

**Local Government Sustainability Policies
and Programs**
Tad McGalliard, Director
Center for Sustainable Communities
International City/County Management Association (ICMA)

ICMA
Leaders at the Core of Better Communities



ICMA Organizational Overview

- Professional association for chief administrative officers and other local government managers
- Research, publications, technical assistance, professional development services
- International and Domestic
- Center for Sustainable Communities
- Funders: EPA, DOE, HUD, USAID, DOS, Gates Foundation, Sloan Foundation and many others
- Partners with EPA on National Brownfields Conference
 - www.brownfieldsconference.org

ICMA *Leaders at the Core of Better Communities* 2

Local Governments and Sustainability Survey

- National survey of 8,569 local governments with populations over 2,500
- 25% response rate with 2,176 local governments responding
- 100+ questions in 12 major categories
- Collaboration between ICMA and ASU

Survey Categories

Policy actions
Planning processes
Recognition programs
Water usage
Recycling & waste management
Energy
Transportation
Buildings and land use
Social inclusion
Housing
Local materials
Public education

Some General Findings

- Indicators that sustainability policies, programs and partnerships are a priority in many places, with about 1 in 6 communities setting the pace with very comprehensive efforts across a spectrum of the twelve areas we analyzed
- Equally obvious that despite all the rhetoric the “sustainability era” is still in its infancy as most communities have not implemented comprehensive programs

Analysis and Findings

- Most communities surveyed reported some actions but the number and range is limited
- Sustainability initiatives are most often targeted at local priorities
- City and county governments seem to be at the same level of adoption on average, although emphasis based on responsibilities are slightly different
- Cities and counties that use council-manager form of government tend to be more active
- The larger the population the more that a local government is able or willing to do

Policy Priorities, Planning and Staffing

- Policy Priorities
 - The Economy – 93%
 - Energy conservation – 61%
 - Environment – 62%
 - Drops off substantially for things like social justice, climate change, green jobs, public transit, and housing affordability
- Less than one in five had established a sustainability plan with targets and benchmarks
- Those with sustainability programs assigned on average 1.9FTEs to the effort

Results-Buildings and Land Use

- 19 total questions in this issue area
- Higher levels of activity in some areas
 - **22% have active brownfields or vacant properties programs**
 - 1 in 5 permit higher density around transit nodes and where infrastructure already exists
 - 35% have zoning codes to encourage more mixed use development
 - 22% have active land conservation programs
 - 29% provide public land for community gardens
 - 21% have residential zoning codes to permit renewable energy power production

Results—Buildings & Land Use

- Fewer policies and programs in other areas
 - 12% require new government projects to be LEED or Energy Star certified
 - 3.6% apply LEED ND standards
 - 2.8% provide tax incentives for “sustainable” development projects
 - 3.3% reduce fees for “sustainable” development projects
 - 8.4% fast track plan reviews or inspections for “sustainable” development projects

Results-Transportation

- Many local governments have
 - Expanded bike lanes on streets (34%)
 - Added biking and walking trails (61%)
 - Added bike parking facilities (27%)
 - Required sidewalks in new development (54%)
- While fewer have
 - Installed EV charging stations (1.2%)
 - Encouraged bike storage facilities (8%)
 - Plans to create or expand local rail options (6.3%)

Small Towns & Rural Communities

- Analyzed data from 1,355 places <25,000
- Smaller communities less likely to adopt sustainability policies and programs
- Most popular policies and programs
 - Recycling
 - Walkability (sidewalks and bike lanes)
 - Building retrofits of government facilities
 - Purchase of hybrid vehicles for government fleets
 - 1 in 3 had zoning codes to encourage mixed use development

Small Town Constraints & Solutions

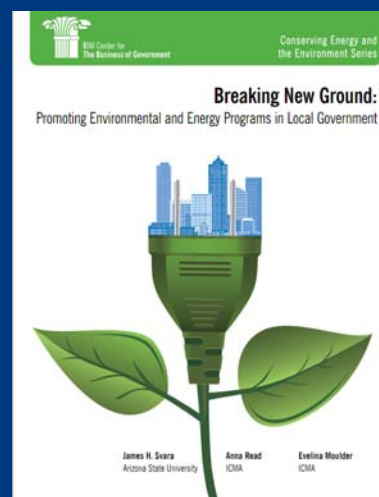
- Fiscal resources—higher wealth communities tended to adopt more policies
- Smaller places tend to have fewer staff and are less able to hire specialized expertise to focus on sustainability
- Small communities with active citizen engagement efforts tend to adopt more policies than those without
- Faster population growth and comes greater attention to land use controls and growth management strategies. Why?
 - Land use policy is a local government responsibility
 - Residents can readily see the results of land use controls

Where's the Data?

- Detailed data sets available for purchase at bookstore.icma.org
- Summary data available at icma.org/sustainabilitysurvey
- Findings summarized in a recent report funding by the IBM Center for the Business of Government and authored by Professor Jim Svara, Arizona State University
 - *Breaking New Ground: Promoting Environmental and Energy Programs in Local Government* (May 2011)
- Forthcoming analysis on small towns and rural places authored by Professor Mildred Warner, Cornell University

Breaking New Ground

- Sponsored by IBM Center for the Business of Government
- PDF Available at icma.org/sustainability



Breaking New Ground Case Studies

- Deeper dive into 8 high-performing communities
 - Anacortes, Washington
 - Buncombe County, North Carolina
 - Grand Rapids, Michigan
 - Town of Jackson and Teton County, Wyoming
 - Palo Alto, California
 - San Antonio, Texas
 - Sarasota County, Florida
 - Washoe County, Nevada
 - Weston, Wisconsin

Local Government Policies & Programs—Solar

- 15% reported having a renewable energy and/or solar energy development goal
- Broad range of challenges ranging from perceived high costs of solar to a lack of enabling legislation to public safety concerns
- In many places planning processes and building codes are confusing or silent on new technologies increasing the soft costs of retrofits or building integrated technologies
- Small but seemingly growing number of communities exploring or implementing inter-municipal arrangements such as joint procurement opportunities

Upcoming –Food Systems

- Funded by Michigan State University
- Questions on food access and production policies and programs (food trucks, farmers markets, corner stores)
- Provided land for community gardens
- **Reusing vacant land for urban agriculture**
- BRE efforts to develop food businesses
- Collaboration with other local and regional entities
- Utilization of federal grant and incentive programs to encourage more food related economic development

Upcoming—Sustainability and Social Equity

- Research project funded by HUD
- Focus on policies, programs and partnerships that advance the social side of sustainability
- Narrow survey process of early adopting communities identified from 2010 survey
- First data sets available in late 2012
- Case studies and findings available in 2013
- Stay tuned to www.icma.org/sustainability

Upcoming—Economic Development

- Last one conducted in 2009; next one expected in 2013
- Will analyze
 - Perceived economic conditions
 - Economic development planning strategies, planning and implementation
 - Revenues used to fund ED
 - Infrastructure investments to spur ED
 - Barriers to ED
 - Small business development
 - BRE and business recruitment approaches
 - Incentives, permitting, fees, and zoning
 - ED performance measures

Brownfields 2013

The screenshot shows the website for the Brownfields 2013 conference. At the top, there are logos for EPA and ICMA. Below them is a navigation bar with tabs for Home, Overview, Program, Redevelopment Forum, Calendar of Events, and Contact Us. A 'Sign In' button is also present. The main content area features a large banner for 'ATLANTA MAY 15-17, 2013' at the 'GEORGIA WORLD CONGRESS CENTER'. Below the banner are several news items: 'EPA Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization', 'Mark Your Calendar - Brownfields 2013 Officially Announced!', 'Call for Ideas Opens on June 1st', and 'What is Your Favorite Aspect of the National Brownfields Conference?' with a list of options: Educational Sessions, Mobile Workshops, Exhibit Hall, Plenary Sessions, and Other. The website is displayed in a browser window with a taskbar at the bottom showing the date as 5/21/2012 and time as 11:09 PM.

Brownfields 2013

- Partnership between EPA and ICMA in collaboration with many local, regional and national partners
- 5,000 attendees, 100+ sessions, 200 exhibitors
- Call for presentations opens on June 1st
- Exhibit hall space and sponsorship opportunities will be announced in June

www.brownfieldsconference.org

Contact Information

Tad McGalliard, Director
Center for Sustainable Communities
ICMA

www.icma.org/sustainability

202.962.3563 (office)

443.223.7851 (cell)

tmcgalliard@icma.org(email)

tad.mcgalliard (skype)