

NOAA-EPA COASTAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP
SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION
December 2006

BACKGROUND

Since the signing of the NOAA/EPA Coastal Community Development MOA in January of 2005, significant progress has been made on many projects identified by the Partners.

NOAA and EPA have worked to provide advice and assistance to our state and local partners to achieve national goals for sustainable management of coastal resources and protection of human health and the environment. We have accomplished this through greater integration and coordination between our offices and with enhanced communication from the federal agencies to the local implementers. Our governmental and NGO partners at regional, state and local levels need more capacity to plan and guide growth in an integrated, comprehensive and coordinated manner and the NOAA/EPA Coastal Community Development Partnership is helping to build that capacity.

STATUS OF PRIORITY PROJECTS

Since the establishment of the Partnership, EPA and NOAA have been focusing on the four priority projects detailed below. Additional project ideas are being discussed and EPA and NOAA will work on selected efforts as time and resources allow. More detailed information on the projects described below can be obtained directly from the contacts listed, or by contacting John Kuriawa (410.267.5668, john.kuriawa@noaa.gov) at NOAA or Lynn Richards (202.566.2858, richards.lynn@epa.gov) at EPA.

✓ **Community Technical Assistance supporting local development efforts**
[Tools and Technical Assistance]

Coastal communities are interested in improving their quality of life, protecting their environmental resources, enhancing public health, and promoting responsible development, but many lack the tools, resources, or information to achieve these goals. Recognizing this, EPA and NOAA have begun a new initiative to give direct technical assistance from national experts, free of charge, to communities that want to incorporate smart growth techniques in their new or redevelopment projects.

Three Sea Grant universities and their partner communities were selected to receive assistance in October, 2005 and three additional sites were selected in 2006. These projects will bring teams of national experts together to work with local communities and Sea Grant extension personnel to address community-identified needs for land use policy assistance. Sites include:

University of Michigan and Marquette, Michigan

NOAA-EPA funds will support [Michigan Sea Grant](#) and the city of Marquette during the process of writing and implementing a form-based zoning code for Marquette's Downtown Waterfront District to attract and support the diverse, mixed-use, and vibrant development the city wants. A team of nationally recognized experts in form-based codes will come to the community to engage stakeholders in the code-refining process and then write new code language for consideration and adoption by the city. The local team will lay the groundwork with stakeholders, advise and assist the EPA team, and then follow up on the expert assistance.

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant and Porter County, Indiana

[Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant](#) has a long standing relationship with Porter County. Recently, Sea Grant helped the county develop a conservation subdivision ordinance. Using that process as a template, Sea Grant and the County now want to develop a Traditional Neighborhood Design ordinance to be included in their Unified Development Ordinance. A team of national experts will help them develop the TND ordinance with full participation from a wide range of county stakeholders.

Delaware Sea Grant and Sussex County, Delaware

Sussex County is home to numerous Atlantic Ocean beaches, which draw hundred of thousands of visitors annually, and a strong agricultural industry. Developers and agriculture stakeholders are often divided on how to best manage future growth and development. To consider and address these differences, national experts will run a series of visioning workshops that involve participants from the entire county so that county leaders have information from all stakeholders on where and how the county should plan to grow.

University of Maine and the Town of Wells

"Depot Brook Smart Development Project" [Maine Sea Grant](#) will work with the town of Wells to implement a community-supported initiative to protect the current ecological integrity of a local trout stream, Depot Brook, while also allowing for growth and development within a proposed gateway area of Wells.

University of Texas and Houston's Main Street Coalition and the Gulf Coast Institute

"Houston's Midtown: A Transit-Oriented Community" [Texas Sea Grant](#) will work with two Houston organizations to analyze the policy and regulatory environment in the Midtown area, particularly around three light-rail stops on Main Street.

University of North Carolina and Eastern Carolina Council of Governments

"Implementing the Smart Growth Principles along the Highway 55 Corridor in Pamlico County" [North Carolina Sea Grant](#) will work with the Eastern Carolina Council of Governments to assess the existing land use regulatory framework for the Highway 55 corridor and obstacles to implementing smart growth principles. They will provide options for siting standards, context sensitive solutions, and local regulatory measures to ensure appropriate development types and patterns once expansion of the highway is completed.

More information is available through Lynn Richards (202.566.2858, richards.lynn@epa.gov) at EPA or Sami Grimes (301.734.1077, sami.grimes@noaa.gov) at NOAA.

- ✓ **Promoting university-based technical assistance and feedback via Sea Grant by enhancing the Coastal Community Development Program**
[Tools and Technical Assistance]

In 2001, NOAA created the Coastal Community Development Program (CCDP) within its National Sea Grant Extension Network. The purpose of the CCDP is to provide leadership in helping coastal communities address all issues related to land use, economic development and coastal resources. This new program builds off the successes and existing infrastructure of Sea Grant programs and tackles one of the largest threats to coastal resources—the expansion of built environments in coastal areas. The CCDP is supported with \$50K/annually from the national Sea Grant office to each Sea Grant College Program, which is leveraged considerably with additional funding and in-kind support by each university program.

In 2005, the National Sea Grant College Office hired a Coastal Community Development National Coordinator to help develop and provide focus for the Sea Grant CCDP, to help facilitate the exchange of information and ideas among agents and others working on coastal community development, and to increase the capacity of agents and others addressing growth and development issues. The coordinator, Amy Zimmerling, in cooperation with the Partnership coordinating committee members, was instrumental in:

- ❑ Incorporating coastal community development as a primary theme of Sea Grant Week in 2005, and highlighting the CCDP at national conferences focusing on coastal issues and community development.
- ❑ Developing and distributing bi-weekly CCD Bulletins on issues of concern to the network.
- ❑ Organizing a national meeting for CCD extension personnel, including training from NOAA's Coastal Services Center on "collaborative processes".
- ❑ Initiating the ongoing NOAA Smart Growth Speaker Series.
- ❑ Leading the refinement of a white paper on the CCDP mission and future directions for enhancement and expansion of the program.
- ❑ Providing analysis and other support for a comprehensive CCDP review, which includes an EPA expert on the advisory panel.\

The Partnership is attempting to identify additional resources at this time to re-hire a CCDP coordinator.

✓ **Developing and delivering training for state and local government officials**
[Outreach and Education]

Many coastal resource managers involved in state and local planning and development issues have a general idea of what better coastal growth decision making entails, but they desire a deeper understanding to implement the principles associated with alternative coastal development. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and state coastal resource management agencies have joined together to develop a training course that will enable stakeholders involved in the planning, growth and development of their coastal community to learn more about the general principles of alternative coastal development as well as ways to implement these principles.

This two-day course will actively engage participants in learning about alternatives to *how* and *where* growth and development will occur in their communities. It will provide them with the background, examples, strategies, data, and resources to support alternative development efforts in coastal areas. Through group discussions and engaging activities, participants will continuously apply the knowledge and skills learned in this course to their communities. Each participant will develop a working Community Action Plan as the final activity. The training is expected to help attendees:

- Learn to recognize examples of conventional development and understand the circumstances that result when continuing this pattern of development, as well as the consequences for coastal communities.
- Learn about alternatives to conventional growth and development, including the defining principles and the economic, social, and environmental benefits to coastal communities.
- Assess the current state of growth and development in their communities; and learn how to identify existing obstacles to alternative growth strategies.
- Become familiar with useful tools and resources available to further alternative growth efforts.
- Understand the purpose, process, and product generated by creating a collective vision for

- how and where coastal communities will grow.
- Experience communicating effectively about alternative growth strategies.
- Establish working Community Action Plans to guide efforts enabling alternative growth and development in their coastal communities.

Through this Partnership, EPA and NOAA have completed the following steps in bringing this training to our coastal partners:

- ❑ Identified the intended audience as local and regional decision-makers and planners.
- ❑ Conducted a needs assessment of our partners and our target audience at the state and local level to determine the scope and content of the training.
- ❑ Described the project outcomes in terms of short, mid, and long-term goals.
- ❑ Collected training content and materials from project partners.
- ❑ Outlined and drafted priority modules based on critical concepts identified in the needs assessment.
- ❑ Integrated instructional design methods throughout the training sessions.
- ❑ Created a comprehensive training manual that provides more detailed information regarding alternative planning and development processes
- ❑ Completed dry runs and the first “live” training in conjunction with our National Estuarine Research Reserve partners
 - The “live” training was conducted in Edisto, South Carolina, and was hosted by the ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve.
 - It included over a dozen participants from local planning commissions, local planning agencies, regional council of governments, and various citizen groups.
 - Evaluation results showed that 95% of participants increased their knowledge of alternative planning and development processes. Furthermore, 100% of participants said they would recommend this course to another coastal professional.
 - Several trainings are already planned for 2007 including Puerto Rico, Ohio, Alaska, and Texas.

✓ **Explaining how better approaches to coastal development help meet Clean Water Act and Coastal Zone Management Act requirements**
[Policy Analysis]

Across the country, cities, regions and states are recognizing that new and enhanced growth strategies can be effective in protecting environmental quality and while promoting coastal community economic development. Specifically, growth and development approaches can be used to meet some water quality and coastal resource protection goals contained in the Clean Water Act (CWA) and Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA).

NOAA and EPA, in conjunction with leading policy experts, have drafted a policy document designed to highlight ways in which smart growth principles can be used to meet the goals of environmental statutes. The document, targeted to governors and state agency leaders, is undergoing reviews and may ultimately be combined with related policy advice to create a comprehensive compendium of ways to use current environmental programs, policies, and rules to foster safer and smarter growth. The publication is expected to focus on the most innovative and pragmatic ways to use State policies under the CWA and CZMA to identify opportunities where better approaches to coastal development will help meet local, state, or federal requirements.