

ASTUDY ON THE URABAN POLICY OF OBAMA ADMINISTRATION, with a  
Focus on the effect of distressed cities with brownfield sites and vacant properties

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[SYNOPSIS]

The Obama Administration set up the Office for Urban Affairs in the White House at the beginning of the administration. Place-based Review launched by the office is aimed at reviving distressed neighborhoods and increasing the growth potential of metropolitan areas. It is a policy to effectively utilize federal funds by aligning subsidies separated in the silo of each departments from the viewpoint of "place". The administration reviewed not only on policies traditionally related to place such as Housing and Transportation, but also in the field targeting "people" such as Labor and Education. However, the actual situation stays only with the review of existing grants and the coordination between ministries, and the newly established grant was limited. Also, after the midterm election in 2010, the budget for planning support centered on "Place" shrunk, as the Republican Party dominated the Congress.

In this survey, a case study was conducted on cities supported by Partnership for Sustainable Communities (PSC) by HUD, DOT, and EPA, based on the urban policy of the administration. Ranson, WV, stagnated due to the closure of the manufacturing industry, combined the support of ministries utilizing PSC, promoted urban revitalization centering on universities that attracted brownfield site with "Commercial Corridor". However, the origin of this regeneration was the strategy by the city in the beginning of 2000. With PSC, it was updated as a form-based zoning code and a detailed master plan. Flint, MI, suffering from depopulation due to the decline of the automobile industry, utilized the planning grant of HUD under the mayor's leadership. The city succeeded in formulating an innovative comprehensive plan corresponding to the declining population, and is revising the zoning. In the selected cities of this survey, federal grants for regenerating "district" and "place" gave certain results. However, the impact of the long-time efforts of mayors and local government officials on revitalization is also significant, not the single effect of the administration's urban policy. In addition, the impact of policies is restricted to cities that received substantial support in the early days of the administration.