

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP

SEPTEMBER 13-14, 2012

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

WORKSHOP MATERIALS

Welcome

Thank you for joining us in Omaha. This workshop is designed to build the capacity of HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning and Community Challenge grantees working in rural or small metropolitan regions to develop strong partnerships to achieve community planning and economic development goals.

Presentations and other event materials, as well as reports, case studies, and other resources related to planning, economic development, transportation, and sustainable development issues can be accessed at www.NADO.org and www.SCLearningNetwork.org. Please be sure to fill out the evaluation form to assist us in planning future events.

About the Sustainable Communities Capacity Building Program

Through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the NADO Research Foundation, in partnership with the National Association of Counties (NACo) Research Foundation, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), and the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI), comprises one of the eight teams providing capacity building and technical assistance to HUD and EPA sustainable communities award recipients. The capacity building teams are forming networks among the grantees to exchange ideas on successful strategies, lessons learned, and emerging tools. This work will strengthen the capacity of grantee communities to create more housing choices, make transportation more efficient and reliable, make more efficient investments in water and wastewater infrastructure, and build vibrant, healthy and economically prosperous neighborhoods. Grantees and their partners can access resources, network with their peers, and find information about upcoming events on the SC Learning Network, available here: <http://sclearningnetwork.org/>.

This program is a component of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, an innovative interagency collaboration, launched by President Obama in June 2009, between HUD, EPA and DOT to lay the foundation for a 21st century economy by creating more financially, environmentally, and socially sustainable communities. More information about the Partnership and additional resources can be found here: <http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/>.

Sponsors

This workshop was coordinated by the NADO Research Foundation, with support from the NACo Research Foundation, through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (No. DCSGP0003-11). Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed at this event do not necessarily reflect the views of HUD. Special thanks to all those who assisted in the development of this workshop, including all of the speakers and facilitators lending their expertise.



About NADO and the NADO Research Foundation

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) is a national membership organization for the nation's 500+ regional planning and development organizations focused on strengthening local governments, communities, and economies. Regional planning and development organizations—known locally as regional planning commissions, councils of governments, area development districts, or similar terms—play a key role in regional and community economic development, business development finance, technology and telecommunications, transportation planning, workforce development, GIS analysis, disaster preparedness, and a variety of other types of services and support for member local governments. Founded in 1988, the NADO Research Foundation is the nonprofit research affiliate of NADO. The NADO Research Foundation identifies, studies, and promotes regional solutions and approaches to improving local prosperity and services through the nationwide network of RDOs. The Research Foundation shares best practices and offers professional development training, analyzes the impact of federal policies and programs on RDOs, and examines the latest developments and trends in small metropolitan and rural America. Most importantly, the Research Foundation is helping bridge the communications gap among practitioners, researchers, and policymakers.



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AGENDA

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

- 8:30 a.m. Registration and Networking**
Coffee and continental breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions**
Ron Kohn, Mills County (IA) and Metropolitan Area Planning Agency Chairperson
Kathy Nothstine, National Association of Development Organizations
- 9:15 a.m. Framing the Issue: Positioning Smaller Communities for a Prosperous Future**
Rural regions and small towns that coordinate long-term economic development strategies with local land use decisions and infrastructure investments can benefit from greater financial returns and improved quality of life. Joe Minicozzi will present research that quantifies the economic impacts of coordinated investments and policymaking in communities around the country.
Joseph Minicozzi, AICP, Urban3, LLC
- 10:15 a.m. 5 x 5: Grantee Success Stories (Round One)**
Grantees will each have five minutes/five slides to describe one key project success in a fast-paced series of short presentations.
- 11:00 a.m. Break**
- 11:15 a.m. 5 x 5: Grantee Success Stories (Round Two)**
Grantees will each have five minutes/five slides to describe one key project success in a fast-paced series of short presentations.
- 12:00 p.m. Luncheon Discussion: Implementing Livability Initiatives in Small Town America**
Planning is only effective if it leads to action. Paul Dreher will highlight tools to connect planning, placemaking, and economic development in small town settings.
Paul Dreher, Livability Solutions/City of Newport, Vermont
- 1:00 p.m. Communications Clinic: Engaging Stakeholders and Champions to Articulate Values**
Interactive training to help participants build and activate relationships with key community partners, identify shared community values and craft a clear, unique message, guided by hands-on exercises and facilitated discussions.
Elisa Ortiz, Smart Growth America
- 3:00 p.m. Break**
- 3:15 p.m. Without Smoke & Mirrors: Finding the Magic in E-logic Models & Performance Measures**
Tools and strategies to help rural stakeholders choose and measure indicators to track program effectiveness and ensure positive community outcomes.
Stacey Stockdill, EnSearch

- 4:00 p.m.** **Community Revitalization and Business Development in Omaha**
Trolley tour of innovative community and economic development and neighborhood revitalization strategies at work in Omaha.
- Evening** **Group dinners in Omaha (self-organized)**

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

- 8:30 a.m.** **Breakfast: Problem-Solving Clinic**
Coffee and continental breakfast provided
In small groups, grantees will have the opportunity to talk through their challenges and benefit from the combined expertise of industry practitioners and fellow grantees to generate potential solutions.
- 9:30 a.m.** **Creating and Retaining Wealth: New Ways of Approaching Economic Development in Rural and Small Metro Communities**
Interactive demonstration of tools designed to help practitioners identify and measure the impacts of project and policy actions on different forms of community wealth. Participants will work through two exercises to analyze components of their HUD SCI projects to determine how different policy and planning interventions can influence community and economic change.
Melissa Levy, Yellow Wood Associates
- 11:30 a.m.** **Lessons Learned and Next Steps**
- 12:00 p.m.** **Adjourn**

LOCATION INFORMATION

Meeting/Accommodations:

Hilton Omaha, 1001 Cass Street, Omaha, NE, 68102

402-998-3400

<http://www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/nebraska/hilton-omaha-OMACVHH/index.html>

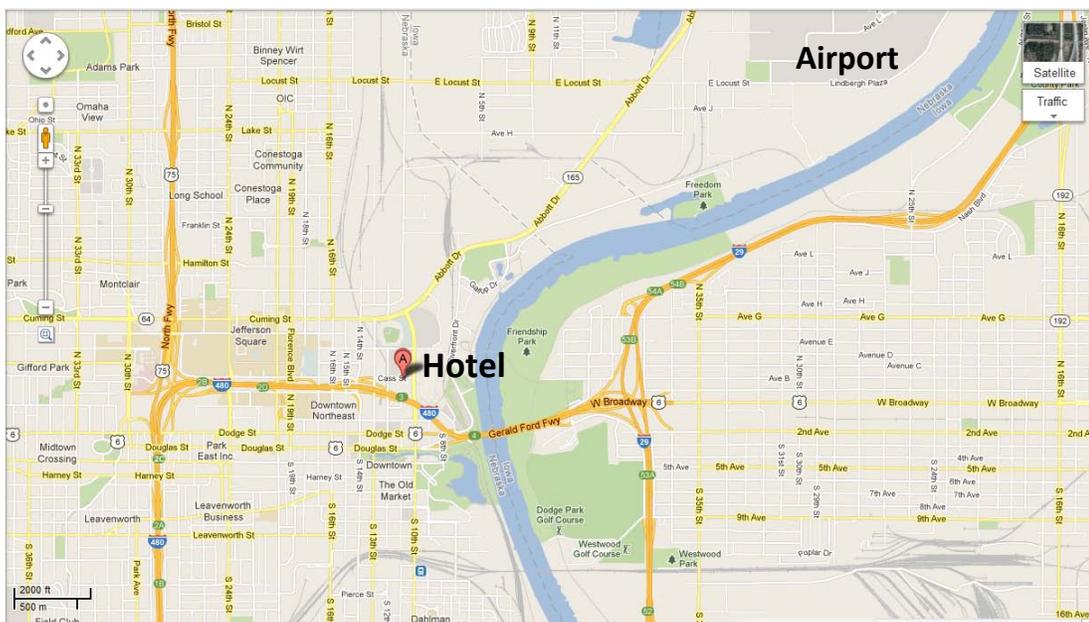
We will be meeting in the “St. Nicholas A” room.

Airport:

Eppley Airfield: The airport is about 5 minutes from the hotel and cab fare is approximately \$15.

Attire:

Business casual



PARTICIPANT PROFILES

EAST ARKANSAS REGIONAL PLANNING CONSORTIUM SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

LOCATION: East Arkansas (Jonesboro region)

GRANT TYPE AND YEAR AWARDED: Regional Planning, 2011

SCOPE: East Arkansas Planning and Development District (EAPDD) has formed the East Arkansas Regional Planning Partnership to oversee the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program in twelve counties. This will support a community and multijurisdictional planning initiative that integrates housing, land use, economic development, transportation, and infrastructure investments. This planning project will assist area jurisdictions and the region in addressing challenges that are interrelated but are often not addressed comprehensively. These challenges include community competitiveness and revitalization; access to jobs, education and services; energy and other resource conservation; and environmental impact. The project features a substantial community outreach component, particularly in traditionally marginalized communities. This outreach will result in approximately 25 community and/or county-based economic development strategic plans utilizing a unique methodology designed by Building Communities. This initiative will be supported by the development of a regional inventory of underutilized assets enhanced by digital modeling tools to help communities envision the greater outcomes such assets can provide as strategies are implemented. Common issues raised during planning meetings over an 18-month process will drive the development of a regional development plan grounded in livability and sustainability principles. Concurrent with and integrated into this process will be regional studies addressing issues including housing, transportation, local food, and access to each of these. These studies will be conducted by qualified firms which are partners in the grant or are identified through an RFP process and coordinated by Building Communities. Collection and management of data will be carried out so as to ensure decisions are well-informed and communicated across all jurisdictions to guide the progress of plan implementation and maximize success.

SUCCESSSES: One major success of the East Arkansas Regional Planning Partnership to date is the awareness of the importance of regionalism that is beginning to appear across the 12-county district. Elected officials, consortium members, and everyday citizens are all beginning to see the value of speaking with one voice in order to have a greater overall impact and leverage resources to greater effect.

CHALLENGES: Two significant challenges facing our region are reaching the traditionally marginalized audiences and lack of broadband connection in much of the area. Both of these challenges force staff to work creatively to reach populations using means other than online media. Staff make extensive use of smartphones for presentations, work with local chapters of special interest organizations to ensure diversity throughout the life of the project, and rely heavily on 'face-time' when promoting events relating to the project. Tailoring our message to specific target audiences is critical to our gaining the support and participation amongst these groups.

WORKSHOP GOALS: Better ways develop appropriate messaging for locally targeted audiences.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

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SMART VALLEY PLACES

LOCATION: Central Valley (Fresno region), California

GRANT TYPE AND YEAR AWARDED: Regional Planning, 2010

SCOPE: The main goal is to incorporate the smart growth principles of the regional blueprint into the planning documents of our region's 14 largest cities. The program to do this is divided into three major components: 1) individual city projects, 2) a community leadership development program tied to each partner city along with a local community based organization, and 3) regional coordination with other similar efforts to help bring change to the entire region, not just the urban areas.

SUCCESSSES: 1) We have city staff partnering with local community based organizations to develop institutes for residents to become more civically engaged. 2) While there was early tension between the effort and the 8 regional transportation planning agencies, we have since partnered with their efforts under a state grant to reach the rural areas of the valley as well.

CHALLENGES: The biggest challenge we have in the region is an "us versus them" mentality that has kept cities from working together. This grant allowed us the vehicle to bring 14 major cities together to begin looking strategically into the future as a region and identify ways to work together rather than compete against each other.

WORKSHOP GOALS: Our staff that will be attending is part of our Rural Development Center, a key partner in the SVP regional coordination program component. It is our hope that he will learn about some of the innovative ways other rural regions are addressing challenges together, rather than on an individual basis.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

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HEARTLAND 2060 REGIONAL PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

LOCATION: Central Florida (Bartow region)

GRANT TYPE AND YEAR AWARDED: Regional Planning, 2010

SCOPE: The Heartland 2060 Consortium includes six predominantly rural counties including DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee; and the Archbold Biological Station; Florida's Heartland Rural Economic Development Initiative (FHREDI); Heartland Workforce; Sebring Airport Authority, and the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies at the University of Florida.

CHALLENGES: The most significant challenges are: reaching marginalized and underrepresented populations to communicate the goals of this effort and receive their input; tying in the economic development component of scenario modeling with other goals given there is no funding for this work in the HUD grant; and working on alternative transportation in sparsely-populated rural areas where few programs and little funding exists to support these alternatives.

WORKSHOP GOALS: We look forward to learning a way for government at all levels to embrace visioning in non-regulatory initiatives.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

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Pat Huff
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HEARTLAND 2050 REGIONAL VISION

LOCATION: Eastern Nebraska/Western Iowa (Omaha region)

GRANT TYPE AND YEAR AWARDED: Regional Planning, 2011

SCOPE: Our primary goal is to generate a preferred regional development scenario for our eight-county region over the next 40 years. Heartland 2050 will culminate in a regionally preferred vision for future growth and development, and a regional plan for sustainable development that highlights specific strategies and actions for the region's core infrastructural systems.

SUCCESSSES: Beginning to link food systems, health and education to the core areas of housing, utility infrastructure, transportation and land use. Our region's largest city has completed an Environmental Element for its Master Plan which engaged numerous stakeholders and put discussion of sustainability in the public eye on a regional scale.

CHALLENGES: Coordinating such a massive undertaking while overcoming the perceived barriers between the rural and urban communities. Our biggest challenge is working through the ramp-up process and engaging the dozens of entities we need to reach out to for participation.

WORKSHOP GOALS: Tools to ensure success of the Heartland 2050 project. Some insight on how to get people to participate and contribute meaningful input to our plan.

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THE TOMORROW PLAN

LOCATION: Greater Des Moines region, Iowa

GRANT TYPE AND YEAR AWARDED: Regional Planning, 2010

SCOPE: The Tomorrow Plan is a regional planning effort focused on the sustainable development of Greater Des Moines. It involves residents and local leaders in identifying visions and aspirations for the region, exploring potential scenarios for its future, and setting a preferred direction for sustainable future development. The goal is to make Greater Des Moines more sustainable as we move towards the year 2050. The plan covers many elements, including transportation, land use, local foods, affordable housing, parks and recreation, economic development, etc.

SUCCESES: Outreach events - Our last public outreach event, Choose Tomorrow, drew over 350 people.

CHALLENGES: Building trust in working at the regional level - making sure all of the communities feel like winners

WORKSHOP GOALS: Implementation strategies

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

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FLINT HILLS FRONTIERS REGIONAL PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

LOCATION: 19-county Fort Riley/Manhattan region, Kansas

GRANT TYPE AND YEAR AWARDED: Regional Planning, 2011

SCOPE: To develop a sustainable plan for regional development through focusing on three frontiers: one, the frontier of economic development across our 19 county eco-region, where we have some of the most rural and distressed areas in the state and nation and some of the most vibrant and successful in our metro area, around Manhattan; two, the frontier of cultural and natural resource preservation, as our region is quickly changing from a small-town rural landscape into a metro area; and three, the frontier of national defense, as we are home to Fort Riley and its mission to serve and support our nation's military, in a time of change and encroachment that has the threat of compromising its mission.

SUCCESES: We have started our CEDS process for forming the Flint Hills Economic Development District and we are working with Public Square, a Kansas community engagement network, to begin a innovative, viral, out-reach campaign.

CHALLENGES: It is a huge 19 county region, with quite a diverse landscape of success and decay. It will be difficult to balance the expectations of a booming metro area, already working within our FHRC to the areas distant, and even, adverse to 'sustainable' planning.

WORKSHOP GOALS: Thoughtful discussion over rural challenges and to develop a 'Meaningful Metrics,' Rural task force.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

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THE CENTRAL MINNESOTA SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

LOCATION: Central Minnesota (Staples region)

GRANT TYPE AND YEAR AWARDED: Regional Planning, 2010

SCOPE: We are a community-driven, university-assisted, partnership developing a five-county strategic plan through highly engaged civic engagement.

SUCCESSSES: Leveraged more than \$4 Million and Engaged More than 600 Individuals (exceeding our target of 200)

CHALLENGES: At the time of the grant: 1) businesses were failing, 2) population growth in some areas and out-migration in others 3) family farms disappearing, 4) pressure on natural resources

WORKSHOP GOALS: Resources for implementation

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

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PARKVIEW GARDENS: A SUSTAINABLE AND ACCESSIBLE NEIGHBORHOOD

LOCATION: University City, MO

GRANT TYPE AND YEAR AWARDED: Community Challenge, 2010

SCOPE: To create a sustainable redevelopment plan for Parkview Gardens, an urban neighborhood located in the easternmost part of University City, an inner-ring suburb which abuts City of St. Louis. Planning issues in the planning area include: lack of neighborhood connectivity, need for additional affordable housing, and a need to improve the quality of existing open spaces. In addition, connecting residents to existing transit bus routes and light rail system and the planned Loop Trolley are included in the study. The Loop Trolley will run along a section of Delmar Blvd), a major entertainment and cultural business corridor which is the southern border of the Parkview Gardens neighborhood.

SUCCESSSES: 1) Formation of Parkview Planning Partners (PPP) advisory committee comprised of stakeholders. 2) Extensive public engagement and involvement. 3) \$80 million mixed-use and student housing development proposed in the neighborhood by Washington University in St. Louis.

CHALLENGES: For some of the commercial property owners/business owners to recognize the benefits and positive outcome the long-term vision of a neighborhood sustainable redevelopment plan could bring for the future of the business district.

WORKSHOP GOALS: To enable owners of businesses and commercial properties to understand the values a sustainability plan could bring, while some incremental changes may have to take place over time.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

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PLANET (PLAN EAST TENNESSEE)

LOCATION: Knoxville region/eastern Tennessee

GRANT TYPE AND YEAR AWARDED: Regional Planning, 2010

SCOPE: Plan East Tennessee (PlanET) is a regional partnership of communities in Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon and Union counties building a shared direction for our future. The main goal of PlanET is to:

- Foster ongoing citizen involvement in planning for the region's future;
- Develop a regional "blueprint" to guide development over the next decades; and
- Increase local capacity for dialogue and plan implementation.

The primary components of the PlanET project are our five focus areas, as well as Equity & Access to Opportunity. Focus Areas listed below:

1. Economy & Workforce Development
2. Transportation & Infrastructure
3. Healthy Communities
4. Housing & Neighborhoods
5. Environment

SUCCESSSES: PlanET has had great success in establishing Consortium Partners throughout its project region and continues to build community partnerships and engagement through its outreach with tools, such as its Meeting In a Box. Meeting in a Box is designed for community groups, neighborhood associations or friends to gather at a convenient time and location to share their opinions on the same topics being discussed as part of the PlanET project phases. For more information about Meeting In a Box and the engaged community groups, please visit here: <http://www.planeasttn.org/Participate/MeetinginaBox.aspx> PlanET has also had success in gathering input and suggestions about the region's future from professionals engaged "Working Groups" – each Working Group specifically addressing one of the before-mentioned focus areas. There is also success with our PlanET Equity Team that is taking a lead in collecting and discussing data related to our region's Analysis of Impediments and Fair Housing Equity Assessment, as well as helping to prioritize outreach for under-represented groups in our region (ex: the poor, youth, minorities).

CHALLENGES:

1. Lack of good paying jobs throughout region
2. Pollution in the rivers and lakes
3. Roads & highways in need of repair
4. Lack of public transportation throughout the majority of our five county area
5. Empty commercial buildings
6. Loss of agricultural land
7. Families, particularly children living in poverty (approximately 25%)

PlanET work: Raise the regional awareness of these issues/challenges and work towards future solutions for implementation that seeks to change the current challenges trends.

WORKSHOP GOALS: Our PlanET Team would like to learn how to better communicate ways to address the challenges that our region faces with the ideas and visions that our communities want to accomplish – knowing that it will require significant collaboration and relationship building for implementation.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

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REGIONAL PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

LOCATION: Houston-Galveston region, Texas

GRANT TYPE AND YEAR AWARDED: Regional Planning, 2010

SCOPE: The main goal of the H-GAC's category 1 Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant is to create a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development for the 13-county H-GAC region. The primary components of the project are public engagement throughout the planning process, identification of goals, objectives and metrics, assessment of existing conditions in the region, development of scenarios, completion of case studies to identify the potential for implementation of sustainability initiatives at the local level, identification of implementation strategies, and creation of the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development report.

SUCCESSSES: Identifying goals, objectives, and metrics for the plan has been one of the successes that we've had in the creation of the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development.

CHALLENGES: The most significant challenge we have faced in the planning process has been misconceptions about sustainability that we have encountered in the public engagement process. These misconceptions have led to divisiveness and disruptions in the engagement process of the grant. We have found new and creative ways to conduct public engagement to continue to allow for full participation of the public, but the misconceptions have continued to distract from the core goals of the grant and grant program.

WORKSHOP GOALS: Tools to help us communicate and engage our rural local officials and communities.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

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SUSTAINABLE THURSTON

LOCATION: Olympia/Thurston County, Washington

GRANT TYPE AND YEAR AWARDED: Regional Planning & Community Challenge, 0

SCOPE: Sustainable Thurston is a community-wide conversation with a goal to develop a vision for a vibrant, healthy and resilient future for the Thurston County, Washington region. Primary components related to small communities in this project include: the fundamental question of how exactly those small communities are envisioned to fit within the larger region (as growth centers, as bedroom communities, or more complete communities) and the necessary steps are to support that vision.

SUCCESSES: 1. Held the first round of community conversations, including four in the small communities of Thurston County, which began to articulate a vision for the communities. 2. Established a South Thurston Economic Development group to begin articulating steps to achieve future community and economic development in the south portion of the County.

CHALLENGES: Creating more independent/resilient/sustainable small communities. Most of the existing communities are dependent on larger cities to the north or south for most of their daily needs including work and shopping, and as a result have a difficult time developing their local economies and local leadership.

WORKSHOP GOALS: Strategies to promote rural economic development/leadership development/community development.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

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WORKSHOP SPEAKERS AND STAFF

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HUD Sustainable Communities Grantees, FY2010 - FY2011

