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Kwon, Myungjung

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Myungjung Kwon*

Examining Sustainable Development Policy in California Cities: 2011 Energy Sustainable California Communities Survey

Abstract: In order to enhance both marketability and sustainability of the community, California cities seek a sustainable development policy which attempts to integrate sustainability programs into an economic development strategy. The author examines sustainable development policy in California cities and explores four research questions. First, to what extent are California cities interested in the adoption of sustainable development policy which integrates sustainability programs into their economic development strategy? Second, what policy efforts do California cities currently undertake for a sustainable development policy? Third, what obstacles do California cities face in pursuing sustainable development policy? Fourth, what additional efforts do California cities need to undertake for a better and smarter sustainable development policy? This research develops a framework from literatures in economic development policy and sustainability policy for descriptive analyses using the 2011 Energy Sustainable California Communities Survey data. The findings from the descriptive and explanatory analyses indicate that considerable numbers of California cities are interested in sustainable development policy and engage in various efforts related to the policy, but lack of funds and political will discourage California cities from pursuing the policy effectively.

Keywords: climate protection and energy sustainability policy actions; economic development strategies; green industries; sustainable development policy.

*Corresponding author: Myungjung Kwon, California State University, Fullerton, Politics, Administration and Justice, 800 N. State College Blvd. Fullerton, CA 92834, USA, Tel.: +657-278-3809, e-mail: mkwon@fullerton.edu

1 Introduction

Pollution and climate change are significant problems that demand governmental action. State governments have adopted climate protection policy to tackle environmental policy issues. These policies often require local governments to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. As a result, considerable numbers of

municipal governments have initiated a variety of policy activities to reduce GHG emissions in their communities (Krause 2011). For instance, in order to comply with Assembly Bill (AB) 32¹ and Senate Bill (SB) 375,² California cities are transforming their communities to sustainable ones by undertaking a variety of sustainability policy activities which encourage the use of renewable energy sources and reduce GHG emissions sourced within their boundaries. Cities promote these sustainability policy activities by using their traditional and broad powers to regulate land use and transportation within their boundaries.

However, at the street level, the benefits of undertaking sustainability policy activities, such as energy bill savings and better air quality, may not be significant enough to make sustainability a top consideration for businesses and residents. Simply mandating stricter building and emissions standards may discourage new business development and result in the relocation of existing businesses to other jurisdictions (Portney 2003; Kwon et al. 2011). Also, due to a very high up-front cost, developers, building owners, and tenants may not be motivated to make business decisions that would result in energy efficiency (Brown et al. 2010). Thus, it is difficult for cities to simultaneously encourage sustainability while retaining existing businesses and increasing the marketability of the community to new business. Therefore, the sustainability goals of AB 32 and SB 375, such as large GHG emissions reduction, may go unrealized.

The purpose of this research is to seek the best and smartest policy model for California cities to enhance both marketability and sustainability of the community. This study has developed a four-stage extent of importance regarding the integration of sustainability programs into a city's economic development strategy. This continuum is referred, in my discussion below, as representing the extent to which a city is interested in a sustainable development policy. Four research questions guide this effort. First, to what extent are California cities interested in the adoption of sustainable development policy to integrate sustainability programs into their economic development strategy? Second, what sustainable development policy efforts do California cities currently undertake? Third, what obstacles do California cities face in pursuing sustainable development policy?

¹ In 2006, the California Legislature passed and Governor Schwarzenegger signed AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, which set the 2020 GHG emissions reduction goal into law (California Air Resources Board).

² SB 375, Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 enhances California's ability to reach its AB 32 goals by promoting good planning. Each of California's MPOs (Metropolitan Planning Organizations) is required/is encouraged to prepare a "sustainable communities strategy (SCS)" that demonstrates how the region will meet its greenhouse gas reduction target through integrated land use, housing and transportation planning (California Air Resources Board).

Fourth, what additional efforts do California cities need to undertake to achieve a better and smarter sustainable development policy? In order to answer these questions, this study examines one particular sustainable development policy which integrates the attraction of green industries into a city's economic development strategy. This empirical study uses survey data gathered in 2010–2011 from city government planners in California and employs descriptive and explanatory analyses to answer these research questions.

2 Sustainable Development Policy in California Cities

Local economic development policies are the primary way for local governments to enhance economic growth in the community (Peterson 1981; Kwon et al. 2009). For this reason, economic development policies have been a popular and important tool at the local level and a primary focus of policy makers and administrators of local governments (Eisinger 1988; Luke et al. 1988; Streib and Poister 2002). Kwon et al. (2009) support this popularity through a N-large study that many reformed cities, such as city manager cities, have used various economic development policy tools (or strategies) to retain their current businesses and attract new businesses.

However, citizens today demand a better quality of life that includes the preservation of open spaces and many other environmental amenities in addition to economic growth resulting in more employment opportunities and higher family incomes (Portney 2003; Anderson 2006). Sustainability literature suggests that local governments need to undertake sustainability policy that protect the environment and reduce pollution in order to improve the quality of life of their citizens (Portney 2005: pp. 5–6; Brody et al. 2008). Sustainability policy at local levels includes climate protection and energy sustainability programs, such as mitigating GHG emissions and promoting energy efficiency, but local governments are reluctant to adopt and implement them due to the aforementioned reasons which include lack of funds and political will.

Recently, cities have attempted to tweak their economic development strategies by integrating these sustainability programs into achieving two goals, the quality of life and economic growth (Portney 2003). It is expected that the current trend is to combine economic development strategies and sustainability programs rather than either one alone. This research refers to sustainable development policy as integrating sustainability programs into a city's economic development strategy both to enhance economic growth and to sustain the

environment. Sustainable development policy provides cities with various benefits. A city with a sustainable development policy can plan land-use to promote energy efficiency in new development and redevelopment projects which can reduce green-house gas emissions and improve air quality (Brown et al. 2009). Also, having a sustainable development policy can help a city gain a green reputation and attract green and high-tech industries which can, in turn, increase employment opportunities for local communities and the local tax base (Portney 2005; Krause 2011). A considerable number of local governments have adopted a sustainable development policy in which their economic development strategy is tied to climate protection and energy sustainability activities to achieve two goals, the marketability of the community and the quality of the life (Mazmanian and Kraft 1999; Portney 2003: p. 104).

One of the most popular sustainable development policies at the local level is to integrate the attraction of green industries into the city's overall economic development strategy. Attracting new industries has been gaining popularity among cities because this strategy can result in short-term and business-oriented achievements which elected officials prefer (Agranoff and McGuire 2003; Feiock 2007; Kwon et al. 2009). However, attracting new manufacturing industries can result in negative side effects for a community, such as air and water pollution and energy usage increase (Peterson 1981). Therefore, the current trend for cities is to try to attract green industries to their community instead of manufacturing ones. Attracting green industries has little negative impact on the local environment, and at the same time, it provides various benefits for citizens and local governments (Brown et al. 2009; Krause 2010). It seems that many cities are interested in attracting green industries in order to simultaneously improve the financial and environmental performance of their city by providing greater job opportunities with little negative impact on the environment.

Following the trend, California cities actively seek this particular sustainable development policy which integrates the attraction of green industries into their overall economic development strategy. Such sustainable development policy can be carried out with various efforts to improve operational environments in order to attract more green industries. For instance, a city provides financial or other incentives to encourage energy efficient technologies in a new development. Regulatory relief or streamlined processes can be granted for developments that incorporate energy efficient technologies. A city can reduce permitting costs for developments that install renewable energy source systems. Also, cities can attempt to have expedited or streamlined permitting for green industries. Sustainability policy studies find that cities who seek sustainable development do not undertake all these efforts, but the cities' use of these efforts vary depending on political and economic feasibilities (Francis and Feiock 2010; Svava 2011). It is expected that

California cities also vary in the way they undertake these efforts depending on financial and political contexts.

This research argues that California cities face several obstacles when trying to adopt the sustainable development policy which integrates the attraction of green industries into their overall economic development strategy. A city facing high unemployment would be more likely to opt for any kind of economic development they can get, while cities with lower unemployment may have the luxury of preferring sustainable development. Local fiscal conditions, such as availability of funds, may determine if a city pursues sustainable development policy because sustainable development requires higher up-front financial investment and may be more expensive to maintain than traditional energy systems (Victor 2004: p. xii; Rabe 2008; Brown et al. 2009). In addition, since sustainability programs conserve non-excludable common resources (e.g., air, water, and carbon energy sources) and their benefits to the city diffuse to free-riding neighboring jurisdictions, cities are less motivated to voluntarily commit to these programs (Olson 1965; Hardin 1978; Krause 2011). The fact that political will and institutions are more concerned about fragmented and noticeable economic benefits may hinder the adoption of sustainable development policy at the local level (Edmonds and Sands 2003; Portney 2003; Zahran et al. 2007; Brody et al. 2008).

Thus, important insights can be generated by examining the different ways in which California cities are interested in sustainable development policy and implement sustainable development. This study uses descriptive and explanatory analyses to determine to what extent California cities are interested in a sustainable development policy which integrates the attraction of green industries into their overall economic development strategy and to explain what factors affect the interests of California cities regarding this sustainable development policy. A four-stage extent of importance regarding the integration of attracting green industries into a city's economic development strategy is developed and variation in this continuum is explained by contextual factors, such as form of government, political barriers, fiscal constraints, population, and community wealth. These insights may help determine what additional steps California cities need to take for a better and smarter sustainable development policy model.

3 Sample and Data Collection

Four hundred and twenty one California cities were surveyed in 2011 (Energy Sustainable California Communities Survey) to collect data for this study. For this survey, I used names and addresses of the city planners provided by the

California Planners Information Network (CAPLIN). With two mailings, a total of 147 completed surveys were received for an overall response rate of 34.9%, which is a reasonable response rate for this type of survey.³

Table 1 and Figure 1 compare the numbers and percentages of all California cities and the sample responding cities by population sizes. Our responding cities reflect a slightly lower percentage of small cities (below 10,000) as they constitute 24.5% of California cities and only 14.3% in our sample, and a slightly higher percentage of larger cities in each of the three categories 10–49,999, 50–99,999, and 100,000 and over. However, the sample is not so badly skewed that we would

Table 1: The Number and Percentage of all CA Cities and Responding CA Cities According to Population Sizes.

Population	All CA cities	Responding CA cities
Below 10,000	114 (24.5)	21 (14.3)
10,000–49,999	199 (42.8)	66 (44.9)
50,000–99,999	96 (20.6)	40 (27.2)
100,000 and over	56 (12.0)	20 (13.6)
Total	465 (100.0)	147 (100.0)

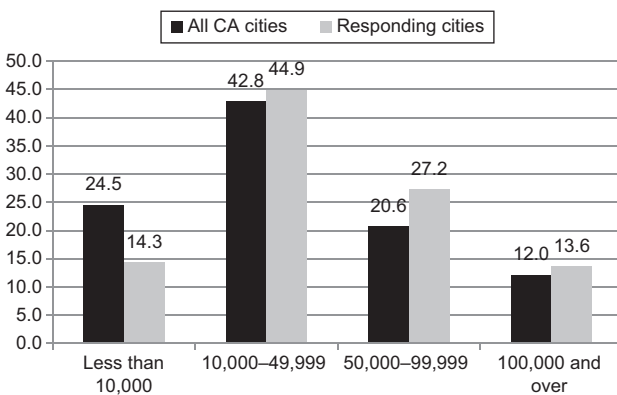


Figure 1: Histogram for Percentages of all CA Cities and Responding CA Cities According to Population Sizes.

³ The ICMA national survey for city governments has response rates ranging from 25% to 35% (see the study of Poister and Streib 1994 and 2005, and also the recent survey of Local Government Sustainability and Policies and Programs 2010).

expect a sample error. Table 2 and Figure 2 show the numbers and percentages of all California cities and the responding cities by forms of government, mayor-council and council-manager forms. The sample is within 1% of the actual distribution by forms of government.

4 What This Study Has Discovered

This section answers the three research questions; To what extent are California cities interested in sustainable development policy? What efforts related to sustainable development have California cities undertaken? What obstacles do California cities face in pursuing sustainable development policy? Several survey questions asked about the interest, efforts, and factors of California cities in regard to the integration of attracting green businesses into their economic development strategy. Table 3 and Figure 3 show a four-stage extent of importance regarding a sustainable development policy which integrates the attraction of green industries in a city’s economic development strategy. This continuum is

Table 2: The Number and Percentage of all CA Cities and Responding CA Cities According to Forms of Government.

Form	All CA cities	Responding CA cities
Mayor-Council	15 (3.2)	3 (2.0)
Council-Manager	450 (96.8)	144 (98.0)
Total	465 (100.0)	147

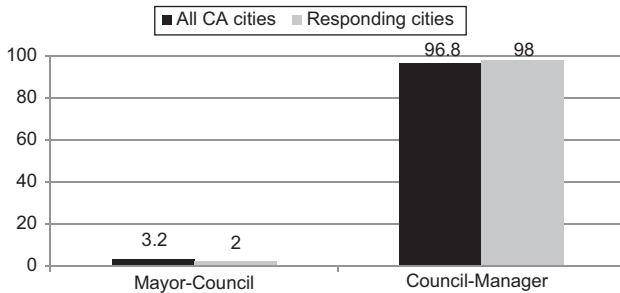
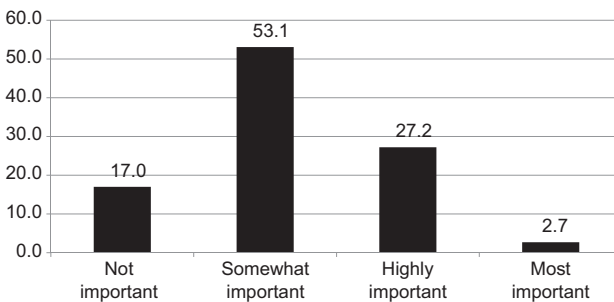


Figure 2: Histogram for Percentages of all CA Cities and Responding CA Cities According to Forms of Government.

Table 3: How Important is the Attraction of “Green Business” in Your City’s Economic Development Strategy?

	Number of cities	%
Not important	25	17.0
Somewhat important	78	53.1
Highly important	40	27.2
Most important	4	2.7
Total	147	100

**Figure 3:** Histogram for Percentages of Responding Cities Regarding the Importance of Attracting Green Business in their Economic Development Strategy.

measured by four ordinal scale choices about the importance of the attraction of green business in economic development strategy to California cities; *Not important*, *Somewhat important*, *Highly important*, and *Most important*. Eighty three percent of the responding cities consider the sustainable development policy important and 17% of them have no interest. About half of them consider it somewhat important and 27.2% of them consider it highly important. It implies that the majority of California cities are interested in the sustainability development policy to improve quality of life and increase economic growth.

Table 4 shows what efforts California cities have undertaken as a part of their economic development strategy to attract green business or industry. The most popular effort undertaken by the responded cities is expedited or streamlined permitting (D) to attract green business. Interestingly, about 4% of them included all the efforts in their economic development strategy. While 83% of the responding cities considered integration important in the previous table, only about 43% of them have actually integrated efforts to attract green business within their economic development strategy. Cities with a higher average population size

Table 4: Does Your City’s Economic Development Strategy Include Efforts to Attract Green Business or Industry Through the Following? (Select all that Apply).

# of efforts	Types of efforts	Number of cities	%	Average population
1	A	4	2.7	72,343
	B	4	2.7	32,194
	C	5	3.4	80,616
	D	21	14.3	46,655
2	A & B	2	1.4	103,507
	A & C	2	1.4	39,999
	A & D	3	2.0	60,537
	B & C	2	1.4	179,230
	B & D	8	5.4	69,626
	C & D	4	2.7	94,712
3	A, B, & D	1	0.7	291,094
	B, C, & D	1	0.7	68,298
4	A, B, C, & D	6	4.1	90,169
None		84	57.1	48,058
Total		147		58,320

A – Financial or other incentives to encourage energy efficient technologies in new development.

B – Regulatory relief or streamlined processes for developments that incorporate energy efficient technologies.

C – Reduced permitting costs.

D – Expedited or streamlined permitting.

are more likely to have actually integrated efforts (see the column of “average population” in Table 4). It seems that more political pressure from the demands of large populations regarding climate protection and energy sustainability may result in symbolic initiatives on sustainable development rather than substantive ones. This study also examines what percentage of the 122 California cities with interest in the sustainable development policy undertake efforts related to the policy. Figure 4 presents that half of the California cities with interest in the sustainable development policy do not undertake any effort related to the policy. Table 4 and Figure 4 show that half the cities with interest in the sustainable development policy are not really taking any intentional action on the sustainable development policy and suggest a need to put in more substantive and realistic effort toward undertaking the policy. This result supports the isomorphic policy decision model of DiMaggio and Powell (1983) that local policy decision can be made through peer pressure and legitimacy rather than internal needs. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argue that a city mimics a popular and uncontroversial policy adopted by neighboring jurisdictions or higher levels of government, although

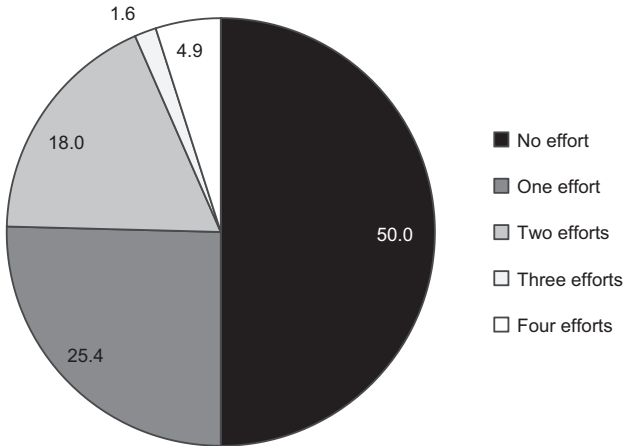


Figure 4 Pie Chart for Percentages of 122 California Cities that are Interested in Sustainable Development Policy Determined by the Number of Efforts they Undertake.

this policy does not meet the internal needs of the community. It is likely that California cities reflect the coercive isomorphism⁴ of DiMaggio and Powell (1983) in that they show great interest in sustainable development policy to comply with California's climate protection legislation without any real effort to pursue this policy.

This research also examines the impacts of carbon monoxide emissions, poverty, forms of government, political will, and availability of funds on the importance of sustainable development to a city. It finds that carbon monoxide emissions⁵ and poverty⁶ do not have any significant impact, but forms of government, political will, and availability of funds do have impact on the importance of sustainable development to a city. Table 5 and Figure 5 present that form of government affects the importance of sustainable development to a city.

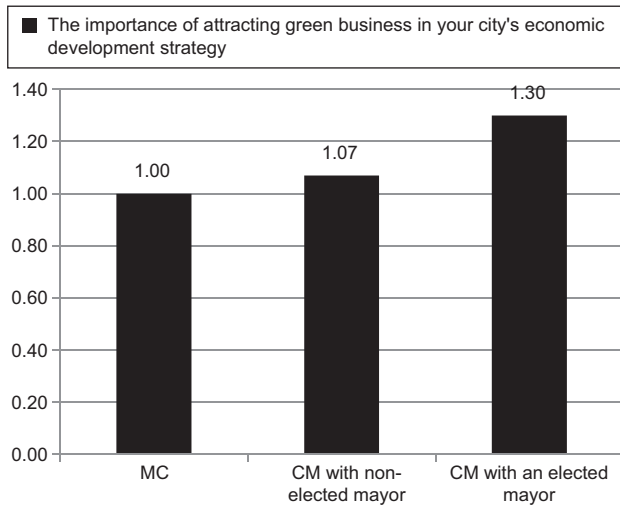
⁴ According to DiMaggio and Powell (1983), coercive isomorphism is a response to pressures from other organizations that the organization is dependent on, as well as the pressure to conform to expectations of society.

⁵ California cities with reduced per capita carbon monoxide emissions between 2000 and 2005 have almost the same average response score for the importance of attracting green business in the city's economic development strategy as California cities with increased per capita carbon monoxide emissions between 2000 and 2005 (1.17 and 1.15, respectively).

⁶ California cities with poverty rates from 0 to 0.10 have almost the same average response score for the importance of attracting green business in the city's economic development strategy as California cities with poverty rates from 0.11 to 0.63 (1.15 and 1.17, respectively).

Table 5: The Importance of Attracting Green Business in CA Cities' Economic Development Strategy According to Forms of Government.

Form of government	Number of responding CA cities	Average response score for the importance of attracting green business in city's economic development strategy
Mayor-Council (MC)	3	1.00
Council-Manager (CM) with non-elected Mayor	88	1.07
Council-Manager (CM) with an elected Mayor	56	1.30
Total	147	

**Figure 5:** Histogram for Average Response Scores of the Importance of Attracting Green Business in CA Cities' Economic Development Strategy by Three Forms of Government.

Council-manager cities with an elected mayor have the highest average response score compared to council-manager cities without an elected mayor and mayor-council cities. These findings imply that political institutions play a major role in motivating cities to undertake sustainable development. Cities with the council-manager form of government provide a career incentive for their city managers which may lead to a long-term, strategic, and realistic development orientation that is valued in their professional field (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Feiock et al. 2003; McCabe et al. 2008; Kwon et al. 2009). Elected mayors may attempt to

integrate sustainability policies into their city's economic development strategy in order to attract political resources and electoral support from citizen groups which have pro-environmental protection attitudes (Kwon et al. 2011).

This research finds that political will affects the importance of sustainable development to cities. One of the survey questions was to ask California cities to rate "lack of political will in the decision making process with respect to your local city's ability to reduce overall energy use" by a Likert scale from not an obstacle (1) to a substantial obstacle (5). Table 6 and Figure 6 present that cities with a higher magnitude of political obstacle have lower average response scores for the importance of attracting green business in the city's economic development strategy. This means that lack of political will in the decision making process regarding the reduction of energy use discourages cities from pursuing sustainable development policy. This result echoes the finding of Portney's sustainability research that sustainability initiatives in cities cannot be driven without the political will of city officials, such as mayors, council members, and agency directors. It suggests that pursuing sustainable development policy requires locally-motivated leadership, and political will at local levels might be increased with further state-level incentives for more substantive and positive policy actions.

Finally, lack of funds discourages California cities from adopting sustainable development policy. Table 7 and Figure 7 show that cities with a higher magnitude of funding obstacle have lower average response scores for the importance of attracting green business in the city's economic development strategy. The broader literature on innovation (Cyert and March 1963; Baldrige and Burnham 1975; Bingham 1976; Rogers 1983; Berry and Berry 2007) generally finds that policy innovations often take extra staff and resources to develop and implement. It is expected that California cities with more fiscal resources may have

Table 6: The Importance of Attracting Green Business in CA Cities' Economic Development Strategy According to the Level of "Lack of Political Will in the Decision Making Process" with Regard to Cities' Ability to Reduce Overall Energy Use.

Magnitude of political obstacle	Number of responding CA cities	Average response score for the importance of attracting green business in city's economic development strategy
1 – Not an obstacle	46	1.40
2	33	1.20
3	28	1.04
4	24	1.08
5 – Substantial obstacle	16	0.63
Total	147	

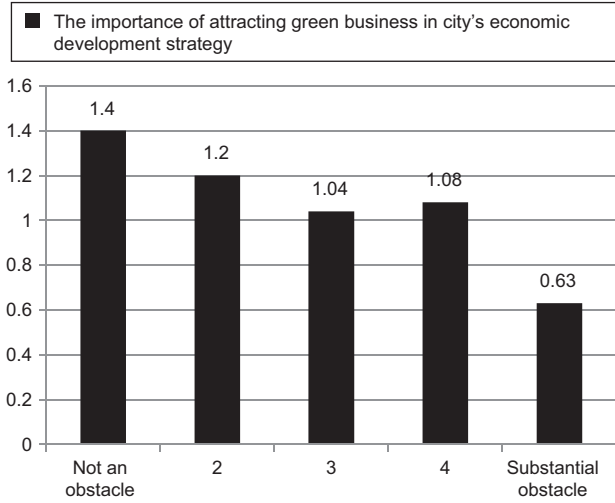


Figure 6: Histogram for Average Response Scores of Five Political Obstacle Levels in Responding CA Cities Regarding the Importance of Attracting Green Business in Cities’ Economic Development Strategy.

more capacity to develop sustainable development plans and take proactive management actions for the city’s marketability and sustainability.

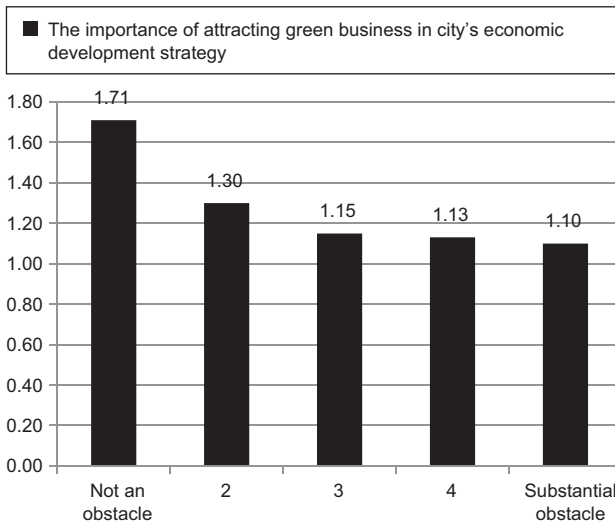
5 What Factors Affect the Interest of California Cities Regarding Sustainable Development Policy

This section further explores the interest of California cities in sustainable development policy by employing explanatory analysis and identifies factors that influence California cities to pursue a sustainable development policy in which they consider the attraction of green business an important part of their economic development strategy. For this explanatory analysis, an ordinal dependent and five nominal, ordinal, and interval independent variables are constructed based on the 2011 Energy Sustainable California Communities Survey, International County/City Management Association (ICMA), and US Census.

The ordinal dependent variable is made up of four stages of importance regarding a sustainable development policy which integrates the attraction of green industries in a city’s economic development strategy: *Not important*, *Somewhat important*, *Highly important*, and *Most important*. Ordered logit is used to

Table 7: The Importance of Attracting Green Business in CA Cities' Economic Development Strategy According to the Level of "Cost/Lack of Funds."

Magnitude of funding obstacle	Number of responding CA cities	Average response score for the importance of attracting green business in city's economic development strategy
1 – Not an obstacle	7	1.71
2	10	1.30
3	20	1.15
4	32	1.13
5 – Substantial obstacle	78	1.10
Total	147	

**Figure 7:** Histogram for Average Response Scores of Five Funding Obstacle Levels in Responding CA Cities Regarding the Importance of Attracting Green Business in Cities' Economic Development Strategy.

estimate this multivariate model, since the dependent variable is ordinal. The objective of ordered logit is to explain the non-linear relationship between the ordinal scale dependent variable and the independent variables which can be measured at the nominal, ordinal or interval levels (Kwon et al. Forthcoming). This ordered logit model measures ordered log-odds regression coefficients and also odds ratios for our ordinal and categorical dependent variable as a linear function of the independent variables.

The independent variables are form of government, lack of political will, lack of funds, population, and per capita income. Form of government, lack of political will, and lack of funds are key independent variables according to the previous descriptive finding above. Population and per capita income are control variables that are considered to be important factors to explain the adoption of sustainability policies (Burby and May 1998; Conroy and Berke 2004; Lubell et al. 2009; Kwon et al. 2011). The city's form of government is a dichotomous variable from ICMA in 2007, coded 2 if a city has a council-manager system with an elected mayor, and coded 1 if it has a council-manager system without an elected mayor, and coded 0 if it has a mayor-council system. Lack of political will is measured by one of the survey questions; "please rate the factor of lack of political will in the decision-making process within respect to your local city's ability to reduce overall energy use." The respondents provided Likert scale responses; 1=not an obstacle, 2, 3, 4, and 5=substantial obstacle. Lack of funds is measured by another survey question; "please rate the factor of lack of funds in the decision-making process within respect to your local city's ability to reduce overall energy use." The respondents provided Likert scale responses; 1=not an obstacle, 2, 3, 4, and 5=substantial obstacle. Population and per capita income are measured from the 2009 US Census.

Table 8 reports ordered logit regression coefficients and odds ratios for the ordered logit model. The model has a fairly strong fit with a pseudo R^2 of 0.11.⁷ The results of coefficients and odds ratios confirm that all primary factors in our

Table 8: Ordered Logit Maximum Likelihood Estimates for Sustainable Development in California Cities.

Independent variable	b	Standard Error	Odds ratio
Form of Government	0.58 [†]	0.31	1.78
Lack of political will	-0.52***	0.14	0.60
Lack of funds	-0.07	0.15	0.93
Population	0.01*	0.01	1.0
Per capita income	-0.01*	0.01	0.99
No. of cases	147		
LL	-144.14		
LR χ^2 (5)	32.11***		
Pseudo R^2	0.11		

[†]p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001.

⁷ Also, the small p-Value from the LR test, <0.00001, leads us to conclude that at least one of the regression coefficients in the model is not equal to zero.

theoretical framework except lack of funds have statistically significant relationships to the pursuit of the attraction of green business being a part of a city's economic development strategy. Lack of political will was negatively related to the extent of pursuit of the attraction of green business in city's economic development strategy.⁸ However, lack of funds failed to have a significant relationship. The form of government also matters, as council-manager forms of government with an elected mayor are much more likely to perceive the attraction of green business as an important program in their economic development strategy. Population has a positive significant relationship to the extent of pursuit of the attraction of green business in a city's economic development strategy, while per capita income has a negative significant relationship. These findings support the important roles of political institutions and political will in the pursuit of sustainable development policy at local levels.

6 Discussion and Conclusion

A considerable number of California cities are concerned about sustainable development policy and are engaged in various efforts to enhance both the sustainability and marketability of the community. One of the main reasons for this is that the California state government has passed climate protection requirements, such as AB 32 and SB 375, to guide cities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Sustainable development policy may help California cities comply with the required GHG emissions reduction goals set by these climate protection bills and increase economic growth. However, the descriptive findings present that more than half of the California cities with sustainable development policy are not engaged in any efforts related to sustainable development. Portney (2003) argues that city officials responded in lukewarm fashion to the prospect of taking sustainability seriously because of the political reality that they are more interested in sustainability projects for symbolic rather than substantive reasons (p. 154). In order to make sustainable development more substantive, California cities need to actively engage in more of the efforts related sustainable development in addition to adopting sustainable development policy.

This study finds that more than half of the responding California cities face fiscal hardship that hinders interest in reduction of energy use and sustainability

⁸ For a one unit increase in lack of political will, the odds of a city being in the most important stage versus the combined highly, somewhat, and not important stages are 0.60 times greater, given the other variables are held constant in the model.

development policy due to lack of funds. Policy innovation and implementation literature has proven the importance of financial resource commitment on the policy making process (Pressman and Wildavsky 1973; Anderson 2006). Availability of funds determines if a policy is alive or killed and decides its success or failure. This research suggests that California cities need to seek more financial resources either from higher levels of government or their own sources to continue supporting and implementing sustainable development policy in the long run. Another suggestion is to collaborate with other sectors by seeking the active participation of environmental non-profit organizations for example. Environmental nonprofits can help their member cities to promote more sustainability policy activities through technical support and stringent guidelines (Portney 2003; Sharp et al. 2010).

Forms of government and elected mayors play an important role in influencing their cities to take sustainable development policy. The descriptive and explanatory findings show that city manager cities attempt to approach sustainable development by tackling both marketability and sustainability rather than either one alone. Elected mayors are also interested in integrating sustainability programs into the city's economic development strategy. City managers and elected mayors enjoy selective incentives from the adoption of sustainable development policy (a strategic and realistic development), such as a career incentive for city managers and a reelection incentive for elected mayors (Feiock et al. 2003; McCabe et al. 2008; Kwon et al. 2009). This study suggests that more support from political institutions, such as support from political and executive leaders, are needed to encourage more California cities to adopt sustainable development policy and to engage in efforts related to sustainable development.

The study provides strong support for the important role of political will toward municipal interest regarding sustainable development. Sustainability policy literature shows that sustainability initiatives cannot be achieved without the support of local political actors (Stone 1993; Young 1995; Portney 2003; Kwon et al. 2011). Local policy makers and city administrators should care about sustainability and environmental ethics and put in more effort to reduce GHG emissions within their boundaries and improve the air quality while dealing with the marketability of the community by adopting a sustainable development policy that can effectively work to benefit their communities. Nevertheless, numerous commentators document development policy failure in which incentives are a response to political demands rather than economic needs, and to diffusion based on isomorphism, or pressures for legitimacy and adopting popular, and non-controversial innovations (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Feiock 2002; Kwon et al. 2009). What additional efforts do California cities need to undertake for a better and smarter sustainable development? This study shows that California cities are very advanced in

sustainable development policy (see Table 3), but it is hard to determine if these advanced actions are working for the community, such as whether city officials are really concerned with the effective implementation after adopting sustainable development policy and if people in the community are understanding and actively participating in the policy implementation. This study suggests that more financial support or more rigorous regulation from higher levels of government, more effective collaboration with other jurisdictions and sectors, more favorable support from political institutions, and broader civic engagement are needed to motivate local governments to undertake sustainable development policy efforts that are more substantive than symbolic. Further studies are needed to assess whether sustainable development policies are being effectively implemented by local governments and if the policies achieve the goals proposed in the policy. Also, it is important for further studies to see how sustainable development policy affects the marketability and sustainability of the community.

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