



# DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY:

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When Considering Smart Growth Planning  
Policies and Greenhouse Gas Reductions

**This report was prepared for elected officials and their  
staff by American Coalition for Sustainable Communities  
September 2012**

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# LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

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September 2012

American Coalition for Sustainable Communities has compiled this report, in order to support cities in their efforts to comply with state mandated AB32-The Global Warming Solutions Act and SB375-The Sustainable Communities Strategies Act.

California cities are required to update their general plans to comply with new planning paradigms that include growth management, integrated land use and transportation plans, greenhouse gas (CO<sub>2</sub>) (GHG) reductions, climate mitigation plans, and the provision of housing that will meet different income levels.

When considering growth management and its outcomes, elected officials and their staffs' focus has been dominated by one dimension of sustainability; how growth and greenhouse gas (CO<sub>2</sub>) will impact the environment. However, successful environmental sustainability depends upon positive effects of all the dimensions mentioned within this report; specifically financial, economic, and political sustainability.

*"Strategies must be cost-effective and must not materially impede economic growth or unreasonably intrude on people's lifestyle choices, or they could be rejected by the public."<sup>1</sup>  
~ Wendell Cox*

This report looks at the State's prescribed Sustainable Communities Strategies through the lens of all the dimensions of sustainability.

## DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY

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1. **Financial sustainability** concerns affordable GHG (CO<sub>2</sub>) reductions.
2. **Economic sustainability** assumes that GHG (CO<sub>2</sub>) reduction strategies will not impair economic growth, job creation or poverty reduction.
3. **Political sustainability** requires that GHG (CO<sub>2</sub>) reduction strategies will be acceptable to the public.
4. **Environmental sustainability** pertains to growth strategies that would have reasonable impacts on the environment.

City officials, staff and planners are seeking expertise to help them devise a comprehensive general plan that will meet all of these new requirements. These experts include, but are not limited to, a mix of state and federal agencies like CARB, Department of Finance, Caltrans, and the EPA, DOT and HUD as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like the American Planning Association, Smart Growth Network, ICLEI, and the Urban Land Institute.

These agencies and NGOs provide abundant resources, tools, analysis, and statistics that support the cities' diligent efforts to incorporate transit oriented development and smart growth/compact development into their general plans for the purposes of GHG (CO<sub>2</sub>) reduction targets.

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Our research focuses specifically on claims made by smart growth experts about the anticipated benefits and outcomes these strategies would have upon sustainable growth management, and how they would affect housing affordability, transportation, and GHG (CO2) emissions.

While analyzing these claims through a wider lens of dimensions of sustainability, we often found the data to be contradictory and raised concerns that these prescribed growth management strategies would neither meet anticipated outcomes nor be financially, economically, politically and environmentally conducive for cities' long-term health.

The intent of this report is to briefly highlight

1. the CLAIMS put forth by state and federal agencies and/or NGOs on a particular topic,
2. present documented objective FACTS from credible sources that contradict the claims, and
3. SUMMARIZE the data.

Finally, we are asking that elected officials, staff and planners

1. regard all dimensions of sustainability when considering the implementation of smart growth planning policies and GHG (CO2) reductions and
2. use the updated facts in this report to assess or reassess the merits of growth management plans, proposals and grants.

Thank you,

American Coalition for Sustainable Communities

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Although many valuable resources were used to create this report, the primary resource is *Reducing Greenhouse Gases from Personal Mobility: Opportunities and Possibilities*<sup>1</sup>; a policy report published by the Reason Foundation in 2011 and authored by Wendell Cox.

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|--|
| <p>Wendell Cox is principal of Wendell Cox Consultancy (Demographia), an international public policy firm and specializes in urban policy, transport and demographics. He has provided consulting assistance to the United States Department of Transportation and was certified by the Urban Mass Transportation Administration as an "expert" for the duration of its Public-Private Transportation Network program (1986-1993). He has consulted for public authorities in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand and for public policy organizations and lectured widely. He serves as visiting professor at the Conservatoire National des Arts et Metiers (a national university) in Paris, where he lectures on transport and demographics.</p> |
|--|

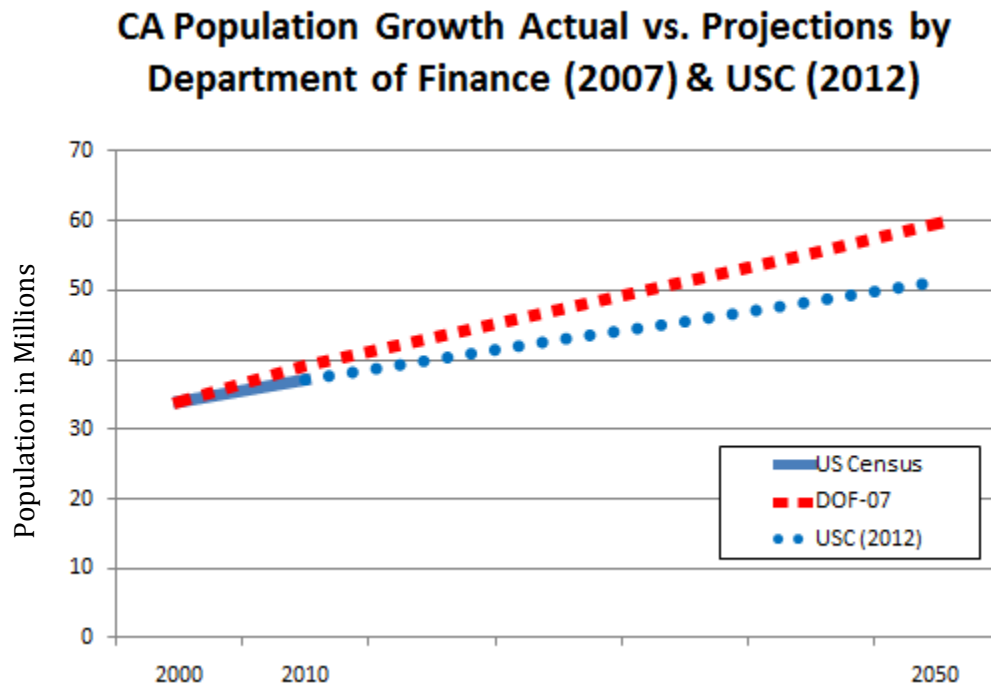
## POPULATION GROWTH PROJECTIONS

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**CLAIM:** *California State population will grow from 36.5 million in 2006 to 60 million in 2050. ~ California Department of Finance, 2007*

### FACTS:

Population growth is foreseen as much slower in these projections than was indicated by the official state population projections issued in 2007 by the state Department of Finance (DOF).



Source: CA Department of Finance 2007 and USC 2012

- The Department of Finance expects population to hit 44.1 million in 2020, the USC study estimates 44.1 million in 2028.<sup>1</sup>
- The Department of Finance expects population to hit 50 million in 2032, the USC study estimates 50 million in 2046 (14 years later).<sup>2</sup>

### SUMMARY:

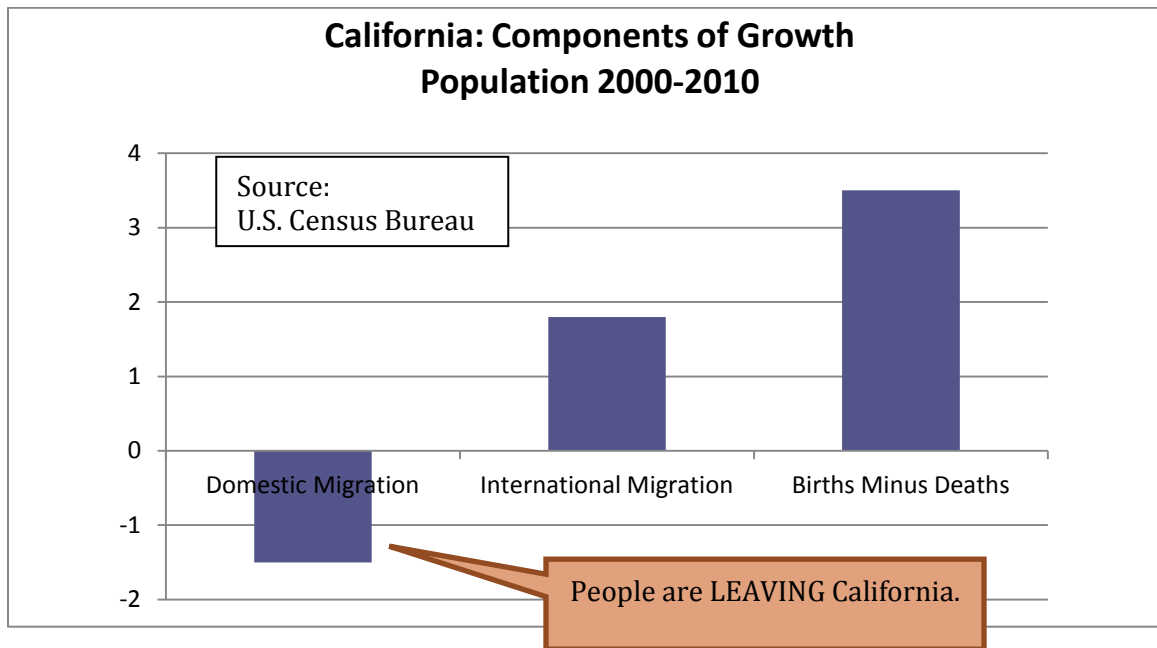
As this chart shows, the US Census population growth projection is less than anticipated by the CA Dept. of Finance. We need to examine the 'need' to implement substantial changes in urban, suburban and rural densities proposed in smart growth policies.



## COMPONENTS OF POPULATION GROWTH

**CLAIM:** *Losses due to domestic migration were more than offset by gains from foreign immigration and natural increase (excess of births over deaths)... ~ Public Policy Institute of California*

### FACTS:



Source: [www.newgeography.com](http://www.newgeography.com)

- “California’s loss was greater than the population of its second largest municipality.”<sup>1</sup>
- “More Californians moved away than lived in 12 states at the beginning of the decade.”<sup>2</sup>
- “Among the net 6.3 million interstate domestic migrants in the nation, nearly one-quarter fled California for somewhere else.”<sup>3</sup>

### SUMMARY:

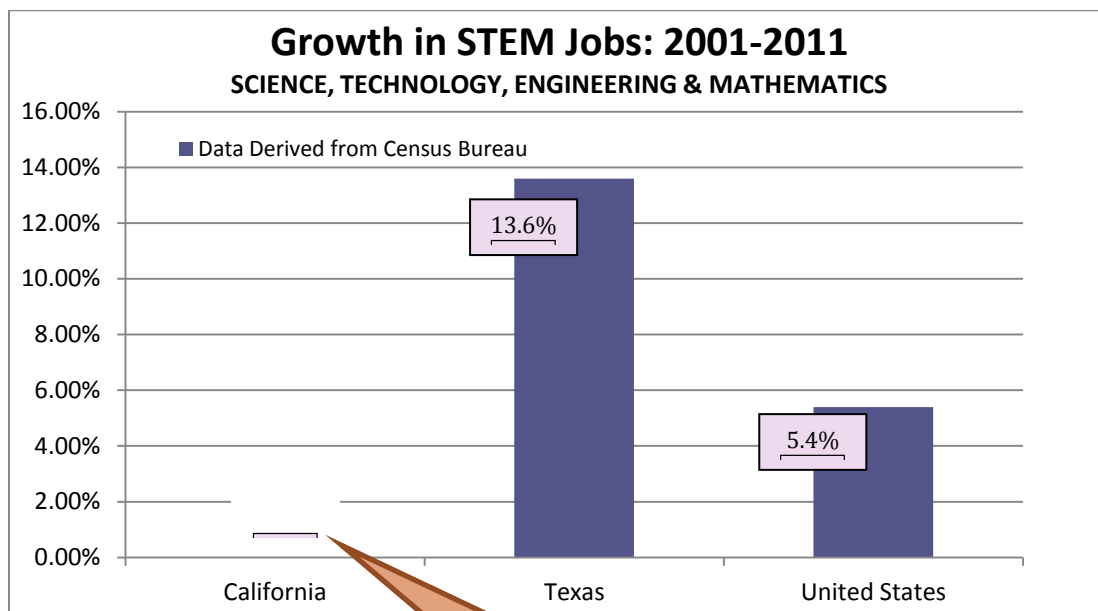
“California is growing because there are more births than deaths and the state had a net large influx of international immigration over the past decade. At the same time, the state has been hemorrhaging residents.”<sup>4</sup> ~ Demographia and the Praxis Strategy Group

## COMPONENTS OF JOB GROWTH

**CLAIM:** *California leads the way with job growth. ~ Silicon Valley / San Jose Business Journal*

### FACTS:

- California is the most anti-business friendly state in the country due to high taxes, excessive regulations, forced unions and bloated public payrolls. California ranks 49<sup>th</sup> for “business tax climate” and 48<sup>th</sup> for “economic freedom.”<sup>1</sup>
- The number of companies leaving California per week in 2009 was one; in 2010, 3.9 per week; and in 2011, 5.4 per week.<sup>2</sup>
- Unless California changes its business environment by reducing taxes and regulations on businesses, we will remain at the bottom of the state rankings.<sup>3</sup>
- California anticipates having an \$8.4 billion shortfall for its FY2013 budget which includes a \$3.4 billion gap carried forward from FY2012. “The Great Recession that started in 2007 caused the largest collapse in state revenues on record. State budgets continue to be a drag on the national economy...reducing the job creation that otherwise would be expected to occur.”<sup>4</sup>



Source: [www.newgeography.com](http://www.newgeography.com)

Lost JOBS = Lost REVENUES

### SUMMARY:

California needs jobs and must improve the environment for businesses in order to supply those jobs. STEM jobs that once boosted the State's economy are leaving because it is too cumbersome and expensive to do business in California. A business-friendly environment would bring employers back to the state, which would bring jobs and increase tax revenues.

## SMART GROWTH POLICIES AND HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

**CLAIM:** *Smart growth, through its regional approach to development and its goal of increasing choices in housing and transportation, can improve the quality, distribution, and supply of affordable housing.* ~ Smart Growth Network and U.S. EPA

### FACTS:

- Prescriptive planning strategies are often recommended when trying to control sprawl.
- The table below is from a report by Costs of Sprawl. The table indicates that 7 in 10 of the recommended land use tactics there is a potential for housing prices to rise.

| Prescriptive Planning Policies & Housing Affordability |   |                                      |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
|  | Strategy                                    | Potential to Increase Housing Prices |
| 1  | Regional Urban Growth Boundaries            | YES                                  |
| 2  | Local Urban Growth Boundaries               | YES                                  |
| 3  | Regional Urban Service Districts            | YES                                  |
| 4  | Local Urban Service Districts               | YES                                  |
| 5  | Large Lot Zoning in Rural Areas             | YES                                  |
| 6  | High Development Fees & Extractions         | YES                                  |
| 7  | Restrictions on Physically Developable Land | YES                                  |
| 8  | State Aid Contingent on Local Growth Zones  |                                      |
| 9  | Transferable Development Rights             |                                      |
| 10   | Adequacy of Facilities Requirements         |                                      |

Source: Burchell, R.W., Lowenstein, G., Dolphin, W.R., Galley, C.C., Downs, A., Seskin, S., and Moore, T., *Cost of Sprawl*—2000.

- “The loss of housing affordability disproportionately disadvantages minority households, due to their generally lower incomes. California’s Thomas Rivera Policy Institute, a Latino research organization, raised concerns about the impact of compact development on housing affordability.”<sup>1</sup>

*“Whether the Latino homeownership gap can be closed or projected demand for home-ownership in 2020 be met, will depend not only on the growth of incomes and availability of mortgage money, but also on how decisively California moves to dismantle regulatory barriers that hinder the production of affordable housing. Far from helping, they are making it particularly difficult for Latino and African American households to own a home.”<sup>2</sup>*

### SUMMARY:

*“Compact development is associated with restrictions that lead to higher housing prices and a loss of housing affordability. Compact development policies prohibit development on large areas of otherwise buildable land by strategies such as urban growth boundaries, building moratoria and other growth controls.” ~ Wendell Cox*

## LIVABILITY AND COMMUNITY PREFERENCES

**CLAIM:** “Smart Growth” concepts include many amenities that future buyers are expressing preferences for.” ~ Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG)

### FACTS:

| <b>2011 Community Preferences Survey</b><br><b>National Association of Realtors</b><br>The data have been weighted by gender, age, race, region, metropolitan status, and Internet access.<br>2,071 adults nationally--37% Democrat, 30% Independent, 27% Republican, 4% something else |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|

|  | City downtown, with a mix of offices, apartments, and shops | City more residential neighborhood | Suburban Neighborhood with a mix of houses, shops, and businesses | Suburban Neighborhood with houses only | Small Town | Rural |
|--|---|------------------------------------|---|--|------------|-------|
| Which of the following best describes the place where you live?  | 5%  | 19%                                | 26%   | 19%                                    | 14%        | 16%   |
| If you could choose where to live, in which type of the following locations would you most like to live? | 8%  | 11%                                | 28%   | 12%                                    | 18%        | 22%   |

|  | Single Family Detached House | Single Family Attached House or Town House | Apartment or Condo | Mobile Home |
|--|------------------------------|--|--------------------|-------------|
| Right now, if you could choose, which of the following would you <u>prefer</u> to live in? | 80%                          | 7%   | 8%                 | 2%          |

|  | Lot Size               | Commute to Job   | Privacy                            | Schools                           |
|--|------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Top Priorities in deciding where to live.* | 61% prefer larger lots | 59% would opt for a longer commute to live in a single family home | 87% feel privacy is a top priority | 75% put schools as a top priority |

Source: The 2011 Community Preferences Survey, [www.brspoll.com](http://www.brspoll.com)

- \*“While walkability is seen as a desirable attribute by most, majorities of Americans are willing to live in communities where they have to drive most places if it means they would have larger lots with more distance from neighbors.”<sup>1</sup> ~ Community Preferences Survey
- “Younger people who are unmarried tend to prefer the convenience of smart growth, walkable communities. Subdivision-type communities appeal more to middle-aged, married couples.”<sup>2</sup> ~ Community Preferences Survey

- “Those on both ends of the socio-economic scale tend to prefer smart growth communities while those in the middle are more drawn to sprawl-type communities.”<sup>3</sup> ~ Community Preferences Survey
- “In general, adults’ current housing situations reflect their preferences. Those who live in housing-only suburbs, small towns, and rural areas prefer more spread out, less walkable communities, whereas urban residents and those who live in suburbs with a mix of housing and businesses prefer more walkable, smart growth communities.”<sup>4</sup> ~ Community Preferences Survey

## **SUMMARY:**

People have different community preferences based on their stage in life. Young, single professionals have different lifestyle wants and needs than young families, empty-nesters, seniors or farmers and ranchers. Providing housing for these different lifestyles should be generated by free-will and market conditions. It should not be something that is mandated by government.

*“Self-selection is the tendency for people to choose residential locations that facilitate their preferred lifestyles, rather than changing their lifestyles based upon where they live.”<sup>5</sup> ~ David Brownstone, UC Irvine*

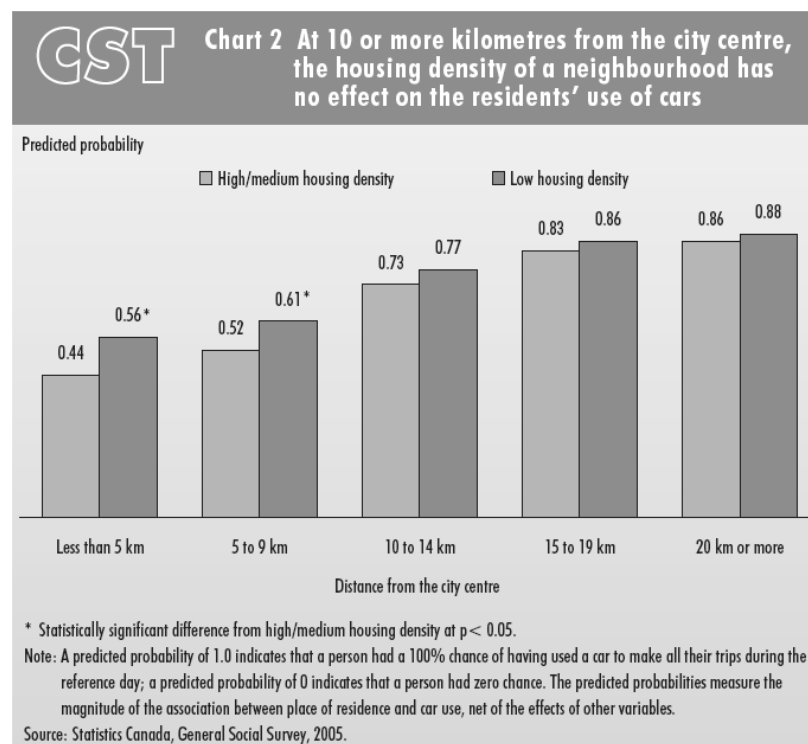
## TRANSPORTATION CHOICES AND POPULATION DENSITY

### *High Density and Car Usage*

**CLAIM:** *Higher-density development is a key element to creating walkable communities and providing more transportation options. ~ Smart Growth Network*

### **FACTS:**

“At 10 or more kilometers from the city center, the housing density of a neighborhood has no effect on the residents’ use of cars.”<sup>1</sup> ~ Statistics Canada



- “Above 10 kilometers from the city center, [...], the impact of neighborhood density on automobile use dwindles until it almost vanishes. Although the chart appears to show that neighborhoods with low density are different than those with medium/high density at more than 10 kilometers from the city core, this difference is not statistically significant.”<sup>2</sup>

### **SUMMARY:**

*“...beyond 10 kilometers from the city center, the fact that a neighborhood was mainly composed of single family or semi-detached houses rather than apartments was not correlated with greater or less automobile use.”<sup>3</sup>*

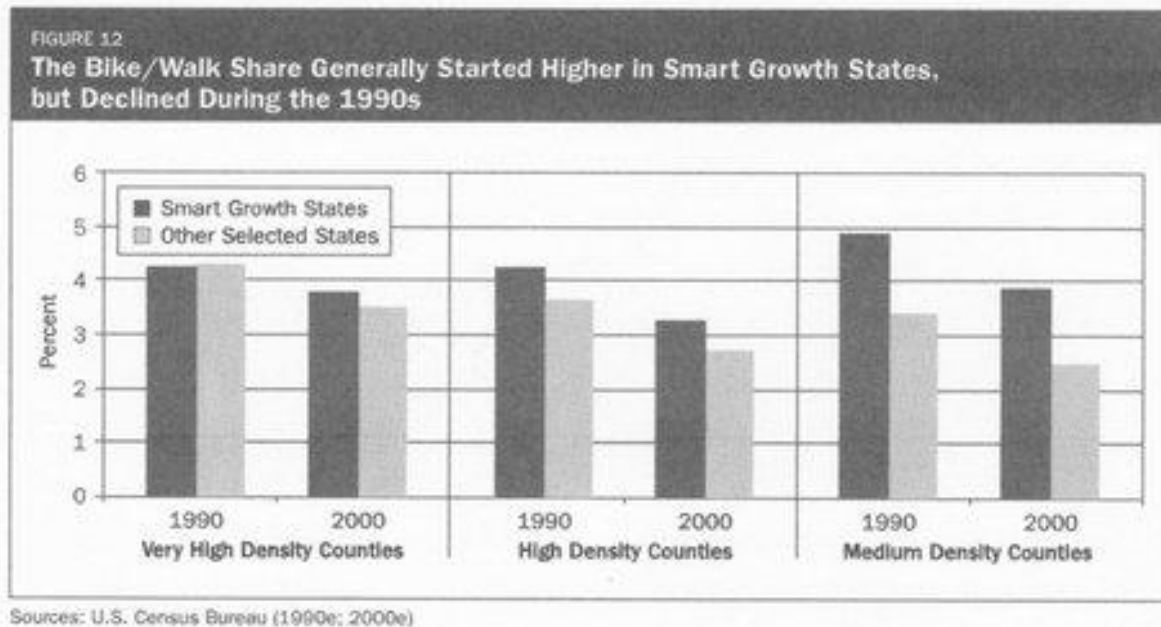
Americans like driving their cars. People like the convenience and comfort of them and will always need personal transportation to get from point A to point B. Distance, lack of convenience, and the

prohibitive cost of building public transportation have been the stumbling blocks for decades in implementing an economical network of public transportation choices. Ironically, transit funds are often derived from automobile use taxes.

### *High Density and Bike Commute Usage*

**CLAIM:** *Given that smart growth programs typically provide bike lanes, bike racks, sidewalks, and priced parking, they should increase the share of bike/walk commutes or at least retard its decline. ~ Lincoln Land Institute*

### **FACTS:**



Source: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy—Evaluating Smart Growth, a research project in late 2006 to evaluate the effectiveness of smart growth policies. The analysis focused on four states with well-established statewide smart growth programs (Florida, Maryland, New Jersey, and Oregon) and four states (Colorado, Indiana, Texas, and Virginia) that offered a range of other land management approaches.  
[http://www.fltd.com/research/general\\_tod/evaluating\\_smart\\_growth.pdf](http://www.fltd.com/research/general_tod/evaluating_smart_growth.pdf), p.21

- As this Figure indicates, “...while the bike/walk share was generally higher in the smart growth states, its share declined over time and was essentially **unrelated to population density**.”<sup>4</sup>

### **SUMMARY:**

*“Overall biking/walking mode share is in decline, with 600 of the 692 jurisdictions experiencing percentage decreases in this mode of travel between 1990 and 2000...”<sup>5</sup>*

Biking and walking paths/trails (though desired amenities) are still being proposed at a construction cost of around \$26,000/mile plus \$1600/year for maintenance. Meanwhile, roads used for shipping of goods and getting people to work will need repairs averaging “\$78.9 Billion over the next 10 years.”<sup>6</sup>

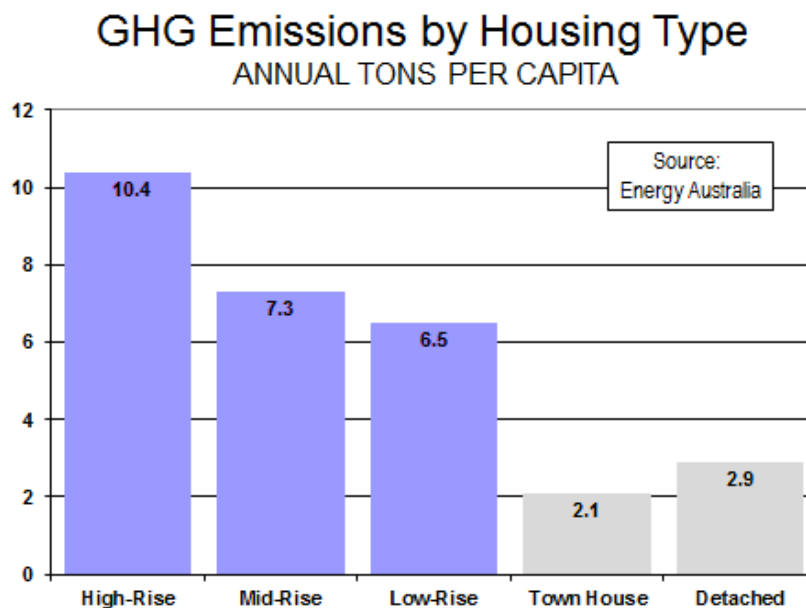
## RESIDENTIAL GREEN HOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

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**CLAIM:** *Residences in auto-oriented suburban areas produce greater GHG emissions than higher-density areas. ~ Driving and the Built Environment and Moving Cooler*

### FACTS:

- “In perhaps the most comprehensive spatial research to date, the *Australian Conservation Foundation*<sup>1</sup> allocated virtually all of the nation’s GHG emissions to households based upon their residential location. The surprising result was that, all things considered, **GHG emissions per capita were higher in more compact areas than in suburban areas, where there is more driving and where there is more detached housing.**”<sup>2</sup>



- When determining energy costs, “the authoritative source, the *Residential Energy Consumption Survey (RCES)* includes only energy use reflected on residential utility bills, but excludes the common energy consumed in higher density housing.”<sup>3</sup>

### SUMMARY:

This Australia study found that when measuring GHG production **per capita**, lower density housing produced less than higher density housing when common energy was included. Costs of common energy must be considered. “Common energy is used for elevators, air conditioning, heating, water heating, building lighting, and commonly provided heating, cooling and water heating.”<sup>4</sup>



## HIGHER DENSITIES, CONGESTION AND GHG EMISSIONS

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**CLAIM:** *The higher densities are intended to reduce the amount of driving, as measured by vehicle miles of travel (VMT). GHG emissions are generally presumed to be reduced by a corresponding percentage. ~ Wendell Cox*

### FACTS:

- “Research indicates a substantially diminishing rate of GHG reduction as traffic congestion increases.”<sup>1</sup>

| Comparison of a 30-minute Trip in Average and Congested Conditions |                           |                      |            |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------|------------|
|  | Less Congested Conditions | Congested Conditions | Difference |
| Trip Time Assumed (Minutes)  | 30.0                      | 30.0                 | 0.0%       |
| Average Speed (MPH)  | 41.9                      | 15.8                 | -62.2%     |
| Distance Traveled (VMT)  | 21.0                      | 7.9                  | -62.2%     |
| Fuel Consumed (Gallons)  | 0.56                      | 0.49                 | -11.9%     |
| Miles per Gallon   | 37.3                      | 16.0                 | -57.2%     |
| GHG Grams (Trip)   | 6,225                     | 5,496                | -11.7%     |

Source: Treiber, M., Kesting, A., Thiemann, C., How Much Does Traffic Congestion Increase Fuel Consumption and Emissions?: applying a fuel consumption model to the NGSIM Trajectory Data, 2008.

### SUMMARY:

A 30-minute trip in congested conditions was found to reduce distance travelled (VMTs) 62%, “due to slower speeds and more stop and start operation.”<sup>2</sup> This data also indicates that as traffic congestion increases, speeds decline and GHG reductions are far less.

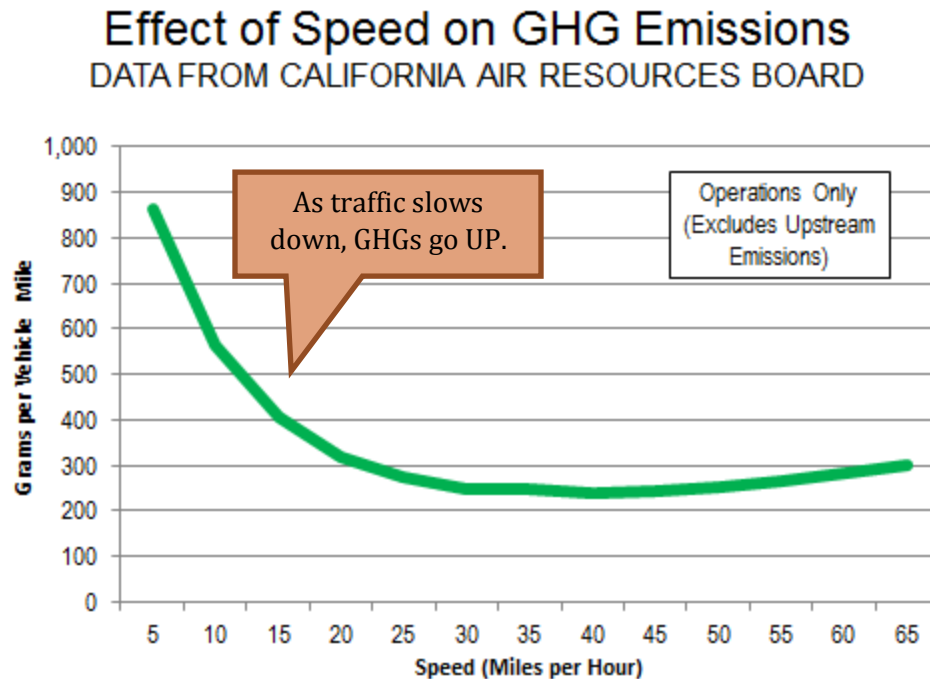
*“The mobility research indicates that this additional travel time would retard economic growth. The slower travel times would raise costs for trucks, delivery vans and on-site services (such as plumbers).”<sup>3</sup> ~ Wendell Cox*

## COMPLETE STREETS AND AUTOMOBILE GHG EMISSIONS

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**CLAIM:** Complete streets are good for air quality. Poor air quality in our urban areas is linked to increases in asthma and other illnesses. ~ National Complete Streets Coalition

### FACTS:



Source: California Air Resources Board

- "...as traffic congestion becomes more severe, local air pollution ("criteria" pollutants, such as carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds and NO<sub>x</sub>) become more intense, which increases the health hazards that justified auto environmental standards in the first place."<sup>1</sup>

### SUMMARY:

- "As vehicle speeds decline, GHG emissions increase, regardless of the distance driven."<sup>2</sup>  
~ CA Air Resources Board

## HOUSING COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH SMART GROWTH POLICIES

**CLAIM:** *Many growth management policies improve the supply and location of affordable housing [...], thereby increasing the desirability of the community and thus the price of housing. ~ The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy*

### FACTS:

- In a study by the Reason Foundation to determine what the housing costs associated with smart growth policies would be by 2050 it was “estimated that additional consumer expenditures for (smart growth) housing would exceed \$1.5 trillion (2010\$) annually...”
- Using the GHG emission reductions from *Moving Cooler* which would be approximately 78,000,000 tons, rendered expenditure per ton of GHG emissions at \$19,700. **This is nearly 400 times the IPCC maximum expenditure of \$50/GHG ton.**

| U.S. Housing Penalty Associated with Compact Development Policies: 2050 |                      |
|---|----------------------|
|   | Annual 2050          |
| Higher House Prices & Mortgage Payments                                 | \$1,450,000,000,000  |
| Higher Rent Payments  | \$90,000,000,000     |
| Total Additional Expenditures   | \$1,540,000,000,000  |
| Annual GHG Tons Removed   | 78,000,000           |
| Additional Consumer Expenditures per GHG Ton Removed                    | \$19,700             |
| IPCC Maximum Expenditure per GHG Ton Removed                            | \$50                 |
| Times IPCC Maximum Expenditure (\$50/GHG Ton)                           | 394                  |
| Projected Gross Domestic Product 2050                                   | \$41,260,000,000,000 |
| Additional Expenditures as a Share of GDP                               | 3.7%                 |

*For Methodology see Reason Foundation Policy Study 388 by Wendell Cox, November 2011. Sources include US Census, American Community Survey, IPCC, Moving Cooler, Goldman Sachs, and National Association of Realtors*

- “The California experience was used for this study and is appropriate as a base for projection for two reasons:
- 1. California housing prices are well above the national average. However, this differential has developed since 1970. As late as 1971, California housing prices were similar to the national average.
- 2. William Fischel has associated the increase in California housing prices relative to the nation with its stronger land use regulation. Fischel found that the rise in California housing prices from 1970 relative to the nation could not be explained by factors such as higher construction cost increase, population growth, quality of life, amenities, the state’s property tax reform initiative (Proposition 13), land supply or water issues.”<sup>1</sup>

### SUMMARY:

*“Compact development policies would result in a massive rearrangement of the economy and composition of the GDP and possible economic disruption. The potential for housing market distortions to produce economic distress is illustrated by the recent experience of the Great Recession, which was closely related to unprecedented house price inflation and deflation, much of it in California.”<sup>2</sup> ~ Wendell Cox*

## STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS AFFECTING COMMUNITIES

**CLAIM:** *Smart growth programs, regulations and incentives will lead to lower development costs and housing prices. ~ Urban Land Institute*

### FACTS:

Many policies of smart growth/compact development can only be achieved through incentives, waivers, government mandates, regulations or fees (taxes). Regulations impact the cost of development in California both in time and money which is ultimately passed on to the consumer.

According to a survey conducted by the *National Association of Home Builders*, "...on average, regulations imposed by government at all levels account for 25.0 percent of the final price of a new single-family home built for sale."<sup>1</sup>

| Table 1. Categories of Regulatory Costs Captured in the Survey                                   |                      |                          |   |
|--|----------------------|--------------------------|---|
|  | Share with zero cost | Share with positive cost | Normal add-ons (such as carrying costs and retrun on equity) where regulatory costs are positive              |
| <b>A. During Development</b>   |                      |                          |   |
| Cost of applying for zoning / subdivision approval   | 10%                  | 90%                      | points on acquisition loan + interest from application to time lot is sold to builder + developer profit      |
| Costs incurred after approval / before construction (impact fees, environmental mitigation, etc) | 5%                   | 95%                      | points on development loan + interest from 1/2 time between approval and time lot is sold to builder + profit |
| Value of land dedicated / left unbuilt   | 19%                  | 81%                      | same as above   |
| Costs of complying with changes in development standards (setbacks, road widths, etc)            | 13%                  | 87%                      | same as above   |
| <b>B. During Construction</b>  |                      |                          |   |
| Added cost due to changes in construction codes / standards over the past 10 years               | 6%                   | 94%                      | points on construction loan + interest from 1/2 time between start and sale + brokers fees + builder profit   |
| Permit, hook-up, impact or other fees paid by builder  | 8%                   | 92%                      | same as above   |

Source: Survey used to generate the NAHB/Wells Fargo HMI, April 2011

Following are a few examples of California regulations that affect the economic, environmental and social justice parameters of community development:

### ECONOMIC

- AB 32, California Global Warming Solutions Act— When California's Cap & Trade market begins, it will have devastating economic consequences for all of California businesses including potential loss of output, and jobs. Indirect business taxes and labor income is substantial and significant to the tune of billions of dollars, while California will only collect around \$1billion in carbon offsets.

- Development Fees—are fees that are imposed at the local level on developers and then passed on to the consumer of the homes or businesses.:
- Community Facilities Districts or Community Development Districts (Mello Roos Taxes)—These districts impose additional tax burdens on property owners for various bond funding of streets, water, sewage and drainage, electricity, infrastructure, schools, parks, and police protection.

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## ENVIRONMENTAL

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- Open Space Preservation—Every county and city is mandated by the state to adopt an open space element into its general plan. These plans place regulatory limits on the types of uses which may be pursued in agricultural areas in order to prevent the conversion of agricultural lands to non-compatible uses. (Government Code section 65910)

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## EQUITY (SOCIAL JUSTICE)

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- SB375, Sustainable Communities Strategy—Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) must consider transportation, housing and GHG emissions in planning a region's growth. It claims it will reduce air pollution, improve public health and shorten commutes. Many of these assumptions are addressed in this report.

## SUMMARY:

Excess regulation and government interference on federal, state, and regional levels, lead to **increased** costs to citizens and reduces local control for strong cities.

The 'three pillars' model of sustainable development (economic, environmental, and social equity) put forth by the American Planning Association and other proponents of smart growth is flawed and will not lead to cities' long-term health and prosperity.

Instead, elected officials, staff and planners must adopt the four dimensions of sustainability (financial, economic, political, and environmental) to capture long-term opportunity, growth, and stability.

## SOURCES

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### LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

<sup>1</sup> Cox, W., Reason Foundation Policy Study 388, *Reducing Greenhouse Gases from Personal Mobility: Opportunities and Possibilities*. November 2001,  
[http://reason.org/files/reducing\\_greenhouse\\_gases\\_mobility\\_development.pdf](http://reason.org/files/reducing_greenhouse_gases_mobility_development.pdf)

In the Reason Foundation Policy Report, Mr. Cox seeks to “assess the relative merits of specific policies intended to reduce GHGs from automobiles”.

The Reason Foundation Report also states,

- “The two most prominent reports on this approach (*Driving and the Built Environment* and *Moving Cooler*\*) predict that compact development could reduce GHGs from autos by between 1% and 9% between 2005 and 2050. Though *Driving and the Built Environment* acknowledges that there will still be significant increase in overall driving (VMT).”\*\*
- “Advocates of compact development believe that people must materially change their behaviors and living conditions to reduce GHG: automobile use must be reduced and urban densities must be increased.”

\*Note on *Moving Cooler*—U.S. EPA uses the results from this study when making statements about Climate Change mitigation and adaptation. <http://epa.gov/dced/climatechange.htm>  
“The intent of the *Moving Cooler* study is to assess the potential effectiveness of a broad variety of transportation strategies—under a wide variety of different assumptions—to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This study was not intended to result in any specific recommendations about the direction of transportation and climate change policies.” Urban Land Institute

\*\*Note on *Moving Cooler*’s GHG impact scenarios—The GHG emission reductions from *Moving Cooler*’s compact development scenarios were similar to those of *Driving and the Built Environment* from 1% in the 43% densification scenario, 3% in the 64% densification scenario and 5% in the 90% densification scenario in 2030. In 2050, the GHG emissions would be 2% in the 43% densification scenario, 5% in the 64% densification scenario and 9% in the 90% densification scenario.

### POPULATION GROWTH PROJECTIONS

<sup>1</sup> Population Dynamics Research Group in the Sol Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

### COMPONENTS OF POPULATION GROWTH

<sup>1</sup> Cox, W., *The Export Business in California (people and jobs)*, 2012,  
[www.newgeography.com/content/002818-the-export-business-california-people-and-jobs](http://www.newgeography.com/content/002818-the-export-business-california-people-and-jobs)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

### COMPONENTS OF JOB GROWTH

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aei-ideas.org/2011/07/companies-are-leaving-california-in-record-numbers-and-it-might-get-worse/>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> McNichol, E., Oliff, P., and Johnson, N., *States Continue to Feel Recession’s Impact*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, March 21, 2012.

## SMART GROWTH POLICIES AND HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

- <sup>1</sup>. Cox, W., Reason Foundation Policy Study 388, *Reducing Greenhouse Gases from Personal Mobility: Opportunities and Possibilities*. November 2001, [http://reason.org/files/reducing\\_greenhouse\\_gases\\_mobility\\_development.pdf](http://reason.org/files/reducing_greenhouse_gases_mobility_development.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup>. Lopez-Aqueres, W., Skaga, J., and Kugler, T., Housing California's Latino Population in the 21st Century: The challenge ahead, [http://www.trpi.org/pdfs/housing\\_ca\\_latinos.pdf](http://www.trpi.org/pdfs/housing_ca_latinos.pdf)

## LIVABILITY AND COMMUNITY PREFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup>. *The 2011 National Association of Realtors Community Preferences Survey*, [www.brspoll.com](http://www.brspoll.com)
- <sup>2</sup>. Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup>. Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup>. Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup>. <http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/sr/sr298brownstone.pdf>, p.2

*Households choose their residential (and work) locations based, among other things, on their preferences for different types and durations of travel. The observed correlations between higher density and lower VMT may just be due to the fact that people who choose to live in higher density neighborhoods are also those that prefer lower VMT and more transit or non- motorized travel. If this is the case, then forcing higher densities may not lead to anywhere near the reduction in VMT 'predicted' by observed correlations. ~ David Brownstone, UC Irvine*

## TRANSPORTATION CHOICES AND POPULATION DENSITY

- <sup>1</sup>. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2008001/article/10503-eng.htm#7>
- <sup>2</sup>. Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup>. Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup>. Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup>. [http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/1324/files/how\\_much\\_will\\_that\\_trail\\_cost\\_fri2007.pdf](http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/1324/files/how_much_will_that_trail_cost_fri2007.pdf)
- <sup>6</sup>. Ibid.

## RESIDENTIAL GREEN HOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- <sup>1</sup>. Australian Conservation Foundation, [http://www.propertyoz.com.au/library/RDC\\_ACF\\_Greenhouse-Report.pdf](http://www.propertyoz.com.au/library/RDC_ACF_Greenhouse-Report.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup>. Cox, W., Reason Foundation Policy Study 388, *Reducing Greenhouse Gases from Personal Mobility: Opportunities and Possibilities*. November 2001, [http://reason.org/files/reducing\\_greenhouse\\_gases\\_mobility\\_development.pdf](http://reason.org/files/reducing_greenhouse_gases_mobility_development.pdf)
- <sup>3</sup>. *Residential Energy Consumption Survey*, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/recs/>
- <sup>4</sup>. Myers, P., O'Leary, R., and Helstroom, R., Energy Australia. & O'Leary, R., and Helstroom, R., *Multi Unit Residential Buildings Energy and Peak Demand Study*, [https://www.basix.nsw.gov.au/information/common/pdf/alts\\_adds\\_req/energy\\_mu\\_study.pdf](https://www.basix.nsw.gov.au/information/common/pdf/alts_adds_req/energy_mu_study.pdf)

## HIGHER DENSITIES, CONGESTION AND GHG EMISSIONS

- <sup>1</sup>. Cox, W., Reason Foundation Policy Study 388, *Reducing Greenhouse Gases from Personal Mobility: Opportunities and Possibilities*. November 2001, [http://reason.org/files/reducing\\_greenhouse\\_gases\\_mobility\\_development.pdf](http://reason.org/files/reducing_greenhouse_gases_mobility_development.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup>. Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup>. Ibid.

## **COMPLETE STREETS AND AUTOMOBILE GHG EMISSIONS**

<sup>1</sup>. Cox, W., Reason Foundation Policy Study 388, *Reducing Greenhouse Gases from Personal Mobility: Opportunities and Possibilities*. November 2001,

[http://reason.org/files/reducing\\_greenhouse\\_gases\\_mobility\\_development.pdf](http://reason.org/files/reducing_greenhouse_gases_mobility_development.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>. CA Air Resources Board, <http://www.arb.ca.gov/msei/onrooad/downloads/pubs/co2final.pdf>

## **HOUSING COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH SMART GROWTH POLICIES**

<sup>1</sup>. Cox, W., Reason Foundation Policy Study 388, *Reducing Greenhouse Gases from Personal Mobility: Opportunities and Possibilities*. November 2001, [http://reason.org/files/reducing\\_greenhouse\\_gases\\_mobility\\_development.pdf](http://reason.org/files/reducing_greenhouse_gases_mobility_development.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>. Ibid.

## **STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS AFFECTING COMMUNITIES**

<sup>1</sup>. <http://www.nahb.org/generic.aspx?sectionID=734&genericContentID=161065&channelID=311>



## ABOUT US

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*American Coalition for Sustainable Communities* is an organization comprised of members who live in the Southern California Region. Our coalition is sincerely committed to educating California elected officials and their staff and planners about the unanticipated consequences of smart growth. Email: [americancoalition4sc@gmail.com](mailto:americancoalition4sc@gmail.com)

Our coalition is affiliated with *Americans Protecting Property Rights*.

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*Americans Protecting Property Rights* (APPR) is a non-partisan volunteer group organized to expose the comprehensive plan to gradually erode our rights to private property through excessive environmental, economic, and social justice regulations.

For elected officials who are seeking to address environmental, economic, and social challenges, APPR advocates for common sense approaches that protect rights to property, assuring prosperity and preventing costly outcomes. Unlike stakeholders with questionable interests, APPR promotes individual rights to property that add value to the local community ensuring a strong foundation for long-term opportunity, growth, and stability.

Co-Founders:

Darcy Brandon

Barbara Decker

Mary Baker

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Mary Baker writes articles for her blog, *Exurbia Chronicles*. Her topics include sustainable development, smart growth, land use, environmentalism, property rights, and life in exurbia. [www.exurbiachronicles.com](http://www.exurbiachronicles.com)

Darcy Brandon is a landscape architect in Southern California. She has 25 years of experience in the trade and during that time has seen an increasing number of regulations that are affecting the building industry.



## DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY

### **1. *Financial sustainability~***

Can the strategies reduce GHG emissions within the IPCC \$50 expenditure range maximum per ton?

### **2. *Economic sustainability~***

Can the strategies be implemented without impairing economic growth, job creation or poverty reduction?

### **3. *Political sustainability~***

Will the strategies have public support and compliance?

### **4. *Environmental sustainability~***

Do the strategies have the potential to materially reduce GHG emissions from automobiles?

