

Partnership for Sustainable Communities: Recent Regional Accomplishments Q3



The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continued their collective efforts to help communities improve access to affordable housing, increase transportation options, and lower transportation costs while protecting the environment. Regional milestones and successes for the Partnership for Sustainable Communities (PSC) between July and September 2013 include:

Communicating Successes

In Region 10 the FHWA Washington Division Office hosted a workshop as part of FHWA's second National Dialog on Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS). The workshop highlighted regional case studies that demonstrated CSS and livability including Complete Streets; green infrastructure; and multimodal, mixed-use development. The city of Renton, Washington, which received walkability technical assistance in 2011 through the EPA Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Program, presented as part of the event.

Coordinating Policies and Programs

Region 5 EPA and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) staff worked to harmonize their agencies' respective policies on contamination to encourage more reuse of brownfield sites. The [FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance \(HMA\) Guidance](#) now includes a new Hazardous Materials policy that aligns FEMA and EPA perspectives on contamination, resolving a longstanding obstacle to FEMA program involvement in brownfields. This policy issue first came to light while the PSC was working to identify opportunities for collaboration in Region 5. The FEMA guidance had previously been so strict that any contamination would render a property ineligible for the HMA program, even if a state had already cleared the property through its own programs. State emergency management agencies now have more incentive to work on brownfield sites.

Supporting Communities

Regions 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 9 all held roundtable discussions during the quarter, bringing together stakeholders at the Federal, state, and local levels to discuss project successes and challenges and identify ways that the PSC can support sustainable communities. For example, Region 9 hosted a roundtable discussion in Honolulu, Hawaii, which included participation from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Participants discussed bicycle sharing, whole-systems approaches to community resilience, approaches for embedding Pacific cultural practices in new development, and age-friendly city initiatives that the city and county of Honolulu are developing through a HUD Community Planning Challenge Grant. The participating stakeholders, including a network of thirteen professional organizations committed to sustainability, explored the next steps for collective initiatives in Hawaii.



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Region 1 –Established a Resilience Workgroup to help communities prepare for natural hazards and the impacts of climate change. The Workgroup created a new chapter in the regional resource guide with Federal resources on community resilience, started a pilot project to record energy and water usage in public housing, explored mechanisms for greening transportation facilities, and conducted outreach to communities on the benefits of participating in FEMA’s Community Rating System.

Region 2 –Co-hosted a roundtable discussion on “Building a Livable and Economically Resilient Toms River,” with the town of Toms River, New Jersey, including discussion of post-Hurricane Sandy issues and brownfields redevelopment.

Region 3 –Hosted a roundtable discussion in Richmond, Virginia to advance the implementation of the Hull Street Corridor Revitalization Plan. The goal of the plan is to improve quality of life in economically sustainable ways such as: strong and safe multi-modal connections, transportation infrastructure upgrades, visual and physical enhancements, improved housing options, expanded job opportunities, and recreational and environmental investments.

Region 4 –Participated in a White House Roundtable in Richmond Virginia on advancing livable and economically resilient communities.

Region 5 – Presented at a meeting attended by the Federal Reserve Bank, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor as part of an effort led by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to align Federal investments in northwest Indiana, northeast Illinois, and southeast Wisconsin.

Region 6 –FHWA and EPA co-hosted a Green Streets workshop with over 100 participants at the North Central Texas Council of Governments in Arlington, Texas. Participants discussed best management practices for project related to livability, including green infrastructure.

Region 7 –EPA, in conjunction with Smart Growth America and the Project for Public Spaces, held a Transportation Performance Measurement workshop at the Des Moines Area metropolitan planning organization in Des Moines, Iowa.

Region 8 –Held a meeting with state partners to discuss performance management, how agencies may support each other in developing livability performance metrics, and how metrics are being used in each state.

Region 9 –Continues to support the California High Speed Rail Authority, which has broken ground on the first segment of the rail line.

Region 10 – Continued coordination and outreach support for the public launch of the Green-Duwamish Urban Waters Federal Partnership in Tukwila, Washington.

