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EPA Program Will Help Communities Improve Environmental and Economic Prosperity

Smart Growth Implementation Assistance program achieves multiple goals and helps federal dollars go further

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Washington, DC – The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced the projects included in 2010’s Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program. The program will help eight communities across the country find the best tools and resources to plan for growth in ways that benefit local economic progress as well as the environment.

“Many communities around the country understand the economic benefits of smart growth, but don’t know where to start,” said Geoff Anderson, President and CEO of Smart Growth America. “With the help of the EPA, these places will be able to turn these ideas and plans into reality, strengthen local businesses, bring jobs into their neighborhoods, and protect the environment with each new investment.”

Senators Sheldon Whitehouse and Jack Reed were on hand in Pawtucket, RI yesterday to discuss the work EPA will do with Rhode Island Housing and the KeepSpace Advisory Committee, a coalition of several of the state’s government agencies and nonprofits engaged in smart growth implementation. KeepSpace has been selected by the EPA to develop strategies that can be implemented across Rhode Island to better align state resources and focus investment in sustainable communities for stronger economic growth.

Other communities selected to participate in this year’s program include Washington, D.C.; Saginaw, MI; Wheat Ridge, CO; Chicago, IL; Salt Lake City, UT; and Cumberland and Cobb Counties in Georgia.

The Smart Growth Implementation Assistance program is coordinated through the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, an unprecedented partnership between the EPA, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Through this interagency coordination, states and localities can use taxpayer money more efficiently by coordinating federal investments to meet multiple economic, environmental, and community objectives with each dollar spent.

SGIA Program Addresses Growing Demand for Smart Growth

The Smart Growth Implementation Assistance program was created in response to growing demand for smart growth solutions across the country. Smart, efficient development decisions save taxpayers money and allow local governments to stretch their dollars farther, even as they make it possible for households to spend less on expenses such as transportation. There is also mounting evidence that areas with smart-growth attributes – like healthy central cities and inner suburbs, excellent transportation networks, or vibrant centers and neighborhoods – have stronger economies.

Smart growth development brings more businesses to town centers and provides more options for how people can get to work. Everyone from children to business owners will benefit from this kind of development, and that's a crucial part of building healthy communities, vibrant economies and a strong middle class.

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.

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