

EECBG: Implementation and Impact

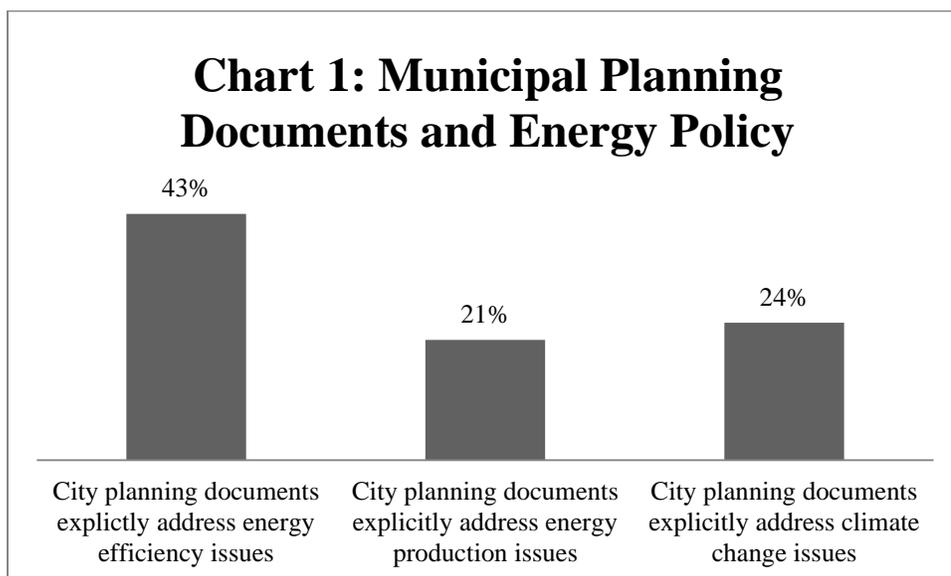


ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTIVITIES IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS: THE USE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANTS

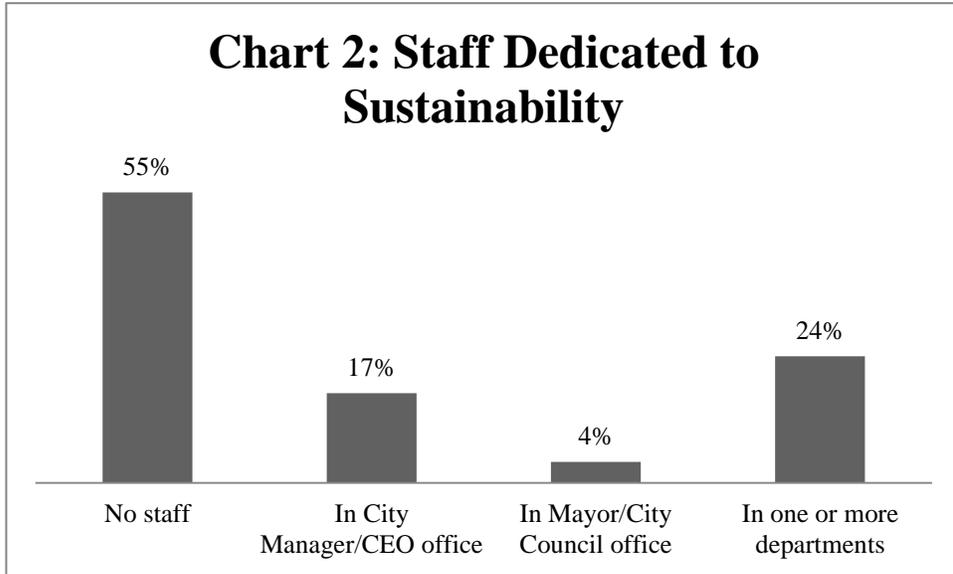
This report contains the results of the first national survey of municipal governments that received grant funds from the EECBG Program. The study is being conducted by Florida State University and the results are based on responses from 729 cities in 2010-2011. The findings are reported in four sections. The first outlines municipal priorities in terms of what citizens think is important in addition and examines the extent to which personnel and governance infrastructure are dedicated to sustainability. The second section describes the adoption and implementation of energy activities and the use of EECBG funds. The third and fourth sections describe the future of sustainability efforts and our research efforts.

Community Priorities in Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

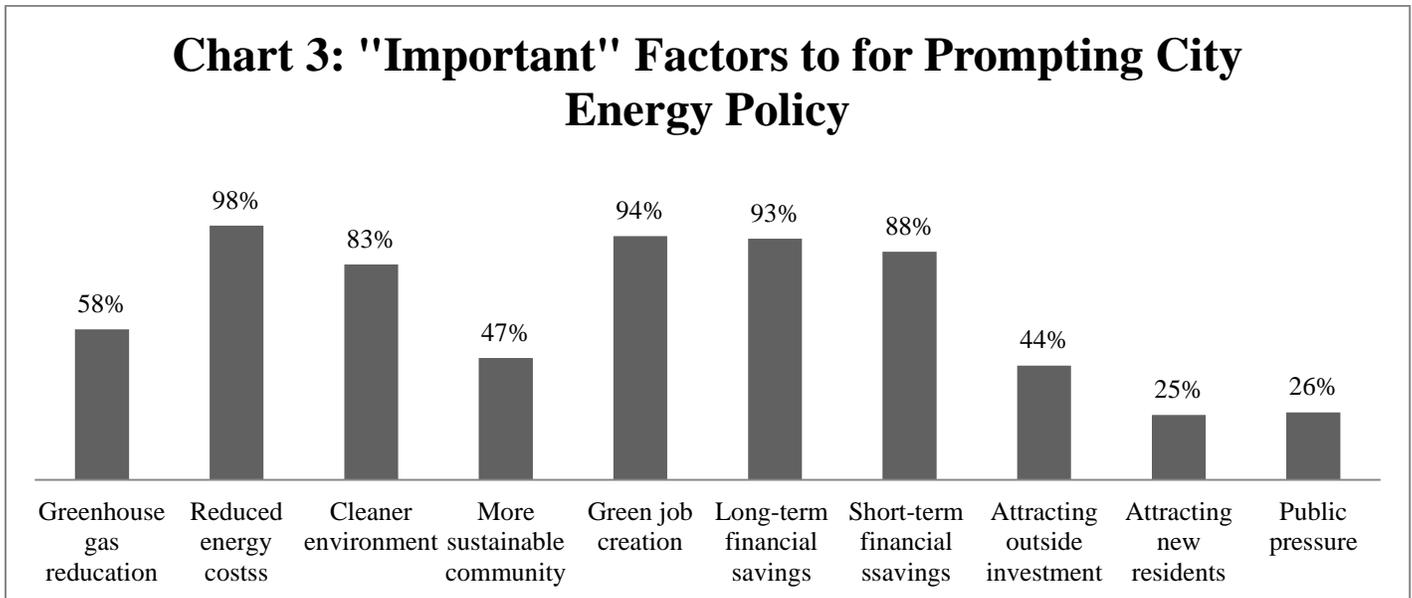
Energy and climate policy issues were important in almost all communities surveyed. In fact 96 percent of the cities responded that climate issues are somewhat important (47%), important (33%), or very important (16%) to their citizens. Nevertheless, less than half of the surveyed cities have an energy or climate plan. Chart 1 reports that energy or climate change are explicitly addressed in the planning documents of 43% of the responding municipal governments.



The survey reveals that 55% of cities had no staff dedicated to sustainability. Chart 2 reports that in the 45% with dedicated staff, they were located in: the city manager/CEO offices, the mayor or City Council offices, or spread across multiple departments.



The survey also asked what factors were important in prompting city energy policy. Chart 3 reports that the majority of respondents said that important factors for their city’s energy policy include creating jobs, lower energy costs and financial saving. Interestingly, community values like indicated by public pressure were far less likely to prompt city energy policies.



Activities in Energy Efficiency and Conservation and the Use of EECBG Funds

City facilities are an important target for energy efficiency and conservation efforts. Although not necessarily a product of EECBG funds, Chart 4 reports 44% of the responding cities required some sort of energy efficient systems in their buildings. Some cities had more than one of these requirements.

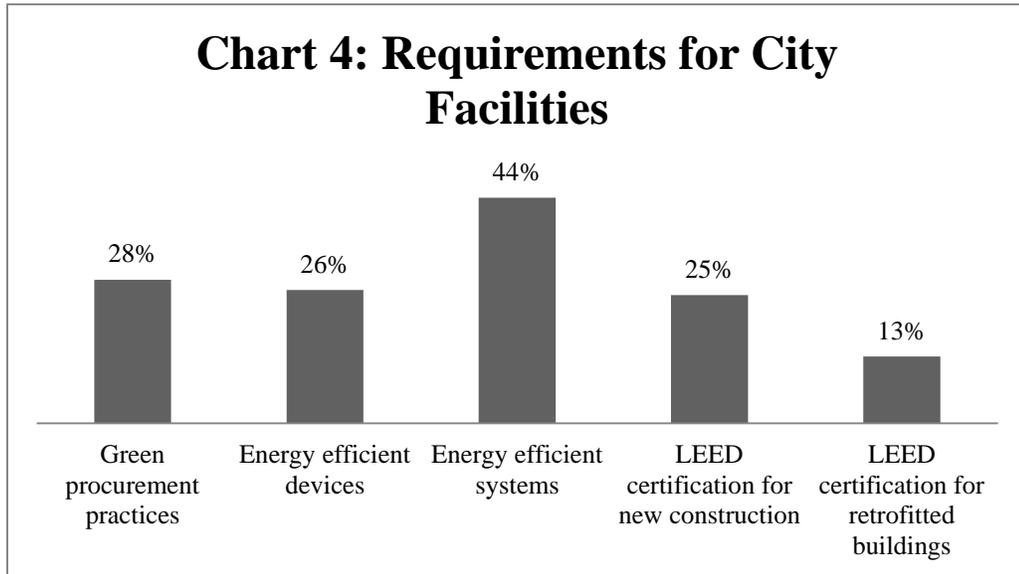
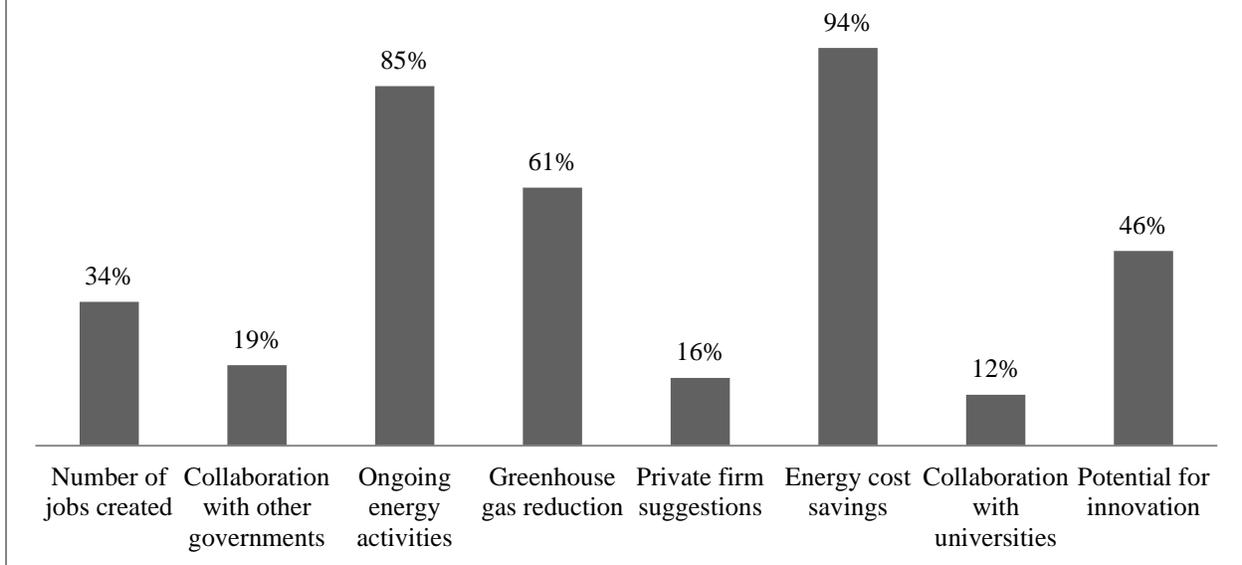


Chart 5 reveals that most municipalities report that the ongoing energy or sustainability activities, energy cost savings to the community and greenhouse gas reductions were either important or very important in choosing EECBG funded projects. There was a clear community-oriented commitment among most municipalities. There is less evidence that potential collaboration with external organizations such as other cities, private firms, or educational institutions influenced project choices. Cities universally responded that they involved citizens to develop their EECBG application by using town hall meetings and interactions with community groups.

Chart 5: Factors "Important to Choosing EECBG-Funded Projects"



Note: The Chart above gives the percentage of municipalities that said the above factors were either “important” or “very important” in deciding how to use EECBG funds.

Table 1 reports that efficiency/conservation strategies, building and energy audits and retrofits, and renewable energy technologies around government buildings are the most frequently funded activities with EECBG funds. Fewer municipalities used EECBG funds to support activities related to transportation activities, green building code development/implementation/inspection and material conservation.

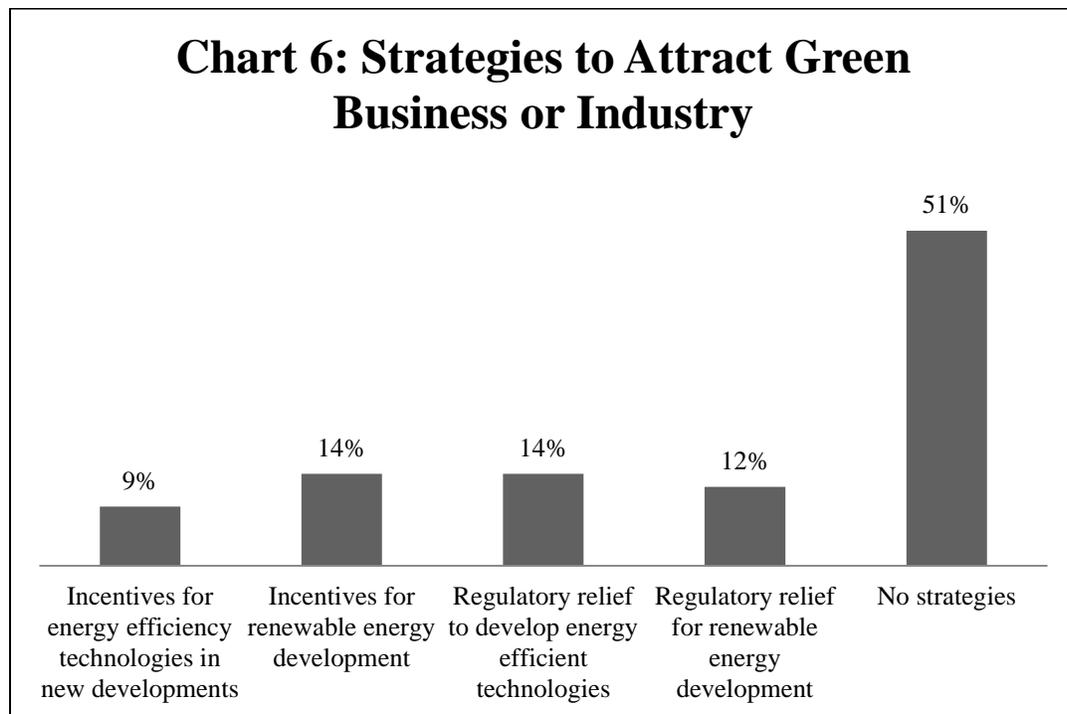
Table 1: EECBG Funded Activities in Municipal Governments

Type of Activity	New Activity	Ongoing Activity	Not Funded by EECBG
New Efficiency/Conservation Strategies	183 (25%)	397 (54%)	149 (20%)
Building energy audits and retrofits	201 (27%)	415 (56%)	129 (17%)
Financial Incentives	131 (19%)	127 (18%)	446 (63%)
Transportation	36 (5%)	160 (23%)	503 (72%)
Green Building Code Development/Implementation/Inspection	28 (4%)	146 (21%)	525 (75%)
New energy technology installations	95 (14%)	179 (26%)	423 (61%)
Material Conservation	37 (5%)	192 (28%)	467 (67%)
Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from waste-related sources	70 (10%)	178 (26%)	445 (64%)
Energy efficient traffic and street lights	112 (16%)	289 (40%)	321 (44%)
Renewable energy around government buildings	152 (22%)	213 (30%)	340 (48%)

EECBG has been generated policy innovation. Many of the projects undertaken with EECBG funds were new to municipal governments. The program has also stimulated collaboration. The survey responses reveal that 20% of responding municipalities reported high levels of collaboration with either other governments or organizations (private industry, Universities, etc.). Similarly, roughly 25% of responding municipalities engaged in collaborative actions like joint purchasing or regional energy partnerships. EECBG funds have clearly helped municipal governments enhance their activities in energy sustainability and appears to have helped prompted municipalities to collaborate with other governments or organizations.

Investing in the Future

EECBG funds have allowed cities to build and grow their energy efficiency and conservation activities, but they have not dramatically stimulated efforts to attract green business. About one half of the cities report having no economic development strategies to attract green business or industry. Of those that do, the majority offer incentives for the development of renewable energy and/or provide regulatory relief to develop energy efficient technologies as reported in Chart 6.



When asked about the impact that EECBG funds had on their community, one-third of municipal governments responded that EECBG funds allowed their communities to develop new programs and strategies that they would not have been able to otherwise while 30% responded that it was too early to be determined.

The Future of Local Government Sustainability

What will happen to city energy efficiency and conservation programs once the EECBG funds are done? Respondents to the survey projected that many of the programs for which the funds have been used will be terminated. This result may be indicative of the severe economic climate in the U.S. FSU will track these programs over the next two years. As part of this effort we will be sending annual follow-up surveys to gather information on the status of programs initiated or expanded with EECBG.

If you are interested in learning more about our work please visit the Florida State University Local Governance Program at <http://localgov.fsu.edu> The EECBG project is supported by the Institute for Energy Systems Economics and Sustainability (<http://www.ieses.fsu.edu/>) and the National Science Foundation (<http://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward.do?AwardNumber=1127992>). Inquiries can be directed to Jessica Terman at Jnt07c@my.fsu.edu.

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