



LAND USE ROADMAP

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This Land Use Policy Roadmap was prepared by ProGov21.



ProGov21 is a shared resource for progressive local policy makers and advocates alike. Operated and maintained by COWS, a national think-and-do tank based at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, ProGov21 offers a fully searchable digital library of progressive policies, practices, and other resources for 21st century local government.

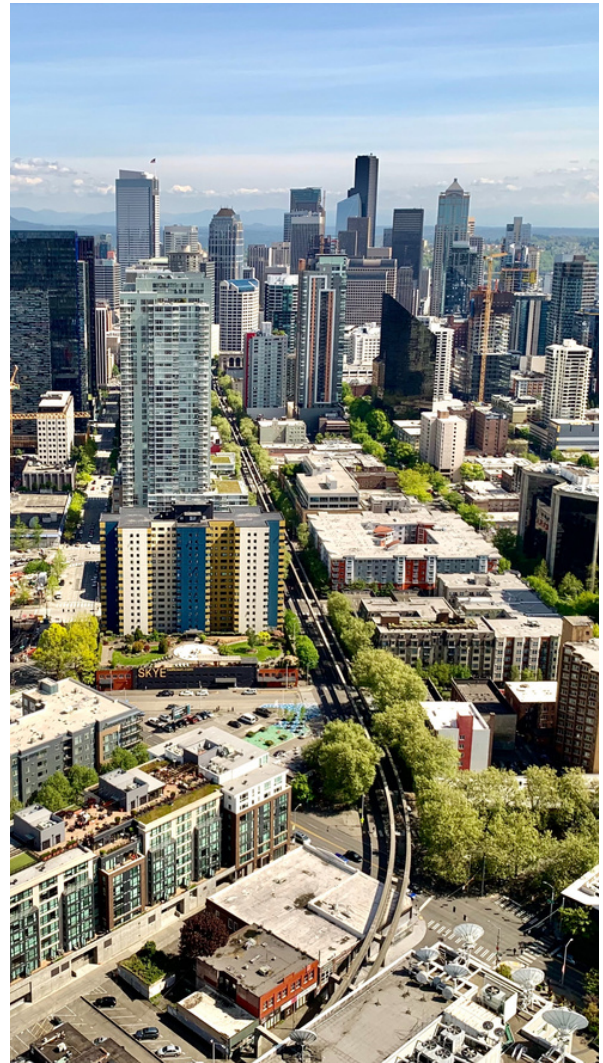
The Problems & Progressive Local Solutions

Land and how we use it is quite literally what defines a city or town. Land use policy impacts every aspect of a citizen's life from their economic opportunity to their health. Progressive land use policy begins with local zoning policies which consider a community holistically taking into account not just economic opportunity and engineering but also equity, health, and the environment.

Important progressive zoning issues include smart development, equity including minority and labor rights, and the environment. Smart development includes inclusionary zoning, transit oriented development, complete streets policy, and moving beyond the corporate subsidy. When considering equity in land use policy progressive local governments work to ensure all citizens benefit. This includes using the power of purse to ensure minority hiring and community benefits agreements during construction. Finally, modern land use policy must contend with the impacts of climate change considering both adaption and mitigation.

Available Local Levers & Targets for Reform

Given land use's centrality to local governance it impacts nearly all departments. Land use is central to a progressive agenda because it is a policy area where local governments are rarely preempted by state or federal



authorizes in their authority to act. Elected civic leaders set the agenda through zoning, law making, and goal setting. While on the implementation agencies play the important role of rule-making and implementation.

Progressive land use policy considers equity and democratic process. This is accomplished through reforms such as inclusionary zoning and transit oriented development policies. Government's should consider spending on land use development projects to ensure minority and labor rights are protected through adoption of community benefits agreements.

Given the growing threats and damage from climate change local leaders must also consider land use policy as a tool to both mitigate and adapt to the impacts of a warming planet. In coastal regions this includes considering rising sea levels while in the interior flooding is an increasingly important concern. Climate action when connected to zoning policy can also generate economic opportunity by creating new good green jobs.

Current Reforms & Tools to Fight for Them

Progressive land use policy begins with smart development strategies which include zoning, transit, and economic development policies. Inclusionary zoning laws create democratic practices to develop equitable policies which consider a community holistically. ProGov21 has a wealth of resources and examples to help develop inclusionary zoning programs. Massachusetts created a [menu of model inclusionary zoning laws](#) for towns, counties, and cities in the commonwealth to implement. We also have examples from [Lehigh Valley, PA](#).

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is a central component of progressive land use policy. TOD simultaneously combats issues facing cities such as equity, housing, congestion, and climate change all while providing large economic gains. The ProGov21 database has a

large amount of resources on TOD including examples from [Austin, TX](#). The database also has wonderful guides to creating a TOD policy including the SPARCC guide to creating [equitable transit oriented development](#) and the federal Transit Cooperative Research Program's [literature review](#) of TOD in the U.S.

Land use policy that combats climate change must break cities of their addiction to car culture. Instead making streets safer and more encouraging of walking, biking, and taking public transit. ProGov21 has numerous resources on implementing a Complete Streets policy. Smart Growth America and National Complete Streets Coalition have created this [policy workbook](#). This guide from Tufts' [PeopleforBikes](#) connects complete street's policy to the [needs of children](#) and their health. [PeopleforBikes](#) has created a complete streets guide to considering racial and economic equity. The database also includes policy examples such as from [Lincoln, Nebraska](#), and [El Paso, TX](#).

Seattle's [bicycle master plan](#) provides a useful example for transforming your city. CNT's report on [minimum parking requirements](#) in Chicago and Donald Shoup of UCLA's report about the [high costs of minimum parking requirements](#) are useful in addressing this problem.

When considering land use policy and how a city spends its scarce resources governments must also consider reforms of their economic development models. Financing land use and capital projects

should not deteriorate into corporate handouts. Good Jobs First has conducted important work on this front including this report on how [tax breaks promote inequality](#) and how they [short change small business](#). For progressive solutions consider this guide from [Local Progress](#) to municipal revenue.

Taking it to the Next Level

While many cities have adopted land use reforms more work is needed promoting equality and tackling climate change. A good case from the ProGov21 database is the [Twin Cities Region](#) equitable development principles for urban, suburban, and rural communities in the area. They also generated a [generic scorecard](#) which other communities can use. [PolicyLink's All-In Cities plan](#) connects important issues of racial equality to economic development and land use issues such as housing and infrastructure development.

Beyond zoning, local governments can use the power of the purse to promote land use equity. To combat historical exclusion of minorities in the construction trades the UCLA Labor Center's has this useful guide to [targeted hiring in construction](#). Similarly, Local Progress has a guide to ensuring [racial equality in public contracting](#). A good example of targeted minority hiring is the [Los Angeles Department of Public Work's](#) comprehensive plan for considering racial equity and also addressing labor

rights through Project Labor Agreements with local unions.

Another powerful tool for promoting land use equity is the implementation of Community Benefit Agreements for public works and economic development projects. For example, see the city's [LAX Community Benefits Agreement](#) and [Los Angeles Affordable Housing and Labor Standards Planning Ordinance](#). The Partnership for Working Families and the Community Benefit Law Center created this [guide for communities to develop Community Development Agreements](#) for their economic development projects. [LAANE](#) also has a wealth of materials on CBAs.

Climate change will be the defining issue for local governments in the coming years. Land use policy is central to mitigating climate change but communities must also consider adaption. One big zoning change cities should consider is the adoption of green building standards such as these examples from [New York City](#) and [Washington D.C.](#) ProGov21 also has useful guides to generating green buildings programs including the IMT Guide to [building benchmarking](#) and the AFL-CIO's [Apollo Alliance](#) guide to using green building programs to create good union jobs.

Beyond green buildings the ProGov21 database has other useful land use resources for greening your community. Policy Matters Ohio created a guide for all Ohio communities to participate in the [Oberlin Project](#) a project by the City

Oberlin in Ohio to become the “Greenist” small city in America. The Georgetown Climate Center has created guide for cities to develop strategies to adapt to the impacts of [rising sea levels](#). Similarly, [Syracuse, NY](#) and surrounding Onondaga County became the first community in the country to create a legal requirement to reduce sewage overflows through Green Infrastructure. Philadelphia has created a [green streets design manual](#) to take on environmental issues and manage storm water. [CNT](#) also has a guide for cities to manage increased storm water from climate change.

Allies, Comrades, and Helpers

Local Progress

Local Progress has many resources on smart development and innovative progressive finance solutions.

Center for Neighborhood Technology

CNT has excellent resources for smart urban development and climate mitigation strategies.

Blue Green Alliance

Blue Green Alliance which runs the Apollo Alliance project has excellent resources for greening a city’s infrastructure while creating good union jobs.

Policy Matters Ohio

PMO has a wealth of resources, for counties in particular, to help promote smart development and climate related land use issues.

PolicyLink

PolicyLink has wonderful resources to ensuring land use and economic development is equitable.

LAANE

LAANE has a wealth of materials on creating Community Benefits Agreements.

Good Jobs First

Good Jobs First is your go to source for combating the corporate subsidy development model.

We continue the conversation around local policy on **ProGov21's Podcast**. Our latest episode features experts from [Policy Matters Ohio](#), and the [Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy \(LAANE\)](#), on a panel discussion all about highroad progressive environmental policies.

Listen to our podcast on, [our website](#), [Spotify](#), [Apple Music](#), or [Amazon Music](#).

