



Tool: Cool Planning: Local Strategies to Slow Climate Change

Provider: Smart Growth America and Otak, Inc.

Summary:

The Cool Planning: Local Strategies to Slow Climate Change workshop seeks to actively involve communities in the process of finding solutions that can be implemented at the local level to slow climate change. Specific community development, land use, and transportation planning techniques can enable communities to reduce their carbon footprints and will be covered in depth in this workshop. The workshop will draw on a technical assistance team that has facilitated hundreds of smart growth and sustainable community development presentations, programs, and workshops in communities across the US and abroad.

Interactive exercises will be integrated into the program to engage participants and get them thinking about how they can get involved. Publications and resources available to help communities will be referenced. Available tools that can be used to monitor a community's progress will be presented, including walkability index/scoring tools (www.walkscore.com), D-variable analysis, surveys, focus groups and interviews, audits, and other methods/indicators.

A model workshop would include the following elements:

Part I: Why addressing climate change has to start at the local level

- How a global problem can be addressed at the local level
- How community design affects greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

Part II: Local Strategies to slow climate change

- Grow cooler
- Grow more compact
- Get centered
- Mix up your land uses
- Recycle urban land and buildings
- Make streets complete
- Make way for pedestrians
- Make your community bicycle-friendly
- Get well-connected
- Put parking in its place
- Make way for transit and transit-oriented development
- Change travel habits
- Find better models for big trip generators
- Green your buildings
- Plant trees in your town or neighborhood



Part III: Taking Action

- Develop elements of a climate action plan
- Measure your plan's effectiveness

The importance of developing locally-based climate action plans will be highlighted in the program. While implementation of these plans can reduce transportation-related GHG and environmental impacts, they can also bring significant economic, national security, and health benefits, such as:

- Insulation against future gas price hikes
- Energy independence
- Retention of local dollars
- Lower transportation costs
- More active and healthier communities



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