

REGIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLANNING



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Learning from Europe
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Planning Paradigm Shifts – Learning from International Regional Councils with Lessons on Energy and Climate Change

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INTRODUCTION

This past April, regional and environmental planning in the United States took a quantum leap in a new direction. For the first time, senior leaders from U.S. and European regional councils met formally in the context of the “U.S.-European Conference of Metropolitan Regional Councils,” in Alexandria, Virginia to exchange solutions for regional climate and energy challenges. Led by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, the Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas (METREX), the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and the National Association of Regional Councils, over 140 officials from U.S. and European regional councils collaborated on the exchange and application of mutually beneficial regional climate and sustainable energy policies. Two themes were repeated regularly among the keynote speakers and participants of the conference: 1) The exchange and applications of lessons between local and regional governments in Europe and the U.S. is an important element for developing solutions to global climate change; and, 2) Local and regional governments in Europe and the U.S. are leaders and innovators in responding to the global challenge of climate change and sustainable energy policies.

SHIFTING THE PARADIGM

The conference was noteworthy for challenging the current paradigm within U.S. planning circles that characterizes the appropriateness of international work – especially at the local and regional level – as marginal at best and wasteful at worst. The challenge U.S. planners face when working abroad can be summarized by Bob Yaro, of the New York/New Jersey Regional Plan Association, who asserted that “Learning from abroad does not come naturally to American planners. Over the past few decades, American planning and land-use regulation have become increasingly insular and introspective” (Faludi 2002:210). In short, American urban and environmental planning lacks a global perspective that is suitably tuned to regularly and consistently finding, understanding and applying lessons from abroad to the U.S. It is still far too uncommon to observe U.S. local or regional authorities initiating and financing their own search, review and application of lessons from overseas into the U.S.

Much of this has to do with the fact that international planning takes place within one of two contexts. Most often, U.S. planners export policies, ideas and technologies to developing countries. The typical pattern is that governmental and non-governmental development assistance organizations, such as the World Bank or the United States Agency for International Development, hire U.S. planners (and other technical and policy experts) from local governments to perform short-term work assignments (several days or weeks) in developing countries. The assignments invariably lack direct relationship to the planners’ own efforts in the United States. Oth-

erwise, international planning work is conducted in “soft-diplomacy” (i.e. a sister-city relationship) or accidental contexts that lack sustained goal-oriented, problem-focused searches, reviews or applications with benefits to planning efforts in the U.S. When U.S. planners or other policy makers travel to developed countries to observe innovations, the travel and preparation are often poorly structured and undisciplined. Invariably, U.S. planners and policy makers lack information about the content and performance about the imported policies. They also seldom assess prospectively transfer applications to the U.S. As a result a vicious cycle emerges in which international work is perpetually viewed with suspicion in the U.S. because of the lack of perceived domestic benefits.



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The METREX conference moved to change this paradigm by bringing together high-level climate and energy policy makers from U.S. and European metropolitan regions in a context to more formally share, review and assess transfer opportunities. A major step was the development and approval of a “Declaration of Cooperation” calling for the creation of focused research exchanges among regional authorities, businesses, non-governmental organizations and universities in the U.S. and Europe. The Declaration also announced the development and implementation of Internet exchanges, video tools, list-serves, web sites, databases and best practices case studies among U.S. and European regional councils. The Declaration called for problem-focused and goal-oriented peer-to-peer technical and policy exchanges on sustainable energy and climate policies among U.S. and European regional councils. At this writing, the Northern Virginia Regional Commission is working with the Network of

European Metropolitan Areas and Regions (METREX) to apply the EU-developed Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory program (GRIP). GRIP will help U.S. regional councils catalogue greenhouse gas emissions, energy production and consumption at the regional level. It can then be applied to inform the development of regional mitigation and adaptation plans.

ENERGY AND BUILDINGS

Planners in the U.S. often struggle to create actionable energy and climate plans because they lack sufficient consideration of scale beyond the level of the individual house, building or street. Moreover, energy efficiency in general, but in the retrofit of homes and buildings in particular, has been recognized as the fastest, most cost-effective and environmentally beneficial means to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. U.S. cities could take better advantage of community energy planning lessons from cities such as Stockholm, Mannheim, and Stuttgart. These cities mesh mixed-use and transit-oriented development with renewable energy heating and cooling systems within entire districts. In addition, European and national-level energy efficiency standards have pushed applications of “energy” labels for buildings that display the calculated consumption of energy, electricity and CO₂. It is common practice in many European cities to blend thoughtful regulatory mechanisms and market forces to achieve sustainable building and energy policies.

TRANSPORTATION

Any meaningful climate and energy strategy in the United States must focus on alternatives to car-dependent transportation systems. Approximately 30 percent of greenhouse gas emissions emanate in the U.S. from the transportation sector. Studies are now emerging that suggest that even the new federal fleet fuel economy increase to 35 miles per gallon for cars and light trucks is unlikely to cut emissions of CO₂ from mobile sources as long



as there is a general increase in VMTs. Clearly there is a need to do more. Even as gas prices go beyond \$4.00 per gallon and ridership in public transit increases in the U.S., successful climate and energy policies must regularly integrate land-use into transportation planning. In many northern European metropolitan regions, it is common to observe modal splits in which 50 percent of trips are on public transit, bikes or foot. Freiburg, Germany, 65 percent of all trips are on public transit, bikes and foot. Stockholm, Sweden's innovative applications of congestion pricing have reduced emissions of greenhouse gases from automobiles 30 percent since its introduction.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

In the U.S., renewable energy makes up less than 4 percent of all energy and less than 7 percent of electricity generation. By comparison, renewable energy in Germany makes up over 10 percent of all energy and approximately 15 percent of all electricity. Moreover, Germany has successfully merged job creation and renewable energy policies. At the present, there are over 215,000 people employed in the renewable energy sector. If trends continue by 2020, over 500,000 could be employed in Germany in the renewable energy sectors.

PAST PRECEDENTS AS MODELS

International work, particularly for planners in the U.S., does not have to be viewed suspicious-

ly, wasteful or irrelevant. There is a legitimate and vital role to justify the work of U.S. planners abroad. History demonstrates that working to harvest lessons from abroad is practical and necessary work. At the turn of the twentieth century, legions of American planners, environmentalists and academicians traveled to Europe to look for and adopt planning and environmental lessons. 'Grand Tours' to European capitals were organized to study park designs, transportation planning, and taxation policies. Moved by the crisis of cholera outbreaks in New York City, Benjamin Marsh deliberately moved to Germany to understand city planning practices that emphasized human health and hygiene and returned to New York City to apply the first zoning regulations in the U.S. The U.S. university system, the introduction of kindergartens, and modern American forestry and natural resources management practices all were imported from Europe during the "rationalistic era" of city planning at the close of the 19th century. During this era, the search for solutions from abroad by planners was deliberate, structured, and sustained.

LOOKING AHEAD

Now, more than ever during this period of unprecedented threats from climate change and wasteful energy practices, U.S. planners will need to reach out to counterparts overseas to find and apply lessons to the U.S. Serious international work starts when policy makers initiate problem-focused, goal-oriented searches, reviews and testing of innovations from abroad. The search and review should be accompanied by analysis of the policy context and measurable indicators of the policies performance. They could include prospective analysis of transfer potential in which a range of policy alternatives and possible outcomes are evaluated. Such an effort has started in Northern Virginia. Through the leadership of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, a long-term effort has been initiated to aid the climate change mitigation and sustainable energy programs of

local authorities in Northern Virginia. Through the 10-year-old bilateral partnership between the NVRC and the regional planning authority of Stuttgart (Verband Region Stuttgart), and now through METREX, finding, understanding and applying innovative climate and energy programs abroad has become integrated into the climate and energy work of the NVRC. The partnership has introduced regional practitioners, policy makers and technical experts to the innovative climate, energy efficiency, renewable energy, land-use and transportation policies of Germany and Europe. Focused, problem-specific exchanges have brought tangible results to Northern Virginia from this relationship, such as real-time transportation signage on the Metro-rail system, traffic calming and "green" roof designs in Northern Virginia. Now the fun starts with community energy planning, applications of solar photovoltaic, district heating, and energy labeling for buildings and housing.

CONCLUSION

U.S. planners should run, not walk to embrace the paradigm shift occurring in international planning that was inaugurated in Alexandria, Virginia, last April. As cities and urban regions in the United States are increasingly affected by climate change, urban planners will be constantly challenged to respond and plan adequately for the environmental, economic and social changes. The METREX conference and work between the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and its partners in Europe, affirmed that U.S. urban environmental planners can easily justify work abroad to harvest information, experiences and lessons. These practices enable U.S. planners to manage the dual pressures of climate change and sustainable energy. Ideally, the work started in Alexandria will be sustained and strengthened as planners around the U.S. are committed to healing the environment, the economy and community.

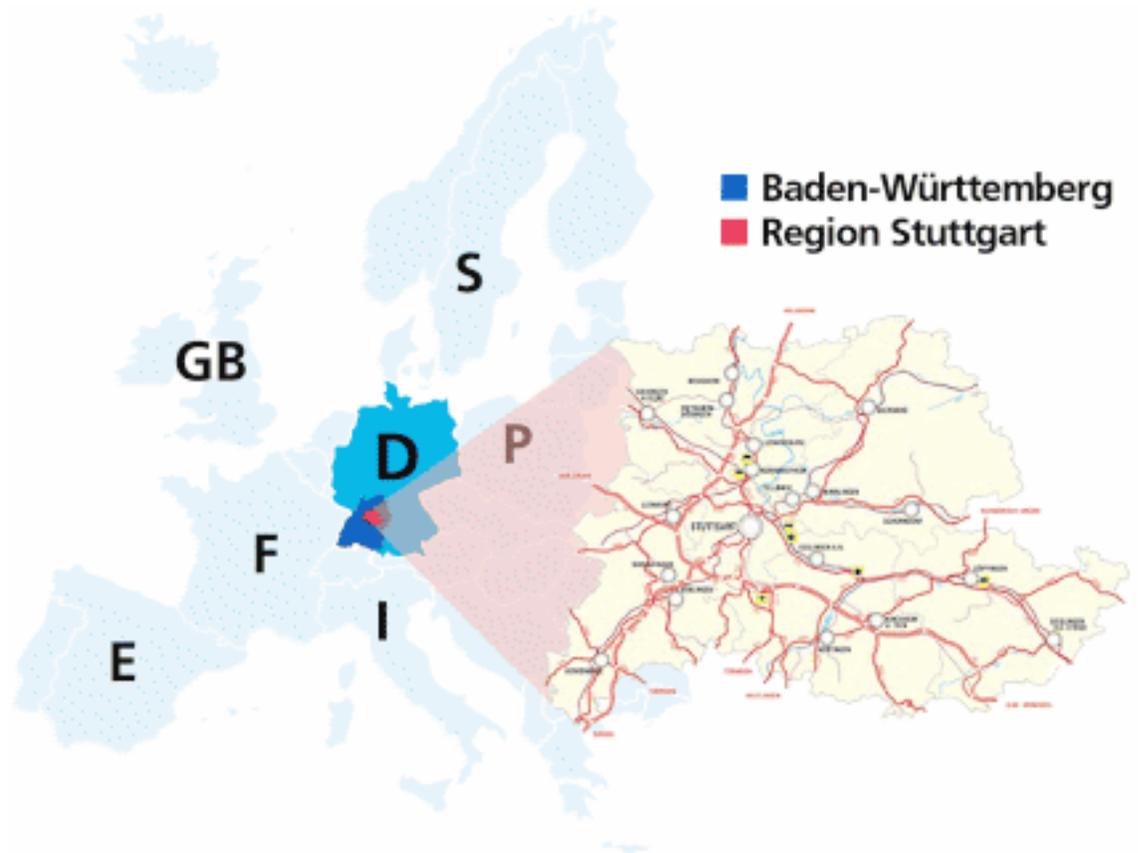
Learning from Europe: Verband Region Stuttgart



Mark Gibb has been a stalwart champion of American/European regional exchanges. He introduced Dr. Bernd Steinacher and the Stuttgart regional to us at the National Association of Regional Councils in Chicago in 2004.

Dr. Steinacher again had a prominent role at the METREX conference reported on here.

The following is an overview of the regional planning activities in Stuttgart under Dr. Steinacher's direction. The article is mainly drawn from the English version of the Verband Region Stuttgart web site. It is a window into a view of regionalism that certainly offers many lessons for us here and further illustrates the value of on-going exchanges such as the METREX conference. - ED



Verband Region Stuttgart

The Greater Stuttgart Region: 3,654 square kilometers in the very heart of Europe, between the Black Forest and the Swabian Alb - a lovely landscape of hills and forests.

Stuttgart is the State Capital of Baden-Württemberg, stands at the intersection of a number of major European traffic routes, and is easily accessible from all the main metropolitan cities.



ORGANIZATION AND FINANCING

The Verband Region Stuttgart was founded in 1994 to give the Region a political organization with its own directly elected representatives of the population: the Regional Assembly. This democratically organized decision-taking body covers the central planning policies including:

- regional infrastructure, planning
- landscape planning
- traffic and transport planning
- local public transport
- business promotion
- waste management
- trade fairs and exhibitions and tourist marketing

The Verband Region Stuttgart can present an objectively uniform picture of the Region locally and to the outside world.

On 13th June 2004, the population of Greater Stuttgart decided for the third time on the

composition of their Regional Assembly and elected 93 representatives for a 5-years term.

The central aim of the Verband is to marshal the forces of the 179 independent municipalities (towns and city districts) within the Stuttgart metropolitan area in order to enable the Region to compete effectively at the European and the world level.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

The representatives in the Assembly elect one of their own members to the honorary position of Chairman, who then works in tandem with the full-time Regional Director to manage the Verband. The current chairman, elected on 10th January 2007 Thomas S. Bopp MdL. The Regional Director, Dr. Bernd Steinacher, has been in charge since 1995 of the business office and its staff of about 40 people.

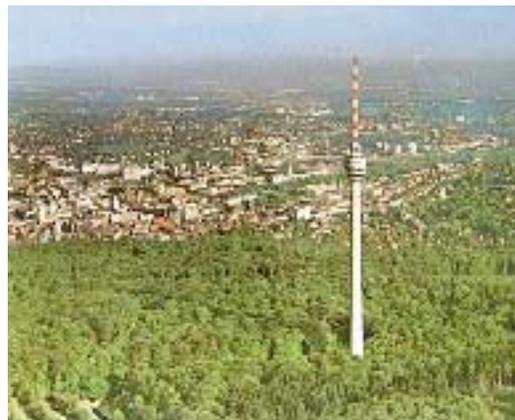
The work in business promotion, tourism marketing, and the co-ordination of local public passenger transport is handled in collaboration with other regional organizations and companies, by private-sector subsidiary companies.

FINANCE

The annual budgets of the Verband Region Stuttgart amount to about 260 million €, and come almost exclusively from public funds in the form of transfers from county and municipal authorities and grants from the Federal and the State governments. The largest item of expenditure is local public transport, which accounts for about 85 percent of the total budget.

PROGRAMS & RESPONSIBILITIES

REGIONAL PLANNING



The Verband Region Stuttgart draws up and finalizes a Regional Plan, with a time-horizon of some 10 to 15 years. It formulates the goals, basic principles, and suggestions from which the planners at municipal level have to take as their guide. For instance, it contains the areas first in line for new housing or commercial and industrial development, routes and locations for infrastructure, and also the green belts and zones that are to be kept free of development.

The preparation of the Regional Plan is based on a long-term view of the Greater Stuttgart Region characterized locally by clearly defined

residential and commercial areas and outwardly as a metropolitan region within the European context. For instance, the existing innovation potential of the Region in business and science is to be strengthened in particular in the field of mobility services and products.

The common factor running like a thread through all aspects of planning has the aim of developing the Region on a sustainable basis and to ensure it has a secure future.

LANDSCAPE PLANNING

Landscape planning is an important component part of regional planning. This is where the landscape and ecological specifications of the Regional Plan are prepared in technical terms. Regional greenbelts and wedges form the necessary counterweight to the inevitable spread of commercial and residential areas.

It also defines which areas deserve special ecological protection, such as biotopes or water catchment areas.

The Verband has drawn up an all-embracing concept called the "Greater Stuttgart Landscape Park", showing where open areas are to be improved, redesigned, and linked up together. The basic idea of the landscape park is enable people to enjoy the landscape and thus to protect it at the same time.

The combined commitment of the Region, the municipalities, and all the various authorities is necessary for implementing these plans. Whereas the Verband Region Stuttgart was only able to plan the Landscape Park in the past, a legal amendment has enabled it to invest in concrete projects along with local authority partners. Since 2005, the Region has helped every step of the way in realizing the Landscape Park as a network of open spaces, ecologically valuable green areas and small parks combined with towns and landscapes. The Verband Region Stuttgart sees this investment in the 'green



infrastructure' as equally important, putting it on a par with the traditional 'grey infrastructure'.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT PLANNING

The traffic and transport infrastructure is the nervous system of a metropolitan region like Greater Stuttgart. For the first time, the Region now has an integrated traffic and transport concept, which is at the same time coordinated with regional and landscape plans.

The regional traffic and transport plan contains long-term strategies for roads, railways, and cycle paths, and a list of priorities for future investments. It was approved in 2001. This traffic program will represent a blueprint for county and municipal planning and will ensure that the Verband is able to influence the investment programs of the State of Baden-

Württemberg and the German Federal Government.

LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Verband Region Stuttgart is the organizing body behind the local suburban electric railway system and, since October 1999, for all regionally important rail traffic. This means that the Regional Assembly decides on extensions to the regional rail network, vehicles, special offers and so on. The Verband "buys in" the transport services from the transport companies such as suburban electric services from Deutsche Bahn AG (German Railways). The recent amendment Act also enables the Verband to use buses instead of rail transport as deemed appropriate.

In this function, for example, the Verband is working on the extension of the suburban electric railway network, has decided on improvements to the timetable and introduced a regional night-bus service at weekends. As a partner



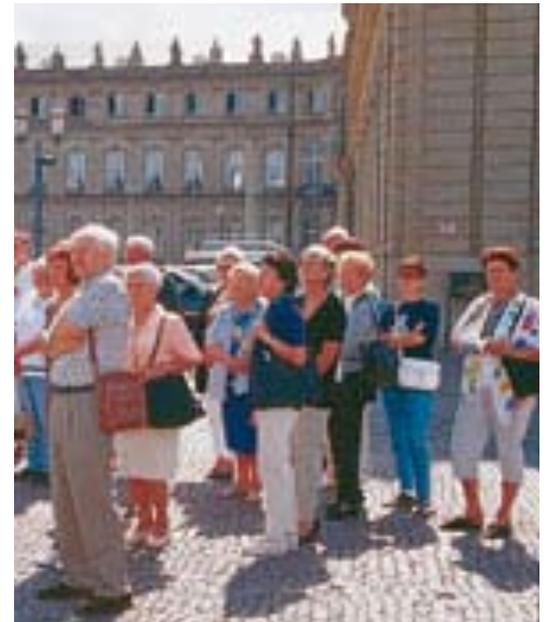
of the transport companies, it has committed itself to ensuring the local public transport should continue to operate in such a way that both passengers and the public sector can afford it.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Along with the rural districts and the City of Stuttgart, the Verband Region Stuttgart is responsible for a segment of waste management, namely for contaminated excavated earth, bottom ash and core sand (dump category II). In 1997, the Verband Region Stuttgart established for the first time standardized conditions across the region for the disposal of this waste, leading to a considerable reduction in charges. Today the waste is recycled and disposed of in the Stuttgart Region at standard market rates.

The Verband Region Stuttgart is of the opinion that there should be standardized regulations for the disposal of all types of waste in the Stuttgart Region. Therefore it advocates a regional waste management concept. This is the only way to prevent over capacities, minimize unnecessary waste transportation, exploit market opportunities and create transparency for companies and private households.

BUSINESS PROMOTION AND



TOURISM MARKETING

Business promotion is absolutely essential for a location like Greater Stuttgart. Programs have to be aligned inwards as well as outwards, so that local business are given the prospect of development as well as the location being made known and attractive to inward investment. The Verband has established a company called Wirtschaftsförderung Region Stuttgart GmbH to coordinate all the activities from a database full of information on business locations and advice to municipalities, investors, and business start-ups.

In the field of tourism, the Verband Region Stuttgart fulfils its obligations by participating in a company called Regio Stuttgart Marketing und Tourismus GmbH, the aims of which are to promote tourism, particularly in the geographical outskirts of the region as a specific part of business promotion, and the local recreational facilities as a contribution to reducing traffic volumes.

Planning Regionally – Acting Locally, SDAPA's Second Annual Planning Commissioners' Workshop

By TRAVIS CLEVELAND, SANDAG &
KELLY SANDOVAL, SANDAG

Planning challenges don't respect jurisdictional boundaries. To a trained planner, this may seem like old news, but to a planning commissioner, particularly a newly appointed one, it is an important thing to keep in mind.

With that thought from City of San Diego Planning Commission Chairman Barry Schultz, the San Diego Section of APA kicked off its Second Annual Planning Commissioners' workshop on Friday, February 15, 2008. The workshop brought together planning commissioners, planning professionals, and citizen planners from throughout the San Diego region. It was sponsored by the San Diego Section of APA, League of California Cities, San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), and Caltrans District 11. The event included plenary sessions, breakout sessions, and sub-regional round table discussions. The primary focus was on regional planning topics and the approaches and decisions commissioners can implement locally to address regional issues.

In his opening remarks, Chairman Schultz advocated for a regional perspective by asking other commissioners to think and act in ways that could educate and engage the public by changing the way cities grow and to facilitate more sustainable decision-making locally through that comprehensive, regional per-

spective. He further challenged the audience to consider how the plans we develop, which are full of planning principles familiar to those of us entrenched in the profession, will translate into noticeable and meaningful changes to our communities.

SANDAG began the program with a brief presentation highlighting the agency's current efforts to coordinate regional planning, which was followed by the featured climate change plenary session. The session panelists discussed climate change effects on San Diego, research efforts that are underway to study those effects, and what governments, non-profits, and citizens are doing to address it.

Later breakout sessions on Land Use and Urban Form, Transportation, Regional Public Facilities, and the Natural Environment regional planning topics focused on the ways planning commissioners could make an impact in each of those areas.

In the Land Use and Urban Form session, SANDAG staff discussed planning tools available to local jurisdictions, such as the Regional



Housing Needs Assessment, the Smart Growth Design Guidelines, Smart Growth Visualizations, and I-PLACES sketch model, a web-based interactive planning tool. Staff also presented financing tools such as the Smart Growth Incentive Program, intended for pedestrian, and bicycle improvements in the vicinity of selected Smart Growth projects, as well as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Neighborhood Safety Program.

The Transportation session included a presentation from SANDAG and Caltrans staff explaining the role of SANDAG, Caltrans, and transit operators in transportation planning and describing each agency's role in implementing the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Staff detailed future plans for roadway and transit improvements called for in the RTP and identified Caltrans and SANDAG's respective roles through the environmental analysis and plan review processes.

Later in the Transportation session, San Diego Regional Airport Authority (SDRAA) staff detailed SDRAA plans for airport maintenance, expansion, and long-range planning, including planned studies for a cross-border airport terminal and the Regional Aviation Strategic Plan. SANDAG staff also explained SANDAG's role in aviation planning, stressing the importance of multimodal access to airports and the importance of developing substitutes for flying for shorter range trips. The session concluded with staff from the San Diego Port Authority, who discussed plans for San Diego's marine terminals and nearby improvements.

In the Natural Environment session, SANDAG staff gave an overview of the environmental aspects of the Regional Comprehensive Plan and explained how the Quality of Life funding initiative can be utilized for various habitat conservation projects. They also described SANDAG's shoreline preservation projects and regional water quality plans. Discussion addressed the challenges SANDAG has encountered and how the Quality of Life Funding Initiative can supplement efforts. The Air Pollution Control Dis-

trict gave insight into the ways in which careful land use design can be used to reduce vehicle trips. The Regional Water Quality Control Board spoke about stormwater management and highlighted their key regulatory issues.

The Regional Public Facilities session included an overview of how SANDAG's Regional Comprehensive Plan plans for public facilities. The San Diego County Water Authority explained how the agency plans to meet future water supply demands in the semi-arid climate that characterizes San Diego and also noted the actions that individuals can take to conserve water. SANDAG and staff from the California Center for Sustainable Energy (CCSE) presented current efforts taking place in San Diego County to respond to the global energy crisis. SANDAG spoke about the research and planning SANDAG has participated in to plan for climate change and reduce emissions and about the California Climate Change Policy, Regional Climate Action Plan, Sustainable Region Pilot Program and Alternative Fuels Toolkit for Local Governments. CCSE staff presented various outreach programs that the Center has

spearheaded to promote sustainable energy practices, such as offering rebates to homes and businesses, encouraging the use of solar energy and giving away free shade trees.

Following the break-out sessions, SANDAG staff facilitated sub-regional roundtable discussions which divided the region into North County, Central, East County and South County sections. The sessions focused on the land use, transportation/transit and environmental issues specific to each sub-region and provided an excellent opportunity for the planning commissioners to ask questions on the issues affecting their jurisdictions.

Based on outstanding attendee reviews, Commissioners and planners alike came away with a clearer understanding of how the issues of their jurisdiction relate to those of San Diego, how they affect the regional planning process, and most importantly, the ways in which the region can come together for lasting solutions.

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Regional Planning Bill Approved

SB 375 LINKS BLUEPRINT PLANNING, GREENHOUSE GASES, TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

BY PAUL SHIGLEY

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Senate Bill 375 is alternately being described as the most important land use legislation since the California Coastal Act of 1976, and a step in the right direction.

Only time will tell whether the bill is a landmark or an incremental step, but there is no denying that SB 375 author Sen. Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento) aimed high. "At the heart of this effort," Steinberg said, "is the need to integrate our housing and transportation plans to create sustainable communities."

Steinberg's bill was by far the most significant land use legislation approved during the two-year legislative session that concluded on August 31.

The collection of interest groups that endorsed SB 375 was remarkable: The California Building Industry Association, the California Major Builders Council, the League of Conservation Voters, the Trust for Public Land, the League of California Cities, the California State Association of Counties, the California Chapter, American Planning Association (CCAPA), and the Congress for the New Urbanism all endorsed the bill.

Affordable housing advocates held out for a long time before eventually offering tepid support. The Schwarzenegger administration has not taken a public position on the bill, but the governor is expected to sign it. The legislation - which applies within the state's 17 metropolitan planning organizations - was the product of numerous, prolonged meetings spread over nearly a year. The final product is a very long, complex measure that addresses a variety of related topics. The primary parts of the measure are these:

- A regional greenhouse gas reduction/trans-

- portation planning process that results in a "sustainable communities strategy" for the region.
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) streamlining for development projects consistent with the sustainable communities strategy, including a CEQA exemption for some infill housing projects with an affordable component.
- A mandate that transportation projects consistent with the sustainable communities strategy receive state funding.
- Alignment of the regional housing needs allocation (RHNA) and regional transportation plan (RTP) processes. The RHNA cycle will be eight years, while RTPs will be updated every four.

The regional planning process calls for a regional advisory committee and local agencies to work with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) on setting greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets for each of the 17 regions. The target, over which CARB has final say, is intended to provide the basis for the sustainable communities strategy.

Those regions that cannot meet their GHG targets through a sustainability strategy must prepare an alternative planning strategy that demonstrates how targets might be reached. The RHNA figures developed by the state Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and by councils of government are supposed to account for a region's sustainable community strategy. General plans, however, do not have to be consistent with the regional strategy - a provision demanded by local governments.

As for CEQA, the measure exempts certain

“transit priority projects.”

These have a density of at least 20 housing units per acre, are within a half-mile of a transit corridor, are smaller than eight acres and 200 units, provide at least 20% of units as affordable or set aside a certain amount of open space, comply with green building standards and are located on sites with no significant environmental constraints.

While the exemption might prove limited, streamlining is available for other projects. A mixed-use project that is consistent with the sustainable communities plan would not have to undergo analysis of greenhouse gas emissions, cumulative traffic impacts or growth-inducing impacts, and a reduced density alternative would not be required. In addition, local agencies may adopt a standard set of traffic mitigation measures for projects that are at least 10 units per acre and 75% residential. Qualifying projects would not have to provide any other traffic mitigation.

The legislation extends the housing element planning period from five years to eight. The council of government would distribute RHNA numbers at the very beginning of the planning period, which is also when the RTP and sustainable communities planning periods commence.

Cities and counties must submit their housing elements to HCD no more than one year into the planning period, and they then have three years to complete all rezoning required by the housing element. Transportation projects and programs must be consistent with the sustainable communities

strategy to be eligible for state funding sources. However, projects programmed in the State Transportation Improvement Program through 2011 are exempt from this consistency requirement, as are projects and programs in any local sales tax program approved by voters before 2011.

“This is the bill that moves toward looking at land use as a regional issue,” said Pete Parkinson, CCAPA’s vice president of policy and legislation, and one of SB 375’s negotiators. The bill achieves the regional perspective by targeting greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, he said. And, indeed, one clear goal of the bill is to reduce the amount of driving that Californians do by emphasizing mixed-uses, higher densities and transit.

“We definitely think it’s progress for the state,” said Ken Kirkey, planning director for the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). “And it’s definitely progress for parts of the state that have not moved as far and as fast on linking up transportation with land use.” Kirkey noted that ABAG began moving in this direction in 2002, when it produced policy-based projections for housing growth based on transit service and available infill sites.

Still, ABAG’s working rela-

tionship with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), which produces the Bay Area’s RTP, has been tense at times. (In most regions other than the Bay Area, a council of governments serves as both the MPO and regional transportation planning agency.) Under SB 375, ABAG and the MTC will have to work together, Parkinson said.

Success, however, requires money, said Kirkey. City officials often understand the need for development of “complete communities,” but they need money to carry out plans, he said.

“The state needs to get much more consistent with how money is spent and where money is spent in relationship to SB 375,” Kirkey said. Jeff Loux, director of the land use and natural resources program at University of California, Davis, endorsed the concept of regional sus-

tainability planning. However, without a requirement that city and county general plans comply with the sustainable communities plan and the regional transportation plan, there is nothing that prevents local governments from approving the wrong type of development, he said. This has been the case with the Sacramento Council of Governments’ blueprint, Loux said. Denser projects in the inner ring have the

endorsement of the blueprint, but the document is unable to prevent ongoing large-lot sprawl on the urban edge, he said.

In 2007, Steinberg included growth management techniques in the bill, such as guaranteed protection for certain resource lands. The author dropped many of those provisions to gain support from the development industry.

Steinberg’s bill met stiff opposition in the Assembly, which provided the final arena for opponents such as the California Chamber of Commerce, the California Association of Realtors and the California Association of the Councils of Governments to try to defeat the legislation. The opponents found allies in Republican lawmakers who defended the status quo, decried state intrusion and questioned climate change.

“This bill changes the way land use planning is done,” complained Assemblyman Bob Huff (R-Diamond Bar). “If you don’t believe in smart growth, you are not going to get any funding.... Suburban communities that are built out are going to be left out of this type of planning.”

Assemblyman Michael Duvall (R-Yorba Linda) said the only way to comply with SB 375 would be to shift funding from highways to public transit. “It simply makes no sense to shift more money to transit programs when nobody uses it,” he said. “The voters want to build more highways. Now’s not the time to take money away.”

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AN EAST COAST PERSPECTIVE - 2 VIEWS

BY LEE SCHOENECKER

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE, AND LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING

There are several possible delineations of Metropolitan Washington, owing in part to its fast growth and owing in part to its closeness to other growing areas, particularly that of the Baltimore area. For purposes of this discussion, it is delineated as that geography covered by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). The COG geography includes the counties of Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's in Maryland with a combined population of 1,984,000; the District of Columbia with a population of 588,000, and the City of Alexandria and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William in Virginia with a combined population of 1,993,000. Some ten other relatively small cities in Maryland and Virginia add an additional 324,000 population. Thus, the total Metropolitan Washington population under the jurisdiction of COG is 4,889,000.

There is no doubt that the interstate nature of Metropolitan Washington complicates local planning, especially as the State of Maryland provides for strong local home rule while the State of Virginia provides pretty much the opposite. Also, the federal government either through direct employment or federal procurement employment has a pervasive influence in the metropolitan area. Further, federal governmental agencies do complicate to some degree local government planning. This is particularly true in the District of Columbia.

Nevertheless, there is a relatively simple local government planning and development structure in Metropolitan Washington compared to most other large metropolitan areas across the country. The figures above show that there are only 19 local general purpose governments in the Metropolitan Washington area that conduct overall local planning and development. Further, if you combine the populations of the three counties in Maryland, the City of Alexandria and the four counties in Virginia, and the District of Columbia, these nine jurisdictions,

all with strong, multi-purpose, and long-established local planning and development operations, cover over 93 percent of above the population under the COG jurisdiction. Contrast this to the majority of large metropolitan areas across the country which have scores of local general purpose governments with local planning and implementation functions.

Special Purpose Governments in Metropolitan Washington Are Not That Complex

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), which runs Metrorail and bus systems, covers a considerable portion of the metropolitan area. It is basically run by representatives from the above-mentioned local jurisdictions. In addition, a number of local general purpose governments in Metropolitan Washington operate their own local bus services, in some ways as a supplement to WMATA bus services. One of the reasons these local governments can run these local bus services is because of their relatively large size and they have the economies of scale to do so. The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, which operates Reagan National as well as Dulles airports, is basically run by gubernatorial appointments from the States of Virginia and Maryland and the District of Columbia with some federal representation. When it comes to water and waste treatment, the situation does get a little more complex. Even here, however, the DC Water and Sewer Authority runs the Blue Plains Waste Treatment Plant, one of the most advanced treatment plants in the world, serving 2.2 million people in the District of Columbia and substantial suburban populations in Maryland and Virginia.

And air quality? The Region's air quality has actually improved over the last 15 years though much yet remains to be done. At the regional level, much of the air quality control work is done through the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) as it interacts with state agencies in Maryland and Virginia as well as the District of Columbia.

Overall Regional Planning

While highway and freeway development have

been very important to the development of Metropolitan Washington, one of the most important influences on the physical and economic development of Metropolitan Washington over the last 30-35 years has been that of the Metrorail system, completed its first stage of 102 miles a few years ago. In part, this Metrorail system was influenced by several regional planning efforts in the 1950's and 1960's, most notably the Year 2000 Plan, a federal effort with local input issued in the early 1960's. (For a well-researched, written, and amply illustrated source on the planning and implementation of the 102-mile Metrorail system see: *The Great Society Subway: A History of the Washington Metro*, written by Zachary M. Schrag and published by The Johns Hopkins University Press in 2006.)

Since becoming the official metropolitan planning agency in the mid 1960's, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) has had various region-wide planning efforts. Three are mentioned here. First, starting in the mid-1970's, in very close cooperation with its local governments, COG developed the Cooperative Forecasting System which, in recent years, has been subject to almost annual updating for local and regional population, employment, and household forecasts. Second, starting in 2002 and then updated in 2006, COG and its local governments developed Regional Activity Centers and Clusters. As of 2006 there were 59 Activity Centers and Clusters identified across the region as broken into five categories: the DC Core, Mixed Use Centers, Employment Centers, Suburban Employment Centers, and Emerging Employment Centers. These Centers and Clusters are used, in part, to encourage future employment, and increasingly, residential growth into these areas. For further information on these activities, go to the COG web site at: mwcog.org.

The third COG planning effort is that of the Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the U.S. DOT-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Washington area. Though the COG Board and the TPB are two separate and equal boards, they both serve the same region and are located in the same facility. For more information on the TPB, again go to the COG web site and click on "transportation" in the upper left hand corner of the home page.

The local and specific regional planning ef-

forts of the last several years (e.g. Regional Activity Centers and Clusters) augur well for an increased level of strategic regional planning and cooperation.

5TH MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL PLANNING ROUNDTABLE DRAWS EXCELLENT SPEAKERS AND STRONG ATTENDANCE

On Friday, November 7, 2008, the 5th Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Roundtable was held in the downtown Philadelphia, Pennsylvania offices of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). Some 90-95 people were in attendance. Our Division was the primary organizer with financial support from the APA chapters of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and the National Capital Area. However, it is very important to note that much of the effort and success for this conference most definitely must be attributed to the excellent support of the two co-hosts: the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the Wilmington Metropolitan Area Council. The Conference theme was, "Multi-State, Multi-Regional Solutions: Transportation, Land Use and the Environment."

Mid-Atlantic Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Backdrop

Thomas Christoffel provided an overview of the regional planning infrastructure from the northern third of Virginia on up through southern New Jersey. Mr. Christoffel was one of the leaders in the development of the 1st Mid-Atlantic Roundtable, held in the Northern Shenandoah Valley in 2005, and put together by the joint efforts of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission. The purpose of that Roundtable was to examine the spill over effects of the very strong growth of Metropolitan Washington into the Shenandoah Valley. Since that 1st Mid-Atlantic Regional Roundtable and up through the present, Mr. Christoffel has been the leading figure in the development and implementation of subsequent Roundtables.

Panel on State and Sub State Regional Planning

The morning's first plenary panel examined important state and sub state regional planning in selected locations in the Mid-Atlantic states. David Robertson, the Executive Director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, led off with a discussion of the Greater Washington 2050 Coalition put together by this Council of Governments. To paraphrase Mr. Robertson, the purpose of Greater Washington 2050 is to develop a regional planning program for what his Council of Governments should be doing in the future in addition to what it is doing right now. James Hassinger, the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission described that agency's "Project Region." The latter is a recently completed regional plan for the ten-county region surrounding Pittsburgh. It won nationwide awards from the American Planning Association, the U.S. Federal Highway Administration, and the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Mr. Hassinger particularly stressed the extensive regional public participation, the truly unique feature of this regional planning effort.

Richard Hall, the Secretary of the State of Maryland Department of Planning described the various state planning efforts in Maryland over the last 20-30 years. Mr. Hall indicated that the now Governor O'Malley, who took office in 2007, has directed full and vigorous overall state and local planning efforts. One of the steps to achieve these robust planning results will be the development of a State Development Plan for the entire State, suggested in legislation years ago. The first phase of that State Development Plan will be a preliminary "sketch plan" for the physical development of the state, due some time in early 2009.

Panel on Multi-State Regional Planning

The lead-off panelist was Petra Todorovich, Director of America 2050 under the aegis of the Regional Plan Association of New York. America 2050 is examining the various megaregions, or metropolitan regions that are growing together across the United States.

The second panelist was George Schoener, the Executive Director of the I-95 Corridor Coalition. This Coalition consists of state depart-

ments of transportation and similar organizations stretching from Florida to Maine along the entire I-95 Corridor. This Coalition examines not only the future highway issues of Interstate 95 per se, but it also looks at other Corridor transportation mode needs.

The panel's final speaker was Tigist Zegeye, the Executive Director of the Wilmington Metropolitan Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) which includes New Castle County in Delaware and Cecil County in Maryland. Ms. Zegeye reviewed WILMAPCO's very recent analyses of the transportation, communication, and economic links of the 28 counties within 60 miles of WILMAPCO, either in the states of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, or Pennsylvania. Mr. Richard Bickel, Director of Planning for the DVRPC also briefly described the DVRPC's "Planning at the Edge," which reviews planning linkages to areas outside of the DVRPC jurisdiction.

Luncheon Discussion: Reauthorization of the Federal Surface Transportation Act

During a full noon luncheon provided by the DVRPC, speakers included Mr. Alan Biehler, the Secretary of the State of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and also the incoming President of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials; Ms. Anne Canby, the President of the Surface Transportation Policy Partnership; and, Mr. Barry Seymour, the Executive Director of the DVRPC who served as a moderator/participant in the luncheon discussions. The luncheon speeches and subsequent discussion centered on the potential renewal of this federal highway and rapid transit authorization legislation which expires at the end of September of 2009. Spirited discussions focused on: the adequacy of the current federal legislation to meet tomorrow's full transportation and societal needs including a fully balanced transportation system; the need to incorporate future energy, environmental, and climate change considerations in to federal legislation; and, the adequacy or inadequacy of governmental institutions to meet tomorrow's transportation demands.

Water Resources Panel

The first afternoon panel speaker was Carol Collier, the Executive Director of the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC). The DRBC is a

Federal-State Commission created in the early 1960's to deal with water resource quantity and quality in this river basin which covers parts of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. One of its many achievements has been to informally effectuate balanced water usage among political jurisdictions, including New York City, during times of water shortages. Looking at water quantity and quality, Ms. Collier warned of rising water levels because of climate change as affecting municipalities along the Delaware Bay and Delaware River, and the possible intrusion of salt-water into the water supplies of various municipalities in the DRBC area.

The second speaker was Joseph Hoffman, the Executive Director of the Interstate Commission for the Potomac River Basin Commission. This Federal-State commission was created in the 1930's to deal with the growing water resource needs of the Potomac River Basin which covers parts of the states of Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Mr. Hoffman pointed to several successes including were that water planning and conservation measures resulted in the need for fewer reservoirs to serve Metropolitan Washington than originally anticipated

Ms. Collier further pointed out that the State Department regularly sends foreign visitors to the DRBC to see how water planning and conservation is done; yet it was somewhat ironic that not that much is known of the work of the DRBC and Potomac River Basin Commission among the general population and even pertinent institutions in the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Climate Change Panel

The leadoff speaker was Michael W. Baker, Chief of Air Quality and Federal Initiatives for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. He is also the Air Quality Committee Chair for the Northeast Association of State Transportation Officials (NASTO) which includes the States of Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Mr. Baker gave a rundown on what each of the NASTO agencies in the United States is doing to deal with climate change issues. The listing is extensive and one can only conclude that state transpor-

tation agencies in the Northeastern part of this country are taking climate change very seriously.

The next speaker was Robert Graff, Manager for Economic Analysis and Coordination for the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Graff spoke to the DVRPC's green house gas emission inventory which takes into account numerous types of measures. Of note, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency now working with the DVRPC as this regional planning agency is quite far advanced in its green-house gas emission inventory. Also, there is the definite possibility that the DVRPC work can be applied, with or without adaptation, to other sub state regional planning agencies.

The final panelist was Stephen Walz, Senior Advisor for Energy Policy in the Virginia Governor's Office. As such, Mr. Walz is integrally involved in the development of that State's first climate change plan and program under the State Climate Change Commission. Virginia's climate change plan will probably become public over the next several months, and from Mr. Walz's presentation, it will probably cover substantial subject matter and may well be far-reaching.

Roundtable Planning Committee

This Committee consisted of Richard Bickel and Candace Snyder of the DVRPC, Tigist Zegeye of WILMAPCO, and Kevin Byrnes, Thomas Christoffel, and Lee Schoenecker of the APA Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division. There was no conference fee for attending the 5th Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Roundtable. Further, in publicizing this event, it was indicated that attendance would probably secure four to five American Institute of Certified Planners Certification Maintenance credits.

The 2009 Roundtable

Next year's program that will be held in the latter part of 2009 in Frederick, Maryland. Possible subject matter suggested to date includes the impact of Washington and Baltimore metropolitan growth spill over into surrounding counties in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia; disaster evacuation; the impact of implementing the actions of the Federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission; and, the reauthorization for the Federal Surface

DIVISION NEWS

The role of regional and intergovernmental planning is changing rapidly - and participation in APA's Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division is a great way for you to become informed and stay involved in this exciting evolution. Under Lee Schoenecker's leadership as Board Chair for the Division over the past several years, our membership grew significantly and our Division activities expanded to include not only our excellent newsletter, but also:

- Presentations on cutting-edge regional planning initiatives at APA National Conferences
- Participation in development of APA's recently adopted Policy Guide on Climate Change
- Cosponsorship of regional planning workshops, such as the annual Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Roundtable

As the incoming Chair of the Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division, I am excited about the opportunities for our Division to continue its excellent work in each of these areas, and to

pursue new initiatives that will further improve our effectiveness. We have a great new Board of Directors, and we are currently working together to develop an updated work plan for FY 2009. One of our areas of focus during 2009 will be our "Best Practices in Regional Planning" project, which will document many of the award-winning regional planning projects and programs across the United States. This project could lead to publication of an APA Planning Advisory Service report on this subject in 2010, and could also lead to the Division playing an important role in Rebuilding America - APA's new national infrastructure investment policy initiative.

We will use this newsletter to keep you informed on these exciting new activities. We also welcome your ideas about how to make the Division work for you. Finally, we invite you to let your colleagues know about our Division, and to encourage them to join. It's easy - membership information is available at www.planning.org/join/pdf/divisions.pdf

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Now what? With two years of constant campaigning behind us, what will we do without the daily message spin hitting us is the morning headlines? Perhaps we will finally be ready to get on with it and get to work. We are hearing about National Infrastructure Plans, Infrastructure Trust Funds, the reauthorization of the Transportation Bill and all prefaced with the state of the national and global economies.

What does seem to be a growing theme for future action is "Green." The perennial green seer, Thomas Friedman, has this to say on his new books' web site :

With the economy in turmoil, many people have asked me what effect the turmoil will have on all the green initiatives I call for in Hot, Flat, and Crowded. This morning I was talking to my friend David Rothkopf, the energy expert at the Carnegie Endowment, and he put it this way: "Is this financial crisis going to be the end of green, or is green going to be how we end this financial crisis?" Really, that is the question of the hour.

Friedman does frame the question facing every sector as the road to recovery is sought.

Weighing in after Friedman is David Smich with his new book "The World Is Curved" and his warnings of the future we face:

It was not without enormous frustration that I approached writing a book about today's new global economy. After all, what do we make of a world financial system that one minute appears to be performing beautifully, and the next acts as if the world is coming to an end? One minute the cybernetic (computer) revolution has transformed the economy into a veritable global wealth machine, as stock markets around the world soar to new highs. The next moment, markets plummet. People then read newspaper stories suggesting the value of their home may soon be less than their mortgage. They discover that their family's life savings—even their cash left in supposedly ultra safe money market funds—could soon go poof in the night...

How to respond in the face of these opposing economic factors is the most critical issue facing worldwide policy makers today. If they overreact to the uncertainty of today's liquidity and credit situations, they risk a financial and economic reversal that will affect us all. Ironically, the best intentions can lead to higher interest rates, greater joblessness, far less robust equity markets, less charitable giving, and a devastatingly bitter rise in

the levels of global poverty. However, this does not have to happen if policy makers recognize the fragility of the capital markets and adopt new, carefully targeted strategic approaches to this brave new world.

Whatever your perspective, have we ever had a more challenging time to re-envision, re-direct and plan for our regional future? Will we be able to shape sustainable, walkable communities that are both more livable and more kind to the earth? Will our next round of hope for funding support a new future and fulfill the buzz we hear about the new "Green "T" Bill?"

Hopeful signs may be seen in leadership initiative like Chicago Mayor Richard Daley's newly announced green "Climate Action Plan." But while Chicago is one of our great cities, it is not, as Kaid Benfield points out in his Natural Resource Defense Council blog, a region <<http://switchboard.nrdc.org/>>:

There has been a lot of attention in the environmental world to the actions of big cities in addressing climate change, in part because of some high-profile environmental initiatives by big city mayors like Richard Daley in Chicago, Michael Bloomberg in New York, and their international counterparts. Unfortunately, there has been much less activity just outside big cities' borders, where we need it most. The suburbs and edge cities are where the most people live, where the most growth has been, and where the carbon emissions per capita are the highest.

So doing something in Chicago the city is a start. But, in order to make a substantial difference in carbon emissions, we need climate action from Chicago the region. In fact, probably the most important thing the city could do for reducing greenhouse gas emissions is to absorb more of the region's projected growth, so less of it goes to the fringe where driving rates and carbon emissions can be several times greater than in the city. As far as I can tell, Chicago's climate plan is completely - and unfortunately - silent on that point.

Thanks, Kaid, for weighing in for regions. Now, how will we take up the challenge in these times?

Ron Thomas, AICP
Regional & Intergovernmental Division
Editor