

October 2008

Dear Colleague,

Local Land Use Issues Are Heating Up

The heat is turned up under local land use decisions. Literally.

The good news? California is a world leader in energy efficiency. When the first wave of green innovation began in the 1970s, California was an early and ardent adopter. Today California is more energy efficient and emits fewer greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions per person than the rest of the US, Germany, the United Kingdom, or Japan (source: Next 10, "California Green Innovation Index" 2008).

The bad news? Once a leader, always a leader. Greenhouse gas emissions are front and center on California's radar screen. The powers that be, from Sacramento to air, water and transportation agencies, continue to formulate strategies to reduce GHG emissions. Assembly Bill 32 requires the state board to adopt a statewide GHG emissions limit equivalent to the statewide GHG emissions level in 1990, to be achieved by 2020. Where are those of us in our industry most likely to feel this?

In a word, local land use decisions. "Business as usual" will soon be morphing into a process that emphasizes - if not dictates -- a low-carbon future.

In September, Snow Properties was one of several sponsors of the day-long forum, "**Partnering with Local Agencies to Combat Global Warming**," hosted by the Local Government Commission and the California Attorney General's Office. No matter one's position on the subject, this is need-to-know information for industry leaders.

All local General Plans will require updating to AB32 requirements. The cities of San Diego and Chula Vista are in the lead. The cities of San Marcos and Encinitas are in the process. A sampling of some of the new ways of thinking includes:

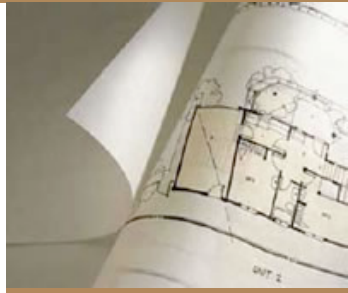
- A climate-friendly community starts with a good general plan
- A 10% increase in urban parks translates to a 4-degree reduction in temperature
- "Elegant Density" is a new model for countering NIMBY opposition to high-density housing
- Creating more walkable streets is a first step in reducing GHG emissions from cars and small trucks
- Electric cars are the future. All newly built garages should incorporate electrical plugs in front
- Municipalities might waive permit fees for solar construction

Just like the weather, all politics, including land use decisions, is local. Stay tuned for more developments.

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Snow Properties provides project management services to developers, financial institutions, owners and managers of real property assets in Southern California. Its expertise spans three decades and all stages of real estate development.

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The Expert's Corner

With the rapid emergence of "green" building standards, the commercial broker has the opportunity to provide added value to commercial clients. How? By helping them assemble a team that can maximize the benefits and minimize the risks of green construction. On the plus side, "green" construction has the potential for favorable tax credits, public & private non-tax financial incentives, potential net metering of excess energy production, tradable credits, potential reduced operating expenses translating into reduced CAMs for potential tenants, and the cachet of the early adaptor advantage.

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Winton & Larson, LLP and
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In a presentation to the North San Diego County Association of Realtors, Commercial Section

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