

Sustainable Communities Background and Grant Overview

Background

Recently, the US Department of Transportation (DOT), the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced an interagency partnership to build sustainable communities. On February 4, 2010, through an advanced notice of funding availability (NOFA), HUD announced that it would proceed with a \$100 million grant program to support regional planning for “the integration of housing, transportation and land use.” Each successful applicant from a large metropolitan region can receive up to \$5 million.

Funding for project implementation will be dependent on successfully completed and adopted regional sustainable development plans. The agencies have outlined the following six guiding principles to their partnership:

1. Provide more transportation choices
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing
3. Enhance economic competitiveness
4. Support existing communities
5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment
6. Value communities and neighborhoods

The specific guidelines of the NOFA are expected in May 2010.

H-GAC's Goal

To establish regional goals that are stakeholder driven, local sustainability strategies should:

- Enrich efforts that support workforce improvements, facilitate job growth and attract new residents
- Conserve the natural environment and enhance the built environment
- Enable pursuit of federal funding for implementation of transportation, housing, hazard mitigation, community and economic development and other sustainability plans

In order to formulate a viable application, H-GAC will facilitate a regional conversation about how to best achieve sustainability. A Stakeholders Meeting is scheduled for **May 7th from 10:00am – 12:00 pm** to hear from local entities about sustainability needs and priorities in the region. H-GAC will then seek other stakeholders in the pursuit of federal assistance for development of a regional sustainability plan.

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