



Partnership for Sustainable Communities

Partnership in Action

April 2010

In June 2009, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency joined together to form the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, an unprecedented agreement to coordinate federal housing, transportation, and environmental investments; protect public health and the environment; promote equitable development; and help address the challenges of climate change.

The three agencies are working together more closely than ever before to meet President Obama's challenge to coordinate federal policies, programs, and resources to help urban, suburban, and rural areas build more sustainable communities and make those communities the leading style of development in the United States.

The agencies are working together to identify opportunities to build more sustainable communities and to remove policy or other barriers that prevent these places from being built.

Livability Principles

1. ***Provide more transportation choices.***
2. ***Promote equitable, affordable housing.***
3. ***Increase economic competitiveness.***
4. ***Support existing communities.***
5. ***Leverage federal investment.***
6. ***Value communities and neighborhoods.***

"It's time to throw out old policies that encouraged sprawl and congestion, pollution, and ended up isolating our communities in the process. We need strategies that encourage smart development linked to quality public transportation, that bring our communities together."

-President Barack Obama, January 21, 2010 to the U.S. Conference of Mayors



HUD Deputy Secretary Ron Sims and HUD Miami Field Office Director Armand Fana at the first of several listening sessions on the HUD Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program.

Listening Sessions: Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program

In the 2010 budget, Congress provided \$150 million to HUD for a Sustainable Communities Initiative to improve regional planning efforts that integrate housing and transportation decisions and increase capacity to improve land use and zoning. Approximately \$100 million of that total will be given to regional integrated planning initiatives through HUD's Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program.

With DOT and EPA's assistance, HUD developed an Advance Notice of Funding Availability with a description and framework of the grant program for public comment in early February. It was designed to gather input from the public on how the program should be structured in order to have the most meaningful impact on sustainable regional planning.

As part of a commitment to listening and learning, HUD Deputy Secretary Ron Sims kicked off HUD's Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Listening Tour in Miami on February 19th. The Deputy Secretary and Shelley Poticha,

Director of the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, listened to stakeholders to learn how the new grant program could spur local innovations that will help communities grow more sustainably.

Throughout February and March, listening sessions were held in Denver, Colo.; Albuquerque, N.M.; Los Angeles, Calif.; St. Louis, Mo.; Hartford, Conn.; Washington D.C., and Cleveland, Ohio. Over 700 people participated, including representatives of state, local, and regional governments; community development organizations; and a broad range of other stakeholders. To reach as many stakeholders as possible, HUD also hosted six webcasts which reached approximately 600 additional people.

More information about the HUD Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program is available at www.hud.gov/sustainability.



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As a result of the Partnership, DOT, HUD, and EPA have increased interagency coordination and collaboration and are developing internal initiatives to support the Partnership's work. Here are a few examples:

HUD Launch of Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities

In February 2010, HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan publicly announced the creation of the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities. The office will be overseen by Deputy Secretary Ron Sims and is under the management of Director Shelley Poticha. The office will help build stronger communities by connecting housing to transportation, fostering local innovation, and building a clean energy economy. Funded by Congress for the first time in HUD's 2010 budget, the office is a key component of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The office will work closely with EPA and DOT to coordinate federal policies, programs, and resources to help urban, suburban, and rural areas build more sustainable communities. More information: <http://www.hud.gov/sustainability>

Sustainable Communities Brownfields Pilots

Together, EPA, HUD, and DOT have selected five Brownfields Pilots where there is a convergence of public transit and the need for affordable housing. Cleaning and reusing this land and providing new housing choices will create jobs and new economic opportunities. The five sites are the Fairmount Line in Boston; the Smart Growth Redevelopment District in Indianapolis; the La Alma/South Lincoln Park neighborhood in Denver; the Riverfront Crossings District in Iowa City, Iowa; and the Westside Affordable Housing Transit-Oriented Development in National City, California. More information: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/sustain.htm#part>

DOT Funds for Urban Circulator, Bus, and Bus Facility Projects

DOT is evaluating grants for two new pilot programs to support livability projects. Up to \$150 million is available for bus livability projects to provide new mobility options to improve access to jobs, healthcare, and education. \$130 million is available for Urban Circulator Grants, which will connect destinations and foster walkable, mixed-use redevelopment. More information: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-29242.pdf>

Clean Water State Revolving Fund Pilots Announced

Through new Clean Water State Revolving Fund Pilots, EPA will offer technical assistance to New York, Maryland, and California – to use their clean water funding programs to support efforts to make communities more sustainable. The aim of this technical assistance is to promote more widespread adoption of practices that encourage states to reinvest in their existing infrastructure systems and in their existing communities.

DOT Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grants

In February 2010, DOT announced \$1.5 billion in TIGER grants for over 50 high-priority, innovative transportation projects across the country. The projects, funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), will create thousands of jobs and help get the U.S. economy back on track. The TIGER grant program targets major national and regional transportation projects that are often difficult to pursue through government funding programs. Selected projects must foster job creation, show strong economic benefits, and promote communities that are safer, cleaner, and more livable. The projects selected range in size from under \$4 million to over \$100 million and are found in both rural and urban communities. They are distributed in 41 states and the District of Columbia. HUD and EPA offered expertise in the review of the grant applications. \$600 million has been allocated to DOT for a second round of TIGER grants. \$30 million of those funds can be used for planning and capacity building to generate and fund projects that improve livability. More information: <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/2010/dot3010b.htm>

Smart Growth Implementation Assistance

For the first time, HUD and DOT headquarters and regional staff are serving on the teams for EPA's Smart Growth Implementation Assistance projects—helping communities find solutions to development-related challenges in the state of California; Louisville, Ky.; Las Cruces, N.M.; and Montgomery County, Md. More information: <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sgia.htm>

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)-HUD Mixed-Income, Transit-Oriented Development Action Guide

FTA and HUD have developed an action guide to help planners implement mixed-income, transit-oriented development. This interactive web guide will help local planners find effective tools to encourage mixed-income development around transit. More information: <http://www.mitod.org>

Change to Federal Transit Administration's New Starts Program

DOT has repealed the New Starts cost-effectiveness rule that limited its New Starts funding recommendations. DOT is making this change in order to give meaningful consideration to the full range of benefits that transit can provide, including shorter travel times, congestion relief, and other important economic development, environmental, and social benefits. More information: http://www.fta.dot.gov/news/news_events_11048.html

EPA Urban Waters Initiative

Under the new Urban Waters Initiative, EPA will work with HUD and DOT to promote equitable redevelopment adjacent to urban waterways, re-invest in existing infrastructure, improve water quality, and revitalize waterfront neighborhoods, especially disadvantaged neighborhoods. EPA expects to announce a Request for Proposals in 2010 for approximately \$600,000 in Targeted Watersheds Grants to build capacity in urban watersheds. More information: <http://www.epa.gov/twg>

More information and updates on each agency's efforts:

<http://www.hud.gov/sustainability>

<http://www.dot.gov>

<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth>