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by Hjk Ert

Seattle City Planning

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

Course

Professor's Name

Date

Introduction

The objective of this essay is to address climatic changes which is already affecting all cities globally. It is estimated that over 80% of United states' residents live in urban areas, thus putting cities at the central role to address climate change. City designs, land use, building designs, people moving from one city to another have a great effect on the energy we use on a daily basis, and the amount of Green House Gases (GHG) emitted into the environment. With another 1.5 billion people expected to move to cities in the next 20 years, mostly from developing countries, proper measures to manage GHG emissions need to be put in place (Cave, 2018). This paper serves as a critical review of Seattle City Sustainable development using the 3Es of sustainability.

About the Seattle and the plan

Seattle City has been and still remains to be a world leader in matters of climate change actions. It is on record that in the year 2000, the city became the first one in the United States of America to embrace a green building goal for all municipal buildings. A year later, it rolled out the program to all other private sectors. Four years later, in the year 2015, Seattle came up again with the largest carbon-free lighting (Botchwey, & Umemoto, 2020). Leading by example, the Mayor of the City challenged other Mayors of the United States of America to reduce the Green House Gases by 7% of the 1990 value, a challenge that was accepted by over one thousand mayors.

The first core goal and principle is transportation and land use. Seattle city sought to separate bicycle lanes from the usual city traffic and to also increase the bicycle parking racks in the streets. According to Letelier & Irazábal (2018), this is meant to incentivize more people to cycle and not use cars. Improve the safety of the sidewalks and improve how they connect to the villages and urban centers. Move from own car use to taxis, hired cars and increase the use of limousine vehicles with high passenger capacity. The city also plans to tremendously expand the

current fleet of electric vehicles. Make the expansion of the current E-parking program, which will reduce the number of people who drive around town to find parking. Develop a program that supports walking and using bikes around the city. To track progress, carbon emissions from passenger vehicles should be reduced by 82%, reduction by 20% the number of traveled miles by the year 2030, by the year 2030, Green House Gases to be reduced by 75%. Another measure to track progress shall be to move away from vehicles that can only carry one occupant. On people safety, Seattle looks at eliminating fatalities and serious injuries by 2030.

The second goal is building energy plans that are designed to enhance sustainability. The city to come up with a program that will rate the home energy performance immediately a home is put up for sale (Cave, 2018). Score every municipal building on energy performance and making these scores available for the public. Through the home wise program, cities to maintain their commitment to low-income weatherization. Cities to also come up with legislations that will exempt all owners of rental houses who take significant steps in increasing energy efficiencies for their buildings. Develop a partnership with all public schools in pursuit of the same. To track progress, carbon dioxide emissions in commercial buildings should be reduced by 45% and reduce energy use in residential buildings by 20% by the year 2030.

Waste management is the third goal embraced by Seattle City. In 2015, the United States produced 264 tonnes of waste but only managed to recycle 68 million tons. Cities should think about collection, transportation, sorting, and disposal of waste. Cities to continue with their support program of opting out of junk mails. Businesses and residential premises should be encouraged to recycle their wastes; investment programs for residential and business areas should be expanded for reuse. Cities should ease the recycling and reuse process and make waste drop-off more convenient in all transfer facilities. Education to the public about waste recycling should be

enhanced. To track progress, Green House Gas emissions should be reduced by 58% by the year 2030, emissions of methane from landfills to be reduced by 50%, and 70% of waste should be diverted from being taken to landfills and be directed to recycling plants.

The last principle is preparation for climate change. Through the green Seattle partnership, efforts should be put towards restoring all the two thousand five hundred acres of forest land, and the urban forest stewardship plan should be implemented. The city should improve culverts to minimize flooding, increase storage of stormwater and launch projects in city areas to prevent flooding. Cities to conduct research in collaboration with other partners about the impacts on climate change (Botchwey & Umemoto, 2020).

Critical Analysis

The plan is guiding the development of the community through the three Es of sustainability, namely; equity, economics, and environment. On economic signals, pricing for road and parking through road toll charges discourages millions of people from using motor vehicles to travel and instead use bicycles, use ride transit for a walk to work. Through road pricing, municipalities also make a huge amount of revenues which they can, in turn, use to develop other transport services. Mobility and social equity impacts must be considered while coming up with strategies for pricing. Unavailability of complete communities and transport choices, the cost of transportation is increased by pricing strategies and parking, which has a long-term impact on the low-income earners.

Equity can be enhanced through climate action by keenly transitioning to a very low carbon transportation system. To achieve this, the city should relentlessly work on a design and implementation of actions about transportation and land use in order to provide full services to all Seattle residents. The design should endeavor to meet all the families' needs, the needs for the

immigrant community needs for all the older group of residents who require treatment, people who are living with disabilities, and residents who are low-income earners. The design should also provide a conducive environment for all the existing business entities, and they should continue thriving. The rich and the poor should enjoy the same benefits under this design (Cave, 2018).

The environment also explains the sustainability of Seattle City. The city has an objective of reducing passenger vehicle emissions by 82%, reducing miles covered by vehicles by twenty percent, and reducing emissions per every mile by seventy-five percentage by the year 2030. These numbers are based on the 2008 baseline. Even though the target falls short of the 2030 objectives, the city will be set on a path to achieve an 89% reduction in emissions by the year 2050. This is due to a delayed adoption of alternative fuels and vehicles. This can, however, be sped up if some good progress is witnessed in the next 15 years. While choices of transportation and complete communities reduce emissions, economic signals are key for cities to achieve reduced emissions. Road pricing is a strategy that will not only reduce emissions but it is also the largest source of funding that helps in implementation of transport choices.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, being a global challenge, climate change requires innovation, common solutions, good leadership, and collective individual action. Air transport remains one of the most common means of transport. According to the Federal Aviation Administration, passengers who travel by air will double in the next 20 years. This will even exert more pressure on Green House Gases emissions which already represents 18% of Seattle's emissions. GHG emissions always occur during taking and landing, meaning the effect is bigger with short flights. Strategies to reduce GHG emissions for air transport include increasing the efficiency of the planes, using alternative fuel, which is cost-effective. Minimizing air travel is another good way to reduce air emissions.

With the introduction of online meetings technology, clients and colleagues can meet remotely. One sure way to discourage air travel is by adjusting flight charges upwards (Botchwey & Umemoto, 2020).

Industries are key to any economy by producing goods that we use on our day to day basis. Industries produce Green House Gases in two categories; the first being direct emissions from machinery operations and secondly from the process of production. In 2010, industrial emissions accounted for 20% of GHG in the United States of America. To reduce emissions, innovations in industries are being encouraged. Cement was previously one of the products with huge quantities of GHG, but this has been corrected through innovations. Industries are also adopting lean technology where they increase production but minimizes waste. Local governments have come up with regulations that limit the threshold of GHG.

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