# Partnership for Sustainable Communities: Recent Regional Accomplishments Q3







The Partnership for Sustainable Communities continued to celebrate its third anniversary in the third quarter of 2012. For example, Region 4 held a celebration on August 29, 2012, in Atlanta, Georgia. More than 70 participants from across the Region represented federal, state, and local agencies and non-profit partners. The gathering provided an opportunity to highlight and discuss the accomplishments of the Partnership throughout the Region.

Some regional engagement milestones and successes between July and September, 2012 include:

### **Communicating Successes**

Regional offices continued to document success and assist grantees with measuring and documenting progress. Region 7 HUD Planning Grant recipient, Mid-America Regional Council, continued to promote "Sustainable Success Stories" as part of an ongoing community dialogue. In Region 8 the Lakota Radio Hour continued to feature the Thunder Valley's Lakota Oyate Omniciye community planning efforts in a regularly scheduled open forum radio program which focuses on one of the twelve priorities identified in the plan each week. In Region 4, elected officials have taken the lead in championing the Centralina Council of Government's HUD-funded "CONNECT for our future" planning project, in the Charlotte, NC region, by delivering presentations to local governments, private entities, and non-for-profit organizations. As a result, the grantee has been successful in securing 41 consortium agreements from local governmental agencies and 20 additional agreements from other organizations. In Region 6, the Harris County (Houston) housing authority has opened the Region's first US Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) platinum rated housing community.

### **Coordinating Policies and Programs**

Regional offices have been working hard to improve communication and coordination amongst Federal agencies. Region 5 held a conference call with Region 1 to discuss the collaboration between HUD, DOT, EPA, and other Federal Partners in Region 5, and the Region 5 Sustainability Grantees Symposium that Federal Partners hosted on June 5-6, 2012. Region 1 is planning to hold a similar symposium event in the near future. Region 10 met to discuss additional ways to advance the Partnership in Oregon, and decided to pursue a stronger linkage to the state's Regional Solutions Centers Initiative, which integrates government, citizen, business, educational, and philanthropic resources in a community- based approach to identifying priorities and solving problems.

#### **Supporting Communities**

Region 9 HUD and EPA staff facilitated coordination between Tribal housing and environmental divisions for six Tribes. In Region 2 EPA led a "Smart Growth Zoning Codes for Small Cities and Rural Areas" Building Blocks Technical Assistance Workshop in Pompey, NY, with support from USDA Rural Development. In Region 3 DOT and EPA staff met with a grantee about the final report for another "Smart Growth Zoning Codes for Small Towns and Rural Areas" project which was recently completed for Marietta, PA. As a result of the ensuing discussions, FHWA will be arranging two subsequent meetings with additional stakeholders. In Region 5, EPA, FTA and HUD delivered presentations at the Kansas Housing Conference.



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**Region 1** –Surveyed FY2010 and FY2011 HUD grantees to gauge the level of interest in a Regional conference. Based on the high level of interest, the Partnership is now planning the conference, which will include topics such as: social equity strategies in transit-oriented development (TOD) projects, place-based economic development, and measuring real-time impacts.

**Region 2** – HUD, EPA, and DOT met to coordinate support for the North Jersey Sustainable Communities Consortium (NJSCC). Since that time USDA has also joined the effort.

**Region 3** —Participated in a meeting for Envision Lehigh Valley, a plan funded by a HUD grant which aims to create a sustainable region by addressing economic and social distress in the region. Partnership members participated in discussions on economic development, fresh food access, transportation choices, housing choices, and climate and energy and served as resources.

**Region 4** —Participated in an implementation teleconference for the EPA-funded Greening America's Capitals (GAC) plan in Jackson, MS, which includes park, roadway, sidewalk, and lighting improvements that will use green infrastructure to better treat stormwater and enhance landscape viability. The US Economic Development Administration and state agencies also participated in the meeting.

**Region 5** –EPA and FEMA are working together to increase collaboration on issues of brownfield redevelopment and stormwater/floodplain management. Discussions on these policies are ongoing and positive outcomes would allow more partnering between FEMA and EPA on projects.

**Region 6** – Sponsored a workshop on "Planning for Sustainable Transportation in the 21st Century" in Houston, TX in partnership with the Texas Transportation Institute. The workshop centered on best practices for livability and sustainability programs and projects in the Houston area and provided an opportunity to discuss how agencies, local governments and the private sector can work together.

**Region 7** – FTA reviewed the draft University City, MO TIGER II housing and transportation planning study. EPA will be conducting a Building Block technical assistance project which will complement the work being done under the TIGER funded planning study.

**Region 8** – Welcomed new Federal Partners, including USDA and the US General Services Administration (GSA). The GSA participated in meetings for the Western Corridor Light Rail Line in Denver, CO, as the Administration owns land in the Federal Center Station area.

**Region 9** —San Francisco Bay Area Partnership workgroup continued to analyze the paper jointly authored by HUD and DOT entitled "Federal Barriers to Local Housing and Transportation Coordination." The group is identifying innovative practices in the Bay Area and California that address barriers that still exist. The group plans to document these findings and share results with their respective agencies.

**Region 10** – Participated in the second "Children's Environmental Health Federal Partners Workshop." As a result of this emerging collaboration, each Federal agency created a map outlining how their programs and partners intersect with children's health in different environments, from homes to schools to communities. The group is identifying unifying themes and projects to collaborate on to improve children's health in the region in 2012.

