



Regional Sustainability Planning

Leveraging Federal Policy and Programs

In 2011, HUD will launch its second year of its Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program. It is a first of its kind program and is designed to create stronger, more sustainable communities by encouraging economic development, connecting housing to jobs, fostering local innovation, and building a clean energy economy.

HUD, along with its sister agencies (Transportation and Environmental Protection), awarded \$98 million in January 2010 to 45 regions across the nation. Building Communities is the grant writer and lead planning contractor for one of the regions which serves two counties—and three Indian tribes—in NE Arizona.

In designing the new program, HUD established three levels of funding based upon the population base of the region. The table at right shows the three FY 2011 funding levels by population.

Population of Region	Funding Ceiling
<200,000	\$1.5 million
200,000 – 500,000	\$3.0 million
>500,000	\$5.0 million

Recognizing that areas are in different stages of working toward long-term sustainability, HUD established two funding categories for the program. Category 1 Funds can be used to support the preparation of Regional Plans for Sustainable Development.



Category 2 Funds can be used to support efforts: 1) to fine-tune existing regional plans so they address HUD's Livability Principles (See figure above), 2) to prepare more detailed execution plans for an adopted Regional Plan for Sustainable Development, 3) and to facilitate limited predevelopment planning activities for catalytic projects.

Building Communities utilizes its comprehensive, objective, expeditious approach to economic and community development strategic planning as the foundation for the broader sustainability priorities the program supports.

Building Communities operationalizes rural sustainability planning by surfacing key concepts, conditions, plans, and viable projects. Short of understanding and applying the full body of the Building Communities' process, communities will likely fail to fully capture their potential for achieving long-term sustainability.

Building Communities assisted four regions to submit competitive applications for the 2011 round of funding. An announcement on the successful 2011 applicants is expected in December. Successful applicants will likely begin their three year planning initiatives in early 2012.

Good luck to the four regions!



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