

Responding to Energy Vulnerability: A Guidebook for Municipalities

working title

FORTHCOMING IN FALL 2006 FROM POST CARBON INSTITUTE.



The factors of world oil supply and demand are changing.

Global demand for oil is rising as the developing world rapidly industrializes. The giant oil fields of the 20th century are declining, however, and industry leaders like Chevron readily state that “the era of easy oil is over.” These trends in the world’s most important energy source suggest that we are entering a period of oil uncertainty and volatility.



This period will be a time of “energy vulnerability” for cities.

Alternative fuels, energy efficiency and new energy technologies are receiving unprecedented attention. But even the most ambitious efforts will not produce viable, economy-wide substitutes for oil and oil-oriented technologies for many years to come. During this transition time, economies of all scales will be especially vulnerable to energy price uncertainty as the world oil market tightens and key oil producing regions remain politically unstable.

Energy vulnerability poses unique challenges for municipal governments:

- As **providers of basic services** and stewards of the public purse, how should municipal governments best manage unexpected costs such as may accompany fuel price irregularities?
- Many households are financially sensitive to rising prices for **gasoline, electricity and home heating/cooling**. What can local governments do to build community resilience against energy price uncertainty?
- Local **land use and transportation patterns** are sensitive to protracted fuel price changes. How should municipalities prepare and respond in their infrastructure planning and management activities?



Municipal leaders have only just begun to address these important issues.

Responding to Energy Vulnerability: A Guidebook for Municipalities will help planners, managers and elected officials prepare for these new challenges.



Now in development by Post Carbon Institute, the *Guidebook* will feature these and other useful resources:

- **Case studies:** actual experiences, best practices, and lessons learned from other municipalities.
- **Messaging:** framing energy vulnerability as an approachable policy and risk management issue.
- **Templates:** language for resolutions, planning documents and public materials.
- **Response Framework:** a four-step process to help identify and mitigate your municipality’s vulnerabilities.

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