


# Chapter 7

## Good Practice Policies Examples in America's Local Governments and their Ethical Considerations

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### ABSTRACT

*Local government leaders can promote transformative progress to foster change in their communities through policies. Cities in the United States are affected by complex and interconnected issues related to land use, transportation, waste management, and housing that have evolved to fulfill residents' needs. The housing good practices identified include overlay zones, adaptive reuse, and form-based code. The transportation good practices discussed are complete streets and leveraging ride sharing. In the case of waste management, the good practices are mandatory recycling and composting ordinances and youth educational programs. Each of the good practices is associated with ethical considerations. Policy changes often result in inequitable outcomes, which can cause ethical concerns. There is a need for future researchers to assess the ethical considerations associated with the identified good practice policies. In essence, good practice policies positively impact local government functions concerning land use, transportation, waste management, and housing.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Local governments are uniquely positioned to address the complex problems that impact their communities by implementing system-level changes using policies. The use of land, transportation, waste management, and housing are some of the areas that require current thinking to promote sustainability in communities. A prevalent problem when it comes to policymaking in most local governments is the limited opportunity to explore the root causes or issues and gather adequate evidence to determine how the proposed changes can promote equity in communities. Instead, local governments often focus on developing single-issues solutions, instead of collaborating with the different sectors and agencies to ensure that the policy changes foster equity (Sally et al., 2023). The lack of a holistic approach at the local government level can often result in the implementation of policies that yield inequitable outcomes for communities. Achieving equitable outcomes and sustainability requires local governments to engage in effective initiatives to assess the complexities associated with land, transportation, waste management, and housing. The complexities of addressing land use, transportation, waste management, and housing increase policymakers' susceptibility to information on suitable approaches for addressing the problems.

Local governments can introduce policies that promote system change in four phases (Sally et al., 2023). The first phase involves articulating the problem, identifying the root causes, and setting goals. During this phase, the community problem associated with the root cause of the issue is recognized. Evidence supporting the scope of the problem and an explanation of why past work initiatives were not effective are identified, underpinning the development of a call to action rationalizing the need for the local government to act. Articulating the problem involves the local government communicating the challenges. Identifying the root cause requires local government teams to determine why the issue exists. Setting goals involves local governments writing impact statements on the desired outcomes or reality that will be the product of the proposed policy and systems change (Sally et al., 2023).

The second phase consists of mapping the policy ecosystem, identifying policy solutions, and assessing feasibility and impact (Sally et al., 2023). The aim of the second phase is policy transference, which involves selecting the available option, based on the most feasible policy proposal, ensuring maximization of the desired impacts. Policy transfer offers an opportunity to apply the best practices at local government levels, promoting in capitalizing on the proven success of other jurisdictions. Good or best practice policies are characterized as clear, measurable, specific, and budgeted (Sally et al., 2023).

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