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SCI

Sustainable Cities Initiative

Assessing State Efforts to Integrate Transportation, Land Use and Climate

Image: Traffic in Brisbane by Simon Forsyth, http://thecityfix.com/blog/thecityfix-picks-feb-26-driving-on-the-rise-transport-contributes-to-climate-change-sidewalks-improve-relationships/

The Issue

How are states working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) from transportation?

Climate change is increasingly recognized as a threat to life on earth. The transportation sector accounts for almost one-third of all greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. Improvements in vehicles and fuels are expected to reduce emissions per capita, but be offset by increases in population if current driving patterns persist. Reducing vehicle miles traveled per capita by promoting alternative modes and limiting sprawl is critical.

The Implications

This comparative research aims to shed light on what practices are most effective in promoting alternative modes and limiting sprawl in order to reduce GHGs from transportation.

The Partners

- Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
- Oregon Department of Transportation
- 1000 Friends of Oregon
- Oregon Environmental Council

The Research

This project looks at how four case study states—California, Oregon, Washington and Maryland—are working to reduce GHGs from the transportation sector, with a focus on efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled per capita. By promoting alternative modes of transportation and limiting developmental sprawl, the reduction of vehicle miles traveled will overall reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

A team of two researchers and four graduate students analyzed documents and conducted over 30 semi-structured interviews with key participants in order to assess efforts being made to reduce GHGs from the transportation sector. Currently the team is synthesizing findings and identifying best practices.

The research will be presented at the annual Transportation Research Board conference in January of 2016, and has been presented elsewhere. Best practices will be shared with real-world practitioners in order to establish a healthier environment.

Project Information

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