

## Summary

### Capital Region Sustainable Communities Initiative

Leaders from public and private sectors and community members in the Capital Region (Wisconsin) recognize the importance of working together to maintain and improve the region's strength in economic opportunity, excellent natural resources, and quality of life. Challenges – such as efficient and equitable transportation, improving water quality, providing housing options near jobs and transit, increasing capital investments and jobs, and fostering career opportunities for all - are interrelated and span municipal borders. They cannot be solved by individual municipalities or organizations acting alone or through single-focus methods. They require public-private collaboration and multi-pronged approaches.

In summer 2010, twenty-seven governmental, business and non-profit entities came together as the Capital Region Partnership (Partnership) for Sustainable Communities to seek funding for collaborative and multi-faceted approaches to regional challenges. Led by the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission (CARPC), the Partnership secured a three-year, \$2 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant (SCRPG) from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The SCRPG funds the Capital Region Sustainable Communities Initiative (CRSCI), through which the Partnership fosters regional collaboration, conducts planning and pursues demonstration projects for sustainable communities. Partnership activities are guided by the SCRPG's Livability Principles.

#### **Capital Region Partnership for Sustainable Communities**

Twenty-seven entities committed resources to carrying out activities proposed in the Capital Region's SCRPG application:

##### **Public Partners**

**Regional** – Capital Area Regional Planning Commission (lead agency), Madison Area Transportation Planning Board, Dane County, and the Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District

**Municipal** – Madison Metro, Cities of Madison, Fitchburg, Middleton and Monona; Village of Waunakee; and the Towns of Westport, Windsor, Sun Prairie, Springfield, Dunn and Sun Prairie

**State** – Department of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Urban and Regional Planning

##### **Private Partners**

**Business** – M&I Bank, Home Savings Bank, and the Madison Area Builders Association

**Environmental** – Capital Region Advocacy Network for Environmental Sustainability (CRANES)

**Housing** – Dane County Housing Authority, Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development, Project Home

**Social** – United Way of Dane County, Urban League of Greater Madison, and Latino Support Network

#### **CRSCI Activities**

- **Conduct Future Urban Development Area (FUDA) planning for sustainable development** Grant resources will fund additional planning, design and natural resource staff, and modeling capabilities, to examine impacts of various growth scenarios, and to engage the public in selecting preferred scenarios.
- **Study and prepare recommendations for enhanced regional transit**, including the option of bus rapid transit, and associated transit-oriented development that improves regional mobility, neighborhood and commercial revitalization, and access to jobs and activities.
- **Prepare transit-oriented development site plans**, in conjunction with local neighborhoods, that increase ridership and access to regional job centers, provide diverse housing choices, promote commercial development, walkability and quality civic spaces.

- **Prepare studies of potential market demand for business and housing** in transportation-oriented development areas and designated revitalization or “smart growth” areas, to better guide planning and development and promote investment opportunities.
- **Prepare and promote an inventory of infill and redevelopment sites** to foster public and private policies and investments in areas already developed.
- **Prepare a business plan and site preparations for the Madison Sustainability Commerce Center** in the Capital East District, a facility for renewable energy, energy efficiency and other green businesses, green jobs, public education and networking facilities.
- **Prepare a feasibility study and business plan for a fresh vegetable packing house** to connect local growers to large institutional buyers, strengthen local farmers, promoting healthy food choices, and providing jobs.
- **Prepare a business plan for a year-round food market** to that meets the needs of underserved, nearby neighborhoods south of the beltline.
- **Prepare a strategy and recommendations to capture 100% of average 1-year rainfall in the planned North McGaw neighborhood in the City of Fitchburg.**
- **Prepare a regional housing strategy** for meeting the region’s diverse housing needs.
- **Prepare recommendations to increase participation in planning and implementation** by traditionally under-represented groups.
- **Prepare recommendations to incorporate greenhouse gas and air quality goals** and performance targets into local and regional plans.
- **Prepare sustainability indicators** and methods of collecting indicator data to track and communicate progress towards long-term desired outcomes.

### **Livability Principles**

- **Provide More Transportation Choices.** Develop safe, reliable, and affordable transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce energy consumption and dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.
- **Promote equitable, affordable housing.** Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
- **Enhance Economic Competitiveness.** Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services, and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.
- **Support Existing Communities.** Target federal funding toward existing communities—through strategies like transit-oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling—to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and safeguard rural landscapes.
- **Coordinate Policies and Leverage Investment.** Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.
- **Value Communities and Neighborhoods.** Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.