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Survey of Local Sustainability Practices in California

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This report conveys the Round I results of the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) sponsored survey of local governments' sustainability practices in California. The report is organized in two sections. Part I discusses the development and administration of the survey. Part II reports and examines the survey results.

The SGC has an important interest in measuring local government activity to improve environmental sustainability. Captured in Spring 2012, these measurements establish a baseline snapshot of city- and county-level efforts to increase the resource efficiency of both local governments and the communities they serve. These baseline data provide a view of local government sustainability activity across various sectors and the factors that may encourage local governments to enhance their efforts further. When paired with future survey measurements, the data will allow the Council to identify trends in local sustainability efforts over time, as well as to assess the impact on local sustainability of the SGC sponsored Sustainable Communities Learning Network.

PART I. SURVEY DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

1. Survey Motivation

The SGC is an interagency body established in 2008 by the California legislature (SB 732) to align state policies and actions to promote sustainability and to administer Proposition 84 funded for sustainability planning grants to regional and local governments. One step the SGC has taken to fulfill its mandate is to establish the Sustainable Communities Learning Network (SCLN), a voluntary association of local government leaders who are addressing or planning to address sustainability issues in their communities. The Learning Network program establishes connections among local government staff and officials for the purposes of sharing of information, advice, and best practices. The Learning Network also provides a forum for content delivery by the SGC and its partners, bringing the latest news of and information about sustainability practices to local leaders.

We administered this survey as the SGC was launching the Learning Network program. These thus results offer a valuable snapshot of local efforts as the Learning Network resources became available. By comparing results from this Round I survey with those from future rounds, SGC can assess how the Learning Network shapes local governments' sustainability efforts in their operations, services, and community development. Paired together with an after survey, these baseline results provide a way to measure local governments' progress on sustainability issues.

2. Policy Dimensions Addressed in the Survey

In constructing the survey, we carefully considered what policy dimensions to target when collecting data about local governments' activities. We sought to be comprehensive, so as to capture government activity across a broad spectrum of areas. We also targeted those issue areas consistent with the Institute for Local Government's "best practice areas" for sustainability and

in which we anticipated the Sustainable Communities Learning Network to be active; this would ensure we captured baseline levels of local government activity in these key policy dimensions.

The policy dimensions targeted in the survey are as follows:
1. Energy efficiency and conservation
2. Water and wastewater systems
3. Green building
4. Waste reduction and recycling
5. Environmentally-friendly purchasing
6. Renewable and low-carbon fuels
7. Efficient transportation
8. Land use, planning, and community design
9. Offsetting carbon emissions
10. Administrative actions and organizational memberships

The first 10 of these dimensions mirror the ILG's best practice areas. (See Figure 1.) We also queried jurisdictions about whether they had articulated sustainability commitments via administrative actions, such as a Climate Action Plan, or organizational memberships, such as participation in the U.S. Conference of Mayors for Climate Change.

Figure 1. Policy Domains for Organizing Sustainability Best Practices
(Institute of Local Government)
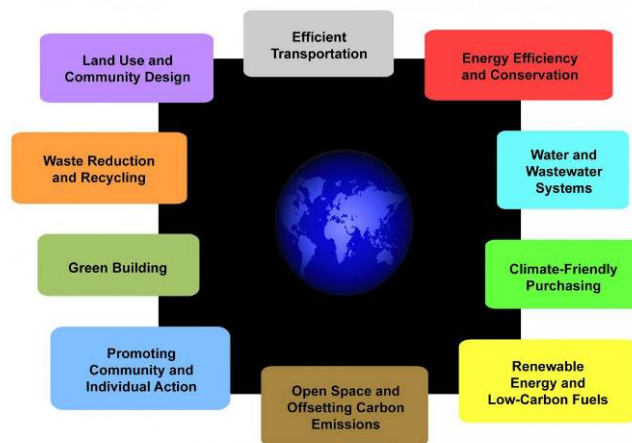
3. Survey Structure

We designed the survey's first section to assess levels of activity for specific on-the-ground sustainability initiatives in California counties and cities. We looked to establish whether or not a local government had specific programs or policies already in place in ten different dimensions across both *government operations* and *community life*. The ten dimensions included energy and water conservation, government and community waste reduction, and promotion of renewable and low carbon fuels. For each dimension, we presented several discrete policies or programs, which identified as "indicator policies" for that dimension with respect to (a) the municipality's own operation and services and (b) the activities of residents and businesses located in the

community. For each indicator policy, we queried whether the local government currently had such a policy or program in place.

We also asked if that jurisdiction was instead actively planning implementation of such a policy or program, considering implementation, or perhaps not considering it at all. We did so to capture a much larger spectrum of policy engagement than would be possible with a binary yes/no answer option. This wider range of answer options allows us to see in what direction a community may be heading with its sustainability policy. For instance, for two cities with few measures implemented, we might evaluate one city's efforts differently if it had many programs in planning or under consideration versus a city that had not considered those policies at all. This approach also allows us to gauge the propensity of local governments to seriously consider new policies and programs.

The first section also sought to capture administrative actions and organizational affiliations of local governments that indicate internal commitment to sustainability actions. We looked at such indicators as whether a locality had joined the organization ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability, signed the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, or had included sustainability goals in its General Plan.

In the second section of the survey, we asked respondents to evaluate the level of general activity in their jurisdiction in each of the ten sustainability dimensions. Ideally, the survey data would reveal correspondence between section one and section two responses. That is, cities that report in section one having many specific indicator policies or programs in place for a given sustainability dimension will also report in section two being very active in this dimension. However, we will also capture localities that report being highly active in a given dimension, but that have underway none of that dimension's indicator policies queried about in section one.

4. *Using Indicator Policies to Gauge Activity across Sustainability Policy Dimensions*

For each practice area, we asked respondent jurisdictions to report on the status of specific indicator initiatives or policies that might be underway in the jurisdiction, either to increase sustainability of local government operations or of the community at large. For instance, to capture activity designed to reduce and recycle waste, we asked jurisdictions whether they had active policies or initiatives for commercial solid waste recycling; industrial recycling; and recycling of construction materials and demolition waste. Similarly, to assess activity in the energy conservation practice area, we asked whether they had any program to conserve energy at municipal buildings or facilities, or to support home energy audits.

For each practice area, we chose indicator policies that in our professional judgment represented the types of actions a local government might undertake if seeking to make inroads in that general policy domain. We also favored indicator policies that had been used successfully to collect appropriate data in previously tested survey instruments.[1] Further, we did *not* choose as

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[1] See: Feiock, R. Implementation of Energy Efficiency and Sustainability Programs (Survey Instrument). Florida State University; Lubell, M., Feiock, R., & Handy, S. (2009). City Adoption of Environmentally Sustainable Policies in California's Central Valley. *Journal of the American Planning Association, 75*(293-308); Portney, K. E.

indicator policies those policies, programs, or initiatives that would be required of local governments in the state of California; community waste reduction and recycling initiatives are one such example. Instead, we sought indicator policies, programs or efforts that local governments would initiate independently. A complete list of the indicator policies about which we inquired is included in Appendix A.

The choice set of answers allowed respondents to indicate that that a specific policy or initiative may have been existing, planned, under consideration, or not under consideration, or that they did not know its status.

5. *Gauging Sustainability Activity with Self-Assessment*

When using specific indicator policies to assess levels of sustainability-oriented activity, the possibility exists that the specific indicator policies chosen for a given dimension may happen not to match the policies a jurisdiction has underway in that dimension. For example, a municipality that has no initiatives in operation or development for promoting commercial solid waste recycling, industrial recycling, and recycling of construction materials may appear to be doing little in the domain of waste reduction and recycling. Yet, the city may have expansive and innovative green waste and food waste reduction programs in place, efforts not captured by the indicator policies.

To address this potential source of measurement error in the survey and to capture *other* activity in each domain not represented by our chosen indicator policies, we gave respondents a different, self-assessment opportunity to report sustainability activity in their jurisdictions. We asked respondents to assess the *general* level of activity planned or underway in their jurisdiction in each of the key practice dimensions. In particular, we asked respondents to describe the activity in terms of the entire range of policy action (consideration, design, adoption, and implementation), as well as on-the-ground activity in the community. For each policy dimension, respondents could report that there was *no activity / none expected within the next three years*; *a little activity*; *moderate activity*; or *high activity*. (They could also indicate that they did not know.) We thereby hoped to capture cities or municipalities that *appeared* to be less active in a domain, given the evidence of indicator policies for that domain, but that were in fact actively engaging in sustainability planning in that domain, or were gearing up to do so.

6. *Survey Administration and Response*

We programmed and hosted the survey using SurveyGizmo, an online survey interface and platform. We invited the planning directors from California's 540 cities and counties included in the database of the State of California's Office of Planning and Research. SurveyGizmo automates individualized survey invitations to targeted respondents and generates survey invites, with SurveyGizmo as the "sender" of survey invitations. Invited respondents received a web link to our online survey instrument. We asked the planning directors themselves or an


(2003). *Taking Sustainable Cities Seriously: Economic Development, the Environment, and Quality of Life in American Cities*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

appropriately knowledgeable staff member to answer the survey, which was launched in mid-February of 2012 and was closed at the end of May, 2012.

Several weeks into the survey, we observed a lower than expected response rate. We suspected that our emailed survey invitations had been screened from intended recipients' inboxes by a spam filter, causing a low initial response rate. We also suspected that automated SurveyGizmo invitations – while efficient for survey recruitment – may have yielded a lower than initial response rate than would have an invitation emailed from a research team member. To address these concerns, we placed reminder phone calls and sent individualized follow-up emails to any targeted participants who had not responded the survey, steps that boosted the initial response rate considerably.

Upon closure of the online survey, 216 respondents had participated in the survey. As seen in Figure 2, the responding jurisdictions in our final analysis are distributed fairly evenly throughout the state, with balanced representation among both urban and rural cities and counties. Among county administrations, there are some slight patterns of non-response among the state's most northwestern counties, and among counties in the Central Valley, including Sacramento County.

Figure 2. Cities and Counties with Complete Responses to the Survey
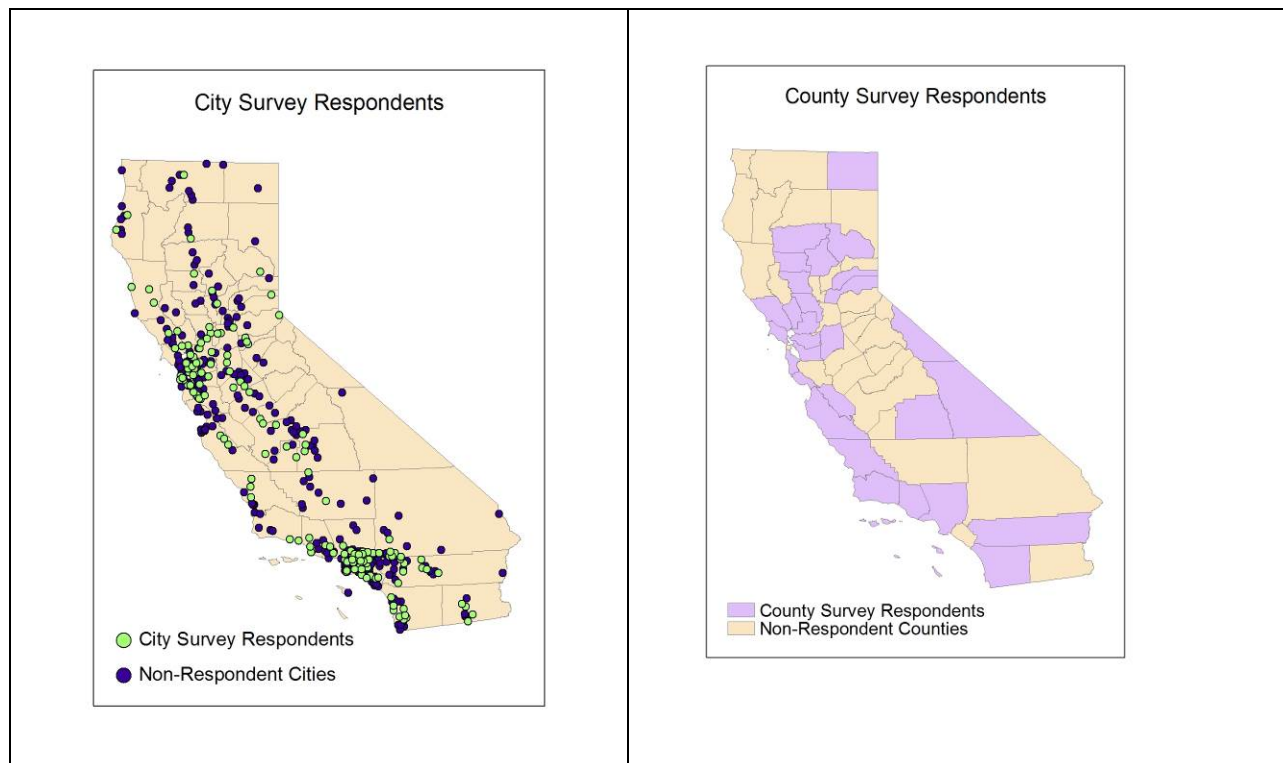
PART II. SURVEY RESULTS

In this section, we report our survey results. Our findings shed light on the current efforts that local jurisdictions in California are taking to improve the environmental sustainability of their communities and their own governmental operations. In particular, we report here on:

1. the degree to which local governments in California are collectively undertaking policies and initiatives to improve the environmental sustainability of their communities;

2. the degree to which local governments in California are collectively undertaking policies and initiatives to improve the environmental sustainability of their own operations;

3. the degree to which local governments have committed to administrative actions and organizational affiliations that indicate their commitment to sustainability efforts;

4. which specific policy dimensions local governments are pursuing most actively in the state of California;

5. which factors most motivate local governments to adopt and implement sustainability policies and programs;

6. the roles played by various local stakeholders in encouraging or discouraging a jurisdiction's efforts to implement sustainability initiatives; and

7. the extent of local government participation in existing regional and collaborative efforts to address sustainability.

1. Average Status of Sustainability Policies and Initiatives Across All Dimensions

Looking across *all domains* at the indicator policies and programs about which respondents were queried, our results suggest that many sustainability-related actions are being considered, planned, and implemented by local governments in California. This is encouraging news. Nonetheless, a significant fraction of responding local governments reported at the time the survey was administered (Spring 2012) that they had not even considered most of our indicator sustainability policies and actions.

Figure 3 illustrates among all responding jurisdictions the average level of consideration given to the indicator policies we asked about, *excluding* the "Administrative Actions" indicator policies. To create this chart, we calculated for each jurisdiction the average response across all indicator policies. Figure 3 is a histogram of these averages. For a jurisdiction to appear in the "Existing" category of Figure 2, the government would have reported actively implementing most of the indicator actions we asked about. Similarly, to appear in the "Not Considered" category of this histogram, the jurisdiction would have reported not having considered most of the indicator actions in our survey. As the figure shows, most governments fall somewhere in the middle, Approximately 20 percent of responding jurisdictions are in the least active group (the two far left bars in Figure 3), approximately 20 percent of responding jurisdictions are in the most active group (the two far right bars in Figure 3), and the remaining 60 percent are in the middle.

**Figure 3. For Responding Jurisdictions, the Status
of Sustainability Policies and Initiatives across All Policy Domains**
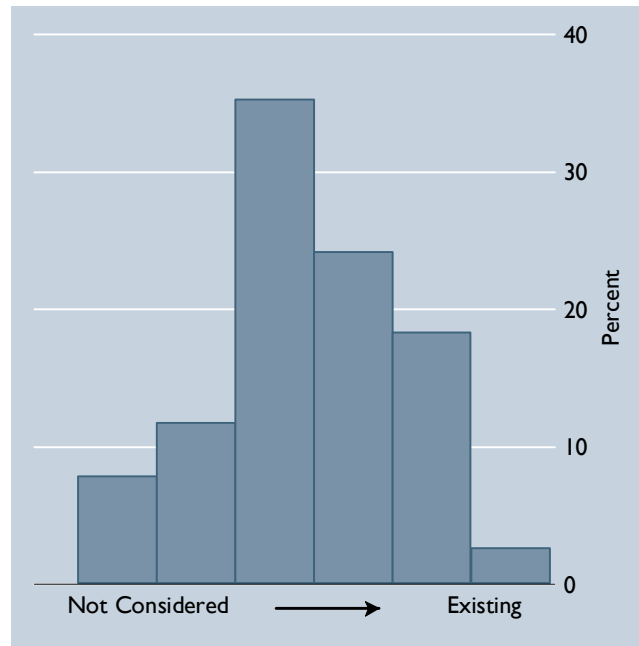
2. *Average Status of Sustainability-based Administrative Actions among Local Governments*

When it comes to administrative actions that California local governments could take to indicate and advance their sustainability commitments, survey data indicate that most local governments in California at least have sustainability issues on their radar screens. Figure 4 shows that more than half of the local governments in California responding to our survey have taken many sustainability-related administrative actions, such as including sustainability goals in General Plan, creating a Climate Action Plan, becoming a member of ICLEI or a signatory to the US Conference of Mayors Agreement on Climate Protection, or undertaking a greenhouse gas emissions inventory. Conversely, only less than 5 percent have not considered such steps at all. Further, given the large percentage of "Existing" administrative actions (Figure 4) and the large percentage of "Planned" non-administrative policy and program actions (Figure 3), we expect that within a relatively short timeframe, the share of jurisdictions reporting "Existing" on-the-ground policy and program actions will increase considerably. A second round of the survey could test whether this expectation is correct.

Figure 4. Average Status of Sustainability-oriented Administrative Actions and Organizational Memberships among Local Governments
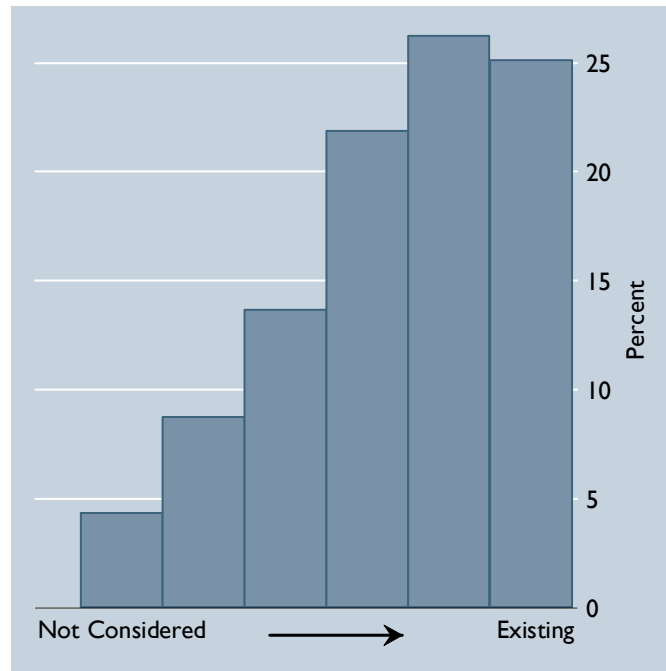

3. *The Extent to which Local Governments are Pursuing Initiatives in Specific Policy Dimensions*

The survey also sheds light on which specific policy dimensions local governments are most actively pursuing in the state of California. We expect that local governments will be unable to pursue sustainability initiatives across all policy dimensions with equal effort and that local governments may concentrate their efforts on specific dimensions, at least at first. We further expect that local government efforts will be more energetic in policy domains where California state law requires action, as is the case with waste recycling and climate action planning, for example.

Assessing the status of our indicator policies and programs among local governments, we can identify the policy dimensions that seem to have more traction among local governments in the state, gauged by indicator policies that already exist or are under consideration. The domains with the highest levels of existing/implemented sustainability activities and programs include:
- Waste reduction and recycling (Figure 7);
- Efficient transportation (Figure 8); and
- Land Use Planning and community design (Figure 9).

Figure 5.
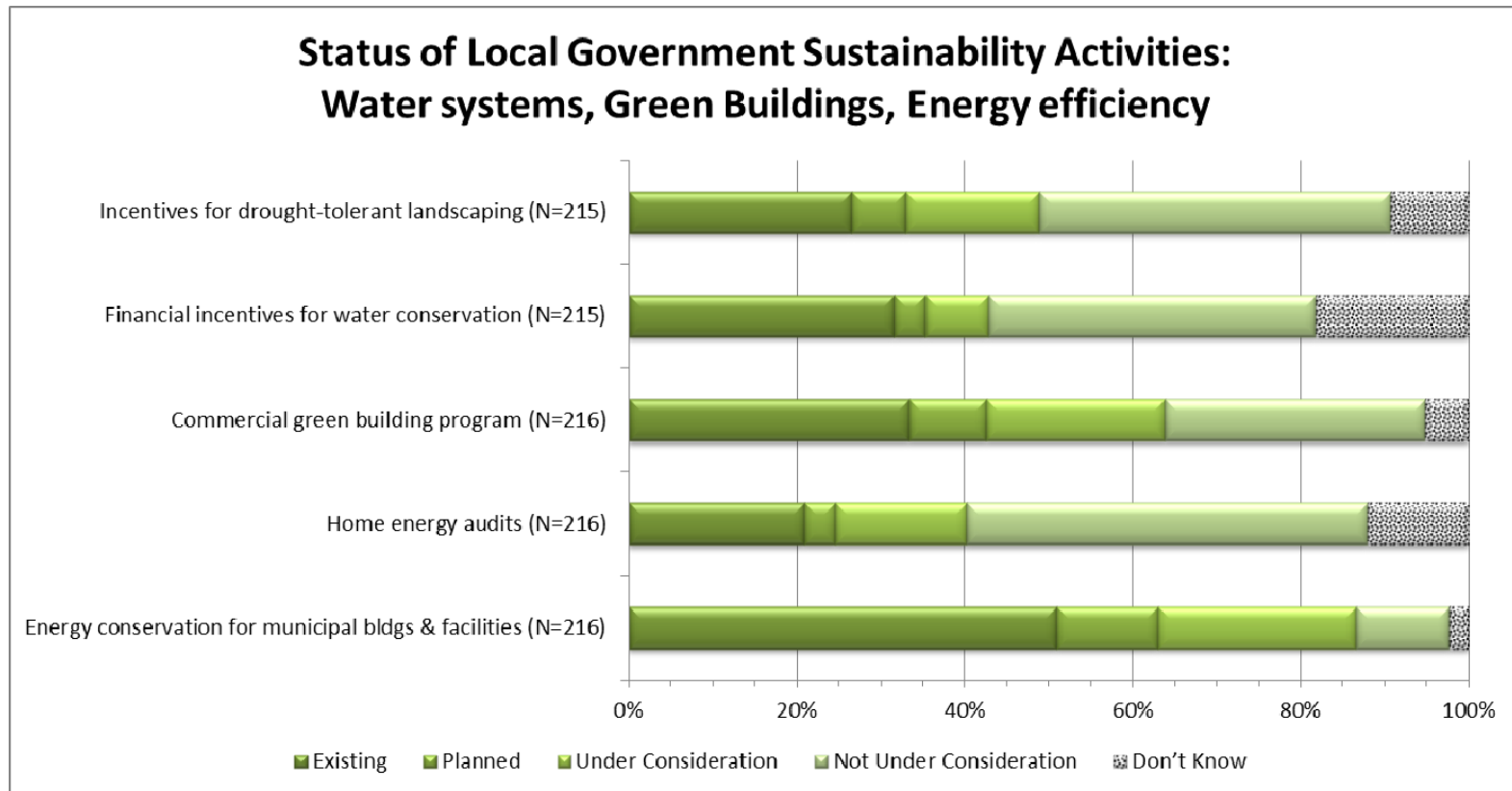
Roughly one-third of responding jurisdictions reported using incentives for drought-tolerant landscaping or for water conservation more broadly. But where such policies did not exist, jurisdictions were more likely not to be considering them at all than to have them in the works. Almost two-thirds of responding governments had green building initiatives in place, in planning, or under consideration. Efforts to conserve energy use in municipal buildings and facilities were widespread, with about only 10 percent of jurisdictions reporting no initiatives whatsoever.

Figure 6.

Status of Local Government Sustainability Activities: Municipal Energy Efficiency and Conservation
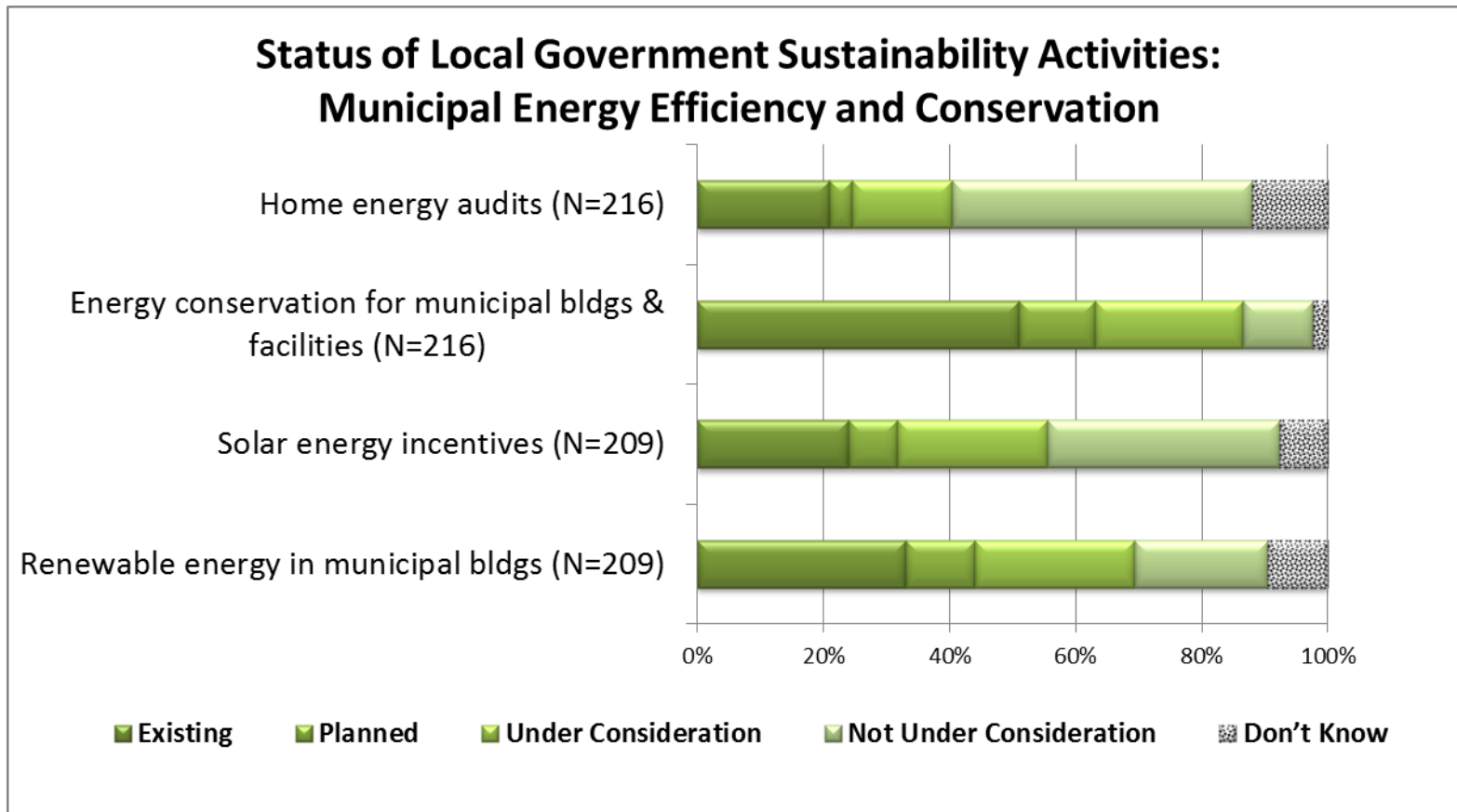
Local government efforts to reduce building energy use and promote solar alternatives appear fairly widespread, when measured in terms of initiatives implemented as well as planned or under consideration. Jurisdictions report having done more targeted toward municipal building and facilities that toward private homes, and it may be that governments are working first to reduce energy in the domains over which they have more control. Programs to audit home energy use are least common among responding jurisdictions, although about 20 percent of localities report using them and another 20 percent say they are planned or under consideration.

Figure 7.

Status of Local Government Sustainability Activities: Waste Reduction (N=209)
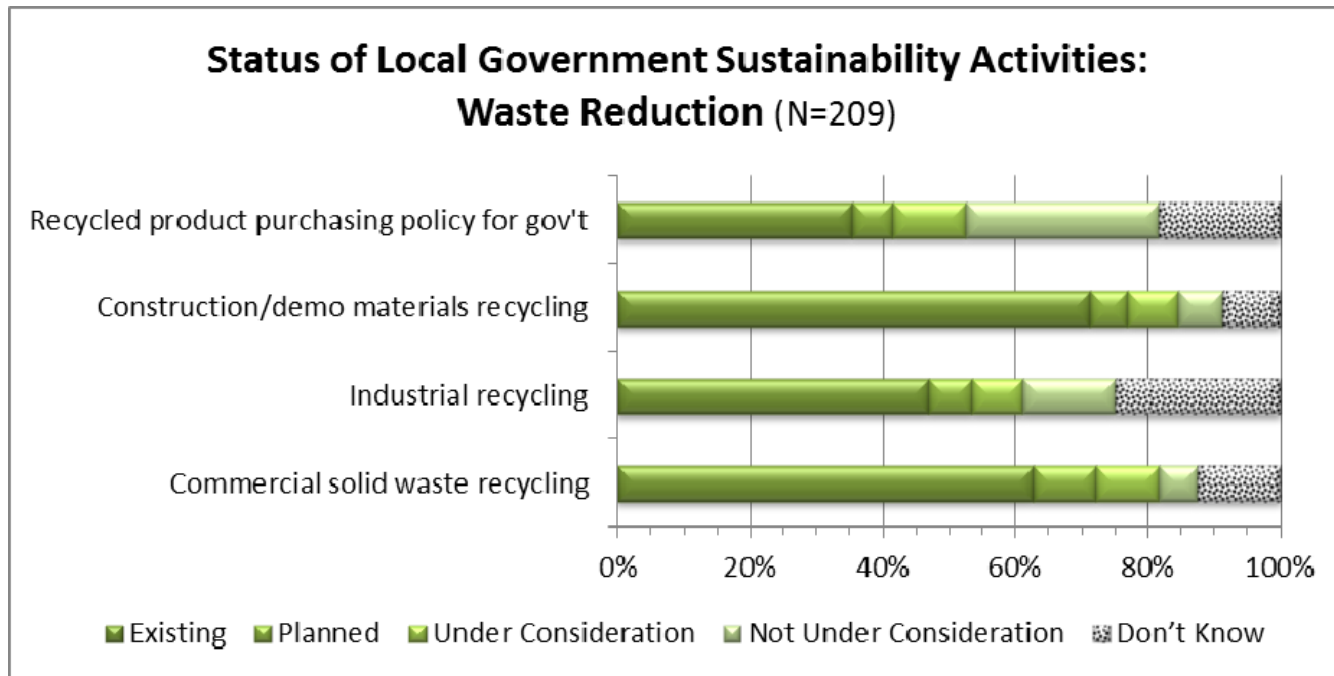
For almost all waste reduction indicator policies queried about, at least 40 percent of local governments had such policies or programs in place. Where programs did not currently exist, jurisdictions tended to report that such initiatives were either planned or under consideration, rather than not under consideration at all. Local governments reported that efforts to institute recycled product purchasing for government were less well developed than other initiatives.

Figure 8.
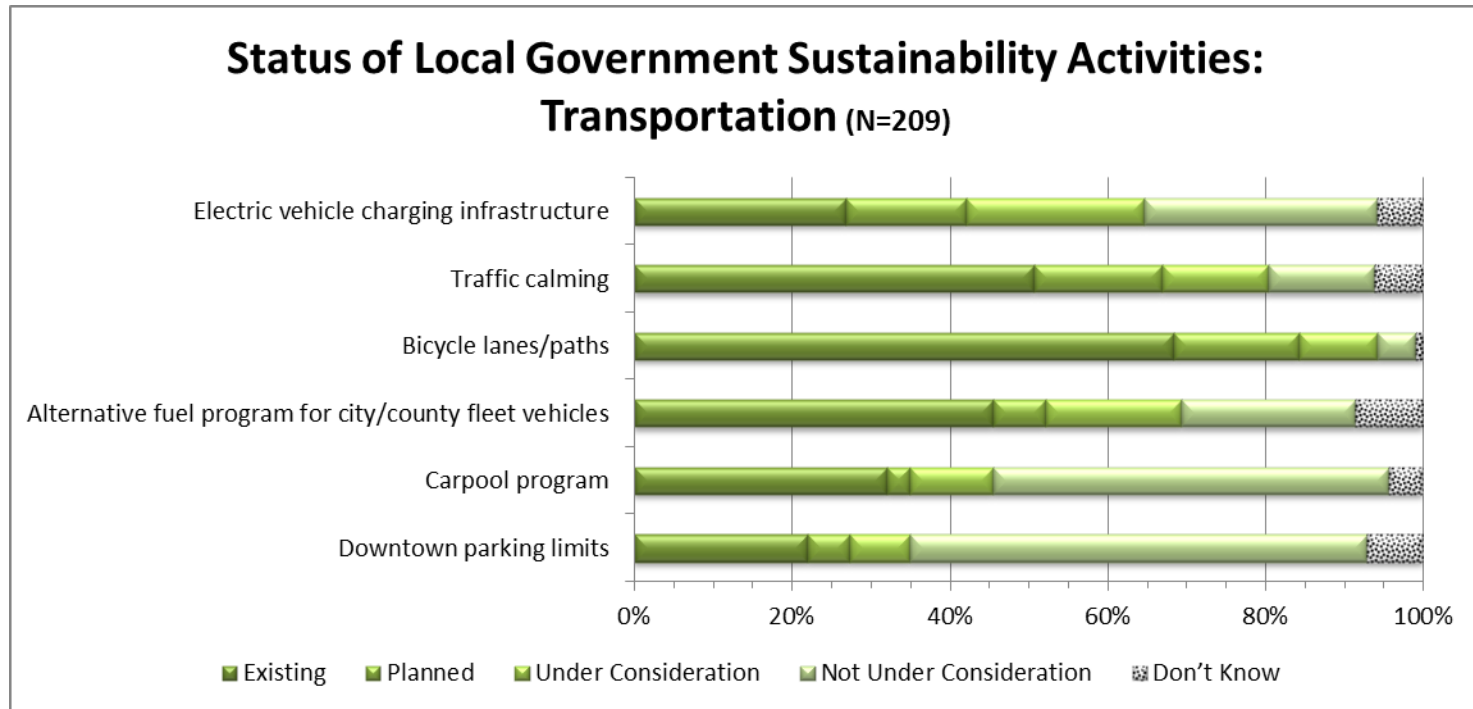
Survey data on Efficient Transportation indicators suggest this is a fairly active policy domain for local governments. A greater share of local governments reported having bicycle lanes, traffic calming measures, and alternative-fuel municipal fleets in place than did governments who had existing EV charging infrastructure or carpool programs. About half of responding jurisdictions said they had not yet considered downtown parking limits, the least well developed among all transportation indicator policies.

Figure 9.
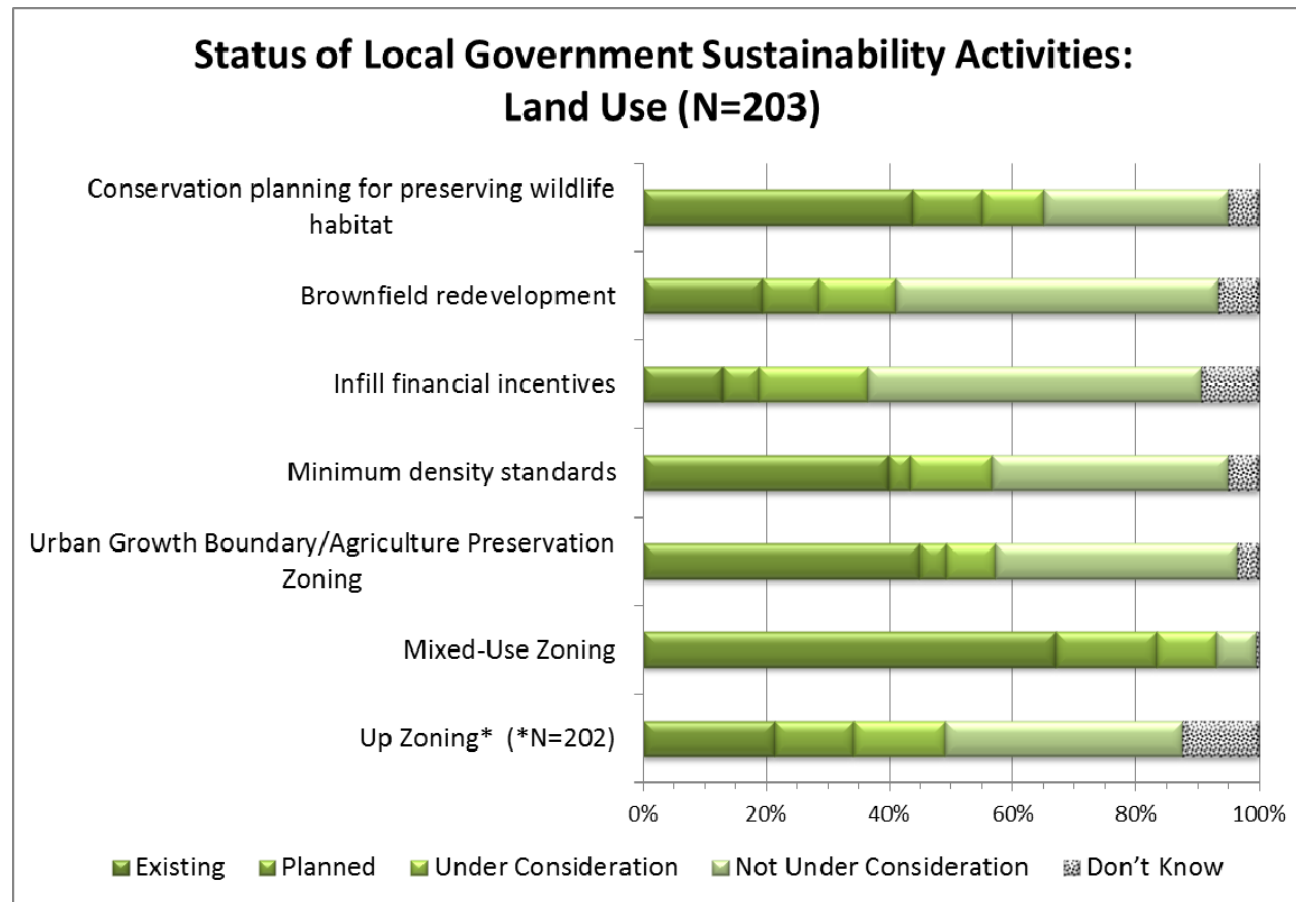
The survey data on land use policies may indicate the extent to which local governments have taken up SB-375 friendly smart growth principles. For instance, while upwards of 40 percent of local governments responding have existing policies to require minimum density standards or contain urban growth, significant shares of jurisdictions have not considered these and other land use approaches such as infill incentives and up-zoning to steer development toward established areas. Almost all responding jurisdictions, however, have policies to accommodate mixed use zoning.

4. *Specific Administrative Actions Taken by Local Governments to Address Sustainability*

In addition to information on jurisdictions' tangible sustainability initiatives, we also asked about administrative actions and organizational affiliations which local governments may have committed to express commitment to sustainability efforts. For instance, 22 percent of local government respondents have adopted a Climate Action Plan, and over 60 percent report that such a CAP is under consideration or in planning. Further, half of all respondents state that the General Plan already includes sustainability goals, while almost another 25 percent say such goals are under consideration. And over half of all respondents have undertaken a GHG inventory for their local government operations, while another 20 percent have one planned. About a third of California local jurisdictions are members of ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability.[2] This international association of local governments committed to sustainable development provides technical services, information and networking to assist local governments in developing sustainability initiatives.

Figure 10.

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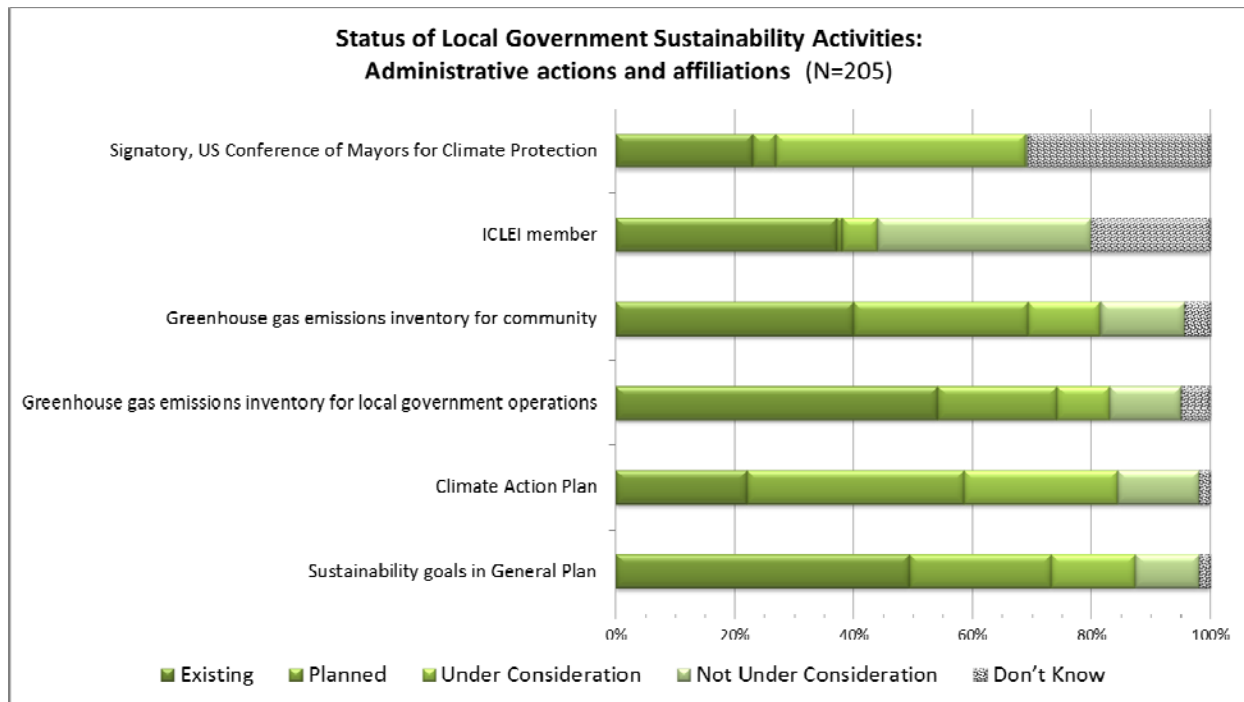
[2] Known earlier as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives.

5. *Local Governments Assess Their Own Activity in Specific Policy Domains*

In addition to asking local jurisdictions about specific indicator policies which they may have enacted, we also asked them to self-assess their activity level in each of the 11 domains of sustainability. We asked for separate self-assessments of activity to increase sustainability in their whole communities and of activity to increase sustainability in local government operations. Figures 11 and 12 display the results.

Overall, for many sustainability domains, at least three-quarters of responding jurisdictions report at least a little bit of activity in both their local government operations and in their communities. For both community and local government operations, the most activity is reported in the domain of "Waste Reduction and Recycling," a result that is consistent with what we would expect given California state law in this domain.

The least activity is reported in the domain of "Adapting to Climate Change." This result may be explained by the heavy focus of climate-related policy on mitigation of impacts on climate change (i.e. emissions reduction) rather than adaptation to it. While not surprising, the relative inattention to climate adaptation could be a cause for concern, as changes to our climate are predicted to affect (and are already affecting) California through increased risk of droughts, floods, forest fires, and, in coastal communities, sea level rise. It will be critical for communities across the state to develop plans to address these changes and to adapt to new expectations for the "normal" frequencies of these events.

Figure 11.
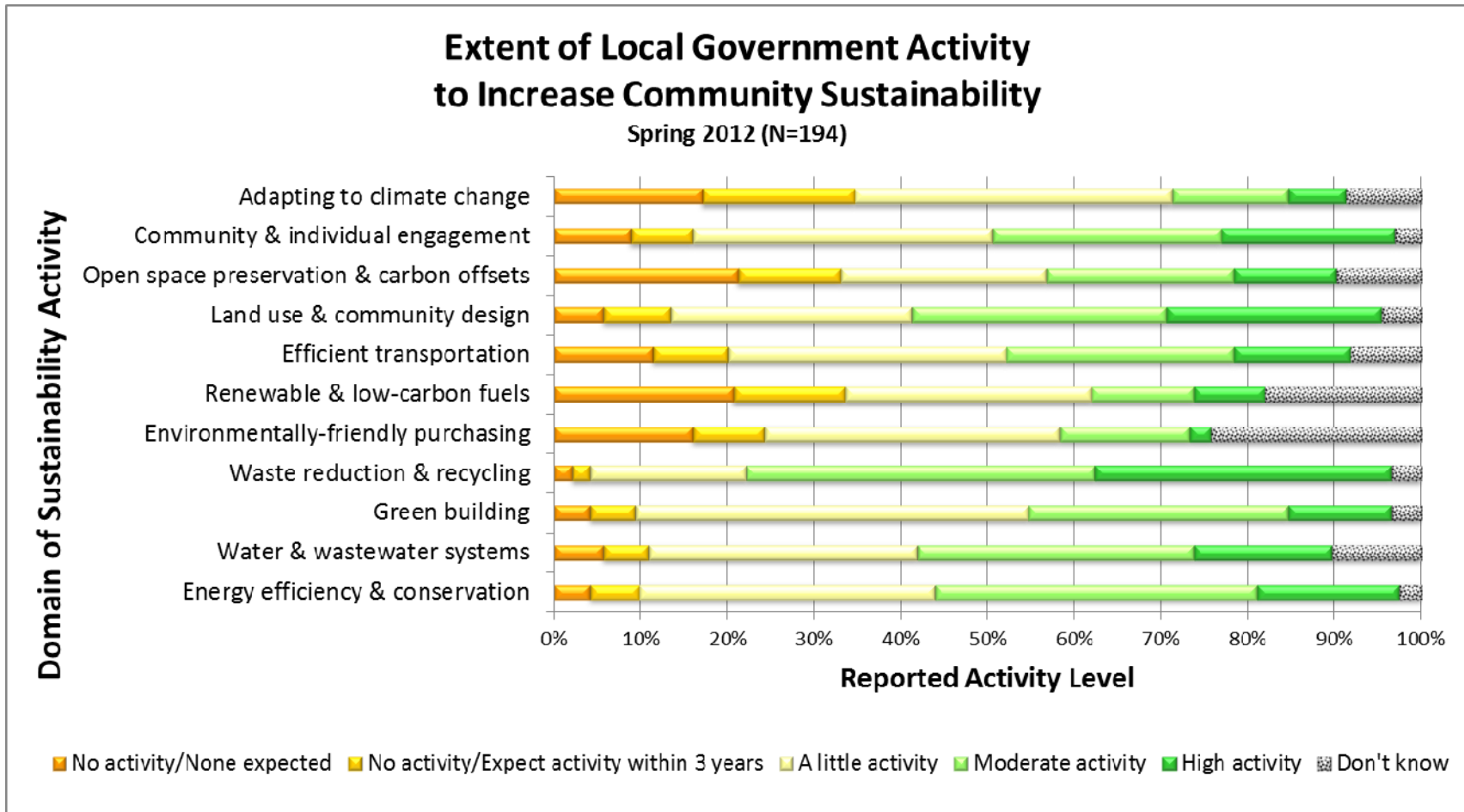
Figure 12.
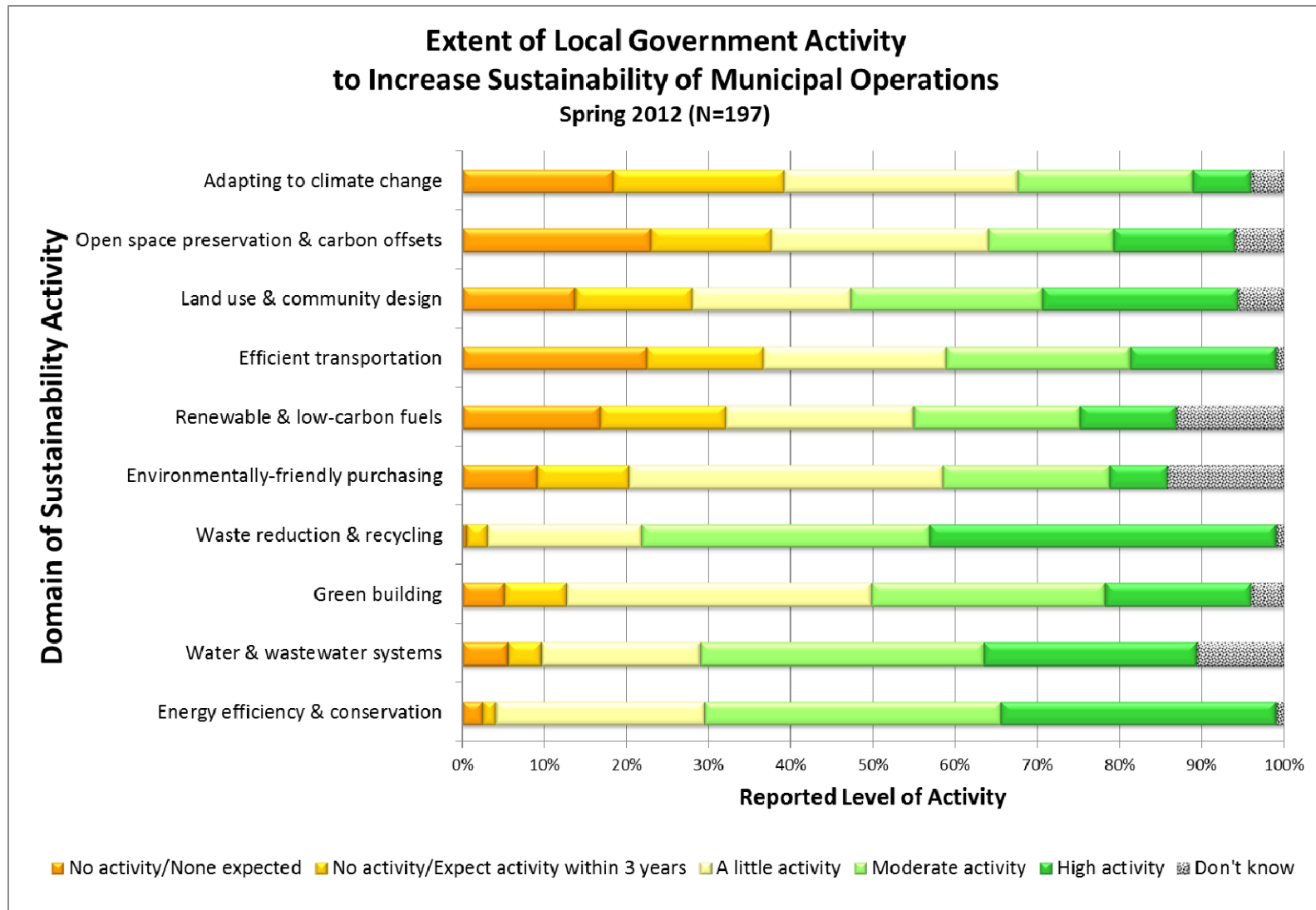
6. Monitoring Local Government Progress on Sustainability

Our survey asked whether local governments have mechanisms for tracking progress on sustainability activity. Figure 13 illustrates the responses we received. The domains for which jurisdictions have mechanisms for tracking progress generally correspond with the domains of most activity. That said, Figure 13 also makes clear that most jurisdictions do not have mechanisms for tracking progress in most sustainability domains.

Figure 13.

Do Cities Have Mechanisms for Tracking Sustainability Progress? (N=193)
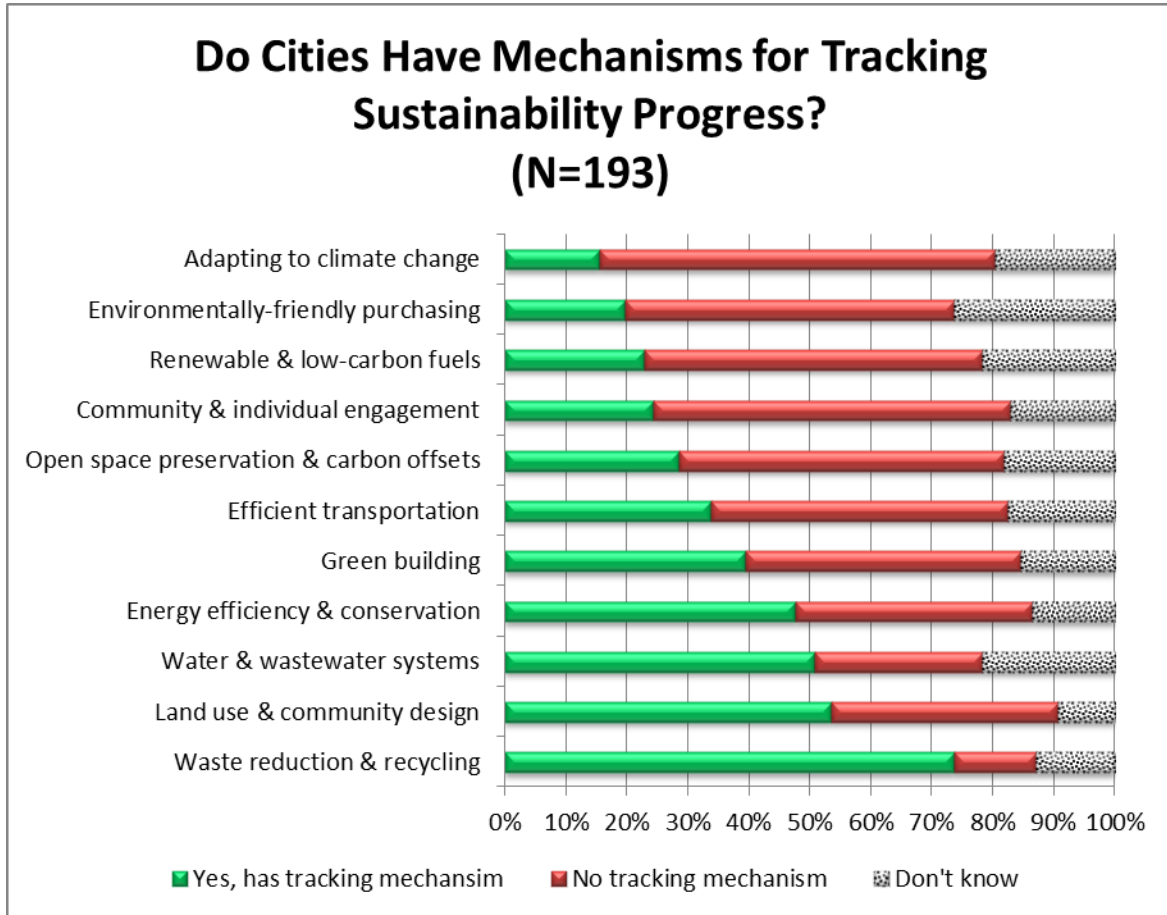
7. *Why Local Governments Adopt Sustainability Policies and Practices*

An important component of this survey is its attention to the factors that motivate local governments to adopt and implement sustainability policies and programs, as well as the roles played by various local stakeholders in encouraging or discouraging a jurisdiction's efforts to implement sustainability initiatives. Survey results show that desire to save money, to do the right thing, and to preserve the environment were named most frequently among respondents as extremely important factors motivating sustainability policies and programs.

Table 1. Motives for Sustainability Action and Their Importance

Reason for Adopting Sustainability Policies	Survey Statement	N	Not important	Somewhat important	Extremely Important	Don't know
Save Money	Sustainable practices save our jurisdiction money.	190	3%	31%	**59%**	7%
Right Thing	Sustainable practices are the right thing for our planet.	190	6%	**50%**	**39%**	5%
Be a Leader	Our community has historically been an environmental leader, and we aim to stay at the forefront of the local sustainability movement.	190	29%	36%	28%	7%
Help Local Economy	Sustainable practices are good for our local economy.	190	4%	46%	44%	6%
Preserve Environment	Sustainable practices are necessary to preserve our local air and water quality.	190	2%	**43%**	**52%**	3%
Attractive Community	Sustainable practices make our community a more attractive place for families and businesses to locate.	190	5%	39%	49%	7%
It's Required	Our community is required to adopt sustainable practices by the State of California and/or the US federal government.	190	7%	42%	45%	6%
Anticipate Future Requirements	We expect future state and federal regulations to require some policy commitment to sustainability, and we prefer to act now to develop our own sustainability approach.	190	15%	44%	35%	6%

8. *Impact of Situational Factors on Jurisdiction's Ability to Advance Sustainability Policies*

Table 2. Enablers of and Obstacles to Sustainability Policy

	N	Substantial obstacle	Minor obstacle	Not a factor	Minor enabler	Substantial enabler	Don't know
		Percentage of Responses (%)					
Financial resource availability	190	**70**	13	3	3	9	3
Conflict/convergence with other budget priorities	190	**62**	25	6	3	1	4
Staff expertise	190	**14**	**40**	23	15	7	2
Staff time availability	190	**47**	**33**	7	6	5	2
Information availability	190	5	29	**37**	15	8	5
Qualified contractor availability	190	4	22	**50**	9	5	10
Political will in decision-making	190	**21**	**36**	11	14	12	6
State policies and actions	190	16	13	11	**29**	**24**	8
Federal policies and actions	190	15	14	19	**29**	**14**	9

Some interesting observations emerge from our survey questions about factors that enable or hinder a jurisdiction's ability to advance sustainability policies. First, respondents perceive federal and state policies as minor or substantial enablers to local sustainability policies far more frequently than they perceive other situational factors as sustainability enablers. Also, locals see federal and state action as pushing them forward more often than thwarting them. Still, in almost 30 percent of cases, respondents name federal and state policies as an obstacle to sustainability at some level. These seemingly contradictory results may point to what Mermet et al call "a major trend in contemporary policy making," namely the phenomenon of policymakers at different levels of government pursuing conflicting policies, resulting in the "deferred settlement of contradictions."[3] Second, over 60 percent of respondents identify conflict between sustainability initiatives and other budget priorities as a substantial obstacle to advancing sustainability policies. This confirms views in the literature that a "high level of contradiction and conflict [exists] between environmental and other sectoral public policies" (Mermet 2012, 81). Third, more respondents (37 percent) report that information availability has *no impact* on their ability to advance sustainability policies than respondents who say it's an obstacle (34 percent) or an enabler (23 percent). Finally, the capacity of local governments, measured in available financial resources, available staff time, and – to a lesser degree – staff expertise, are cited by a majority of respondents as obstacles to adopting and implementing sustainability policies.

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[3] 2012, 183; Leroy and Arts, 2006, p. 3.
http://engees.unistra.fr/site/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/gsp/chap1_Leroy.pdf)

9. *Actors Who Have Championed the Adoption of Sustainability Policies*

We asked respondents about the role of actors in championing sustainability initiatives. Respondents named planning staff as *leading* champions and as *supporting* champions more frequently than they named other actors. The Planning Commission was the actor identified most frequently as not having visibly championed sustainability policies. Across all actors, respondents more commonly said an actor was a supporting champion than a leading champion.

Table 3. Sustainability Champions

	Mayor	Elected Officials	Planning Commission	Planning Staff	Public Work Staff	Other City Staff	Community Stakeholders
N	163	190	190	190	190	190	190
Has been a leading champion	24%	17%	9%	**30%**	18%	13%	20%
Has been a supporting champion	45%	55%	53%	**61%**	53%	51%	45%
Has not visibly championed sustainability	31%	28%	**38%**	9%	28%	36%	36%

10. *Do Actors in the Jurisdiction Support or Oppose Sustainability Policies and Programs?*

By asking whether specific jurisdictional actors supported or opposed sustainability, we allowed several interesting patterns to suggest themselves. First, all actors seem to be more commonly associated with strong or moderate *support* than with strong or moderate *opposition*. This suggests that it is more common for respondents to perceive support for sustainability than to recognize opposition to sustainability; this is true across all / almost all* actor categories. (*Developers are seen almost equally as supporters and opponents.) Second, while there's a high proportion of "don't know" responses in general, they are unevenly distributed across actor groups. Homeowners and the media are the two groups most commonly associated with a "don't know" response, suggesting the views or activities of these groups are not well known to them. Third, respondents name environmentalists as strongly supporting sustainability far more commonly than they name other actors as strongly supporting sustainability. This is expected. Conversely, developers and business interests are named as sustainability opponents more commonly than are other actors. This makes sense too, in a stereotypical kind of way.

Table 4. Public Support for Sustainability Actions

	N	Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Neutral	Moderately support	Strongly support	Don't know
Public	190	3%	4%	26%	45%	11%	12%
Chamber of Commerce	190	2%	9%	28%	29%	9%	23%
Neighborhood Organizations	190	1%	5%	27%	33%	7%	27%
Environmentalists	190	1%	0%	6%	15%	**60%**	18%
Developers	190	4%	**21%**	26%	24%	2%	24%
Homeowners	190	2%	6%	34%	15%	2%	42%
Business	190	3%	**14%**	30%	31%	4%	20%
Media	190	1%	2%	24%	34%	8%	31%

11. Regional Collaboration and Climate Action Planning

The Strategic Growth Council has committed resources to improving the ability of local governments in California to share with one another information and resources related to sustainability policy and programs. The presence of robust resource-sharing networks can help to diffuse useful information and effective practices for the development and implementation of sustainability initiatives, and the SGC's "Sustainable Communities Learning Network" (SCLN) is designed to build such networks. This survey takes the first of two steps needed to assess the penetration of the learning network among local jurisdictions. In addition to establishing baseline measures of local governments' activity levels with regards to sustainability, it also captures information on participation by local governments in existing sustainability efforts that are regional and collaborative in nature.

Table 5. Participation in Regional Collaborative Sustainability Initiatives

N=188	Frequency	Percent
Yes, involved in regional collaborative	170	90.4
No, not involved in regional collaborative	16	8.5
Don't know	2	1.1

Of the three quarters of survey respondents who provided information about involvement in regional collaboratives, 90 percent reported involvement in such efforts.

When local governments do participate in regional collaborative sustainability efforts, they most commonly report devoting less than 15 hours per month of cumulative staff time to such activities. Among respondents who provided information about their involvement, 70 percent reported that their jurisdiction had taken action as a result of participation in the regional effort.

Table 6. Time spent by staff on regional collaborative sustainability efforts (Total monthly planning staff hours)

N=188	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5 hours	89	47.3
5 to 15 hours	68	36.2
16 to 40 hours	18	9.6
More than 40 hours	6	3.2
Don't know	7	3.7

Table 7. Participation in a regional collaboration has led our jurisdiction to take action to advance sustainability.

N=188	Frequency	Percent
Yes, jurisdiction has taken action	132	70.2
No, jurisdiction has not taken action	42	22.3
Don't know	14	7.4

Climate Action Plan Implementation

Our question about levels of implementation of the Climate Action Plan had a high rate of non-response (n=205, or 83 percent), with only 41 (17 percent) of all participating jurisdictions providing an answer. While the data may therefore be less reliable than data from other questions, it is interesting to note that the largest group of respondents reported that less than 25 percent of CAP policies and measures had been adopted or implemented.

Percentage of CAP measures that have been adopted / implemented

N=41	Frequency	Percent
less than 25 percent	16	39.0
25 to 50 percent	6	14.6
50 to 75 percent	7	17.1
greater than 75 percent	2	4.9
Don't know	10	24.4

Appendix A. Indicator Policies Addressed in Survey Questions

For each key practice areas in the survey, we queried respondents about their use of the following indicator policies and initiatives.

1. Energy efficiency and conservation
- Energy conservation for municipal bldgs & facilities
- Home energy audits

2. Water and wastewater systems
- Financial incentives for water conservation

3. Green building
- Commercial green building program
- Incentives for drought-tolerant landscaping

4. Waste reduction and recycling
- Commercial solid waste recycling
- Industrial recycling
- Construction and demolition materials recycling and reuse

5. Environmentally-friendly purchasing
- Recycled product purchasing policy for government entities

6. Renewable and low-carbon fuels
- Renewable energy use in local government buildings
- Solar energy incentives

7. Efficient transportation
- Downtown parking limits
- Carpool program
- Alternative fuel program for city/county fleet vehicles
- Bicycle lanes/paths
- Traffic calming
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure

8. Land use, planning, and community design
- Up Zoning
- Mixed-Use Zoning
- Urban Growth Boundary/Agriculture Preservation Zoning
- Minimum density standards
- Infill financial incentives
- Brownfield redevelopment
- Conservation planning for preserving wildlife habitat

9. **Offsetting carbon emissions**
   - No indicator question was used.

10. **Administrative actions and organizational memberships**
    - Sustainability goals in General Plan
    - Climate Action Plan
    - Greenhouse gas emissions inventory for local government operations
    - Greenhouse gas emissions inventory for community
    - ICLEI member
    - Signatory, US Conference of Mayors for Climate Protection