

# APA's Overview of Federal Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities Programs in the FY 2011 Budget Proposal

## HUD Sustainability and Related Programs

**\$150 million for the Sustainable Communities Initiative.** This is level funding from FY10, however the program scope is slightly changed from the three areas announced for FY10. According to the budget, the FY11 Sustainable Communities Initiative will have four "components" in 2011 (no specific allocation of funding was provided among the four areas):

- Sustainable Communities Planning Grants
- Sustainable Communities Challenge Grants
- Creation of a Capacity Building Program and Tools Clearinghouse
- Joint HUD-DOT-EPA Research Effort on Transportation and Housing Linkages

**\$150 million for Catalytic Investment Competition Grants.** This new program is a part of the Community Development Block Grant but, like the Sustainable Communities Initiatives, the funding is competitive and not formula-based. Secretary Donovan said the program was designed to support "job creation and large scale transformative projects in hard hit neighborhoods." The funding is specifically designed to leverage other funds, including Choice Neighborhoods and Sustainable Communities grants. Four programmatic eligibilities were outlined:

- Reclaim vacant property and create green infrastructure
- Remove property-related obstacles to recovery
- Facilitate economic development and neighborhood vitality in targeted neighborhoods
- Support TOD

Because HUD is using CDBG funding, officials do not believe that a separate congressional authorization is necessary. The BEDI program was zero-funded in the budget and officials suggest that this program is intended in part as a replacement for other, smaller economic development programs like BEDI.

**\$250 million for Choice Neighborhoods.** Choice Neighborhoods was funded as a \$65 million pilot in FY2010. The budget proposal calls for taking the program "to scale" and replacing the existing HOPE VI program. The intention is to create a grant program focused broadly on distressed neighborhoods with a "strong emphasis" on community planning for school and educational improvements as part of neighborhood revitalization. Grantee eligibility would be expanded beyond Public Housing Authorities. The budget also suggests that Choice Neighborhoods grants would be "coordinated" with other HUD and other federal agency programs as part of the Administration's "place based strategy."

**\$60 million for a "revamped" Capacity Building Program.** The budget proposes consolidating and expanding HUD's local capacity building efforts and consciously connecting capacity building funding with the Sustainability, Catalytic and Choice Neighborhood programs.

**Changes for Consolidated Plans.** The budget proposal indicates that HUD will be making significant changes to the consolidating planning process required by CDBG. The focus of these proposed changes are not fully clear from the initial budget but will address "integrated planning," "greater accountability," and "better performance metrics." Assistant Secretary Marquez stated that there would be "outreach" to all stakeholder groups as part of the process.



## DOT Sustainability and Related Programs

**\$527 million Livable Communities Program.** This funding supports three separate initiatives that are each part of DOT's role in the interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The funding would be allocated among three areas:

- \$307 million in transit funding to increase the planning and project development capabilities of local communities. The program would assist transit agencies in using the Job Access and Reverse Commute formula grants; Alternatives Analysis grants; and Formula grants for State and Metropolitan planning to support planning for and implementation of livable and place-based investments in transportation.
- \$200 million in highway funding for a competitive livability grant program to assist States and local governments in integrating planning processes within transportation, land use, and natural resource conservation. Grants could also be used to enhance the capacity to plan, implement, and assess transportation projects according to livability goals and investment performance objectives. The funds could be used to improve modeling and data collection.
- \$20 million to establish an Office of Livable Communities in the Office of the Secretary to coordinate multimodal and interagency livability efforts and lead DOT's investment decisions that focus on livable communities. \$12 million would be set aside for grants and technical assistance to improve States, regions, and localities' ability to plan and execute transportation investments in support of livability and sustainability goals.

**\$4 billion for National Infrastructure Innovation and Finance Fund.** In essence, this new program is a replacement for the multimodal TIGER grants funded in ARRA and the FY10 THUD appropriations bill. The new fund would be a new structure within U.S. DOT providing both loans and grants (as well as support public-private partnerships) for "projects of regional or national significance." Funding will also be available to support the planning and feasibility studies necessary to identify potential projects (\$150 million).

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## EPA Sustainability and Related Programs

**\$32 million for Healthy Communities Initiative.** EPA consolidated several new and existing programs into the Healthy Communities Initiative. Funding is distributed among four program areas:

- \$10.9 million for technical assistance for sustainable communities
- \$9.5 million for community water priorities
- \$6.3 million for clean, green and healthy schools
- \$6 million for air toxics

All program areas are grant programs. The current EPA smart growth office will be largely responsible for the sustainable communities program area but the exact funding level for the office is not yet available.

**Expanded Brownfields Program.** Funding for the EPA brownfields program would grow by \$41.5 million under the Administration's proposal to \$215 million. For the first time, the brownfields program would be expanded to include integrated area-wide planning.

**\$43 million for regulatory initiatives to control greenhouse gas emissions under existing Clean Air Act authorities.** \$6 million of this funding would be used for to support state and local regulatory programs to reduce GHG emissions from mobile sources.