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## **National Associations Congratulate HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Awardees**

*Organizations urge continued federal investments to ensure  
nationwide community economic competitiveness*

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Washington, DC – The National League of Cities (NLC), National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), Smart Growth America (SGA), the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) and ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability USA (ICLEI) congratulate the cities, towns, communities and regions which today were awarded Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These communities will now undertake critical regional planning and implementation activities that support building sustainable, livable communities through regional cooperation, broad stakeholder and community involvement and coordinated processes. The organizations also offer gratitude to HUD and the other federal agencies involved for undertaking an inaugural and historic process that will yield results for years to come.

HUD's grant program is modeled on successful efforts around the country over the last several decades that developed long-term strategies for growing communities in a way that improves quality of life, environmental sustainability, and economic growth. These projects have lasting impacts on the communities they serve, providing cost savings, affordable homes and increased transportation access and options.

To continue progress towards sustainable development and maximize the effectiveness of local innovation, NLC, NARC, SGA, n4a and ICLEI urge Congress and the Administration to continue to adequately fund these grant opportunities. Congress should enact the Livable Communities Act (S.1619/H.R.4690) to allow HUD to provide the necessary support to local communities for regional planning and implementation of multi-benefit projects that help cut traffic congestion; reduce greenhouse gas emissions and oil consumption; protect rural areas and green spaces; revitalize existing Main Streets and urban centers; and, create more affordable housing. The organizations also support increased and sustained funding through federal

appropriations and budget processes to further incent and expand these opportunities throughout the country.

**Comments from the leaders of NLC, NARC, SGA, n4a and ICLEI:**

“These grants are essential to building a smart foundation for the nation’s future growth,” said Donald J. Borut, NLC’s Executive Director. “HUD’s efforts in this area will increase the productivity of our cities, towns and regions, result in decreased environmental costs and allow local officials to help define federal policy in a way we rarely see. We commend the Administration for today’s announcement.”

“We are thrilled with the announcement of the HUD grants,” stated Fred Abousleman, Executive Director, NARC. “We applaud HUD and the federal government for this reinvigorated commitment to advancing multi-jurisdictional work through incentives, flexibility and direct funding to local governments, regional planning organizations and communities. This is a great first step to ensuring community growth is as comprehensive, efficient and effective. Our regional planning organizations stand ready to showcase immediate successes, continue to serve the needs of communities, and offer a process to spread these efforts across the nation.”

“In tough economic times, it’s critical that America’s cities and towns make smarter use of their money,” said Geoffrey Anderson, President and CEO of Smart Growth America. “These grant awards will help communities across the country save money, create jobs, leverage private investment and make smarter decisions with public dollars.”

“We were very pleased to see today’s announcement of the awards under HUD’s Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program,” said Sandy Markwood, CEO, n4a. “These new resources will go a long way to improve planning and coordination efforts that lead to greater access to affordable, accessible housing, transportation options, and other essential supportive services that will assist people to age successfully in their communities over their lifetimes. n4a commends HUD and wishes all the grantees and their local partners success in their regional planning efforts.”

“We commend the Administration and HUD for recognizing the importance of providing the best tools and resources by which local governments can build healthier and more sustainable communities,” said Martin Chávez, Executive Director, ICLEI USA and three-term mayor of Albuquerque, NM. “The ideas embodied in the Sustainable Communities Partnership, and this grant program in particular, represent some of the best thinking on how to design and sustain our local communities and governments so we, as a nation, can address the economic and environmental challenges of the 21st century.”

### **About The National League of Cities**

The National League of Cities is the oldest and largest national organization representing municipal governments throughout the United States. Its mission is to strengthen and promote cities as centers of opportunity, leadership, and governance. Working in partnership with the 49 state municipal leagues, the National League of Cities serves as a resource to and an advocate for the more than 19,000 cities, villages, and towns it represents. More than 1,600 municipalities of all sizes pay dues to NLC and actively participate as leaders and voting members in the organization. For additional information, please visit [www.NLC.org](http://www.NLC.org).

### **About The National Association of Regional Councils**

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) serves as a national voice for regionalism by advocating for regional cooperation as the most effective way to address a variety of community planning and development opportunities and issues. NARC's member organizations are composed of multiple local governments that work together to serve American communities – large and small, urban and rural. For additional information, please visit [www.NARC.org](http://www.NARC.org).

### **About Smart Growth America**

Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for and leading coalitions to bring smart growth practices to more communities nationwide. From providing more sidewalks to ensuring more homes are built near public transit or that productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods. For additional information, please visit [www.smartgrowthamerica.org](http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org).

### **About the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging**

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) is the leading voice on aging issues for Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) across the country and a champion for Title VI Native American aging programs. n4a's primary mission is to build the capacity of its members to help older persons and persons with disabilities live with dignity and choices in their homes and communities for as long as possible. For additional information, please visit [www.n4a.org](http://www.n4a.org).

### **About ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability USA**

ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability USA (ICLEI) was launched in 1995 and has grown from a handful of local governments participating in a pilot project to a solid network of more than 600 cities, towns and counties actively striving to achieve tangible reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and create more sustainable communities. ICLEI USA is the domestic leader on climate protection and adaptation, and sustainable development at the local government level. For more information, please visit [www.iclei.org](http://www.iclei.org).

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