Politics in States and Communities
(15 Ed.)

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Chapter 13

Community Power, Land Use, and the Environment
Learning Objectives

• List the various public policies that are affected by land-use decisions made by local governments.
• Compare and contrast the elite and pluralist models of community power.
• Explain why there is a near-consensus among economic elites who benefit directly when land is used in a way that promotes economic development.
• Trace the shift of local political influence from economic elites to political elites, and contrast the priorities of these two groups of elites.
• Trace the growth of planning, assess the influence of planners, outline the opposition to planning, and describe the zoning process.
• Detail the various innovative alternatives to strict land-use policies.
• Explain the circumstances under which governments can take possession of or restrict the use of private land.
• Analyze the effectiveness of the various urban renewal policies.
• Discuss the transportation policies that affect local communities, compare the roles of the national and state governments in transportation policy, and compare transportation policies aimed at cars versus those aimed at other modes of transportation.
• Describe the various environmental policies that affect states and communities, and assess the extent to which governments have been able to address these problems.
Models of Community Power

- The elite model: Power concentrated in the hands of relatively few, usually top business and financial leaders
- Power in “Middletown”: Study found community power entrenched in hands of business class
- The pluralist model: Power widely dispersed, with different leaders in different issue areas
- Power in New Haven: Found polycentric, diverse system
Elites in Communities

• Economic Elites
  – Local Control of Land Use
  – Growth as Shared Elite Value
  – Elites Striving for Consensus
  – Growth as Good Politics

• Political Elites
  – Some Political Elites Opposed to Growth
  – The NIMBY Syndrome
  – Restricted Growthers (The “Smart Growth” Movement)
  – The Unintended Consequences of Growth Restrictions
Planning and Zoning

- Comprehensive Planning
- Developing Political Support for Planning
- The Influence of Planners
- Opposition to Planning
- Zoning
- Subdivision Control
- Official Map
- Building and Construction Codes
- Capital Improvements
- Environmental Regulations
Innovative Planning Practices

• PUDs: Planned urban developments, usually a mixed-use plan
• Exactions and impact fees: Ways for local governments to charge developers for increased governmental costs
• Developer agreements: Can settle conflicts between local governments and developers
• Designing “livable” communities: New Urbanism began in 1990s
• The urban sustainability movement: Many efforts based on land use
• “Disaster-proofing” disaster-prone areas: New need for housing-related policies and programs
The Takings Clause

Eminent domain is the judicial process by which government can take private property for public use by providing fair (just) compensation, as determined by the Fifth Amendment’s Takings Clause. Use often relates to transportation, schools, sewers, economic development.

• “Takings”—When cities go too far: How far can government go in regulating land use without compensating property owners?

• “Takings” for public use (economic development): Controversial New London, Connecticut, case: Supreme Court said governments can use eminent domain to take privately owned land and turn it over to private developers; states are objecting
Community Development and Revitalization

Housing Act of 1937 tied ideal of “urban renewal” to public housing.

- Community development block grants: 1974 Act consolidated federal grants to cities
- Economics of development: Use of semi-autonomous community development corporations or authorities
- Enterprise empowerment zones: Federal grants, loans to communities to revitalize distressed areas
- Relocation: The most sensitive problem in redevelopment
- “Brownfields”: Abandoned, idle property that may be contaminated
- Politics and development: Mayors, developers have made urban redevelopment politically more popular than public housing
Transportation Policy

- Cars, cars, and more cars: Now 250 million on nearly 4 million miles of road
- Highway politics: Interests auto, oil, trucking, other industries, as well as ecologists
- Early federal aid: 1916 Act gave federal government influence over state policy
- The interstate system: Congress authorized national system in 1956; now extensive
- Federal highway money: Federal gasoline tax 18.4 cents/gallon
- Speed limits: Feds imposed a national 55 mph limit from 1974 to 1995
- The 21-year-old drinking age: Feds use highway funding to impose on states
- Auto insurance: All states require auto liability insurance
- Traffic safety: States can set mandatory seat belt laws, set DUI policies
- Helmet laws: Federal rule dropped in 1976, some states see issue of personal choice
- Driver distraction: Newest safety issue, may be involved in one-third of accidents
- Auto safety: Manufacturers have responded, air bags have reduced fatalities
How Americans Get to Work

Transportation Policy

• State gasoline taxes: Pay over two-thirds of total highway costs
• Fuel efficiency: Feds set corporate average fuel efficiency (CAFE) standards
• The highway lobby: Works to earmark gas taxes for roads and highways
• Infrastructure investment and economic growth: Some linkage, though spending on highways, bridges has lagged and infrastructure deteriorating
• The mass transportation movement: To stop sprawl, improve environment
• Metropolitan transportation: Goal should be “to move people, not cars”
• The case for subsidies: Fares typically don’t meet operating expenses
• Federal mass transit aid: Energy crisis has helped focus feds on mass transit
• A new high-speed rail system?: Obama administration proposal for high-speed passenger rail network across America
• Federal support for transportation alternatives: 2 percent rule for states
Road Mileage and Gasoline Taxes

Note: Data are for 2011.

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# Most Congested Urban Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Area</th>
<th>Per Person Annual Hours of Delay</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore, MD</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas, TX</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco, CA</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta, GA</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle, WA</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orlando, FL</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis, MN</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami, FL</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Average</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Data are for 2009. Most recent data available at time of publication.*

Proposed High-Speed Rail System

Environmental Protection

In recent years the federal government has assumed ever-greater responsibility for the environment.

• Solid waste disposal: Landfills, incineration, recycling
• Toxic waste: EPA committed to clean up by Superfund laws
• Water pollution: Federal goals and money help cities and states build sewage treatment plants
• Air pollution: Cities like L.A. regularly exceed EPA limits
• Environmental politics: Sometimes seen as a “white phenomenon”
• Greening of the states and cities: Undertaking initiatives
Growth in Solid Wastes

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross waste (millions of tons)</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>120.5</td>
<td>151.6</td>
<td>205.2</td>
<td>242.6</td>
<td>252.4</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste per person per day (lb)</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage recycled</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Most current data.
Recycling Rates of Selected Products

Note: Data are for 2010. Mechanical papers include directories, newspaper inserts, and some advertisement and direct mail printing.
Source: Environmental Protection Agency, “Municipal Solid Waste,” Figure 3, November 15, 2012. Available at http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/nonhaz/municipal/.
# States & Green Technology

## TABLE 13-3  States on the Cutting Edge of Green Technology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest Recycling Rates</th>
<th>States with Best Solar Incentives</th>
<th>Total Power Capacities for Wind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Minnesota</td>
<td>1. Louisiana</td>
<td>1. Texas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Washington</td>
<td>2. Oregon</td>
<td>2. Iowa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the Web

- www.planning.org
  American Planning Association

- www.hud.gov
  The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

- www.ushsr.com
  U.S. High Speed Rail Association

- www.whitehouse.gov/high-speed-rail
  White House page on high-speed rail, jobs, and the Recovery Act

- www.publictransportation.org/
  Public Transportation site