How can Local Municipalities Take Advantage of Adaptive Watershed Management?

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Land as Economic Resource

- Watersheds = Land
- Land = Property
- States encouraged local governance of land because it facilitated the fastest economic use of land.
  - Increased the productivity of the nation
- Adaptive Watershed Management is a tool municipalities can use to support a different type of land use decision making process.
But why would a City want to go to all the trouble? What’s in it for them?
Land as Natural Resource

- Does Regulation make you care?
- Regulation doesn’t seem to benefit the City, only the public resource.
- Perception is that open space costs money to maintain and doesn’t create a revenue stream to justify it.
- Cities have lots of things to care about and they all cost money.
- There are many priorities that conflict and/or compete for revenue.
The biggest motivator in both public and private land use decision making is the economy. This funds all of the other things a City cares about.

- Local governments get their $ from sales taxes.
- How to encourage investment, real estate development/redevelopment, and how to increase sales tax revenue.
Try to Avoid Competing

- Don’t compete with other important community needs, find ways to achieve mutual benefit.

- Create connections between urban elements.

- This is what a good system does. All the parts benefit each other.

- A community or City is a kind of system.
How-To Resources

- US Green Building Council
  - LEED
  - Guidance on Design
- EPA Office of Smart Growth
- Urban Land Institute
- American Planning Association
Green Infrastructure

- Can be used as a planning tool to serve both economic and environmental needs.
- What is infrastructure for economic growth and how can natural resources be integrated into the design of these things?
- Infrastructure is not a structure, it is the service provided.
- How can a restored river corridor be used as a new amenity to attract economic investment around it?
- Can alternative transportation enhance the utility & value of the amenity?
Terms Developers Recognize

- Smart Growth
- "Lifestyle" Developments
- "Cultural Creative" Demographic
- New Urbanism
- Sustainable Development
- Mixed Use
- Public/Private Partnership
Don’t invest millions and create a mess.
- Political suicide
- Big Dig in Boston, Levy’s in New Orleans....

Cities need to know what natural resources there are, or were, and how to go about restoring them.

Complex data costs a lot of money.

Don’t reinvent the wheel, just assemble it.
- There are already a number of efforts underway
- Every agency collects data, but only for themselves
- These can be coordinated and leveraged to support decision making
- SCCWRP is a good example of bringing data together
Ease Capital Interests Into It

- Develop conceptual strategies for mutual benefit that private interests, regulators, and environmentalists can all buy into.
- Gain consensus on the necessary information, governance structure, implementation process, etc...
- Then start defining what that could mean.
  - Site level opportunities
  - Look for areas that are underperforming economically
  - Pay attention to the real estate market
  - Look for partnering opportunities & pilot projects
Where should indicators be used?
- City/neighborhood planning phase.
- Site development planning phase.
- Lastly, the permitting phase.

Get ahead of the game and partner with Industry also.

Streamlined permitting & lower risk is money in their bank account.
Adaptive Management Enables and Empowers Local Government

- Ecosystem management requires accurate data about the resource, and the impacts of development.

- Adaptive Watershed Management can help cities manage the natural resources that can contribute to their economic bottom line.
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