



American Planning Association  
**Wisconsin Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

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## APA-WI Statement on the Insurrection

The Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association's Equity and Diversity Committee condemns last week's violent assault on our democracy. Our Nation's strength has come from our ability to have peaceful dialogue between different points of view, and through our dialogue come to a consensus that moves us all forward. It is through our diverse points of view that we have been able to tackle enormous problems and thrive while doing it. Last week's events publicly illustrated our weakness. Our inability to address and meaningfully solve two of our greatest sins, racism and white nationalism, has brought us to a point where our democracy was actually threatened.

We are reminded of the show of force that accompanied the protests to address these issues just last year. After the murder of George Floyd at the hands of people sworn to protect us, Americans were rightfully angered and took to the streets. These demonstrations across the country remained largely peaceful but were often accompanied by large numbers of police and even the National Guard. We witnessed throughout the year the brutality with which our American brothers and sisters were subdued. We also witnessed how unprepared we were when a sharply different demographic protested, rioted, and then illegally invaded our Capitol.

This stark contrast brings to mind James Baldwin when he said, "If any white man in the world says give me liberty or give me death, the entire white world applauds. When a black man says exactly the same thing word for word, he is judged a criminal and treated like one." This lack of preparedness for white protestors-turned-insurrectionists, demonstrates a dangerous lack of imagination and it is a symptom of systemic and institutional racism that we, as planners, helped to create. Our own AICP Code of Ethics calls us to do this when it says, "We shall seek social justice . . . and promote racial and economic integration. We shall urge the alteration of policies, institutions, and decisions that oppose such needs." This is our responsibility to the public.

We have hope that this dark event will help unify us in creating that more perfect union for all Americans. We saw a glimmer of that hope when, after the insurgents had been dispelled, our Congress, Democrats and Republicans, came arm-in-arm protecting the electoral ballots. Many of our elected officials realized the threat to our democracy, and that brings some comfort. May we as planners also realize that threat, oppose it, and begin dismantling the system that has brought this about. It is our duty to do so.

Signed:

APA-WI Equity and Diversity Committee

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Donna Brown-Martin  
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