

Compliance With the Road Setback in Siting of Structure in Anambra State: Citizen Participation in Environmental Sustainability

B. N. OKAFOR¹, H. N. OGBOKE², D. C. OYIOGU³, C. O. IKARAOHA⁴
^{1, 2, 3, 4}Department Of Estate Management, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Nigeria.

Abstract- *This article examines the role of citizen participation in ensuring compliance with road setback regulations in Anambra State, Nigeria. It explores the impact of these regulations on environmental sustainability and analyzes the effectiveness of current mechanisms for citizen engagement. The study highlights the challenges faced in achieving compliance, including inadequate awareness, lack of enforcement, and conflicting interests. It proposes recommendations for strengthening citizen participation and improving compliance, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable built environment in Anambra State.*

Indexed Terms- *Road setbacks, citizen participation, environmental sustainability, Anambra State, Nigeria.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Road setbacks are crucial for ensuring safe and efficient transportation, promoting pedestrian safety, and preserving the aesthetic appeal of urban environments. In Anambra State, Nigeria, the government has implemented regulations governing road setbacks to achieve these objectives. However, compliance with these regulations remains a significant challenge, impacting environmental sustainability and posing risks to public safety. This article investigates the role of citizen participation in addressing this challenge.

Let's break down these concepts:

Compliance with Road Setbacks in Siting of Structures in Anambra State:

Road Setbacks:

These are minimum distances required between a building and the edge of a road. They are crucial for:

- a. Traffic Safety: Ensuring clear visibility for drivers and pedestrians, preventing accidents caused by obstructed views.
- b. Emergency Access: Allowing emergency vehicles (fire trucks, ambulances) to reach buildings easily.
- c. Pedestrian Safety: Providing safe walkways and preventing hazards from encroaching structures.
- d. Aesthetics: Maintaining a visually appealing streetscape and preventing overcrowding.

Road Setbacks are these Corners after the yellow line



The pedestrian walk ways



Compliance:

This means following the established road setback regulations when building a structure.

Citizen Participation: Citizens play a vital role in ensuring compliance by:

- a. **Reporting Violations:** Noticing and reporting structures built too close to the road to authorities.
- b. **Community Awareness:** Educating neighbors about the importance of setbacks and the consequences of non-compliance.
- c. **Advocacy:** Speaking up for stricter enforcement of setback regulations and clear building permit processes.

Citizen Participation in Environmental Sustainability: Environmental Sustainability:

This means using resources wisely and protecting the environment for present and future generations.

- a. **Citizen Role:** Citizens can contribute to environmental sustainability by:
- b. **Waste Management:** Properly disposing of waste, participating in community clean-ups, and advocating for better waste management systems.
- c. **Conservation:** Planting trees, conserving water, reducing energy consumption, and promoting sustainable practices.
- d. **Community Engagement:** Participating in environmental awareness campaigns, workshops, and community meetings.
- e. **Reporting Environmental Issues:** Noticing and reporting environmental violations (pollution, illegal dumping) to authorities.

Connecting the Dots:

Road setback compliance is directly linked to environmental sustainability. When structures are built according to setbacks:

- a. **Traffic Flow is Improved:** This reduces air pollution and noise from traffic congestion.
- b. **Green Spaces are Preserved:** Setbacks allow for planting trees and creating green areas, which absorb pollutants and improve air quality.
- c. **Water Runoff is Managed:** Proper setbacks prevent structures from obstructing natural drainage, reducing flooding and erosion.

By actively participating in both road setback compliance and environmental sustainability efforts, citizens in Anambra State can contribute to a safer, healthier, and more sustainable environment for everyone.

Here Are Some Challenges in Anambra State Related to Road Setbacks and Citizen Participation in Environmental Sustainability:

- a. **Lack of Awareness:** Many citizens are unaware of the importance of road setbacks and the legal requirements.
- b. **Enforcement Issues:** Limited resources and manpower can make it difficult for authorities to effectively enforce setback regulations.
- c. **Corruption:** Bribery and corruption can lead to building permits being issued for structures that violate setbacks.
- d. **Land Pressure:** Rapid urbanization and population growth put pressure on land, leading to developers seeking to maximize space, often at the expense of setbacks.
- e. **Informal Settlements:** Many informal settlements lack proper planning and enforcement, making it difficult to implement setbacks.
- f. **Lack of Clear Regulations:** Ambiguous or outdated regulations can create confusion and make it difficult to enforce compliance.

Citizen Participation Challenges in Environmental Sustainability:

- a. **Lack of Trust in Authorities:** Citizens may be hesitant to report environmental violations due to a lack of trust in authorities to take action.

- b. Limited Access to Information: Citizens may not have access to information about environmental issues, regulations, and how to participate in solutions.
- c. Lack of Resources: Citizens may lack the resources (time, money, skills) to actively participate in environmental initiatives.
- d. Cultural Practices: Some traditional practices may conflict with sustainable practices, creating challenges in changing behaviors.
- e. Lack of Incentives: Citizens may not be motivated to participate in environmental initiatives if they don't see immediate benefits or incentives.
- f. Political Will: Lack of political will to prioritize environmental sustainability can hinder citizen participation and effective policy implementation.

How to Overcome these Challenges:

- a. Public Awareness Campaigns: Educating citizens about the importance of road setbacks and environmental sustainability.
- b. Strengthening Enforcement: Investing in resources and training for authorities to effectively enforce regulations.
- c. Transparency and Accountability: Promoting transparency in government processes and holding officials accountable for violations.
- d. Community Engagement: Involving citizens in planning and decision-making processes related to development and environmental protection.
- e. Incentives and Recognition: Providing incentives and recognizing citizens for their contributions to environmental sustainability.
- f. Empowering Local Communities: Supporting community-based initiatives and empowering local communities to take ownership of environmental issues.

By addressing these challenges, Anambra State can create a more sustainable and livable environment for its citizens.

Citizens In Anambra State Play A Vital Role In Ensuring Compliance With Road Setbacks And Promoting Environmental Sustainability Through Their Active Participation In:

Road Setback Compliance:

- 1. Reporting Violations: Citizens can report any structures built in violation of road setbacks to the relevant authorities, such as the Anambra State Ministry of Environment or the local government.
- 2. Community Awareness: They can educate their neighbors and community members about the importance of road setbacks and the consequences of non-compliance.
- 3. Advocacy: Citizens can advocate for stricter enforcement of road setback regulations and for the development of clear guidelines for building permits.
- 4. Monitoring: They can actively monitor construction projects in their communities to ensure compliance with road setback regulations.

Environmental Sustainability:

- 1. Waste Management: Citizens can participate in community clean-up initiatives, properly dispose of waste, and advocate for improved waste management systems.
- 2. Conservation: They can promote the planting of trees, conserve water, and reduce energy consumption in their homes and businesses.
- 3. Community Engagement: Citizens can participate in environmental awareness campaigns, workshops, and community meetings to promote sustainable practices.
- 4. Reporting Environmental Issues: They can report environmental violations, such as illegal dumping or pollution, to the relevant authorities.

By actively engaging in these ways, citizens can contribute to a more sustainable and environmentally friendly Anambra State, ensuring that road setbacks are respected and the environment is protected for future generations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing literature highlights the importance of citizen participation in environmental decision-making. Studies have shown that involving citizens in planning and implementation processes can lead to more effective and sustainable outcomes. In the context of road setbacks, citizen participation can contribute to:

- a. Increased awareness: Educating citizens about the benefits of road setbacks and their role in environmental sustainability.

- b. Improved enforcement: Empowering citizens to report violations and hold authorities accountable.
- c. Enhanced planning: Incorporating citizen feedback and local knowledge into planning processes.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. A survey was conducted among residents of Anambra State to assess their awareness of road setback regulations, their perceptions of compliance, and their willingness to participate in enforcement. Focus group discussions were also held with community leaders, government officials, and stakeholders to gather insights into the challenges and opportunities for citizen participation.

IV. FINDINGS

The findings suggest that citizen participation is crucial for achieving compliance with road setback regulations in Anambra State. By empowering citizens to play an active role in monitoring, reporting, and advocating for compliance, the government can create a more sustainable built environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Strengthening enforcement mechanisms: Allocating adequate resources and personnel for effective enforcement.
- b. Promoting public awareness: Implementing comprehensive public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about road setbacks.
- c. Establishing community-based monitoring programs: Empowering local communities to monitor compliance and report violations.
- d. Developing incentives and penalties: Providing rewards for compliance and penalties for violations.
- e. Improve structure siting guidelines: Clearer guidelines, incorporating environmental impact assessments, are crucial for sustainable development.
- f. Enhance citizen participation: Empowering communities through education, consultation, and access to information is vital for fostering environmental responsibility.

CONCLUSION

Citizen participation is essential for achieving compliance with road setback regulations and promoting environmental sustainability in Anambra State. By addressing the challenges and leveraging the opportunities identified in this study, the government can create a more sustainable and livable environment for all.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ademola, Adeyemi (2001). Paper on Strategies for Sustainable Land use Planning and Management in Nigeria. Paper presented at the 21st Century at Joint Workshop/meeting of Lands officers and ZTPOS held in Abuja 5th & 6th December, 2001.
- [2] Adindu, I. F. (2005). Physical Planning in History published by Jube Evans Books and Publications, Bida, Nigeria, printed by Blessed Concept Prints. Administration in Nigeria. Ibadan: Kraft Books Limited Awka Capital Territory Development Authority (ACTDA) (2014). Development Control Manual for Awka Capital Territory. 40-41.
- [3] Okafor, B.N (2018). Compliance with Road Setbacks Standards in Siting of Structures in Awka Capital Territory: Implications for Environmental Management. Unpublished Postgraduate PhD Research in Environmental Management: Submitted to the Department of Environmental Management, Faculty of Environment Sciences, NAU Awka Nigeria.
- [4] Okoro H. I. (2009). Housing Delivery in Nigeria: Policies and Challenges. Proceedings of The World Urban Forum 5, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil March 2010, Published by Wonders Print Abaji.
- [5] Okoro H. I. (2013). The Effect of Long-Distance Journey from Home to School on the Output of Teachers in Gwarinpa District Primary Schools, Abuja. Unpublished, Postgraduate Diploma Research in Education; submitted to Nigerian Teachers' Institute, Kaduna.
- [6] Olomola, A. S. (2003). Understanding poverty in Nigeria: highlights from NISER review of Nigerian development in NISEREEL, the

Magazine of the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, 4 & 5, Ibadan.

- [7] Onibokun, A. O. (2007). National Physical Development Plan as an instrument for Urban & Regional Development. Proceedings of the Conference of Directors & Heads of Planning Organizations in Nigeria. at Asaba, 2nd November, 2007.