

Land Use & Climate Change Advisory Committee

Background Information and Research for LUCC Potential Recommendation on Infrastructure Funding

The Technical Support Team (Tech Team) is tasked with providing information and research to the Land Use and Climate Change Advisory Committee (LUCC). Based on the ideas moving forward as potential recommendations from the LUCC, the Tech Team has conducted research and provides this preliminary information to the LUCC. To the best of their abilities the Tech Team has researched to provide information in response to the SB 6580 legislation and the LUCC Work Plan.

1. What, if any, actions have been taken by local governments to address climate change related to this particular idea?

Infrastructure funding continues to be a challenging issue at all levels of government (state, tribal, local). We are currently not aware of many examples of infrastructure funding decisions being made with climate change issues being a factor in the decision. The City of Olympia is perhaps the farthest along in this area. For instance, the decision to build a new city hall was subject to a change in location due to the potential for sea level rise.

This paper looks at the idea of targeting infrastructure funding to certain areas, where urban and compact development would take place. To date, CTED is not aware of instances where this is happening specifically with the intent of addressing climate change.

2. What, if any, computer modeling programs or other analytic and assessment tools are available to assist a local government in addressing this idea?

This would be better addressed as part of an overall comprehensive plan or sub-area plan analysis because the types, and mix of uses, and intensity of future development will provide the information necessary to analyze greenhouse gas emissions of various scenarios. Perhaps the type of infrastructure provided could be one of the variables analyzed at that time (assuming certain types of infrastructure are more climate friendly than others).

This would usually be included in the analysis, in some detail, in order to establish mitigation requirements (see the Everett example in SEPA and The Promise of GMA. It is available (by clicking on the link to the PDF at the bottom of the page) on the CTED website at:

http://www.cted.wa.gov/portal/alias_CTED/lang_en/tabID_399/DesktopDefault.aspx

The technical team will continue to look for examples of computer modeling programs or tools that allow for an analysis of the type of infrastructure planned to be included in the model.

3. What are the positive and negative impacts of a local government addressing this idea on:

- a. Affordable housing**
- b. Employment**
- c. Transportation costs**
- d. Economic development**

This is a very challenging question to try to answer in this way. Answers would be dependent upon how the local governments choose to pursue the policy, rather than based on the policy itself. The technical team would appreciate guidance from LUCC members into where data may exist to help provide input into these topics.

The technical team will continue to look for analysis in these areas. The most promising data may come from California State. According to the September 2, 2008 edition of the Wall Street Journal Online,

“California lawmakers passed a bill aimed at cutting carbon-dioxide emissions by rewarding cities and counties that prevent urban sprawl and improve public transportation. The bill's proponents and transportation experts say it is the first measure in the nation to link government transportation funding with urban planning and CO₂-reduction goals. Senate Bill 375 contends that cutting back on driving is as critical in the fight against global warming as producing cleaner fuels and more-efficient vehicles. Transportation experts say they expect the bill to become a model for state and national policy makers. Under the new bill, regional planning authorities will have to develop realistic plans to meet emission-reduction targets in order to receive transportation funding and lighter regulations for builders. Compact projects built close to public-transportation options are rewarded with fewer regulatory hurdles.”

As California seems to be on a similar path and ahead of where we are, we may be able to find data on this topic related to our questions outlined above. The technical team will continue to search for relevant data.

4. Please provide a general assessment of state and local resources needed, financial and otherwise, needed to fully implement the idea.

Local infrastructure needs are already high (see 1999 Public Works Board report and the more recent Association of Washington Cities report). CTED is currently finishing a GMA Study to describe local government infrastructure needs in growing communities, which will be available in approximately one month. The Office of Financial Management is currently working on an implementation plan for an improved state infrastructure investment system.