Paying for the City We Need: The Role of Land

Summary

Equitable and sustainable urban growth requires a strong financial base, and land plays a key role. Land-based financing tools such as value capture, or “value sharing,” combined with a well-functioning property tax, are critical for providing infrastructure, housing, open space, public safety and other basic public goods and services.

Actions and Implementation

The property tax is a proven system for funding the provision of basic goods and services by local government, and it plays a foundational role in local government finance in countries such as the United States and Canada. As a complement to the property tax, land-based financing tools such as value capture make use of the land value created for adjacent private landowners and developers by specific public investments in urban infrastructure. It is possible to measure this “land value increment,” and encourage the private sector to contribute to the creation of infrastructure, such as a transit line and station, at the front end. This strategy has the effect of correcting market failures that, in many cases, prevent public and private investments in infrastructure and planned urban expansions.

Innovative Initiative

Financial tool - land value capture - integrated planning -

Resources devoted to delivery