



The Community Regeneration, Sustainability, and Innovation Act of 2009
“Regeneration Act” (S. 453/H.R. 932)
Bill Summary

In the past thirty years, many of our nation’s central cities have languished into barely recognizable, emaciated versions of their once vibrant selves. This bill encourages innovation and strategic vision for cities across the nation.

To bring about holistic improvements of our cities, the Regeneration Act creates a new, pilot grant program within HUD targeted towards cities and metropolitan areas experiencing large-scale property vacancy and abandonment due to long-term employment and population losses.

The Regeneration Act offers three levels of assistance designed to provide short-term economic stimulus and longer-term strategic regeneration planning and programs to “shrinking cities”:

Types of Assistance:

1. ***Regeneration Communities Demonstration Program: 3 year program, 1 year pilots***

Recipient Eligibility and Requirements: Applicants must demonstrate significant population loss or rate of vacancy and abandonment; half of the awards would be directed towards small cities (fewer than 150,000) and half to large cities (over 150,000 residents); submittal of a regeneration plan is required (see below)

Activity Eligibility:

- *Vacant Property and Program Capacity Activities:* Establishment or expansion of vacant property data information systems, local or regional land banks, recovered building materials reuse and recycling infrastructure, and code enforcement capabilities.
- *Stabilization Activities:* Deconstruction and demolition of vacant and abandoned properties or public infrastructure or relocation of structures.
- *Design, Development and Reuse Activities:* Creation of open space and networks of green infrastructure and urban agriculture, adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of architecturally, historically, or culturally significant structures, and development of infrastructure to produce renewable energy on vacant land
- *Planning and Policy Innovation Activities:* Development of strategic plans, neighborhood, brownfield, and vacant property plans, city and neighborhood typologies, vacant property assessment, or code reform to encourage reuse of vacant properties

2. ***Sustainability Demonstration Projects: one-time demonstration project***

Recipient Eligibility and Requirements: Applicants must demonstrate significant population loss or rate of vacancy and abandonment; competitive innovation grants and demonstration projects must be in accordance with the act’s sustainability goals; no regeneration plan is required.

Activity Eligibility:

- *Design and creation* of interim and permanent open space and networks of green infrastructure, low-impact development, storm water management activities, and urban agriculture initiatives.
- *Establishment of infrastructure* for recovered building materials reuse and recycling or for renewable energy production on vacant land.
- *Creation of workshops and training* for green collar jobs to support innovative sustainability demonstration projects, or other activities that would further sustainability goals.

3. ***Strategic Regeneration Planning Grant: one-time planning grant***

Recipient Eligibility and Requirements: For those communities in need of planning assistance, the Regeneration Act could provide a one-time planning grant to develop regeneration plans prior to their submission to HUD.

Regeneration Plan can to include:

- *Comprehensive land use plan* that reflects the population loss a community or region has experienced, future population trends, and provides for the efficient and sustainable use of the community's land, structures, neighborhoods, and resources.
- *Creation of green infrastructure*¹ to be set aside for recreation, open space, agriculture, park use, educational use, or purposes related to future economic or residential development.
- *Detailed implementation strategy*, including modifications to comprehensive or master land use plans, neighborhood plans, and zoning and building codes.

Federal Interagency Regeneration Communities Coordinating Council

The bill calls for the development of a Council to facilitate the targeting and leveraging of governmental and nonprofit resources within Regeneration Communities related to redevelopment, job creation, neighborhood stabilization, community revitalization, and economic development by:

- Offering technical assistance from a network of local and national vacant property assistance providers.
- Assigning staff through Intergovernmental Personnel Agreements.
- Allocating other Federal agency funds consistent with an approved plan.
- Guidance and technical assistance coordinating funding from other Federal sources in plans developed under the Act
- Where feasible, instituting alternative performance-based regulatory approaches and standards.

Funding

- Regeneration Communities Implementation Grants (Demonstration Program): \$100M/year for 3 years.
- Planning and Sustainability Innovation Grants (Regeneration Planning and Demonstration Projects): \$25M/ in Y1; \$12.5M/year in Y2 and Y3.
- Federal Interagency Regeneration Communities Coordinating Council: \$24M/year for 3 years.

¹ **Green Infrastructure**: This term is defined in the Act as the interim and permanent reuse of vacant properties for an interconnected network of open spaces, trails, and natural areas such as greenways, wetlands, parks, forest preserves, and native plant vegetation that can naturally manage stormwater, reduce flooding risks, improve water quality, and reduce urban heat islands.