



## Partnership for SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

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If you are not up to speed on the new California laws regarding greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and land use, you should be. Our state has launched nothing short of a Land Use Revolution.

Over the next several years, California will see the biggest change in how communities are shaped and land is developed since road and highway construction took off in the 1950s.

This is NOT another wacky California trend that those in other states can dismiss. Many states are watching California's example, and dozens of cities are starting to look for ways to curtail sprawl and encourage more compact development.

In the past few years, California policymakers have recognized that vehicle emission standards could never be tough enough to solve the problem of rising GHG emissions. Compact, core-directed growth must be part of the solution to the dire situation we face.

The best part about the new California laws is that they rely on the transportation planning process--including transportation funding--to focus the attention of local leaders on land use, zoning, and the need for affordable housing. This strategy makes transportation spending a contributor to community cohesion and efficiency instead of the chief engine driving suburban sprawl.

As for housing affordability, the message is clear: Housing affordability must be viewed in terms of the combined cost of shelter and transit, and new affordable housing must be built near both jobs and transit.

The problem with all this is that the hard work going on now to formulate new regional housing and transportation plans is not being matched by efforts to influence public opinion and build support for the major changes in land use patterns.

The sad fact is, many people don't like density and they don't like affordable housing

development--and mandates from the state won't change that.

The next two years are critical: Advocates must start building public support for the coming changes now. At the same time, people outside California must learn from what's happening here and begin to formulate policies that make sense in their own states.

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