

Transitioning to Sustainability: The Challenge of Developing Sustainable Urban Areas

September 23, 2009

Meeting Was Very Successful!

- Attendance
 - 80 Registered
 - +/- 70 in Attendance Through Day
 - +/- 45 Still Present at End of Day
- Participants Thoroughly Engaged Throughout Day
- Valuable Input and Insights

Significant Federal Activity

- Agency Data Confirmed This But, as Expected, Largely Uncoordinated
- One Exception Reported: DOT/EPA/HUD Collaboration
- Request for Assistance From Xavier de Souza Briggs, OMB
- Request for Advice (Advisory Group) by Adolfo Carrion, Director White House Office of Urban Policy

Thrust Areas for DOT/EPA/HUD Collaboration Include:

- Thrust Areas
 - Transportation Choices
 - Equitable and Affordable Housing
 - Economic Competitiveness
 - Support Existing Communities
 - Coordination and Leverage of Federal Policies and Investments
 - Valuing Communities and Neighborhoods
- Reducing/Eliminating Barriers
- Metrics

OMB Requested Assistance with Seven Questions

- What Does it Mean to Lower the Carbon Footprint of Various Places?
- How Can Policies be Made More Flexible While Retaining High Quality?
- How Can Comprehensive Planning be Accomplished That Integrates and Liberates Communities?
- How Can Multiple Outcomes From Spatial Structure be Understood?
- What are the Long-Run Drivers of Sustainability?
- How to Connect Urban Development to Growth and Well-Being? Health Care Initiative
- What are the Enablers of More Healthy Urban Areas?

Academic Researchers Expressed Several Issues/Concerns

- Clear Link of Urban Environment Quality to Health, Especially to “Greening”
- Accessing Funding for Cross-Discipline Studies
- Insufficiency of Current Funding
- Non-Traditional Nature of Urban Sustainability Research
- Extracting Common Threads/Developing Common Toolkit Across Urban Area
- Translating Research Results Into Practice
- Data Collection and Management
- Proposal: “Urban Genome Project”

Users Also Expressed Several Issues/Concerns

- Mayors Want to be Innovative, Serve as Test Beds
- But, they Lack Time to Access the Literature
- Words: Difficulty Communicating Between Researchers and Users
- Proposal: “Urban Sustainability Extension Service”

Harriet Tregoning Offered Characteristics of Competitive Urban Area (4 of 5)

- Contain Distinctive Places
 - Historic Areas, Waterfronts
- Transportation Choices
 - Economic Advantage
- Walkable Urbanity
 - Six Types of Walking
- Inclusiveness and Social Equity

Results Indicate Following Issues for Our consideration

- Continued Role as Convener/Honest Broker for Federal Agencies
- Advisor to Administration
- Advocate for Increased Funding
- Advocate for “New Urban Sustainability Science”
 - Place-Based, Highly Interdisciplinary, “Opportunistic”
- Facilitate Translation of Research Into Practice