Legislative Committee is important to the organizational mission of APA-NC.” (0 indicating strongest disagreement, and 10 indicating strongest agreement)

Q3 - 3. The APA-NC Legislative Committee works on behalf of chapter members to affect planning-related legislation in a variety of ways. Rank the top three activities on which you would like to see the Legislative Committee focus their attention. Place a “1” by your first choice, a “2” by your second choice, and a “3” by your third choice.

Q4 - 4. Rank the top three member resources on which you would like to see the Legislative Committee focus their attention. Place a “1” by your first choice, a “2” by your second choice, and a “3” by your third choice.

Q5 - 5. Would you support an increase in membership dues to fund additional activities of the Legislative Committee? For example, this could support current activities (such as the advocacy and member outreach activities mentioned earlier) or support additional resources (such as a full time lobbyist).

Q5a - 5(a). How much of an increase to your annual state chapter dues would you support?

Q6 - 6. How do you prefer to receive communication from the Legislative Committee to best assist you/your jurisdiction in adjusting to changes in planning-related state law? Check all that apply.

Q7 - 7. In the past, the Legislative Committee has requested individual members make contact with their legislators to advocate for or against pending legislation. In the past three years, how often have you made contact with one or more of your legislators on an issue related to planning to advocate for a specific legislative action?

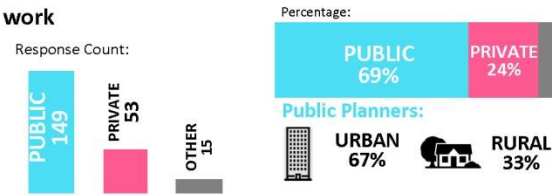
Q7a - 7(a). What has limited you from interacting with legislators on issues/bills related to planning? Check all that apply.

Q8 - 8. The Legislative Committee depends on the support of chapter members (through their willingness to volunteer) to meet our objectives. We would like to know how we might grow our committee’s membership. Which of the following activities/benefits would encourage you to more actively participate in the work of the Legislative Committee? Check all that apply.



In 2019, APA-NC's Legislative Committee conducted several studies on advocacy by planners to supplement their efforts in writing a strategic plan. These studies included a chapter-wide member survey. For the member survey we asked 11 questions and received input from 225 planners (14.6% of chapter members). This report details the key findings from each question.

Q9 & 9(a) Which of the following best describes where you work? Choices: Public | Private | Other/Do not work

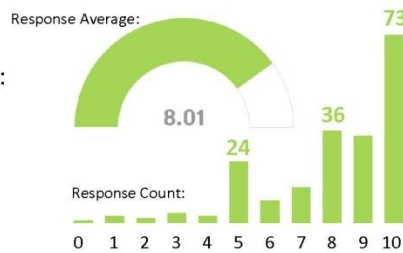


Summary: Most of the responses to our survey were from public sector planners (69%); a majority of which were from urban jurisdictions.

Q1: How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement? "Changes to planning law passed by the North Carolina Legislature impact my day-to-day work." (0 indicating strongest disagreement, and 10 indicating strongest agreement)

Average response: **8.01/10**

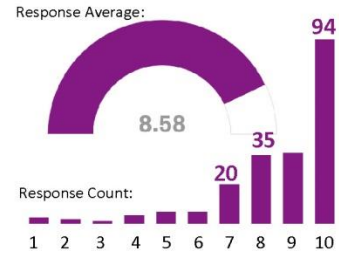
Most frequent response: **10/10**



Q2: How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement? "Having a Legislative Committee is important to the organizational mission of APA-NC." (0 indicating strongest disagreement, and 10 indicating strongest agreement)

Average response: **8.58/10**

Most frequent response: **10/10**



Q3: Rank the top three activities on which you would like to see the Legislative Committee focus their attention. Place a "1" by your first choice, a "2" by your second choice, and a "3" by your third choice.

Summary:

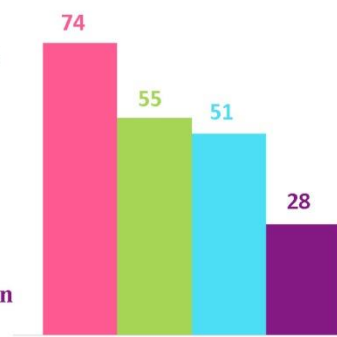
40% of members indicated their strongest support for Legislative Committee members engaging in direct advocacy with the General Assembly as their top preferred committee activity.

Direct advocacy with legislators (74 / 215 first place votes)

Educational events for elected officials (55)

Partnering with other associations (51)

Proposing new legislation (28)

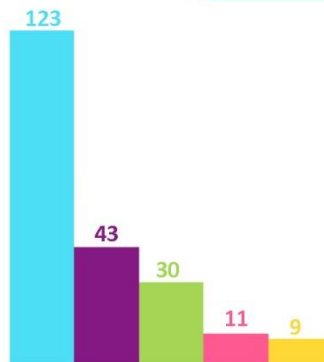


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Q4: Rank the top three member resources on which you would like to see the Legislative Committee focus their attention. Place a "1" by your first choice, a "2" by your second choice, and a "3" by your third choice.

Summary:

Chapter members resoundingly supported the committee's effort to track pending legislation. 123 out of 215 members (53%) supported pending legislation as their top preferred member resource.



Tracking pending legislation (123/215 first place votes)

Educational events for elected officials (43)

Partnering with other associations (30)

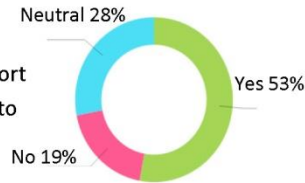
Proposing new legislation (11)

Organizing seminars by legislators (9)

Q5: Would you support an increase in membership dues to fund additional activities of the Legislative Committee? For example, this could support current activities...or support additional resources.

Summary:

53% of chapter members support an increase in their state dues to fund increased legislative activities or resources.



Asked only to those who responded "yes" to Q5-

Q5(a) How much of a dues increase would you support (on a scale of \$1 to \$15)?

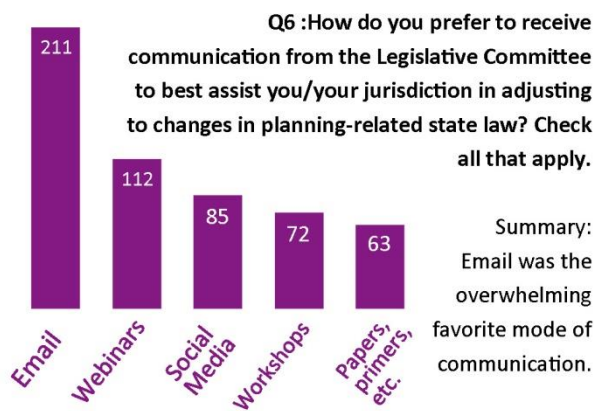
Average Response: (\$11/\$15)

Most Frequent Responses:

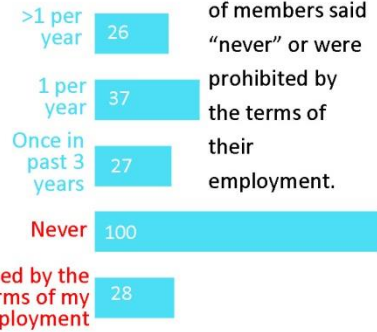
Dollars	Response Count	%
\$10	49	42%
\$15	45	38%
\$5	13	11%
\$7	2	2%

Summary:

On average, members who said yes to Q5, supported an \$11 increase in state dues to support increased legislative committee activities.



Q7 - In the past three years, how often have you made contact with one or more of your legislators on an issue related to planning to advocate for a specific legislative action?



Summary: 58% of members said "never" or were prohibited by the terms of their employment.

CM Credits for participating (124)

Assistance in compliance (82)

Opportunity to interact with legislators (70)

Partial rebate of APA-NC dues (50)

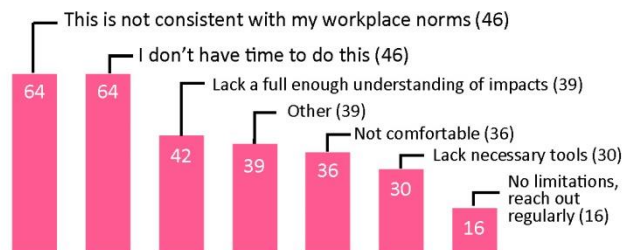
Increased recognition on website or at conference (46)

Free Legislative Committee SWAG (11)

Annual recognition luncheon (7)

Q8- Which of the following activities/benefits would encourage you to more actively participate in the work of the Legislative Committee? Check all that apply.

Q7(a). What has limited you from interacting with legislators on issues/bills related to planning? Check all that apply.



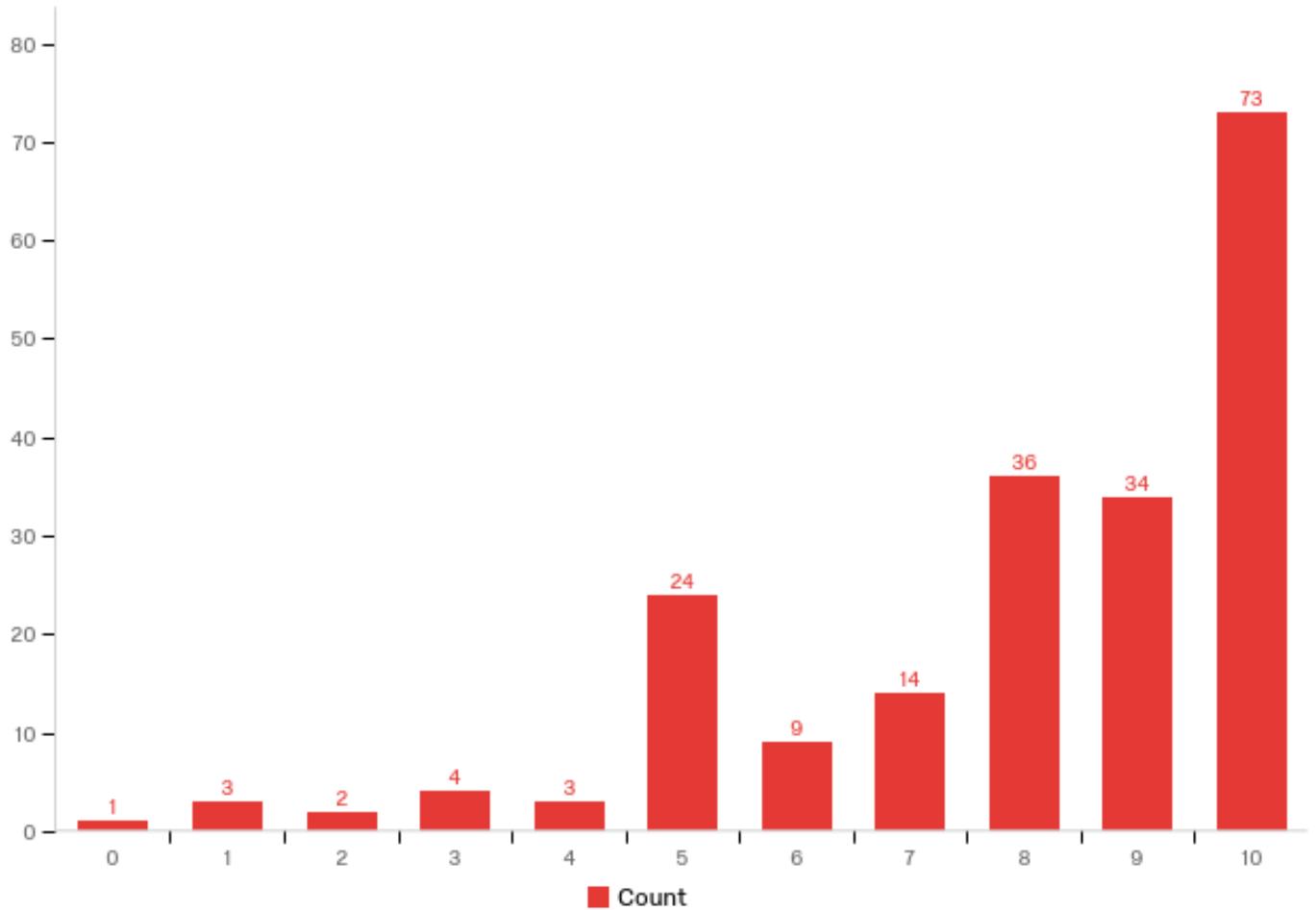
Takeaways:

The results of this report show that APA-NC members see the value in the work of the legislative committee and legislative representation for planners. These findings will help the legislative committee draft a strategic plan that is bold and conscious of the opportunities and limitations of planners to engage in advocacy in Raleigh.

If you would like more detailed information on the data collected in this report, you can access the full report and legislative strategic plan by visiting [INSERT LINK HERE](#). If you have any questions about the data or how to become more involved in the APA-NC Legislative Committee, please contact Chad Meadows for more information.

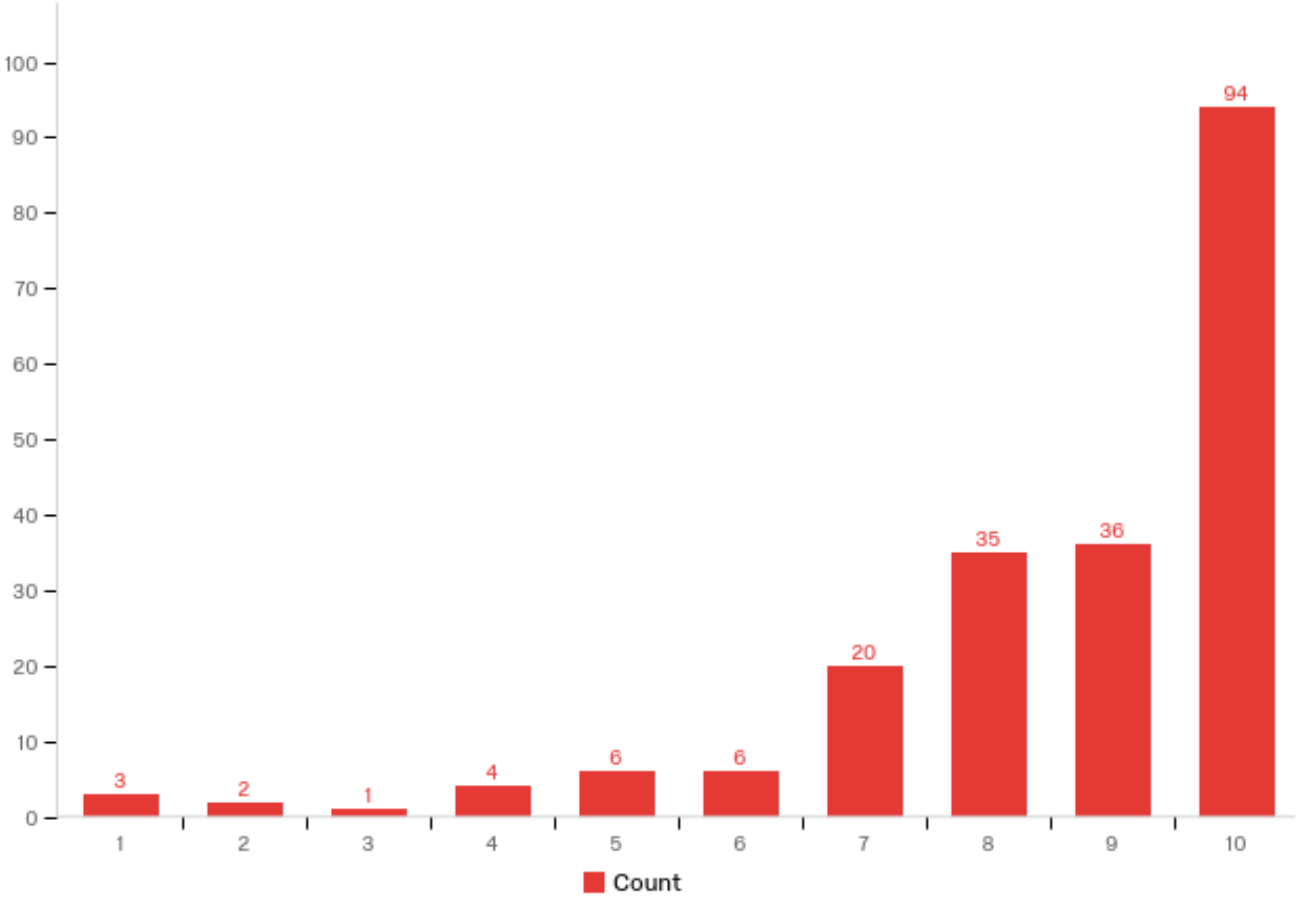
Q1 - 1. How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement? “Changes to planning law passed by the North Carolina Legislature impact my day-to-day work.” (0 indicating strongest disagreement, and 10 indicating strongest agreement)

Distribution responses (Q1)



Q2 - 2. How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement? “Having a Legislative Committee is important to the organizational mission of APA-NC.” (0 indicating strongest disagreement, and 10 indicating strongest agreement)

Distribution of responses (Q2)

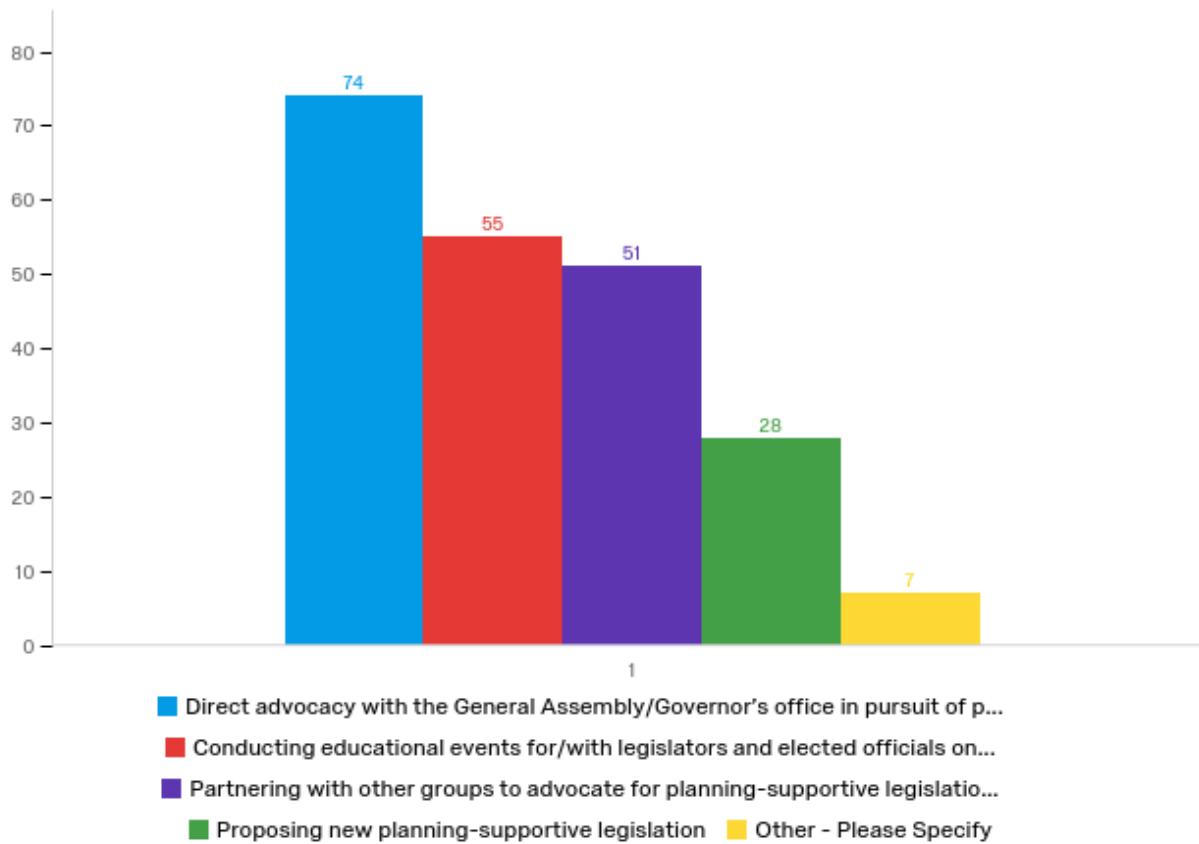


Q3 - 3. The APA-NC Legislative Committee works on behalf of chapter members to affect planning-related legislation in a variety of ways. Rank the top three activities on which you would like to see the Legislative Committee focus their attention. Place a “1” by your first choice, a “2” by your second choice, and a “3” by your third choice. (You may type an open ended response in the "other" field)

#	Field	Mean	Std Deviation	Count
3	Direct advocacy with the General Assembly/Governor’s office in pursuit of planning-supportive legislation	1.84	0.80	179
2	Partnering with other groups to advocate for planning-supportive legislation	1.98	0.79	159
1	Conducting educational events for/with legislators and elected officials on planning issues/topics	1.94	0.80	156
4	Proposing new planning-supportive legislation	2.25	0.80	123
5	Other - Please Specify	2.16	0.93	19



First Place Votes (Q3)



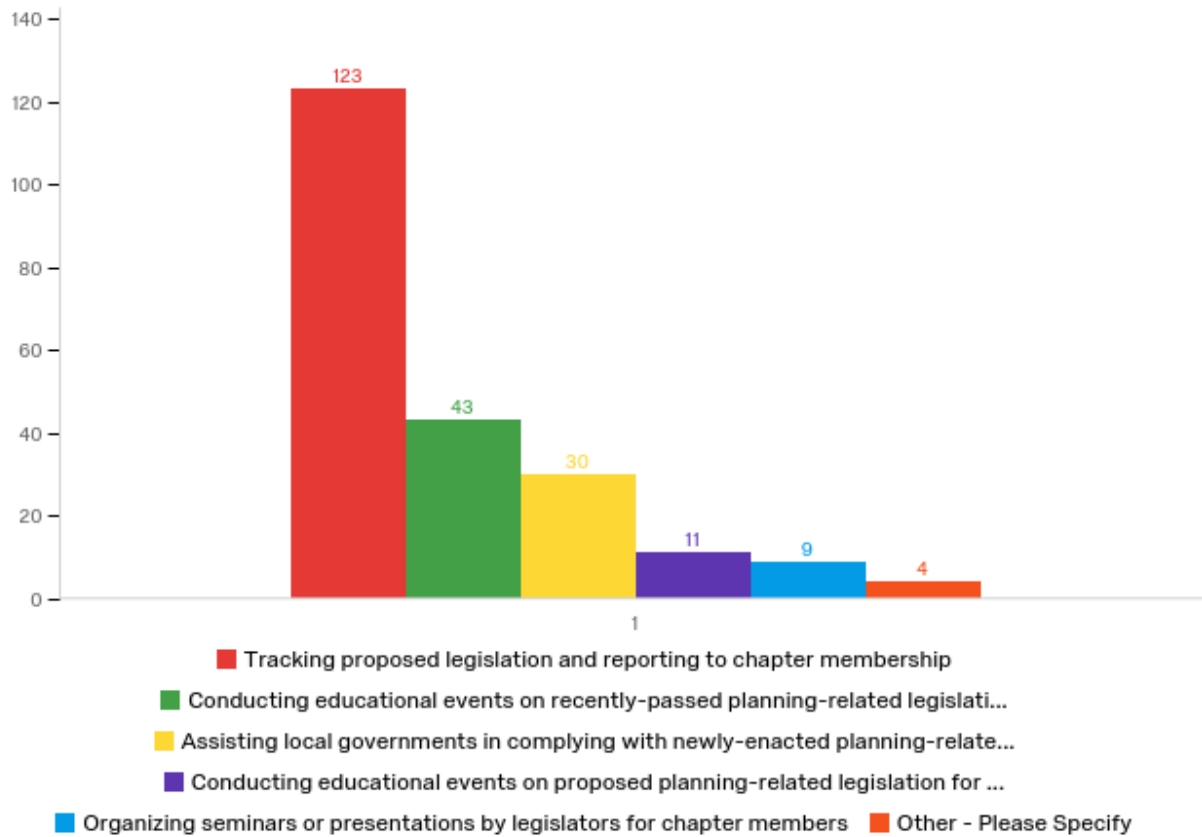
Distribution of Responses (Q3)

#	Question	1	2	3	Total			
3	Direct advocacy with the General Assembly/Governor's office in pursuit of planning-supportive legislation	41.34%	74	32.96%	59	25.70%	46	179
2	Partnering with other groups to advocate for planning-supportive legislation	32.08%	51	37.74%	60	30.19%	48	159
1	Conducting educational events for/with legislators and elected officials on planning issues/topics	35.26%	55	35.90%	56	28.85%	45	156
4	Proposing new planning-supportive legislation	22.76%	28	29.27%	36	47.97%	59	123
5	Other - Please Specify	36.84%	7	10.53%	2	52.63%	10	19

Q4 - 4. Rank the top three member resources on which you would like to see the Legislative Committee focus their attention. Place a “1” by your first choice, a “2” by your second choice, and a “3” by your third choice. (You may type an open ended response in the "other" field)

#	Field	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Tracking proposed legislation and reporting to chapter membership	1.46	0.73	0.53	180
2	Conducting educational events on proposed planning-related legislation for chapter membership	2.41	0.67	0.44	109
3	Organizing seminars or presentations by legislators for chapter members	2.38	0.75	0.56	56
4	Conducting educational events on recently-passed planning-related legislation for chapter membership	1.98	0.70	0.50	165
5	Assisting local governments in complying with newly-enacted planning-related legislation	2.22	0.79	0.63	130
6	Other - Please Specify	1.78	0.79	0.62	9

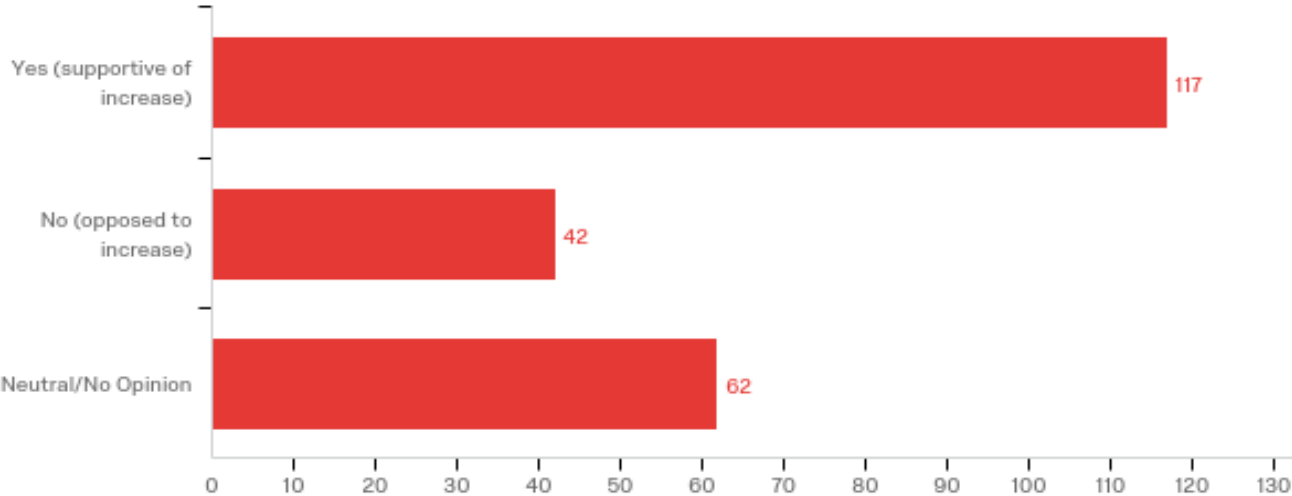
First place votes (Q4)



Distribution of responses (Q4)

#	Question	1	2	3	Total	
1	Tracking proposed legislation and reporting to chapter membership	68.33%	123	17.78%	25	180
4	Conducting educational events on recently-passed planning-related legislation for chapter membership	26.06%	43	50.30%	39	165
5	Assisting local governments in complying with newly-enacted planning-related legislation	23.08%	30	32.31%	58	130
2	Conducting educational events on proposed planning-related legislation for chapter membership	10.09%	11	38.53%	56	109
3	Organizing seminars or presentations by legislators for chapter members	16.07%	9	30.36%	30	56
6	Other - Please Specify	44.44%	4	33.33%	2	9

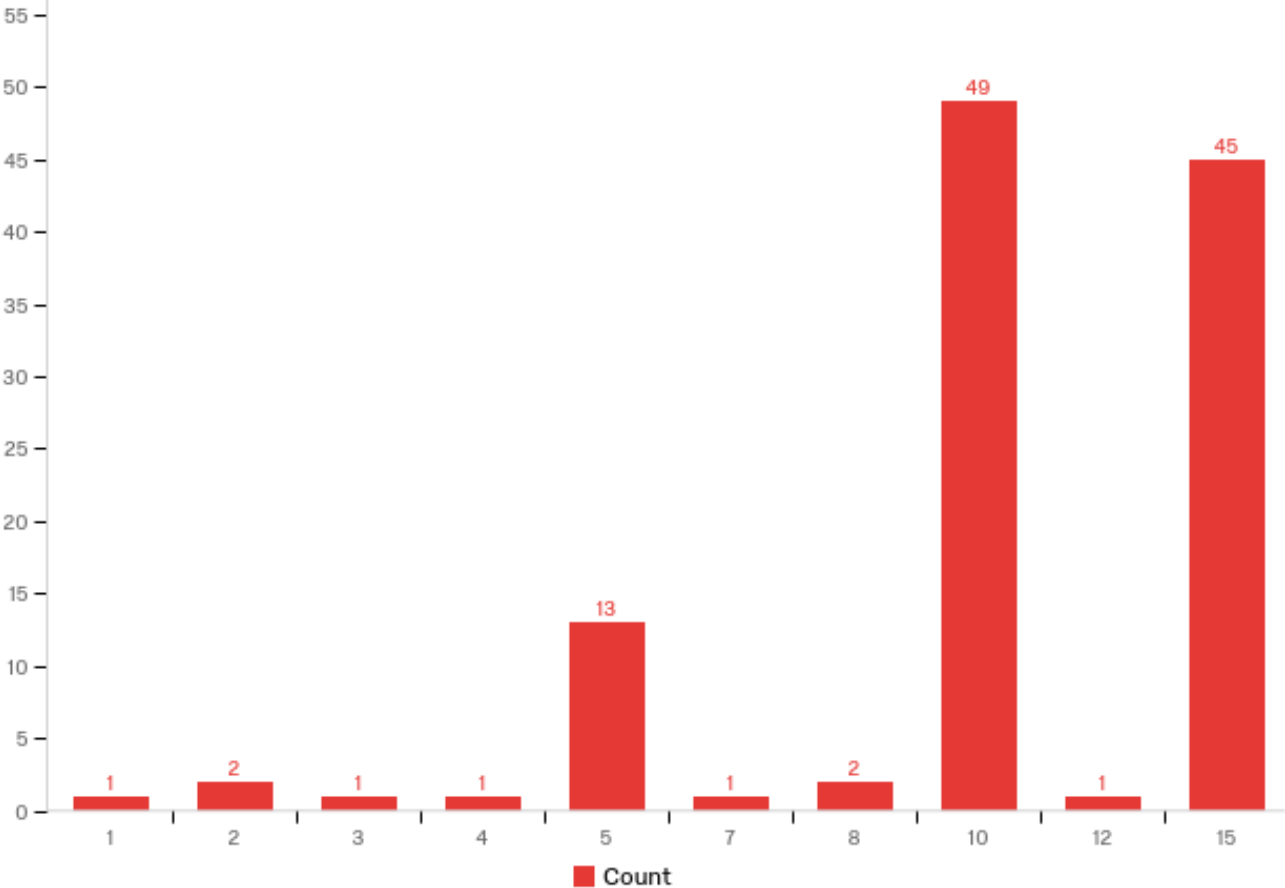
Q5 - 5. Would you support an increase in membership dues to fund additional activities of the Legislative Committee? For example, this could support current activities (such as the advocacy and member outreach activities mentioned earlier) or support additional resources (such as a full time lobbyist).



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes (supportive of increase)	52.94%	117
3	No (opposed to increase)	19.00%	42
4	Neutral/No Opinion	28.05%	62
	Total	100%	221

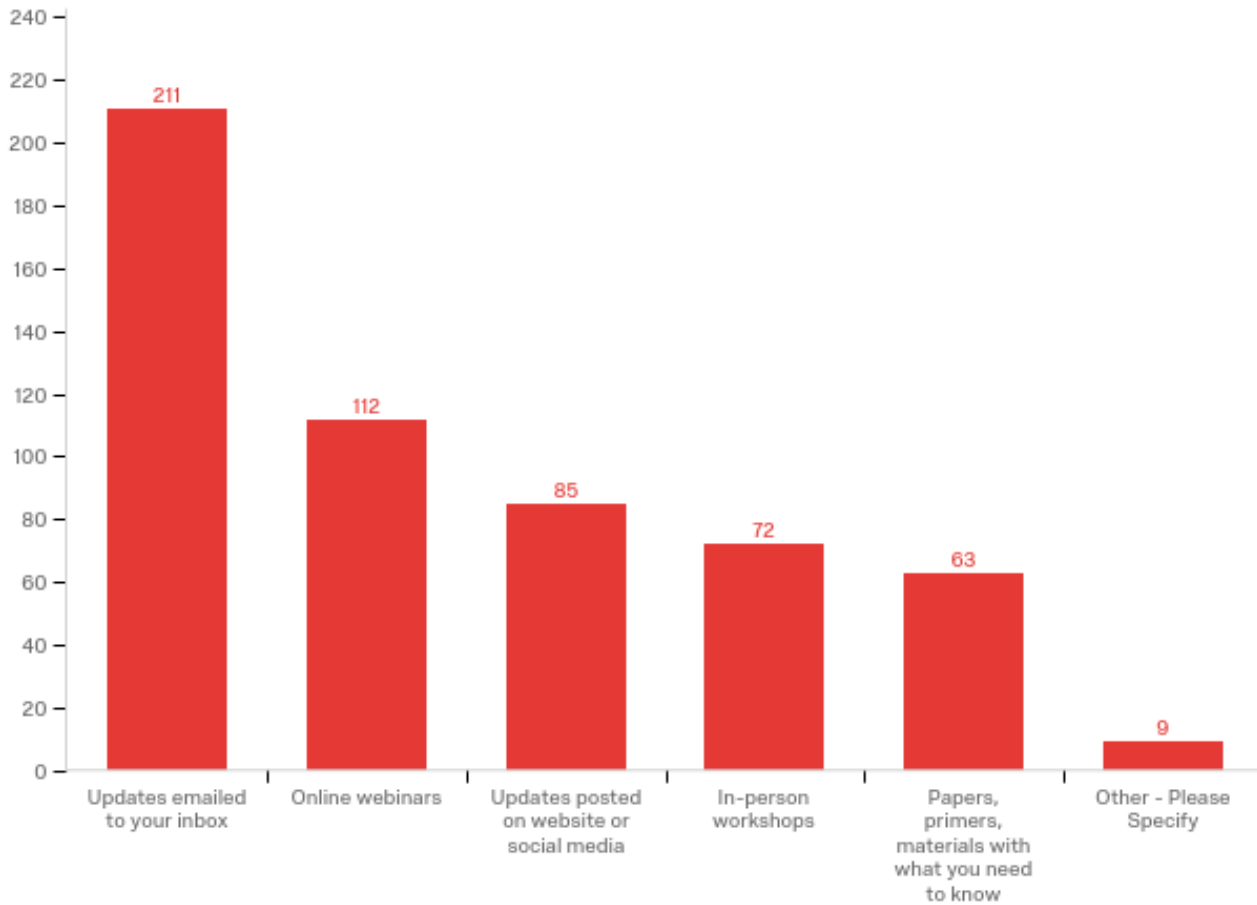
Q5a - 5(a). How much of an increase to your annual state chapter dues would you support?

Distribution of responses (Dues Increase)



Q6 - 6. How do you prefer to receive communication from the Legislative Committee to best assist you/your jurisdiction in adjusting to changes in planning-related state law? Check all that apply.

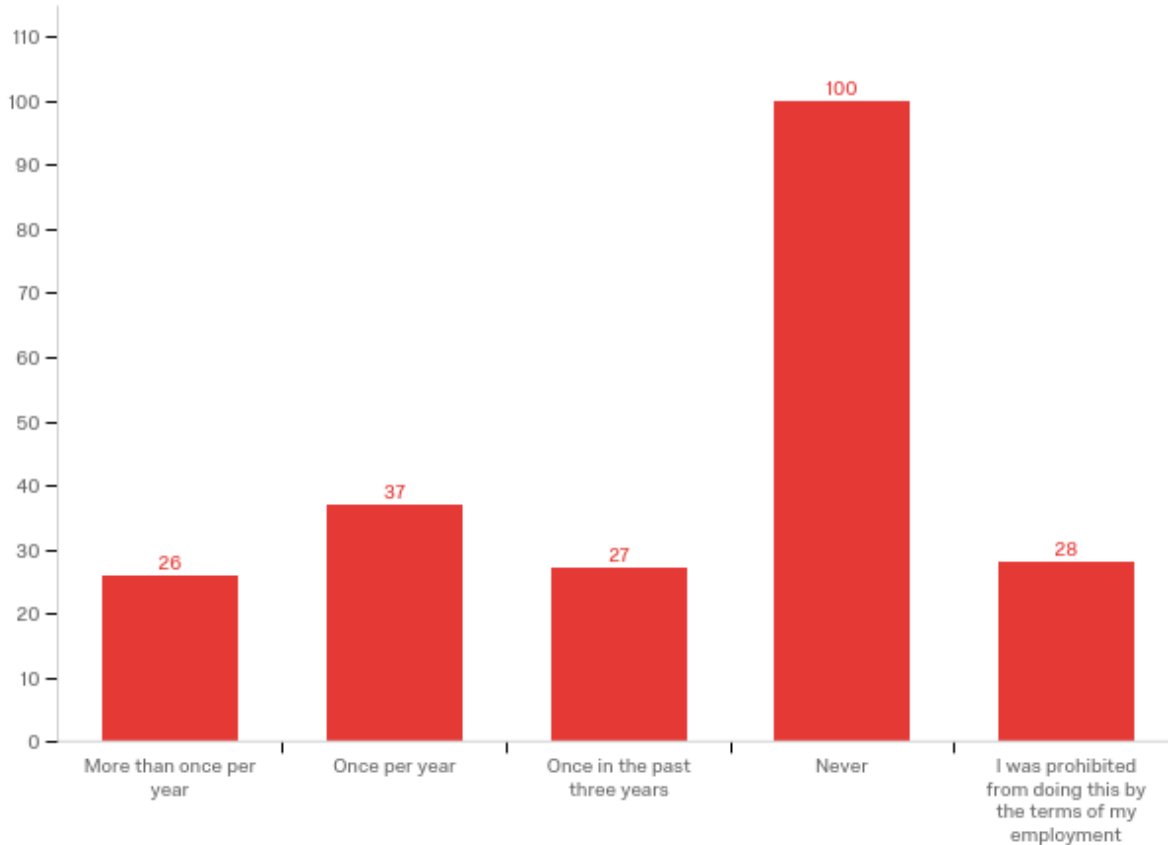
Distribution of responses (Q6)



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Updates emailed to your inbox	38.22%	211
2	Updates posted on website or social media	15.40%	85
3	Papers, primers, materials with what you need to know	11.41%	63
4	Online webinars	20.29%	112
5	In-person workshops	13.04%	72
6	Other - Please Specify	1.63%	9
	Total	100%	552

Q7 - 7. In the past, the Legislative Committee has requested individual members make contact with their legislators to advocate for or against pending legislation. In the past three years, how often have you made contact with one or more of your legislators on an issue related to planning to advocate for a specific legislative action?

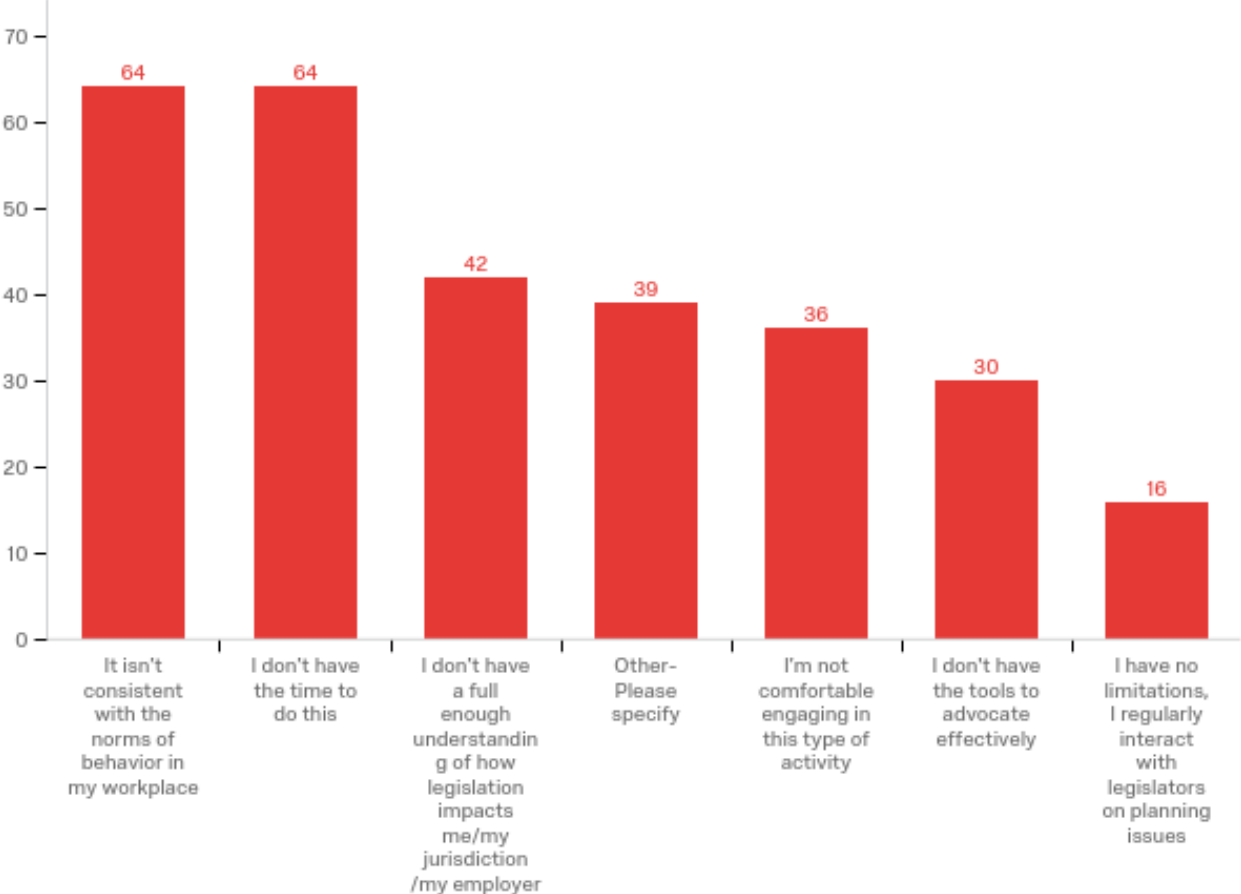
Distribution of responses (Q7)



#	Answer	%	Count
1	More than once per year	11.93%	26
2	Once per year	16.97%	37
3	Once in the past three years	12.39%	27
4	Never	45.87%	100
5	I was prohibited from doing this by the terms of my employment	12.84%	28
	Total	100%	218

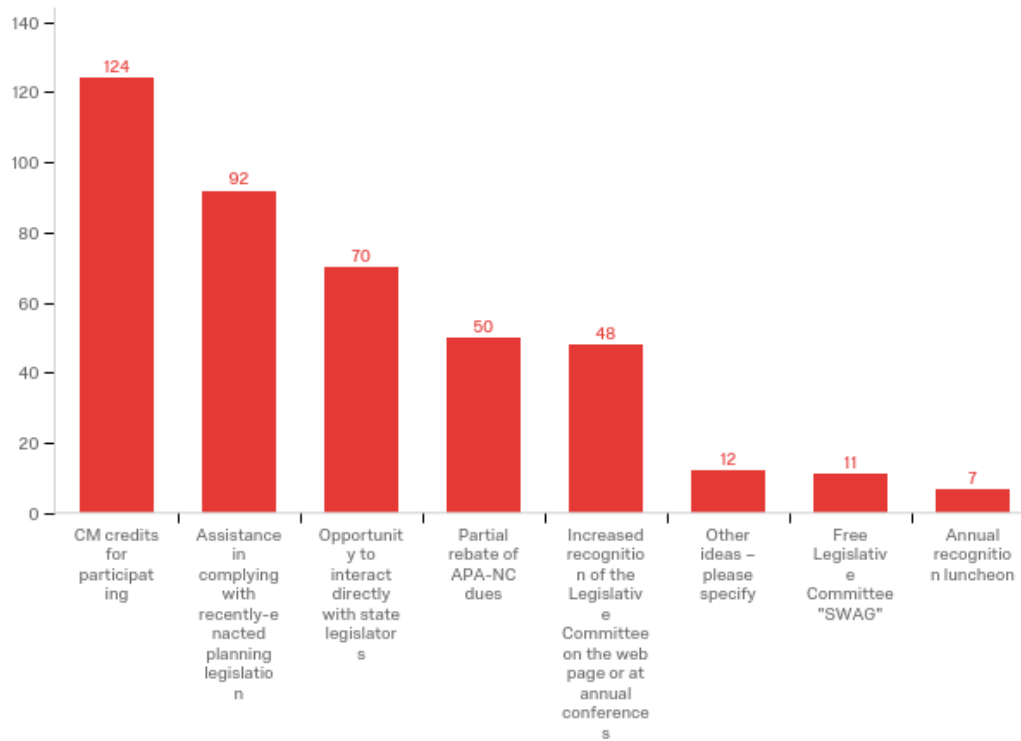
Q7a - 7(a). What has limited you from interacting with legislators on issues/bills related to planning? Check all that apply.

Response count (Q7a)



Q8 - 8. The Legislative Committee depends on the support of chapter members (through their willingness to volunteer) to meet our objectives. We would like to know how we might grow our committee’s membership. Which of the following activities/benefits would encourage you to more actively participate in the work of the Legislative Committee? Check all that apply.

Response count (Q8)



Percentage of all responses (Q8)

#	Answer	%	Count
6	CM credits for participating	29.95%	124
2	Assistance in complying with recently-enacted planning legislation	22.22%	92
1	Opportunity to interact directly with state legislators	16.91%	70
7	Partial rebate of APA-NC dues	12.08%	50
3	Increased recognition of the Legislative Committee on the web page or at annual conferences	11.59%	48
8	Other ideas – please specify	2.90%	12
4	Free Legislative Committee "SWAG"	2.66%	11
5	Annual recognition luncheon	1.69%	7
	Total	100%	414

LEGISLATIVE BEST PRACTICES FROM OTHER CHAPTERS

One of the initial steps in the development of this plan was to survey other state chapters with active legislative committees to better understand their programs and approaches. Members of the APA-NC Legislative Committee conducted telephone interviews with the legislative committee leaders in several states, including: California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, Ohio, and Texas. Each chapter brought unique experiences, legislative contexts, and strategies to the table. While not every strategy employed by these chapters will work in North Carolina, there are many important lessons and good examples from which to draw. The following pages provide details on areas North Carolina has in common with legislative programs in other states, and a review of practices or approaches that are unique to other chapters that may help us build or refine our program in North Carolina. The final section includes notes from the individual discussions.

Practices In-Common with Other Chapters

The following table summarizes some of the common practices across the chapters interviewed. Additional discussion follows the table.

Chapter	Lobbyist	Limited Committee Size	Bill Tracking	Partnerships	Individual Member Advocacy
Connecticut	X	-	X	X	X
California	X	-	X	-	X
Florida	X	X	X	-	-
Illinois	-	X	X	X	X
Ohio	-	-	-	-	X
New Jersey	-	-	-	X	-
Texas	X	-	X	X	X
Washington	X	-	X	X	X

An X indicates that the chapter uses the practice; a dash “-“ indicates when a chapter doesn’t use the practice, or doesn’t use it in a traditional fashion.

Hiring a Lobbyist:

Most state chapters we interviewed retained a lobbyist in some form. Even those that did not, generally had some staff that could assist in legislative needs. APA Florida is a particularly good model from which to draw insight due to its partisan similarities to NC and its exemplary use of its lobbyist. In Florida, the chapter’s lobbyist primarily works to educate legislators on understanding how to *think* about planning issues, not necessarily how to *vote*. Their chapter, like North Carolina, faces Republican majorities in both chambers and has decided to serve as an educational asset to legislators. The Chapter relies on its Executive Director and lobbyist to prepare, track legislation, and keep members informed on developments during session. Their lobbyist attends all the Chapter’s Executive Committee meetings and maintains a close relationship to the Legislative Committee by speaking to them at least once a year in advance of their annual policy workshop.

Long-term relationships with the lobbyist was a repeated theme in Florida and in other states that worked well with lobbyists. Three chapters retained their lobbyist for over 10 years (Washington, California, and Florida) and all three use their lobbyist to speak to board members, members at large, and legislators on pressing issues. But patience is key; APA-WA for example, has hired the same lobbyist for the last 12 years but it has taken some

time to form the strong relationship they have now. In the beginning, their lobbyist had some experience with transportation issues but needed to learn land use. They spoke of the importance of finding a lobbyist retained by clients with similar issues as APA.

For those states that did not retain a lobbyist they found other ways to supplement for their legislative needs. The Texas Chapter, for example, hired a part-time communications associate instead of a lobbyist. Several chapters have hired an executive director, including the New Jersey Chapter which works with other organizations to gather information and organizes Chapter members to mobilize when needed. Planners in Illinois organize their efforts at an annual Illinois Planners Legislative Action Day (PLAD), similar in structure to APA National's Legislative Policy and Advocacy Conference. So, while lobbyists play a crucial role in the states where they are used, a lobbyist is not an essential component of a successful legislative program.

Committee Structure:

Each chapter runs their legislative committee in a unique way, but it was clear that committee size and leadership appointment has an impact on committee outcomes. The Illinois Chapter keeps their legislative committee limited to no more than eight members, telling the members from the outset that the committee is a "working committee." FL-APA on the other hand appoints their committee members based on geography, with one member from each region within the state. Others create several appointed positions to elevate the prestige of roles. The Texas Chapter, for example has a Policy & Advocacy Committee Chair; Government Relations Chair; and a highly involved past chair, and an elected liaison with the TX Municipal League. CA-APA was one of the only states to mention a subcommittee structure and an election process for appointing leadership. They have created separate subcommittees for attorney issues, environmental issues, and "membership" issues (over 100 members). There are several ways to structure legislative committees, but the important lesson is that structure can be used strategically based on a chapter's needs.

It's also crucial to the success of any legislative program to keep the committee members motivated and interested. To keep things relevant for committee members, the Connecticut Chapter communicates primarily through texts since conference calls lag in participation. Another approach to elevating the importance of legislative work is regularly report progress in chapter-wide communications. Washington's Legislative Committee has a spot reserved in the chapter newsletter each month for a short article on policy issues, while some like the Florida Chapter hold an annual policy workshop that is open to all members. The Texas Chapter also attested to this approach. Their chapter develops a policy "program" for all members to show the chapter what they're doing and where they stand on key issues. The purpose is twofold; first, the content can alert members and legislators to where the Committee stands on issues, but also serve as a call for feedback from chapter members on whether they agree with policy stances.

Bill Tracking:

Almost all chapters invest time and resources into tracking legislation, the main differentiation between chapters was in how bills are reported to members. One of the more notable practices was that of the Florida Chapter

who sends a tracking report and summary of major bills to all members on a weekly basis and retains them on the website for members for up to two years. Chapters that retain a lobbyist like California and Washington use their lobbyist to identify bills for the Legislative Committee to prioritize for tracking. Florida and Texas run their tracking through one point of contact, the executive director in Florida and a volunteer in Texas. The only states that did not keep an account of legislation through bill tracking (Ohio and New Jersey) expressed more concern with the amendment rules in their legislatures creating difficulties for tracking than with the efficacy of tracking bills in general.

Association Partnerships:

Most every chapter interviewed relied on strategic partnerships in one form or another. There is no consistent theme for why and when state chapter's partner with other associations, but partnerships are leveraged for a diversity of reasons. For example, while some chapters, such as Texas have a liaison to the League of Municipalities from their Legislative Committee, chapters like Florida have hesitations about crossing into this partnership. Partnerships can also be made to air grievances and broaden the tent of a proposal. NJ-APA formed a steering committee with all the groups that had a stake in local development decision-making and invited them to participate in drafting a rewrite of the state municipal land use law. This process gave everyone a seat at the table and increased the support of the APA's recommendations. The result of their meeting helped them set a long-term agenda and they have continued to meet as the issue works itself out.

Lastly, partnerships can be developed with groups that may traditionally be considered enemies. The Washington Chapter uses partnership with like-minded groups but shared that there is a real opportunity in partnering with groups like the Home Builders Association. While their efforts to partner have come up short, there have been several issues where a lack of consensus between these groups has given legislators reason for pause. Perhaps this could be a partnership our chapter could explore for some low-hanging fruit issues.

Member Advocacy:

Most chapters call on their members as advocates, but few reflect positively on the outcomes. Members are often alerted through newsletters, member alerts or letter campaigns but several chapters expressed skepticism over whether they were effective in moving the dial on legislation. Several chapters that we interviewed believed that planners had particular difficulty in stepping out to lead on legislative issues due to their public positions. However, many interviewees came up with very innovative approaches to overcoming this challenge.

The Washington Chapter, for example said that they maintain a Legislative Education Advocacy and Direction (LEAD) group to respond in these scenarios but said they only sent one call for action in 2017 due to short timelines. Illinois and Connecticut were the only two to hold events in the state capitol once a year to mobilize members. Texas went so far as to set up a separate 501c(3) organization called "Planning Matters" to provide a political shield for APA. The goal was to do more advocacy and testimony through this group but keeping funds separate was difficult and something the Chapter will need to sort out before it is used more extensively.

Practices Unique to Other Chapters

This section details those areas where practices between North Carolina and other state chapters diverge. These examples are provided as food for thought about how we might supplement or revise our activities to have a greater impact.

Partnership with Legislators (Connecticut, Florida & Illinois)

Effective conversations with legislators are essential for the success of any legislative initiative, but we heard several state chapters mention particularly unique partnerships they were able to cultivate with legislators to help ensure they had a constructive seat at the table. At the Illinois Chapter's annual Planners Legislative Action Day, the team has started to admit legislators to their happy hour and events during the day. They haven't had huge numbers turnout, but they do have one legislator who is a former planner who continues to show up and has been an asset in getting meetings and greater influence during session.

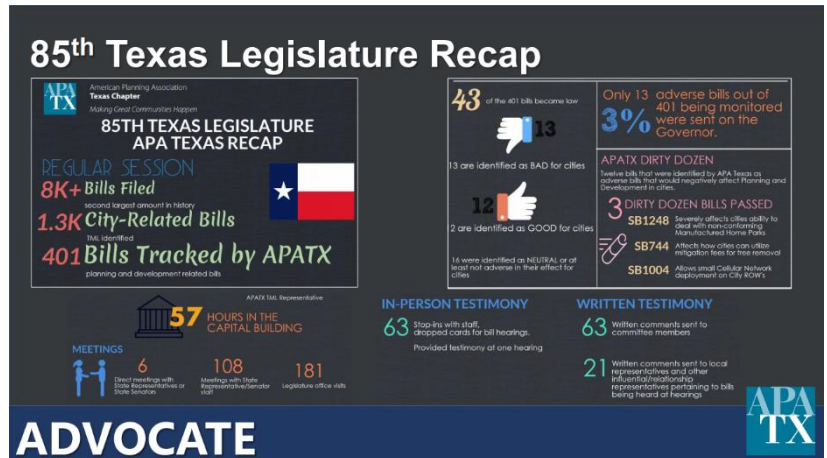
Connecticut by far provided us the best example of how to develop a partnership with legislators where there are hospitable ears for APA's message. In Connecticut, the Commissioner of the Department of Housing submitted proposed fair housing language that was opposed by the Chapter. But because their critique was drafted in a constructive way the Commissioner convened a working group comprised of the associations impacted by the bill. In years since, CT-APA has been invited back to work on updates to the code and are actively sought for advice on new legislation. In their interview with us, they shared that this sort of partnership tends to work better when the proposal is a personal initiative of an administrator or legislator who is looking for feedback.

It should be noted that both examples are drawn from states with legislatures controlled by the Democratic Party. Regardless of this fact, the Committee should seek out opportunities where a legislator is initiating a new idea or has planning experience for this sort of partnership.

Legislative Platform/Policy Papers (Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, Ohio, Texas & Washington)

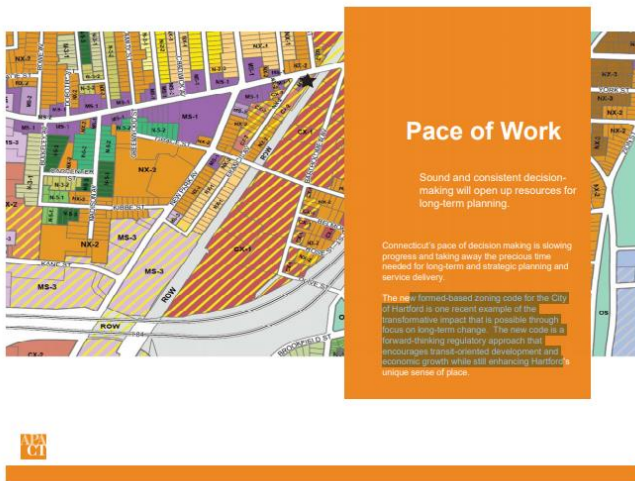
One of the more common practices we heard about across state chapters was the composition of a legislative platform or series of policy papers to inform members, executive committee leadership and lawmakers on APA's work and policy stances. Planning ahead and getting approval on key policy positions based on historic trends, helped committees to respond more quickly as session progressed, but it also provided legislators important context before the first bill is dropped or hearing scheduled. This section will highlight two states that took innovative approaches to creating and sharing its policy platform.

APA-Texas surveyed its members and found that most members were unfamiliar with any chapter activity outside of the conference. To address this, the Chapter now dedicates a section in its Annual Report to all members for Legislative Committee initiatives. To communicate their work the Legislative Committee created an infographic to display their work in a readable and engaging format. Within the infographic is the chapter's stance on several key bills which communicates key positions to chapter members on issues that affect them.



The Texas Legislative Committee created an infographic to display their bill tracking information in the chapter's annual report

Connecticut earned our second spotlight on this topic for their creation of their “Start with planning” series. The series was initiated by the Chapter as a policy platform for the 2018 gubernatorial race. The slides the



committee created introduce lawmakers to the chapter, their mission, and goals. They do not get into technical discussions of policies but instead provide candidates a better picture of how planning has impacted local communities in Connecticut and why they should care about APA’s opinion.

It should be noted that almost every chapter spent time at the beginning of session developing policy papers. Florida and Washington also provide good examples of policy platforms/papers which are available from their respective websites..

The Connecticut Chapter's "Start with Planning" platform highlights notable works of planning in the state

Sessions/Awards for Advocacy (Washington & Florida)

Several chapters use awards or state conference events to highlight legislative accomplishments. The Washington Chapter awards a “Legislator of the Year” award each year and uses the award to both reward legislative accomplishments but also to recruit support for the year to come. The recipient is determined by the consensus of the Legislative Committee which weighs speeches, bill sponsorships, votes, and the legislator’s position in leadership.

Conferences are a great time to award legislators for their effort to promote planning but they're also a good opportunity to talk about state policy issues in general. As mentioned earlier, APA-FL hosts a policy workshop immediately after the state conference where planners discuss emerging issues including a staple session with the state demographer who does an interesting presentation on demographic trends. In addition to providing the Legislative Committee an opportunity to meet in person and work on policy positions, these sessions can serve as a rallying opportunity for the session to come.

Legislative Action Day (Illinois & Texas)

Lobby Days or Action Days energize members and advance the practice of planning regardless of the number of members who turn out. The Illinois Chapter was the only chapter to incorporate a lobby day into their legislative program, but leadership reflected positively on how their event gives them quality time with lawmakers and their staff. The Chapter's Planners Legislative Action Day draws anywhere from 8-12 planners each year. Five policy priorities will be set for the day and meetings will be scheduled for all attendees who are required, at a minimum, to meet with their home legislator. The Chapter provides breakfast and encourages all members (whether they attended the PLAD or not) to convene in Springfield for a happy hour after the day's scheduled meetings. Although the Illinois Legislature is controlled by the Democratic Party and planners are better received than in North Carolina, these types of results can be replicated in states where there is the will power and organization to do it.

Hiring an Executive Director (New Jersey, Ohio, Florida & California)

An executive director is not an expressly legislative role for all APA chapters, but several committee leaders we interviewed made the connection between their legislative success and the efforts of an executive director. Florida's executive director has a policy background and tracks all the chapter's legislation. California's executive director is also their lobbyist, and New Jersey's is a local mayor who is also a member of the local League of Municipalities giving her access to their legislative agenda and information on any developments. New Jersey recommended that if a chapter were to hire an executive director, they should hire someone who can fundraise to cover their salary.

Great Places Video Series (TX)

Probably the most innovative approach to advocating for planning and great places is the work of the Texas chapter to partner with a travel personality to celebrate great planning. Chet Garner is a local TV personality who hosts a program on PBS where he makes day-trips to Texas cities to showcase the state's great destinations. The Chapter approached him with a partnership proposal where he would create programs for cities that are awarded a Great Place designation and he was more than willing to oblige. The city where the special is being filmed pays for the production but the video includes an interview with city planners and serve as a great promotion for the city. The clips get great social media attention and expose Chet's thousands of followers to planning concepts.

While the goal of the video is not expressly legislative, the exposure these videos bring to planning serve the purpose of building positive public opinion for the profession. The video's Chet produces are both informative and entertaining. They are sharable on social media and give dedicated air-time to planners. Not every state will have an equivalent personality to utilize, but where resources and the right partner are available this is a great way to broaden the support for planners Capitols across the country.

Downtown Bryan Great Place in Texas Promo Video:

https://www.facebook.com/pg/thedaytrippertv/videos/?ref=page_internal

Conclusions

1. Partisan splits are important for strategy formulation.

There was a clear difference we observed in state chapter practices based on the partisan makeup of each state. Chapters with Republican-controlled legislatures relied on innovative approaches to advance the message of planners through public relations while states with Democratic-controlled legislatures were more often afforded a seat at the table to directly influence legislation. States like Washington, Connecticut and California, states with Democratic-controlled legislatures were heavily involved with forming policy through task forces or directly lobbying where as states like Florida and Texas focused on public relations, and member engagement and communication.

While North Carolina was traditionally a Democratically-controlled legislature, the past six years have been markedly different from this historic trend. The immediate recommendation is for our chapter to reassess the strategies we employ with this frame of reference.

2. Hired staff can supplement decreased volunteer capacity.

We noticed that where volunteers are limited by work-schedules and political concerns, chapters retained staff or an executive director to manage significant legislative functions. Frequent volunteer conflicts were a major area of concern for several of the past chairs in North Carolina. States like Florida, New Jersey and California all retained an executive director who was proficient in legislative tracking or lobbying. Bill tracking, graphic design and member communication functions were often designated to these hired individuals. These states could serve as models for our chapter in assessing the need for full- or part-time staff.

3. Innovative public relations can be an effective outlet.

Past leaders of the NC-APA legislative committee and several chapters across the country were able to use innovative forms of media to push the discussion of planning issues. We were impressed with the Texas Chapter's Great Places video series and Connecticut's "start with planning" platform. This recommendation is heightened in importance considering the recurring Republican-control of the North Carolina Legislature. The chapter's most effective course of action may no longer be in committee testimony or bill drafting but instead elevating the practice of planning through shareable and compelling media forms such as video or social media.

4. Partnerships can be forged through membership connections and common challenges

Several chapters formed helpful connections to other associations (i.e. The League of Municipalities) through common members or common challenges. The level of these partnerships took varying degrees of involvement from simply attending meetings to composing joint letters of support. Some of our past chairs identified a need for innovative or unique partnerships to reinvigorate attention to planning issues. Assessing common connections of members or seeking out new partnerships with groups like AARP for example could be an effective takeaway from this report.

5. Policy statements are key to fast and meaningful action

The required speed of response was a challenge identified by several past chairs of the NC Chapter's legislative committee. Two common strategies employed by other chapters was the early *formulation* of policy statements and the early *circulation* of these statements. Getting approval by chapter leadership on key issues was crucial for the speed of response required throughout session. But almost just as important was the distribution of the policy statements to legislators and staff. The Washington Chapter for example makes a point to get their updated policy statements to legislative staff before the end of the year so that staff are informed and can pull from this knowledge even as bills are pre-filed.

Interview Notes

California

We spoke with John Terrell, Vice President of Legislation, on November 7, 2018.

<https://www.apacalifornia.org/legislation/>.

- Their Legislative Chair is an elected position – this adds credibility, but can make succession a challenge as potential leaders do not want to run for election
- They have a legislative platform <https://www.apacalifornia.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2017-18-Legislative-Platform-APA-California-final.pdf> - which is updated every 2 years
- They have had the same lobbyist for 35 years – neither an attorney or a planner, but does testify for the chapter – they obtain facts from chapter before speaking to the legislature
- They have a series of committees: an attorney subcommittee, an environmental subcommittee, and a “membership” subcommittee of over 100 people
- Attorney committee (6 land use attorneys) help to draft suggested bill language the chapter will float, or propose language changes to other bills
- The chapter often sponsors its own bills – latest example: by-right housing
- Many of the attorneys are well connected to the General Assembly
- This committee doubles as their panel of experts on housing
- They have a subcommittee of environmental consultants (who work with CEQA) who focuses on environmental bills
- The membership committee (organized into north and south due to state size) helps with policy letters and similar correspondence to the general assembly
- Legislative teams also prepare position letters: <https://www.apacalifornia.org/legislation/legislative-review-teams/position-letters/>
- In CA, all bills must be filed within first 45 days of the session. Then, APA-CA lobbyist looks at bills and flags a basket for the committee to review (around 300). Committee reviews and culls bills further (to

around 100). Then they have a webinar with the committees to discuss the bills and decide which ones to focus on.

Connecticut

We spoke with John Guszowski & Amanda Kennedy, co-chairs of the Legislative Committee, on October 22, 2018.

- No formal division of labor between co-chairs
- They go to capital and testify on bills
- Having 2 of them allows them to take action quickly
- They have an annual report on legislation they give at their annual conference
<http://www.ccapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CCAPA-Hot-Topics-2018-Legislative.pptx.pdf>
- CT legislature has alternating short & long sessions
- They have a lobbyist. In the beginning they would work with their lobbyist to track and comment on legislation
- Over the last year they have been forming partnerships and proactively working on proposed legislation
- 1st year, they met with a legislator (sympathetic to planning) identify areas of mutual interest, they would ask for draft language that they would submit.
- Two sessions ago they had 3 dozen “bad” bills aimed at changing their affordable housing legislation. Recent sessions have seen fewer bad bills.
- They have a volunteer committee which they communicate with via e-mail; it doesn’t yield much interaction, but they also do conference calls.
- Sometimes they are not clear what their position should be in responding to a bill, so it helps to talk through responses to bills or legislation with committee members.
- Start with Planning is their 2018 policy platform <http://www.ccapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Start-with-Planning-Summary-Presentation-March-21-2018-Compatibility-Mode.pdf>
- In 2018 they met with gubernatorial candidates and gave them their ‘Start with Planning’ materials
- They are presenting start with planning to their league of municipalities
- They want to use their local chapter membership to respond to pending legislation
- They have a chapter-based legislative breakfast – members attend and ask their legislators to attend
- Sometimes they joined their awards ceremony with the legislative breakfast
- They have been asked to sit on task forces such as their fair housing task force

Florida

We spoke with Laura Everitt, FAPA President (president elect chairs Legislative Committee) on October 19, 2018.

- They appoint folks from sections and at large to their legislative committee every 2 years their legislative committee consists of 26 people
- Meet with their legislative committee in person once per year the day before they have the public policy workshop

- They review the policy statements as a group – they look for things that are changing or that need to be updated, folks bring up their own individual issues
- The policy statement is reviewed by executive committee and then approved by chapter membership at state conference <http://www.floridaplanning.org/legislative/legislative-platform/>
- They assign smaller teams of folks to address individual issues
- They have a lobbyist who reports to them on situation at the GA. Lobbyist is part-time and has been their rep for at least a decade. He testifies and shares information from the Chapter with legislator staff
- Lobbyist comes to every executive committee meeting and brief the exec committee
- They are thinking about pushing out information on what planners do and their areas of expertise. This would be shared with new elected officials
- The Chapter does amicus briefs for various court cases that go through the Legislative Policy Committee
- They maintain a bill tracking report from each legislative session <http://www.floridaplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/APA-Florida-Bill-Tracking-Report-March-12-2018.pdf>
- They have a legislative newsletter that goes out to membership during the legislative session <http://www.floridaplanning.org/legislative/bill-tracking-reports/>
- Bad bill proposed? Get in touch with their lobbyist and ask them to get in touch with legislators individually.
- Have never asked their chapter members to advocate for or against particular bills
- They shy away from taking a stand, and just try to inform the legislators and the public
- They are trying to more proactively reach out to legislators on what FAPA does using national’s tools
- She would like to have more work for committee members on an on-going basis
- Would like to get some more junior folks involved – their committee has members with numerous years of experience, would like to see more younger chapter members
- It would be easier to get younger planners involved if we can really make a difference
- They partner with 1000 Friends of Florida, strong ties with League of Cities, but have not really partnered

Illinois

We spoke with David Silverman, Legislative Committee Chair, on November 18, 2018.

- They do not have a lobbyist, no budget – all volunteer organization
- Very focused committee of 8 or less (otherwise unwieldy) – they are a working committee
- Have a legislative alert section on their webpage <https://www.ilapa.org/legislative-committee> Each alert link takes you to a detailed page discussing bill, sponsor, status, what the bill does, and why it should be opposed. It links to a “witness slip”
- They assemble email blasts to membership on one or more bills. It includes details on the bill, what it does, the chapter’s stance, and why it should be supported or opposed
- May-Dec legislature is out of session that is when they do the most activity
- Says planners are not inclined to lead initiatives (they are used to be in the back)
- Difficult to motivate the membership for legislative action
- “Shell bills” enter committees in January (just titles, no text)
Language is crafted during Jan through Mar they contact legislators to keep up with what’s in the bill
- April means bills come out of committee

- The committee forms a position, check with executive committee, then e-blast goes out
- They have an annual Illinois Planners Legislative Action Day (PLAD) at the General Assembly in Springfield
- These have had 5 PLADs. They have modest list of advocacy issues
- PLAD: go to GA with 5 or so issues that relate to pending bills (3rd week of March) because it corresponds to when bills come out of committee and head to floor votes
- Attendees sign up through website
- Attendees find out who their legislators are, and must make appointments with them (senator + representative) at least; where possible meet with other committee chairs
- They have a packet of materials for attendees
- Best attendance was with 30 people (2017)
- They have a breakfast with a speaker, then go to the general assembly for individual meetings
- Re-assemble at local pub and invite legislators – try to network with individual representatives
- The PLAD was a way to revitalize the committee
- They try to keep their advocacy issues focused
- Because they are small, they need to partner, like with the League, AIA
- Watch proceedings of house and senate
- Also working on a Legislator of the year award

New Jersey

We spoke with Maura McManimon on November 19, 2018.

- Sheena is their executive director, who is very dynamic - Sheena is a Mayor, sits on NJ League and she shares their legislative agendas with the committee
- They have a legislative committee
- There is Vice Pres for policy, oversees the committee
- There are topical committees in the Committee and ad-hoc people
- Groups meets on a regular basis with an agenda and a group that can reach out to when needed
- They partner with a lot of other organizations/coalitions (Smart Growth Advocacy, Land Use Advocacy, County Planners Group)
- They prepare op-eds or write letters to legislators/Governor
- The state municipal land use law controls land development, they have mounted an effort to update the municipal land use law they created a steering committee of different groups with a stake in local development decision making, then had an open meeting format (participants set agenda in 1st hour, propose discussion topics, then people go to the conversations they want, a giant brainstorm), then propose/suggest legislation
- Complete Guide to Planning in NJ <http://njplanning.org/complete-guide-to-planning-in-new-jersey/>
Appears to describe state planning framework and discuss relevant acts and legislation – does not appear to be an annual update of legislation.
- They used op eds to make comments on bills, and occasional testify at hearings; but this requires some support on the part of the committee
- They don't mobilize their membership to act as individuals; she is not sure that 5,000 emails on a topic makes a difference anymore

Ohio

We spoke with Todd Kinskey, Legislative Committee Co-Chair, on November 18, 2018.

- Webpage has a link to legislative page
http://www.ohioplanning.org/aws/APAOH/pt/sp/resources_legislative
- Recently developed policy platform (approved 12.18.17)
http://www.ohioplanning.org/aws/APAOH/asset_manager/get_file/176237?ver=1570 Sets out chapter's position on 23 planning-related topics
- Conducted a webinar in September 2017 on the platform document (interactive format webinar)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjjODCLZ0Hs&feature=youtu.be>
- They post advocacy alerts on legislation on their legislative committee webpage with a short description and link to the bill. They have the "take action" button which links back to the national APA's form (see description from Catherine Hinshaw). They also post information pieces on legislation prepared by others.
- They are growing their organization and making planning more relevant.
- The GA is almost always in session.
- Bills pop up all the time
- Not much advance notice, and bill numbers/names change
- They do not have a lobbyist, no paid staff
- Diverse landscape in Ohio – each city, township, county has its own lobbyists – they do their own thing
- They used to have an employee who tracked legislation paid for by the COG who tracked bills and reported to membership – he left, and chapter had to step in
- Recently hired an executive director in 2011 who was a planner; used an association management agency before executive director was hired
- The chapter created a video called "Because We Plan" (2016) t-shirts, bumper stickers, trying to plant idea in the public's mind that good things happen because we plan
- Used the You-tube video as a promotional tool. They also publish stories from membership about how planning makes a difference.
- 'Because We Plan' effort lead to need to state the chapter's position on issues – plan to update this in 2019. They will send the policy platform to legislators. Statement on home rule is a great example about relevant positions the legislature would benefit from.
- They are working on a secondary document that addresses how the chapter responds to issues unlisted in the policy platform. Fast way to vet how the chapter feels on issues.
- When legislation comes up, they draft a statement/response and that is sent out to senate president and chapter membership
- They want to have formal engagement with their legislators. They used to have an annual event, and may revisit. They encourage local planners to individually connect with their local legislators.
- They are going to start giving an award to legislator or "friend of planning"
- They are going to add a land use attorney elected to their board
- In some cases planners can contact their own jurisdiction's lobbyists
- Its about relationships. Last year's state conference, they did an all day session on legislative engagement. They were doing training for their membership. They brought legislators in and lobbyists in to the session. They had a full-day retreat on legislation with Emily from National and their Board. This lead to the conference session.

Spoke with Doug McDonald, Chapter President, on October 26, 2018.

- They are in the same boat as NC in terms of a defensive position
- They had an attack on city authority last year – expect a bill capping property taxes for cities next year – big problem for growing cities and paying infrastructure
- Last year the Governor’s office mounted a campaign against local tree protection preservation ordinances. They got surveys from local cities who use those ordinances and went to Austin
- They have a policy/advocacy committee chair, a governmental regulations chair, and a highly involved past chair, and they have an elected position that is the liaison with the TX Municipal League. They use their league to do the advocacy. This prevents the Chapter from supporting things opposed by the League.
- They are trying to start a Legislative Arm of their chapter “Planning Matters”.
- They would use this as a neutral platform (501C3 organization) to do their advocacy. They thought about asking the FAICP members to join and jump-start this organization. They would provide seed funding.
- They do ask their individual members to advocate directly, but it is not successful.
- They are now preparing position letters prepared by Legislative Committee and if consistent with the policy platform, may be quickly drafted and sent to the respective Committee Chair at their GA.
- They put together a chart showing all of the legislative activity.
- They assemble a legislative recap report <https://www.txplanning.org/media/files/files/4dc7d82c/85th-legislature-update.pdf> see also <https://www.txplanning.org/media/files/files/49666cb0/final-apatx-annual-report.pdf>
- They have a webpage with legislative alerts <https://www.txplanning.org/legislative-alerts/>
- They have a 2018-2019 Legislative Platform <https://www.txplanning.org/media/files/files/7ac57dbd/apatx-legislative-program-2019-final-09062018.pdf>
- They have had local governments to include part of the Chapter’s policy platform in their local legislative agendas.
- They had a booth at their Texas Municipal League conference – educating local elected officials about what planners do
- They have partnered with a state celebrity (“Chet” show on PBS – day tripper) they came together on Great Places. They have worked together for two years. They get a lot of social media coverage. Now local governments work with Chet. He did one with Bryan, TX. It’s a downtown promotion video and talks to planners.
- They have recently increased their dues and conference fees, which they used to hire a communications person. They may be thinking about a lobbyist.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NORTH CAROLINA LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

This history is being published at a strategic time in our State’s legislative history. For the first time since Reconstruction, the legislature is firmly under Republican control. Upon taking office in 2010, the Republican Majority immediately embarked on a mission to reduce local government planning autonomy and the ability of local governments to self-determine their built environments through changes in enabling legislation.

Despite the best efforts of the Chapter’s part-time lobbyist and the work of numerous dedicated planners, the Chapter has been largely unable to mitigate negative legislation or develop effective relationships with legislators from either party. After several years of ineffective advocacy, entropy and a sense of defeat has crept into the Chapter regarding our ability to affect legislation. Many planners feel powerless to affect change, including numerous state-mandated reductions in labor force in 2011.

The 2018 mid-term election brings a renewed sense of hope for change in our legislature, and the Chapter sees this as an opportunity to revitalize the Legislative Committee and increase its relevance to planning practitioners in North Carolina. To assist in this endeavor, the Chapter applied for and was awarded funding to complete a strategic plan for the Legislative Committee. One of the initial steps in preparation of its strategic plan was a review of the Committee’s recent history. The following pages detail the past initiatives of the Committee as reported by five prior Chairs of the Committee for the period since 1985. Each Chair was asked to reflect on the Committee’s focus during their tenure, what actions or approaches worked well, and where improvements could have been made.

Tim Gauss (Legislative Committee Chair 1985-1995)

Committee Focus	What worked	Room for Improvement
Tracking legislation	Retaining lobbyist team	Clear pre-session strategy
Member education	Partnerships	Committee structure
	Sympathetic bosses	More robust promotion

FOCUS: The focus of the Legislative Committee under Tim Gauss’ tenure was tracking legislation, and member education. The Committee faced many of the same issues that the Chapter faces today including annexation, billboard amortization and property rights issues. As bills and issues arose the Committee was alerted by their two lobbyists. Their lobbyist team had a good reputation with legislators and therefore served as the face of the chapter in the General Assembly. Tim Gauss led the committee through a robust education and recruitment program that included regional conferences and newspaper ads to build a team that could follow legislative issues and organize a coordinated response.

THINGS THAT WORKED: The lobbyists retained by the chapter during Tim’s tenure were effective champions. They were well connected and knowledgeable enough to serve as representatives of the organization in hearings and meetings. The chapter experienced a period of particularly effective partnership with the League of Municipalities and the Association of County Commissioners but also partnered with the Landscape Architects

and an unnamed transportation planning group. Most important of all however, Tim had a sympathetic boss who supported what he was doing to get the job done during work and outside of work hours. He and others have reflected on this as a key to effective leadership and proper investment of time in the committee’s efforts.

IMPROVEMENTS: The Chapter lacked several things during this term that could have improved legislative outcomes including: a clear, vetted pre-session strategy, improved committee structure and better promotion among planners. Tim reflected that the committee structure was not as effective as he would have liked. Their main function at this time was responding to legislative issues as they arose, and the pace of session often became overwhelming. To help with this, Tim suggested that a chapter-approved legislative priority list would have enabled the committee to respond quickly as bills were introduced and hearings scheduled. Lastly, Tim thought the educational events they worked on could have been better promoted. Attendance was low, but this was something he thought could have been addressed by more robust marketing.

Ben Hitchings (Legislative Committee Chair 1999-2007)

Committee Focus	What worked	Room for Improvement
Direct promotion and advocacy	Clear policy recommendations	Shift message for new majority
Tweaking language	Network of member advocates	Communication techniques
Press events	General Assembly presence	

FOCUS: Under Ben Hitching’s leadership, the North Carolina Legislative Committee experienced some of its most successful years of policy influence. The Legislature was controlled at the time by Democratic majorities in both chambers and the Legislative Committee capitalized by passing legislation to modernize planning statutes and create the Smart Growth Commission while also blocking proposals to prohibit amortization by the billboard industry. The committee focused their efforts initially on directly promoting and advocating for proposals they cared about. Ben was fortunate to have superiors who allowed him to devote the necessary time and effort into his work as the Legislative Chair, sometimes spending consecutive days and late hours in the halls of the General Assembly. Ben and the Chapter met with legislators directly when issues arose at the Capitol, ran press events for local media attention and drafted reports on major issues like the proposed amortization prohibition. But as the political tilt of leadership turned against planners in the second half of his tenure, the committee focused more on tweaking legislation and working through partnerships. He mentioned efforts to tweak farm bills and partner with the public health community to promote healthy communities as staples of this portion of his term.

THINGS THAT WORKED: Ben gave us three actions that most closely related to the committee’s overall success: 1) having clear policy positions as an organization, 2) effectively recruiting members as advocates, and 3) being physically involved in the General Assembly. Policy positions served as a touchpoint between the legislative chair and the committee during the heat of session. The Executive Committee had to approve the positions to make them official, but these served as vetted talking points that members could confidently deliver throughout session. Secondly, the committee spent a lot of time recruiting and mining relationships of members who were willing to help. Ben remarked that the diversity of people involved with APA was astounding and a great asset in

building relationships with lawmakers. Lastly, being able to spend long amounts of time in the legislature helped the Committee to see several key pieces of legislation across the finish line. Ben attributes his ability to carry the bulk of the legislative work on top of his professional obligations to the generosity and understanding of his boss.

IMPROVEMENTS: Ben’s recommendations to improve the Committee’s efforts provide us good insight amidst changing dynamics in North Carolina politics. First, he recommended that the Committee shift the messaging we offer to cater to the new Republican majority. One of the ways to do this is to tie our Great Places awards more into the people and constituents involved with making places great instead of just the planners. The second way he discussed was to tie our message into the economic value of planning. He talked about a campaign they branded, “Planning for Prosperity” which talked about the value of community assistance funding. While the initiative failed, he thought the concept still had an application for today’s political environment.

The second area of improvement Ben put forward was to spend more time strategizing the best form of communication for legislators. Communication in the social media era is so diverse that any time spent understanding the effectiveness of different forms of communication would be time well spent.

Ken Bowers (Legislative Committee Chair 2009-2013)

Committee Focus	What worked	Room for Improvement
Track and respond to legislation	Policy positions	Staff or lobbyist for testimony
Partnerships	Partnership with Sierra Club	More novel arguments

FOCUS: Under Ken Bower’s leadership the Chapter faced Republican majorities in both chambers of the General Assembly and spent much of their time tracking and responding to harmful legislation. The Committee’s response could require anywhere from a meeting at the Capitol to providing committee testimony. The Legislative Committee partnered with groups like the Sierra Club or League of Municipalities to formulate a response to specific issues which Ken commended as an effective way to quickly broaden the impact of a response. The Committee weathered many storms during Ken’s term, including proposals to prohibit annexation, eliminate of extraterritorial jurisdiction and design control bills.

THINGS THAT WORKED: Partnering with organizations that can mobilize through mass emails like the Sierra Club was a strategy on which Ken reflected positively. In addition, the environmental angle of the billboard issue was incredibly helpful; people love trees and hate billboards, so the messaging was easier for this issue than others. Ken also reflected positively on the need for a clear, vetted policy statement but recommended the Committee find ways to get more robust feedback from members.

IMPROVEMENTS: Ken’s main recommendation for improvement was finding an advocate who is capable and able to speak at the Capitol when issues arise. Several committee members, including Ken, stepped up to serve in this way during his tenure, but the need was always on short notice and remarkably nerve-racking. Ken also reflected that planners were often barred by their supervisors from speaking publicly in this way due to their public positions. In addition, the short notice of hearings left little to no time to prepare materials and leave

behinds. A lobbyist or staff-member familiar with planning issues and with the committee members would have been a much more effective mouthpiece in Ken’s opinion.

Lastly, Ken recommended the committee be more creative in how they approach issues. Telling a legislator why something is bad for planning is only effective if the legislator cares about the practice of planning. Instead, Ken recommended making more of an economic pitch or partnering with a constituency that may not traditionally be allied with planners (i.e. AARP) to alert legislators to the broad impact of planning issues.

Chad Meadows (Legislative Committee Chair 2013-2016)

Committee Focus	What worked	Room for Improvement
Legislative Tracking	Meeting with leadership	Member advocacy
Member Alerts	Using member connections	More division of labor

FOCUS: Keeping membership aware and involved through bill tracking and action alerts were the primary strategies invoked by the Legislative Committee under Chad Meadows’ leadership. Over the course of his term as chair, the General Assembly was still controlled by the Republican party, however he saw a decrease in the number of bad bills being introduced. The chapter retained a lobbyist during this term and partnered with similar organizations as in the past (i.e. The Sierra Club, Scenic America and League of Municipalities).

THINGS THAT WORKED: The most effective advocates leveraged during Chad’s tenure were the members and their connections to leadership. While several action alerts were sent to members during his term, none were as impactful as a push the Committee made to leverage the connections of members in securing meetings with the Senate President and Speaker of the House.

IMPROVEMENTS: Chad reflected that the Committee under his tenure could have better mobilized members and created more relevant tools by dividing labor into smaller groups. The Committee communicated pressing legislative issues to members but found that these efforts ultimately came up short. Its unclear whether the problem was with a lack of response from members or an unconvincing message. Secondly, Chad recommended future committees divide the labor into manageable teams. Specifically, he thought the committee could have used set informational pieces about the benefits and the outcomes of planning and spent more time training committee members to mobilize and be a resource for legislators.

Amy Nelson (Legislative Committee Chair 2016-2018)

Committee Focus	What worked	Room for Improvement
Legislative Tracking	Member Alerts	Time to work



Member Alerts	Serving as resource for legislators	More staff
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FOCUS: Under Amy Nelson’s leadership the Legislative Committee began to take more of an advising role for legislators while continuing to serve as a resource for planners on the latest developments. Member alerts were an important element to stopping several bad bills from passing but the committee was also effective in answering questions directly from legislators. The Chapter retained a lobbyist over the course of these two years, but Amy was sure to keep him in close communication with the committee and membership. She even had the lobbyist come to present a “Day in the Life of” session during the Chapter conference which attendees found very useful.

THINGS THAT WORKED: Amy noted that the Committee had great success in answering questions from legislators and reporters on key pieces of legislation. She recalls being approached by a reporter with a question about a bill after the reporter was referred to her by a legislator. From time to time, city planning staff in Amy’s office would discuss legislation and invite legislators to come to their office and get their feedback. Legislators were generally receptive to this dialogue and knew they could approach the Chapter as a resource for city planning issues.

IMPROVEMENTS: Time and work conflicts were the primary impediments to Legislative Committee efforts under Amy’s leadership. She was fortunate at the beginning of her term to devote time and effort to dialogue with legislators, but as her tenure progressed, her time was stretched and couldn’t devote as much attention as she would have liked to the Committee. Her main recommendation was to hire more staff devoted to the tasks of the committee and explore member connections to legislators.