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The 2011 Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Guide
How to Incorporate Equity into your Grant Application

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Last year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), launched an unprecedented new program to help regions plan for sustainability. In October of 2010, nearly $100 million was awarded through a competitive process to 45 different regions to create and implement regional plans that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments. This year, approximately $67 million has been allocated for this competitive grant process.

The theory behind the Sustainable Communities Initiative is that economic competitiveness, social equity, and environmental and public health are interconnected and, that all of these outcomes can be improved if regions better coordinate their public investments toward the goal of sustainability. Past development patterns have prevented regions from maximizing their potential. Low-income communities and communities of color are often isolated from economic opportunities because the only homes affordable to them are in neighborhoods far from growing job centers, good public schools, and basic amenities like grocery stores and banks. Meanwhile, transportation and other infrastructure—critical to attracting and keeping jobs—is crumbling and the risk of climate change is growing.

This guide—an update of the inaugural guide released in Summer 2010 in preparation for the first round of grants—provides information on how regions can incorporate social equity into their applications for the second round of funding for sustainable communities grants, which will be announced this summer. It was written for local governments, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), nonprofits, foundations, and educational institutions who are interested in developing competitive grant applications.

What is equity and why does it matter?

Equity, by definition, means fair and just inclusion. Social equity is an important goal in its own right: ensuring that regions are becoming fairer and more just places where all residents can access and take advantage of the region's economic, social, and environmental assets is a worthwhile aim of regional planning. But focusing on social equity is also imperative to achieve our goals for economic competitiveness, public health, and environmental health—and it is becoming more so over time.

One reason this is the case is the rapid demographic transformation underway in this country. The face of America is changing. The new Census 2010 data is proving that we are becoming a more diverse nation at a more rapid pace than we previously thought. In most regions, Latinos, Asians, and other nonwhite racial and ethnic groups contributed nearly all of our population growth (92 percent nationwide). By the end of this decade, the majority of youth will be people of color. And by 2042 or earlier we will be a majority people of color nation. This tremendous diversity can be a major asset to regions as they compete in the global economy, but we are not currently investing adequately in the new majority. In setting the blueprint for future development, regional plans need to ensure that all residents have access to the essential

ingredients for economic and social success: living wage jobs, good schools, affordable homes, transportation choices, strong social networks, safe and walkable streets, parks and playgrounds, and nutritious and healthy food.

In addition, economists increasingly recognize that regions and nations that are more equitable also perform better economically. A recent paper jointly authored with the Center for American Progress, _Prosperity 2050: Is Equity the Superior Growth Model?,_ summarizes how economic thinking about equity and growth has changed in recent years.

Equity in the grant application

HUD has made equity a significant priority of the Sustainable Communities program. A recent analysis by Reconnecting America found equity to be one of nine common themes found in winning Sustainable Communities, Community Challenge, and TIGER applications in the FY2010 cycle. There are several ways in which applicants are asked to demonstrate their approach for advancing equity in their planning grants.

- _Program Goals_: the grant application suggests that regional planning efforts take into account social equity and access to opportunity through initiatives such as expanding location-efficient affordable housing opportunities, improving access to affordable transportation for all, and increasing access to educational opportunity
- _Program Outcomes_: the reduction of social and economic disparities for low-income communities and communities of color; the creation of more inclusive communities; increased participation and decision-making in planning processes by populations traditionally marginalized in these settings
- _Program Design_: from the creation of the consortium and governance structure to the types of activities selected to be incorporated in the planning process, HUD expects that applicants not only include low-income communities and communities of color in the process, but undertake specific measures that work to identify structural disparities and work to create pathways for prosperity for those populations with unequal opportunity; to demonstrate a commitment to meaningful engagement, applicants must show a process for community involvement, governance, and the inclusion of organizations that represent social equity concerns in the consortium; lastly, 10 percent of the total budget must be directed for community engagement activities

How this guide is organized

This guide seeks to help applicants for the regional planning grant program effectively address equity in their proposals. It reflects the best efforts of PolicyLink to offer resources that help applicants meet the guidelines, priorities, and definitions created by HUD, as well as highlighting promising practices in the field from the first round of grants and related fields of practice. Except where directly quoting HUD, it represents an independent attempt to offer understanding, interpretation, and advice based on 12 years of organizational experience advancing regional equity.

The ANOFA released by HUD strongly reflects and is framed by the six Livability Principles adopted by the Senate and HUD's five Strategic Goals of their FY2010-2015 Strategic Plan.

This year's application process features two phases, _pre-application_ and _full application_. The guide provides some guidance for essential steps in the _pre-application_ process; the rest of the guide is organized according to the five Rating Factors of the FY2011 ANOFA for the _full application_ process. It only offers guidance on the portions of the application that are relevant to equity concerns. As you go through the document, you will be guided through the required HUD Form 2010 (6-2010), aligned to the Rating Factors. Note that the text underlined in blue is a hyperlink that will direct you to online resources.

The Basics

Eligibility Requirements for Pre-Application

Meeting the Application Threshold

The 2011 Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant application process consists of two phases. The pre-application process provides an opportunity for applicants to demonstrate that they meet the requirements for geographic coverage, consortium structure, and the minimum criteria for Category 1 and Category 2 applicants. Category 1 grants will be awarded to support the creation of a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (RPSD); Category 2 grants will fund efforts to fine-tune existing regional plans as well as the creation of plans and policies intended to implement the RPSD. In the pre-application process, applicants will also be screened to ensure that they do not have federal debt or have violated civil rights threshold requirements identified on page 20 of the FY2011 General NOFA. Applicants who meet these minimum requirements will be invited to submit a full application to HUD.

Forming the Consortium

A critical place to incorporate equity into the Sustainable Communities grant application is through the structure of the consortium. In the pre-application, HUD requires that the applicant provide a list of intended core consortium partners. Depending on the precise geography that your region covers, HUD requires that consortia include the principal city(s) of the metropolitan statistical area, the city or county with the largest population, the metropolitan planning organization(s), and a nonprofit organization, foundation, or educational institution within the region that has the capacity to engage diverse constituencies and populations. One agency from the consortium will need to be the lead agency, which will handle all financial arrangements, sign a cooperative agreement with HUD, and ensure that all the benchmarks and deliverables of the grant are reported to HUD. A nonprofit organization is eligible to play the role of lead agency.

HUD has emphasized in the ANOFA that the core priorities of the grant include inclusion and participation in the governance structure. In Rating Factor One (discussed later in this document), applicants will be awarded points based on their ability to build representative governance structures not only at the time of the application but also through the life of the grant. While only a list of intended core consortium partners is required for the pre-application, applicants will only have 30 to 45 days from the announcement of the full application to submit a complete proposal that details the governance structure of the consortium and the role of various players. We strongly recommend working through these governance and engagement issues now!

RATING FACTOR #1: ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (15 Points)
Strengthening Inter-Jurisdictional Partnerships

The goal of this grant is to build inter-jurisdictional and cross-sector partnerships that plan for future sustainability of the region and a shared vision that will continue beyond the grant period to through the implementation of future projects. **As emphasized in the previous section, a critical place to build strong equity participation into the application is through the consortium structure.**

> *Creating an Inclusive and Diverse Governance Structure: Lessons from St. Louis*
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> In St. Louis, an 11-member consortium consisting of local and regional governments, non-profits, and institutional partners, was awarded $4.6 million to support the creation of a regional plan that encourages economic competitiveness through the connection of housing, high-quality jobs, schools, and transportation. The consortium has identified two pillars to underscore their work: 1) objective research and data; and, 2) public involvement and community engagement.
>
> Recognizing the importance of diversity in a decision-making capacity, consortia partners in St. Louis went through an application process to form a Steering Committee for the grant—at the center of the consortium—to ensure that a racial, ethnic, income, and geographic diversity was represented to guide the planning process. Potential members were nominated by representatives of the original consortia partners; those nominated were given an opportunity to apply for a position on the Steering Committee. MPO staff strongly encouraged that nominees represent low-income communities and communities of color to the extent possible. As a result, nearly a third of the Steering Committee members are people of color, some who work for organizations that represent communities of color, others that bring professional contributions to planning for equity.
>
> This diversity will be crucial to the inclusion of low-income communities and communities of color in the planning process and the subsequent allocation of resources to implement the plan. One of the Steering Committee's upcoming tasks will be to select and prioritize Community Planning Areas—diverse places in the region that will be the focus of investment and planning efforts.

Nonprofits whose expertise is in facilitating participatory processes, equity analyses, and land use advocacy, as well as organizations that represent under-served neighborhoods or constituencies in the region, will be especially valuable to the consortium. Three of the fifteen points in this rating factor will be awarded for applications that have strong capacity to address economic and social disparities. Including a variety of organizations in your consortium that have experience with analysis, planning, community engagement, leadership development, or strategy development that directly address racial or economic disparities will help make both your application and partnership stronger.

The lead agency will need broad reach into diverse geographies and constituencies; and it will need to rely on a team of organizations that collectively accomplish that task. It will be important to provide details about these strengths and contributions when the application asks for descriptions of partners' activities and commitments in Rating Factor 4. HUD will be looking for consortium representatives that have specific experience in working with or representing communities that are targeted for revitalization by the plan. (See page 32 in the FY2011 ANOFA.)

If you are taking the lead in forming the consortium, begin conversations with potential partners now -- prior to the pre-application process. This will give your application greater credibility by having well-developed partnerships. Communities of color and low-income groups should be integral to determining the composition of the consortium, the decision-making processes it will use, and crafting the vision, governance, and budget that will be written into the grant application.

If you are a community-based organization (CBO) that wants to play a leadership role in the planning process, you should contact your MPO immediately to join their process or recruit their participation in preparing a grant application.

CHECKLIST: FOR POTENTIAL LEAD AGENCIES
Assembling an inclusive and comprehensive consortium

❑ **Consult with equity advocates**, foundations that invest in community development, community-based organizations and networks representing people of color and/or low-income residents, and key public agencies that address issues of poverty and public health who can refer strong organizations. Gauge their interest and capacity to be involved in the process.

❑ **Ensure partners have expertise and a proven track record working with low-income people and communities of color.**

❑ **Ensure that community-based organizations actually have the support of the constituency they claim they represent.** Consider asking the organization's constituency for letters of support, as well as from philanthropic organizations, other community groups, etc.

❑ **Equity-focused community-based organizations should constitute at least one-third of participants in the governance structure established for the regional planning process.** This might include organizations, educational institutions, foundations, or coalitions with proven social equity leadership. Their leadership should contribute significant racial diversity to the governing body. They should bring (or be able to reach) seasoned experience on issues of transportation access, affordable and fair housing, workforce and economic development, environmental justice, and civil rights. Example: Seattle.

❑ **Identify the key existing plans and studies that will be built upon to form your Sustainable Communities plan.** Because many existing regional plans or jurisdictional general plans may not adequately address the disparities that the SCI effort is intended to undertake, clearly identify the areas of concern that the planning process will address—disinvested or declining population neighborhoods or central cities, environmental hot spots or brownfields, jobs-housing disconnects, areas of high unemployment. Begin gathering relevant studies and data that highlight the impacts on low-income people and people of color, and prepare to name them in your application.

❑ **Invite public health partners and experts** who are working on healthy food access, health disparities/health equity, air quality, clean drinking water, crime/public safety, and comprehensive planning for people re-entering from jails and prisons. Public health organizations can help the region address health disparities and work towards better integration of planning and public health. Examples: Southeast Florida, Seattle.

- ☐ **Include workforce and economic development partners** who can help craft regional economic development goals and align institutional resources to meet them. *Example*: Houston has a working committee of future economic development that includes chambers of commerce, minority business development organizations, community investment banks, and workforce development-focused community college partners.

- ☐ **Include school districts, local community colleges and universities, and other educational organizations** that can help create goals that will improve school quality and access to workforce opportunity at the regional level.

- ☐ **Open budget discussions to ensure support the participation of critical equity-based groups.** HUD has allowed lead applicants to be sub-grantees for funds, which can be regranted to community organizations to implement the consortium's community engagement strategy and equity focus, to participate in or lead both local and regional planning activities, to serve on technical advisory or policy committees, and/or participate or staff a regional equity network. Local foundations can also be included in supporting deeper nonprofit participation, while contributing to the 20 percent match requirement. *Examples:* Seattle is developing a regional equity network supported by $750,000 of grant funds; Twin Cities is regranting to community organizations for engagement activities along the transit corridors being planned there.

- ☐ **Identify the lead applicant and partnership structure to manage the consortium effectively.** The lead applicant is not required to take charge of the consortium, but is responsible for being the primary administrative contact with HUD. Note that HUD has left the governance framework for your consortium open and is prioritizing innovative partnership structures. Example: St. Louis (see above).

CHECKLIST: FOR EQUITY ADVOCATES
Getting a Seat at the Table

Regions interested in submitting SCI proposals are already lining up players and working on details. **If you are a community group and want to be involved in the planning process, consider these first steps.**

- ☐ **Do your homework:** read the NOFA. While this year's NOFA has not been released yet, you can read the FY2010 NOFA here. Become familiar with the basics - the overall purpose of the grant, possible outcomes, and deadlines involved. Read successful grant applications from the prior year to get a sense of how other regions approached their process, governance structure, budget, and workplans. Here are links to the applications from Seattle, Boston, and St. Louis.

- ☐ **Know your strengths and goals.** Think about the interests your organization represents. What can you contribute to the planning process? What goals would you like to achieve through the grant? What are the main equity issues of your region that you think could be addressed in the SCI process? *Example*: The California Bay Area 'Six Wins' coalition tied their goals for affordable housing, workforce development, and transportation equity to their regional planning processes.

- ☐ **Speak with other equity groups.** Who would be strong partners in this process and bring greater diversity to the table? Learn who is already talking with key local or regional government agencies and officials about these possible grants. Develop a joint plan for approaching planners, or at the very least,

coordinate your approaches, if others want to do this separately. Groups will need sufficient representation and a strong case to get seats at the table.

❑ **Assess your capacity to engage in this effort.** A common practice in regional planning activities is to pay staff of local and metropolitan planning departments and governance representatives to work on the initiative as part of their day job, while CBOs are asked to volunteer their time or work under small contracts for engagement activities. This can leave CBOs understaffed, or overextended, and can limit both their organizational contributions to the plan, as well as the development of the long-term stakeholders needed to implement an equity-focused plan over time. Before approaching relevant jurisdictional or planning staff to participate in an SCI grant application, CBOs should draft a budget for programmatic staff and expenses needed to participate in the planning process and in community engagement. Consider the training and capacity building of staff and constituency needed to effectively engage, and ensure that your budget reflects those needs.

> *Making Community Engagement Central to the Consortium: Lessons from the Twin Cities*
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> In the Twin Cities, the SCI "Corridors of Opportunity" consortia includes a Community Engagement Team (CET), comprised of three community-building intermediary organizations—NEXUS Community Partners, Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, and Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing (at the University of MN).
>
> The CET started by identifying the diverse communities (including historic African American, and diverse Southeast Asian, African and Latino immigrant communities) along the light rail transit corridors that will be included in the 'Corridors of Opportunity' planning process. From these, the CET is now developing a community engagement advisory committee to guide its work, develop engagement techniques (such as interviews with residents, surveys, visioning, and goal setting), and inform each stage of the planning process.
>
> To fund this deep engagement, the CET will regrant $750,000 allocated from the planning grant budget to support the work of community-based organizations to conduct these visioning, planning, engagement and outreach activities with their own neighborhoods.
>
> NEXUS Community partners holds a seat on the Policy Committee of the initiative to ensure continuity between the local planning and engagement and the overall trajectory of the initiative.

❑ **Approach relevant local or regional government staff** to express your interest in applying. As mentioned in the eligibility requirements, MPOs are required to be involved. To identify your local MPO(s), click here. Once identified, decide how you want to approach the relevant MPO(s) and inquire if they are participating in the SCI planning grants.

→ *If the local or regional planning organization is applying, ask what their time frame is and what process they have in place for engaging community-based organizations and other groups. If you feel that process is unclear or inadequate, make some suggestions. State your interest in being a formal member of the consortium.*

Involving equity coalitions in regional planning

In **Denver**, a 12-year, $6.2 billion public transportation expansion plan for the region, FasTracks, will build six new transit lines and 57 new stations by 2017. Front Range Economic Strategy Center, Making Connections-Denver, Metropolitan Organizations for People, and Project Wise developed a community engagement initiative around two stations for Denver Housing Authority residents and surrounding community members. Through the establishment of Resident Advisory Committees (RAC) in 2006, the effort engaged hundreds of residents and resulted in the adoption of a list of Community Principles (such as preventing displacement, and creating economic opportunities) to guide redevelopment efforts. See the principles here.

In post-Katrina **New Orleans**, two critical plans have been developed to steer federal infrastructure investment and neighborhood redevelopment: a Unified New Orleans Plan that brought together neighborhoods in 13 planning districts to outline priority infrastructure investments; and a New Orleans Master plan to guide zoning and future development. While the City of New Orleans, the Greater New Orleans Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation supported the community engagement and shared governance model for the Unified Plan, the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation hired a community organizer and gave grants to neighborhood organizations in communities of color to ensure their engagement and advocacy on behalf of their neighborhoods in the Master Planning. Robust affordability and local business goals came out of the deep reach into neighborhoods.

Listening to the community

Boston MPO has created a participatory process by which it assesses community transportation needs. Information about the transportation needs of minority and low-income populations is primarily collected through small-group interviews and meetings with community contacts, and through larger MPO focus groups or forums. The MPO initiates one-on-one or small-group interviews at the offices of representatives of community organizations to discuss transportation needs and burdens. Information and surveys are mailed to community contacts prior to these meetings to help participants prepare. These materials are also sent to those who are unable to schedule time for an interview but could provide information useful to the MPO´s planning process. For more information, click here.

FILLING OUT THE APPLICATION

The application for Rating Factor One totals a possible 15 points, and contains two sub-parts:

(1) Consortium Partners: Organizational Capacity and Qualification (8 points)
(2) Key Personnel: Capability and Qualifications (4 points)
(3) Consortium Partners: Capacity to Address Economic and Social Disparities (3 points)

This form from the FY2010 application assesses the consortium's capacity to effectively implement the proposed activities that are within a feasible and timely manner. The staff that you list here should have key roles in the coordination and implementation of activities proposed in the application. The Key Personnel should be reflected in the budget form (HUD Form-424-CBW) of Rating Factor Three.

Factor I – Capacity of the Applicant and Relevant Organizational Experience
PolicyLink examples in BLUE

1. Key Personnel			
Name and Position Title (please include the organization position titles in addition to those shown)	Percent of Time Proposed for this Grant	Percent of Time to be spent on other HUD grants	Percent of Time to be spent on other activities
1.1 Overall Project Director			
Name: Organization Position Title: Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development	20%	35%	45%
1.2 Day-to-Day Program Manager			
Name: Organization Position Title: MPO Urban Planner	90%		10%
1.3 Other			
Name: Organization Position Title: CBO Community Engagement Liaison	95%	5%	

NOTE: HUD is particularly interested in the consortium's past experiences and background in preparing and implementing regional housing, transportation, and related infrastructure plans.

→ **Applicants must provide an organizational chart, evidence of a memorandum of agreement, or other proof of commitment to work together, and bios or resumes within their grant appendix.**

Within the narrative of Factor One, the applicant must provide evidence of the experience and accomplishment of the members within the consortium. The experience of each person must demonstrate an ability to meaningfully contribute to developing and implementing multi-jurisdictional projects. This must include experience indicative of effective community outreach efforts involving minority, limited English-speaking populations, low-income persons, and persons with disabilities. Keep in mind that the key personnel and partners included in this factor must possess the commensurate experience to the planning and implementation of the grant proposal. The function of each individual must be in line with the **necessary needs of the plan and eligible budgetary allotments.**

2. Partners [PolicyLink examples are in blue]			
Name and contact information	Description of Commitment	Proposed Activities to be Conducted by Partner	Resource and leveraged resource commitment ($ value for services)
Name: Organization Position Title: Regional Transit Authority Director Sub-recipient: ☐ Yes ☐ No	20% FTE	To plan for better transit access between transit dependent communities and job centers.	$40,000/yr + $1,000,000,000 from TIGER II grant
Name: Public Health Department Environmental Justice Officer Organization Position Title: Sub-recipient: ☐ Yes ☐ No	50% FTE	Identify health disparity hotspots and plan for health mitigations; involve universities' schools of public health and public hospitals; engage residents from hot spot areas to participate in mitigation strategies.	$50,000/yr + $25,000 philanthrophic Health Impact Assessment grant
Name:		Develop analysis of housing need	

Organization Position Title: Regional Housing Coalition Sub-recipient: ☐ Yes ☐ No	150% FTE	across region, plan for housing investment to meet affordability needs, plan for greening of housing in low-income communities.	$150,000/year
Name: Organization Position Title: Fresh Food Access Coalition Sub-recipient: ☐ Yes ☐ No	200% FTE	Develop plan for regional healthy food access.	$200,000/year + $1M/yr Community Transformation Grant

RATING FACTOR #2: NEEDS/EXTENT OF PROBLEM (10 points)
Focus on Demographics and Targets

The data requirements for Factor Two are crucial to establishing your need for funds to support regional planning. The NOFA requires a description of existing social, economic, and environmental conditions that demonstrate why the region would benefit from comprehensive regional planning. Incorporating indicators that measure disparities by race and income and creating a participatory process for your region's needs assessment will build the basis for enabling equity-based strategies. Applicants are required to buttress their narrative description with quantitative and qualitative data for 10 specific indicators provided in the Ratings form, using data sources supplied by HUD. HUD also encourages applicants to use additional indicators to describe the regional context and provides a list of 22 additional measures. The agency suggests using data to explain the unique characteristics of historically marginalized populations or communities.

A FEW TIPS FOR ALL APPLICANTS:

To understand how vulnerable groups are faring in terms of access to regional opportunity, it is important to further disaggregate the data by race/ethnicity, income, and other relevant demographic groupings. Doing so will allow you to identify and document disparities which might not be evident to the consortium or the grant reviewers if aggregate numbers are used, and to track how conditions are changing over time. Not all of the data points will be available at a disaggregated level, but many are.

Community mapping with GIS can be a powerful tool to assess differences among the neighborhoods, communities, and cities within the region and inform strategies for change. A geographic information system (GIS) integrates hardware, software, and data to enable users to access, analyze, disseminate, and display spatial data. GIS can be used to designate communities of concern, such as low-income neighborhoods or communities of color, and analyze them in terms of specific livability measures (e.g., transit access, supermarket access, proximity to parks, air quality, etc.). Metropolitan planning organizations use GIS to analyze data and test different investment scenarios, and many city and county agencies and departments also use GIS. In many regions, data intermediaries exist that can help community organizations access and use geographic data. See if your region is one of the thirty-four in The Urban Institute's National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership.

If your organization does not have access to GIS software, consider working with your MPO or with a local university to map regional equity indicators. Google also has a free platform to map spatial data, called Google Fusion Tables. Another option is to purchase a subscription ($2,000/year) to PolicyMap, a nationwide web-based GIS system called that provides data on demographics, real estate, city crime rates, health, schools, housing affordability, employment, energy, and public investments at multiple geographic levels, and allows users with paid subscriptions to upload and map their own data sets.

See these resources for more information about community mapping and GIS:

→ Community Mapping Tools

→ Using GIS to Support Advocacy and Social Justice

→ Transforming Community Development with Land Information Systems

➔ Using Maps to Promote Health Equity

Contact other government agencies to find additional data, such as the county assessor for property data and the local labor and economic development agency for data on jobs and employment.

Be aware of data limitations. The What Works Collaborative authored, "Building Environmentally Sustainable Communities." The report offers a thorough analysis of the following data limitations:

(1) Using only universally available data can narrow the scope of measurement and potentially limit accuracy.
(2) Using static, rather than dynamic, indicators ignores trends and projections.
(3) Not explicitly including racial and economic segregation limits analysis.
(4) Failing to break down subsidized housing by families, elderly, and disabled may overstate inclusion.
(5) Not controlling for income in transit usage may over or understate potential transit usage.

Equity advocates should be actively involved in developing the statement of need. People who live outside of the marginalized communities that will be part of the grant's scope and/or data experts may not be aware of the assumptions they bring to their characterization of the challenges/problems a particular people of color or low-income community faces. Ideally, at least some of the relevant data should be obtained through participatory research. At a minimum, the statement of need should be vetted through groups representing people of color and low-income communities in the region.

While the application requires a statement of need, also plan to incorporate asset and opportunity mapping in the process. People who live in under-resourced communities also live in places rich with culture, history, and key community institutions and assets. By mapping the assets of communities, the plan to address disparities can build on the strengths. Opportunity mapping can be useful in identifying spatial disparities in access to resources and help determine priority areas for planning activities. Both Sacramento and the Twin Cities are using their Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants to identify areas of opportunity in the region and align investments to make those opportunities accessible for low-income communities and communities of color.

Community Mapping

In 2006 the Front Range Economics Strategy Center (FRESC) teamed up with the Colorado Community Collaborative (CCOC), made up of a group of seven community organizations that represent nine different counties in Colorado, to produce the *Denver Atlas II: A Region in Transformation*. Each of these member organizations use grassroots community organizing as a primary strategy, with a strong emphasis on membership-driven self governance. Together they produced an illustrative visual mapping that captured the social, economic, and political dynamics of the region. The image below is an example of how Census Data can be disaggregated to present gentrification pressures in Denver's LA Alma Park Neighborhood:

Each dot = one household earning over $100,000
(per census block group; dots distributed randomly
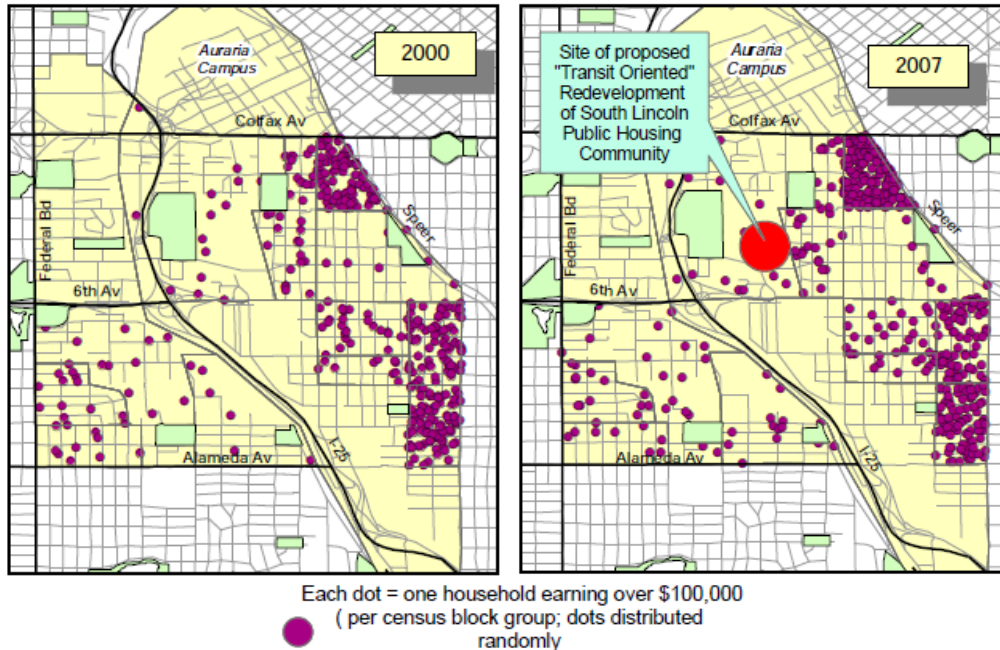
► **The Coalition for a Livable Future (CLF) in Portland, Oregon has built a regional *Equity Atlas*. To view it, go to: http://equityatlas.org. In addition, CLF has drafted a corresponding *Equity Action Agenda* which is based on the community mapping process: http://equityatlas.org/actionplan.html.**

FILLING OUT THE APPLICATION

The application for Rating Factor Two totals a possible 10 points with an additional point for regions that are within an area of severe economic distress. The rating factor contains eight categories that will help guide you in using data to define the scope and extent of your region's need:

(1) Housing Costs	(5) Economic Opportunity
(2) Environmental Quality	(6) Fresh Food Access
(3) Transportation Access	(7) Healthy Communities
(4) Socioeconomic Inequality	(8) *Severe Economic Distress

To guide you through this process we have listed HUD's recommended data source and provide suggestions for each category.

* Refer to pages 33-35 of the FY2011 ANOFA to understand the necessary data requirements.

Factor 2 – Need and Extent of the Problem

For categories 1-3, data must be collected for 1990, 2000, and 2009/10.

➔ **If the data does not exist** for the area in question, HUD recommends using a weighted average. For further data clarification by HUD, click here.

➔ **Note: The links provided within the "location of data" box are the links provided by HUD, marked in RED.** Additional links suggested by **PolicyLink** will be marked in **BLUE**.

1. Housing Costs			
1.1 Median Regional Housing Prices Relative to Household Income		**1.2 Proportion of Regional Population Paying More than 45% of Income to Combined Housing and Transportation Costs**	
Input:	Rent, income, housing price data	Input:	Housing, transportation, income data
HUD Source:	Federal Housing Finance Agency	**HUD Source:**	Center for Neighborhood Technology Housing + Transportation Affordability Index
Location of Data:	http://htaindex.cnt.org/	Location of Data:	http://htaindex.cnt.org/
Suggested Indicator: Housing burden (rental and owner-occupied) by income group/racial and ethnic group. **Suggested Source:** HUD and local housing department statistics.		**Suggested Indicator**: Break down by: neighborhood – where are people paying more? And by income and race/ethnicity: who is paying more? **Suggested Source:** HUD and local housing department statistics.	

2. Environmental Quality			
2.1 Urbanized Land per Capita		**2.2 Total Miles of Distribution of Water Infrastructure per Population Served**	
Input:	Population, urbanized land data	Input:	Population, water infrastructure data
HUD Source:	U.S. Census, EPA distillation	**HUD Source:**	Local Utilities Companies and the U.S. Census
Location of Data:	HUD SCI User Database	Location of Data:	varies
		HUD Suggestion: Contact local utility companies for data on water distribution infrastructure	
Suggested Indicator: Sum of common chemical releases (lead, nitric acid, mercury, etc.). Estimated total respiratory frisk from air toxins. **Suggested Source:** EPA Toxic Release Inventory or the National Air toxics Assessments (NATA).		**Suggested Indicator:** Residential and gross per capital water use. **Suggested Source:** US Census and local water/utilities data.	

3. Transportation Access			
3.1 Vehicle Miles Traveled per Capita		**3.2 Portion of Regional Trips: Automobile, Transit, Walking, and Bicycling**	
Input:	Road infrastructure, population, vehicle miles traveled	Input:	Trip share data
HUD Source:	FHWA highway stats, U.S. Census	**HUD Source:**	American Community Survey
Location of Data:	http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/ohpi/hss/hsspubs.cfm	Location of Data:	http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index.html
HUD Suggestions:	DOT has developed 'Miles Traveled' statistics in urbanized areas; this data is available in Excel format here.	**HUD** Suggestions:	The data presented on this website does not measure all trips, only commuting behavior (journey-to-work). This data is also bundled into the SCI state reports generated by the HUD SCI User Database.

Suggested Indicator: Percent of commuters commuting to work by public transportation + percent of commuters commuting to work by walking. **Suggested Source:** U.S. Census.		

4. Socioeconomic Inequality			
4.1 Segregation by County			
4.2 School Lunch Eligibility			
Data Needs:	2009 Black/White Dissimilarity Index	2009 Asian/White Dissimilarity Index	2009 Hispanic/White Dissimilarity Index
HUD Source: http://www.s4.brown.edu/cen2000/SchoolPop/SPDownload.html; SUNY Albany National Center for Education Statistics; http://www.nces.ed.gov/.			
PolicyLink Suggestions: For further indicator ideas, click here: http://www.urban.org/publications/412088.html. The School Data Direct is another possible source for measuring socioeconomic inequity within schools, http://www.schooldatadirect.org/.			
Suggested Indicators: (1) Percent of elementary schools proficient in state and reading and math tests; (2) Percent of elementary school students on free and reduced lunch; (3) Number of violent crimes per thousand people; (4) Number of property crimes per thousand people. **Suggested Source:** FBI Uniform Crime Report (2008).			

5. Economic Opportunity			
5.1 Availability of Subsidized Affordable Housing near Employment Centers (Note: please list the five largest employers and the housing conditions related to it)			
Data Needs:	employment center (name / SIC designation)	# of employees	number of housing units within 2 miles of the employment center	% of housing near employment center that is subsidized
HUD Source: This data is locally collected.			
PolicyLink Suggestions: Census Zip Business Patterns (2006), BLS Occupational Training Data.			
Suggested Indicators: (1) Growth rate for jobs at "associates degree" level between 1998 and 2005; (2) Number of jobs within five-mile radius divided by number of people at or below 60 percent AMI within five-mile radius.			

Data Needs:	employment center (name / SIC designation)	# of employees	number of housing units within 2 miles of the employment center	% of housing near employment center that is subsidized

6. Fresh Food Access	
6.1 Proximity of Full-Service Grocery Stores for Low-Income and Auto-Dependent Households	
Data Needs:	% households with no car and > 1 mile to grocery store	% low-income people living > 1 mi to grocery store

Data Needs:	% households with no car and > 1 mile to grocery store	% low-income people living > 1 mi to grocery store
HUD Source :The USDA Food Environment Atlas http://www.ers.usda.gov/foodatlas/.		
PolicyLink Suggestions: Think about the qualitative assessment of the grocery stores within your region (e.g., quality, types of foods, etc.) to include in the descriptions of your narrative statement. For further guidance, the USDA has developed the Community Food Security Assessment Toolkit.		
Suggested Indicator: (1) Proportion of retail establishments that accept state/federal food assistance programs; (2) Density of fast food outlets; for additional Fresh Food Access indicators, click here.		

7. Healthy Communities						

7.1 Prevalence of Preventable Disease

Race:	White	Native American	African American	Hispanic	Asian American/ Pacific Islander	Other
Indicator	Incidence Per 1000	Incidence Per 1000	Incidence Per 1000	Incidence Per 1000	Incidence Per 1000	Incidence Per 1000
Asthma Hospitalization						
Childhood Obesity						
Diabetes						
Heart Disease						
Lead Poisoning						
Low Birth Weight						

HUD Source: County and State Health Departments are the primary source. For other data sets, see http://www.communityhealth.hhs.gov.

PolicyLink Suggestions: For further recommendations, review *Strategies for Enhancing the Built Environment to Support Healthy Eating and Active Living* -- the first of four policy briefs authored by Prevention Institute for the Convergence Partnership. For more additional tools, see *The Transportation and Health Toolkit*.

Suggested Indicators: (1) Street tree population; (2) Proportion of sidewalk lengths with pedestrian scale lighting; (3) Number of hospital beds per 100,000/total population. For additional Healthy Communities Indicators, click here.

CASE STUDY: Public Health Planning – Putting the Public Back in Planning!

Departments of Public Health can play key roles in equity planning. San Francisco Department of Public Health works side-by-side with community-based groups in a highly participatory process. They utilize a consensus-based "Healthy Development Measurement Tool" to conduct health impact assessments (HIAs) of development policies on individuals and neighborhoods. This tool informed road pricing policies based on air pollution exposure; environmental noise exposure; pedestrian and vehicle injuries; physical activity; and, household finance. The HIA helped the department promulgate new regulations where air quality modeling identified areas that exceed a certain threshold level.

RATING FACTOR #3: SOUNDNESS OF APPROACH (50 points)
Bringing it All Together

Rating Factor 3 is where many of the elements of the regional planning process need to be woven together in a way that demonstrates how the workplan 1) addresses the purposes and goals of the Sustainable Communities program; and, 2) how the implementation mechanisms within the proposal will achieve the program outcomes through measurable objectives. **This rating factor accounts for nearly half of the possible points in the grant application. Your narrative must directly address the two program priorities** (i.e., the Six Livability Principles and HUD's Strategic Goals) and demonstrate sufficient capacity and effective strategies that address needs and leverage assets in your region to build inclusive regions and communities of opportunity. The majority of points goes toward the quality and cost effectiveness of your plan and your consortium's ability to actively engage outside organizations. The NOFA explicitly states that HUD places priority on applicants' ability to build capacity and share knowledge among members within the consortium and across its broader region. The point breakdown for this rating factor is as follows:

Category 1 Applicants:

1) *Description* of the regional plan for sustainable development (8 points)
2) *Process* to develop the regional plan (15 points)
3) *Consortium Structure*: Governance and Management (15 points)
4) Project *Implementation* Schedule (4 points)

Category 2 Applicants:

1) *Description* of execution plan and program for the existing regional plan (8 points)
2) *Process* to improve or further develop the existing regional plan or vision (15 points)
3) *Consortium Structure*: Governance and Management (15 points)
4) Project *Completion* Schedule (4 points)

All Applicants:

5) Budget proposal (4 points)
6) Addressing HUD's policy priorities (4 points)

Creating Regional Equity Networks to Ensure Sustained Inclusion: Kansas City's Social Equity Network

Organizing for success has been a central theme throughout the Kansas City Sustainable Communities regional planning effort. Their regional plan—*Creating Sustainable Places*—seeks to build on the region's strong track record of collaboration to provide leadership, coordination of outreach and education activities to broaden public understanding of and involvement in sustainability issues as well as strengthen stakeholder capacity to address them.

Recognizing that the key to successful regional growth involves diverse communities' engagement, regional leaders have taken steps to support the formation of a social equity network. Supported by staff from the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), these partners have focused on developing an equity framework that influences planning throughout the region as well as organizing over 45 organizations to contribute to the planning process.

The equity consortium is led by five social equity partner organizations, including:
- Metropolitan Organization for Racial and Economic Equity (MORE2), a local consortium of urban/suburban faith congregations;
- The Urban League of Greater Kansas City;
- Church Community Organization, a faith-based PICO affiliate, focused on organizing and leadership development;
- The Hispanic Civic Engagement Project, an alliance of community agencies serving Hispanic communities; and
- The Green Impact Zone of Missouri, an initiative covering a 150-block area of Kansas City, Mo., that has experienced severe abandonment and economic decline

Each of these key partners is contributing to an equity framework for the region which will include building out a broader constituent base that leverages their members to inform the planning process in each of the corridors.

The chart on the following page breaks down these phases and provides a summary of the partnership objectives and required components for Rating Factor Three. The chart illustrates the 50- point distribution for this rating factor.

OBJECTIVES AND RATING STRUCTURE

> *"The goal of the partnership is to support metropolitan and multi-jurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing and land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of* (1) **economic competiveness and revitalization**; (2) **social equity, inclusion,** *and* **access to opportunity**; (3) **energy use and climate change**; *and* (4) **public health** *and* **environmental impact**.*"*

CATEGORY ONE

Planning & Visioning	Point Distribution
General Description of the Proposed Sustainable Regional Plan	**8 pts**
Process to Develop a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development	**15 pts**
Governance and Management (Leadership Structure; 5pts)*	**15 pts**
Project Implementation Schedule	**4 pts**

Budget Proposal	
The budget form should reflect the planning or implementation process.	**4 pts**

HUD'S Policy Priorities	
1. Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing a. Increase the skills and technical expertise of partner organizations b. Share knowledge amongst partners 2. Expand cross cutting policy knowledge	**4 pts**

TOTAL	**50**

CATEGORY TWO

Implementation of a Plan	Point Distribution
General Description of Proposed Execution Plan and Program for a Sustainable Regional Plan	**8 pts**
Process to Improve Your Existing Sustainable Regional Plan or Vision	**15 pts**
Governance and Management (Leadership Structure; 5pts)*	**15 pts**
Project Completion Schedule	**4 pts**

Budget Proposal	
Examples of Budget Items include: Direct labor costs, Fringe benefits, travel, and sub-grantees Note that all categories within the HUD 424 CBW Form do not need to be filled out.	**4 pts**

HUD'S Policy Priorities	
1. Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing a. Increase the skills and technical expertise of partner organizations b. Share knowledge amongst partners 2. Expand cross cutting policy knowledge	**4 pts**

TOTAL	**50**

To score well within Rating Factor Three, it is essential that the proper entities, interests, and values of the community be fully represented in order to develop a comprehensive regional plan for sustainability that incorporates equity throughout the different components of the planning process—from community participation in every stage of the process, to budgeting for building capacity of local organizations, to developing specific equity-focused indicators for program evaluation, and to creating diverse and representative governance structures within the consortium.

The tasks involved in regional planning for sustainability are far-reaching and nuanced, calling upon a wide variety of skill sets. **HUD recognizes that regions are at different states of readiness with differing capacities to engage in planning for a sustainable and inclusive future.** The rest of this rating factor is organized by the different categories for point allocation: description of the regional plan or execution plan, process to develop or improve on the regional plan, the structure of the consortium, project implementation or completion schedule, the budget proposal, and addressing HUD's policy priorities.

Description of the Proposal for or Execution of the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development
(8 points)

All applicants need to address how the regional plan will "build inclusive communities free from discrimination, and advance access to economic opportunity for all segments of the population." (page 37 of the FY2011 ANOFA) Start consulting with community organizations and equity-focused groups that have experience working with residents that have historically been victims of discriminatory housing practices and/or that live in neighborhoods with less access to quality schools, healthy food outlets, health care, quality public transportation, or affordable housing. Work with data experts in your region to map the location of neighborhoods of opportunity. Through mapping and conversations with organizations familiar with these issues, work to identify how the regional planning efforts can effectively address these issues of education and access to opportunity.

The relationship between proposed community engagement activities and populations that face social, economic, and health disparities (as identified in the data produced in rating factor two) should be clearly articulated. If your needs assessment identifies severe poverty, high housing and transportation costs, or disproportionate environmental burdens in some communities, the plan should reflect these issues. Consider using the development of the needs assessment as a platform to engage with underrepresented populations and traditionally marginalized processes. This process can also help to clarify how projects might be prioritized to best address existing economic, social, and health disparities.

Process to Develop or Improve a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (RPSD) (15 points)

The objective of a multi-level regional planning process is to successfully integrate community input and a set of deliverables from community and municipal-levels into a unified region-wide plan that encompasses all districts and neighborhoods and that focuses and coordinates infrastructure investment. Entities that are responsible for coordinating various investments will likely have plans that they will be bringing to the table (e.g. a regional transportation plan; HUD comprehensive plans for housing investment; city or county general plans, water or air resources board plans, state energy efficiency plans). A first step will be to review the relevant plans and decide which aspects of them are useful as a baseline for the regional planning process. The consortia will need to decide how the key information from each existing plan can be overlain with the others to begin to understand regional conditions in a relational way. And it will need to decide what new information is needed.

The overlay of sectoral dynamics (e.g. where transit arteries are; where job centers are; where housing density and affordability exist) with demographic dynamics (where are high poverty communities, communities of color, communities of affluence) forms the basis to envision the key things that need to happen to create a more sustainable, prosperous, and equitable region. The perspective of low income communities and communities of color is crucial in this process as those communities know keenly the lack of infrastructure they face; the perspective of social justice-focused advocacy groups is crucial as they know keenly the regional trends and disparities in arenas like air quality impacts or housing discrimination. Laying out a plan of how you move from consortium to community and back again is more art than science.

Many regions already have such plans, but few will have strong equity and sustainability aspects. Each applicant will need to describe how they will engage the community, achieve their equity and sustainability goals, and ultimately who will be responsible for implementing the plan and how it should be implemented. There are a few key equity considerations for this section, listed below.

Applicants will need to describe how their community engagement process will engage a large constituency of residents, including those from low-income communities and communities of color in such a way where they have an effective role in shaping the regional vision. One key component to effective community engagement is ensuring that local community organizations lead and coordinate the engagement process. These organizations typically have the best knowledge of the various groups that work with residents on the ground on relevant issues to the planning process and often have existing relationships with these groups that this process can build upon. Second, effective community engagement in regional planning processes requires a level playing field with regards to language and technical terms. Consider incorporating activities that build capacity for local groups to engage on issues addressed in the regional plan, such as leadership institutes or training workshops.

Demonstrate how the outcomes from the community engagement process will be reflected in the final plan. This is a common theme throughout the NOFA; HUD is interested in understanding how the identification of social, economic, and health disparities in Rating Factor Two will be reflected throughout the planning process, from the identification of activities to the outcomes of the community engagement process. Planning processes that are most successful at incorporating feedback from engagement are those that delegate as much decision-making authority to community residents as possible. For more information on effective community engagement, Sherry Arnstein's "Ladder of Citizen Participation" is a useful resource.

Category One applicants will need to describe a mitigation strategy for any potential residential and small business displacement that could occur as a result of infrastructure investments that impact land costs and property values. This type of displacement can occur alongside investments in light rail or subway transit, park development, or large-scale redevelopment projects, to name a few. HUD has asked that if grantees have identified demolition or the conversion of any low- or moderate-income dwelling units as a viable strategy for redevelopment, they must:

- Address why it has determined to demolish rather than to preserve those properties;
- Identify the number of those properties that are reasonably expected to be demolished or converted; and
- Address relocation assistance to residential and nonresidential displacement

Successful strategies to mitigate displacement and the negative effects of gentrification often involve working closely with residents and community organizations to devise strategies for dealing with

neighborhood change. See the "Development Without Displacement" profile for an example of displacement prevention in action in the Bay Area.

There are many examples of local and regional plans that have addressed equity concerns. Many of these are described below.

Making the Connection:
Examples of Inclusive and Equitable Plans

HUD Required RSPD Plan Elements	Resources
Adopt a Housing Plan	The following housing plans show the diversity of approaches:: Los Angeles, CA "Housing that Works" adopted in 2008 Chicago, IL "Accepting the Challenge" adopted in 2009 "Chicago Metropolis 2020" Adopted in 2007 New York, NY "The New Housing Marketplace" adopted in 2004 Washington, DC "Housing in the Nation's Capital, 2007". This takes a regional look at vulnerable population's housing needs.
Incorporate Equity and Fair Housing	Pratt, Sarah and Allen, Michael. *"Addressing Community Opposition to Affordable Housing Development: A Fair Market Housing Toolkit".* The Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania, 2004. Leeuw, M., Whyte, D., et al. *"Residential Segregation and Housing Discrimination in the United States."* The Poverty & Race Research Action Council, 2008. Portland State University. "2011 Field Work Review: Fair Housing Choice." 2011.
Advance Regional Transportation Planning	*The Transportation Prescription:* *Bold New Ideas for Healthy, Equitable Transportation Reform in America* A report by PolicyLink and Prevention Institute, and commissioned by the Convergence Partnership, this policy guide analyzes the intersection of transportation, health, and equity. This report provides key policy and program recommendations that can improve health outcomes in vulnerable communities, create economic opportunity, and enhance environmental quality. The Sacramento Region Blueprint Plan In 2008, the SACOG Board adopted the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2035, using the Preferred Blueprint Scenario as the basis for the land use on which transportation investments will be made. The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2035 links land use and transportation planning with $42 billion in transportation investments in the six-county Sacramento region over the next 28 years. Metropolitan Transportation Commission Snapshot Analysis In the San Francisco Bay Area, the MTC created a set of 13 of transportation-related measures related to their designated low-income and minority communities of concern. Based on a recommendation in the *Transportation 2035 Equity Analysis Report,* the Snapshot Analysis is intended to drill-down on key transportation-related indicators in order to assess transportation differences between communities of concern today and track changes over time.

Advance Water Infrastructure Planning	Unincorporated Communities: The Community Equity Initiative Throughout the United States, millions of people live outside of central cities on pockets of unincorporated land. Predominantly African American and Latino, these communities range from remote but concentrated settlements of industrial or agricultural laborers to neighborhoods at the fringes of cities and towns that have been excluded from city borders. Residents of these areas struggle to attain the most basic features of a safe and healthy environment—services like clean water, sewage lines, storm drains, streetlights, and sidewalks. Dependent on rural county governance for urban needs, these communities are systematically underserved in the overall allocation of public resources. In order to ensure that these communities are able to benefit from and contribute to regional sustainability efforts, it is critical to ensure that their basic infrastructure needs are met. To do this, local and regional planning processes should pay specific attention to identifying strategies that facilitate the efficient delivery of infrastructure services including such things as annexation, system consolidation, and extension of services from existing infrastructure systems. For other tips in advancing water infrastructure; see the Los Angeles Water Management Plan
Plan for Equitable Economic Development	The Equitable Development Toolkit: 28 Tools Equitable development is an approach to creating healthy, vibrant, communities of opportunity. Equitable outcomes come about when smart, intentional strategies are put in place to ensure that low-income communities and communities of color participate in and benefit from decisions that shape their neighborhoods and regions. PolicyLink has developed an online toolkit of 28 tools to reverse patterns of segregation and disinvestment, prevent displacement, and promote equitable revitalization.
Conduct Scenario Planning Exercises	The Consensus Building Institute The Consensus Building Institute (CBI) improves the way leaders use negotiations to make organizational decisions, achieve agreements, and manage multiparty conflicts and planning efforts. The site provides links to effective scenario processes and techniques that improve group decision-making on complex public and organizational issues.
Conduct Comprehensive Climate Change Impact Assessments	*Minding The Climate Gap:* *What's at Stake if California's Climate Law isn't Done Right and Right Away* By Manuel Pastor, Rachel Morello-Frosch, James Sadd, and Justin Scoggins *Minding the Climate Gap: What's at Stake if California's Climate Law isn't Done Right and Right Away* details how incentivizing the reduction of greenhouse gases—which cause climate change—from facilities operating in the most polluted neighborhoods could generate major public health benefits. The study also details how revenues generated from charging polluters could be used to improve air quality and create jobs in the neighborhoods that suffer from the dirtiest air. **The Emerald Cities Collaborative** Developing a regional plan for investing in energy efficient retrofitting of buildings can be one of the highest yield sustainability returns—creating housing cost reductions through energy savings for lower income households; developing living wage jobs with career ladders or workers of color; creating green house gas reductions for climate change benefits. The Emerald Cities Collaborative can help regions plan energy efficiency into housing elements, long term regional investment strategies, workforce development plans and resources that guide successful implementation of an Energy Efficiency Element. See: http://www.emeraldcities.org/ EPA State & Local Climate and Energy Programhttp://www.epa.gov/statelocalclimate/ **Center on Wisconsin Strategy** A Short Guide to Setting up a City-Scale Retrofit Program Seizing the Opportunity (for Climate, Jobs, and Equity) in Building Energy Efficiency

Governance and Management (15 points)

➔ **This is a critical section to get right in terms of how the consortium handles inclusion, diversity, and equity.** HUD is reserving 5 of these 15 points to award applications based on the soundness of the leadership structure with respect to the inclusion of diverse and underrepresented populations.

Applicants should be prepared to offer a credible, detailed plan for expanding the partnership after a grant is awarded in ways that deepen the diversity at the table, with specific roles and forms of accountability established. How will power be shared among existing and future partners? This needs to be spelled out in the application and in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), as it will be crucial for the meaningful involvement of grassroots groups, particularly those from low-income and people of color communities. How transparent, fair, and inclusive will the governance and management processes be? What kind of public feedback mechanisms will be put in place? How can the data management plan take into account equity metrics and non-traditional community data sources?

The equity considerations for this section are very similar to that for Rating Factor One. However, while the first rating factor is more concerned with the inclusion and capacity of organizations that work with traditionally marginalized populations within the consortium, the points in Rating Factor Three address the mechanics of the governance structure itself—the rationale for including each partner, their role in the process, how organizations and their representatives will be included in various committees and caucuses, the budget resources that will be allocated to the partners, the data management plan, and the management of implementation and completion for the plan and associated projects.

The governance structure of the consortium should ensure that diverse and traditionally underrepresented populations are included in a decision-making capacity. To reiterate many of the points from rating factor one, begin consulting organizations that represent communities of color and low-income communities early on in the process. Consider incorporating these organizations in different types of decision-making capacities within the consortium that engage on a diversity of issues such as community engagement, program evaluation, scenario planning, and policy implementation. Be creative with your consortium structure: consider using this process as a platform to foster the creation of regional equity networks that will help sustain community engagement long after the grant period is over.

Forming an Equitable, Diverse Governance Structure
Considerations for Inclusive Engagement

(1) **Build a social equity caucus, regional equity network, or communities of color advisory committee with voting power/decision-making authority**.

   Example: Equity Network Steering Committee in Seattle

(2) **Structure the budget to support community visioning processes** that feed into the regional vision. Provide the language and other participation supports (e.g., transport and child care) to facilitate engagement.

   Example: Community Leadership Program, San Joaquin Valley, California

(3) **Budget for community data collection including needs assessments and social equity mapping** to establish a baseline and set targets that include attention to poverty and racial concentration, social

indicators, housing affordability, and mapping the location of opportunities for employment, quality schools, fresh food, parks and open space, health centers, and other amenities.

(4) **Provide educational tools and media strategies** to communicate the process and results of planning and keep regional residents apprised of the progress and convey social equity vision at each opportunity.

(5) **Identify and use facilitators that can navigate race, class, and culture dynamics in constructive, community-building ways.** If you will be working with consultants, work with local equity-focused organizations in the selection process or establish equity criteria in the screening process.

(6) **Be prepared to provide additional training and technical assistance.** Under-served communities will need to be able to advocate for their own needs and for policy changes. If strong advocacy groups do not yet exist in one or more of the under-served communities within the region, then local groups in these communities need capacity-building resources to build this advocacy skill.

Example: Community Leadership Program, San Joaquin Valley, California

(7) **Create a culture of openness and flexibility and a willingness to adjust plans based on the evaluations**.

(8) **Consider the use of regranting** to community-based and equity focused organizations to implement some of the community engagement work and build the capacity of local organizations.

Example: Community Engagement Team, Twin Cities, Minnesota

(9) **Utilize budget resources to hire minority-owned planning firms** with experience working in communities of color, **diverse planning staff, or local organizations to conduct planning activities.** Much of the talent needed exists in the organizations in your home communities. Utilize resources to build their bench strength and keep the capacity long after the planning period. Work with CBOs to do outreach for new job positions to recruit diverse candidates.

Project Implementation and Completion Schedule (4 points)

Fill out the Factor Five chart to include the appropriate milestones necessary to achieve the specific outcomes over the next 18 to 36 months that resolve the challenges identified in Factor Two. Once the chart is complete, align the benchmarks to the narrative required for this section. In this section you will also need to include expected metrics to track progress towards achieving results. Work as collaboratively as possible with community organizations and equity partners to develop a shared definition of progress—then develop benchmarks and metrics from there.

Applicants will need to detail the mechanisms that will be used to advance economic opportunity for populations performing below the regional median. HUD has suggested a few activities such as community monitoring agreements, employment development strategies, targeted neighborhood plans, and activities that affirmatively further fair housing. Many of these activities should build from the disparities identified from the needs assessment in Rating Factor Two. We suggest working closely with equity-focused groups to identify these activities or develop the criteria that will be used in the process to select which projects get funded.

Meaningful community engagement takes time and can be more "messy" and cumbersome than less democratic, transparent, and open processes. So, create timelines accordingly!

Budget Proposal (4 points)

Ten percent of the total project budget needs to be committed to activities that support the engagement, participation, and governance of low-income communities, communities of color, and other populations traditionally marginalized in regional planning processes. This could include committing resources to local organizations to conduct the engagement processes, as they have the best access and trust with diverse constituencies. Consider establishing a resource pool to create a sub-granting program that would provide funds to community-based organizations to build their capacity to engage in this process. You could also hire experienced community organizers that have worked with low-income communities and communities of color to reach out to diverse constituencies.

When budgeting for engagement, consider the special needs of diverse populations. This could include translation services, child care, meals, and transportation to the site.

The budget expenses should reflect the plans and activities described in your narrative. Although the budget constitutes a small allotment of points, it is crucial that the budget provides the necessary financial support for key consortium staff and the involvement of social equity groups. The consortium should include social equity groups into "direct labor" expenses to ensure structural participation. Creating a grant budget to support the development of local areas to develop plans can foster community of color participation, build the capacity of community organizations, and help integrate local area plans with the greater regional plan.

Budgeting for Robust Community Engagement and Social Equity Outcomes: Lessons from Seattle

Recognizing the historic opportunity presented by the Sustainable Communities Planning Grants, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), along with other consortium partners, requested $750,000—15% of the total grant reward—for the formation of a regional equity network to promote more equitable and inclusive planning efforts as part of their regional plan - *Growing Transit Communities: A Corridor Action Strategy*.

Their proposal outlined a regional social equity network that would add value by including community organizations representing low-income communities and communities of color in planning discussions and processes that have traditionally lacked their voice; and, creating cross-jurisdictional partnerships to build stronger local and regional agenda alignment as well as foster more equitable development outcomes throughout all aspects of the program.

To ensure these lofty goals were met, consortium partners provided staff and $450,000 in resources—to be disseminated in the form of 30 grants of $15,000 each—to build the capacity of community based organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color in or near target transit corridors to engage in these planning efforts. PSRC also arranged for the hire of a social equity network manager to be placed within Impact Capital, a leading community development financial institution in the region. The network manager's charge has been to build the capacity of Impact Capital and the network by developing and administering the innovative mini-grants program to support non-profit organizations in transit corridors and abutting neighborhoods for policy development and organizing to foster inclusive decision-making and equitable development.

Next steps include hiring an affordable housing network manager to be placed within A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH). It is expected that both network managers will collaborate to mobilize their constituents and further equity within each of the corridors.

HUD's Departmental Policy Priorities (4 points)

Applicants must demonstrate compliance with the HUD policy priorities applicable to the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program:

1. **Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing**

2. **Expand Cross Cutting Policy Knowledge**

To receive points under the first priority, applicants must demonstrate how: a) the skills and technical expertise of partner organizations will increase; and b) knowledge will be shared among partners within the consortium. To receive points under the second priority, applicants must work to expand the use of successful models to other communities through data-sharing agreements. This requires knowledge sharing, capacity building, data collection, and analysis.

For household level data, HUD has specified that the types of data-sharing agreements can be with a university or other policy research group. For parcel-related data, the agreement may be with a nonprofit or governmental agency. Applicants must indicate what data they and/or partner organizations will collect on outcomes for the defined target area and how they intend to disseminate policy lessons learned during the planning process. To demonstrate progress within this section, HUD has encouraged applicants to establish and provide anticipated outputs of the planning process (e.g., publications, research studies, etc).

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Best Practices in Action

Collaborative Planning and Problem Solving

Environmental justice community-based organizations addressing inequities in planning, zoning, and community development offer other important lessons. The ReGenesis Project in Spartanburg, South Carolina is a national example of the EPA's collaborative problem-solving model. Another excellent example is the work of the Low Country Alliance for Model Communities (LAMC) in Charleston, South Carolina which developed a community mitigation plan with the Port of Charleston. Both of these groups were awarded EPA's EJ Achievement Award.

► **To read about participatory action-based research and planning in the area of environmental justice, with LAMC and other groups, see: http://ifs.sc.edu/EJ.asp**.

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Best Practices in Action

Development without Displacement

In the **San Francisco Bay Area**, the FOCUS program unites the efforts of the four regional agencies responsible for land use planning, transportation, air quality, and water to encourage future growth in existing communities and near transit. In 2009, FOCUS implemented a Development Without Displacement Program with environmental justice funding from the state DOT to help community groups and local governments develop strategies to ensure TOD does not lead to displacement of lower-income residents. The agencies' efforts are complemented by a regional advocacy and organizing effort, the Great Communities Collaborative, which seeks to ensure that that by 2030 all people in the Bay Area can live in complete communities, affordable across all incomes, and with nearby access to quality transit. This year, the collaborative partnered with the regional transportation agency to develop a program to help reach that goal: a $40 million revolving loan fund to support land acquisition for 1,100 to 3,800 new affordable homes located near rail or bus stops.

► **For additional resources, *Mapping Susceptibility to Gentrification: The Early Warning Toolkit*, Karen Chapple. Center for Community Innovation,** click here**.**

RATING FACTOR #4: MATCH, LEVERAGING RESOURCES, AND PROGRAM INTEGRATION (7 points)

Understanding the 20 Percent Match

To deliver on a commitment to equity, partners should seek matching funds that will support equity focused activities, and enable the consortium to meet or exceed the minimum 20 percent leverage requirement. *Note: Consortia win points if they exceed the leverage threshold.* Donated staff time, for example, can count as an in-kind contribution. Community based partners can be valuable recruiters of philanthropic contributions to the budget. Jurisdictions and community partners can also designate land holdings that will be utilized as part of the sustainable development plans towards this match requirement.

Factor 4 – Leveraging Resources				
Name and contact information of the organization or entity that will partner with applicant	Work To Be Accomplished In Support of the Program	Value of In-Kind or Cash Match Contribution*	Additional Leveraged Funds Contribution	Total of Match and Leveraged Contributions
Type of Organization Community Foundation	Funding community participation in planning; investing in commercial corridor revitalization	$1 million community engagement grants $5M Program Related Investments		$6,000,000
Type of Organization Community College	Planning workforce development strategies	In-kind key personnel to convene workforce consortium, analyze jobs, skill needs, training curriculum—valued at $50,000/yr X 2		$100,000
Community Cultural Center	Community Engagement	$8,000 for in-kind donation for community meeting space.		$8,000
Regional Transit Authority	Transportation Needs Assessment and 20-year transit plan	$.5m	$2.5 M TIGER capital investment	$3M
Housing Authority	Redevelopment of Public Housing in high poverty community	$12M CHOICE implementation grant	$5M CDBG investment from City	$17M

Some local, regional, and national foundations are interested in funding nonprofits to participate in regional planning exercises. Consortium partners should work to secure an MOU with interested funders to submit as part of the application process. This would strengthen the application.

➔ **Partners may receive some of the grant funds to do critical pieces of the planning and consortium management work.** These arrangements should be noted in this section of the Ratings Form and spelled out in the mandatory partnership agreements/MOUs that must be submitted. **If community-based organizations can provide meeting space, technical assistance, or other services (e.g., organizing, meeting facilitation, conducting participatory research, interpretation/translation, coordinating communication, or outreach, those contributions should be reflected in the budgeting.** These skills will strengthen the planning process and should be noted as hard costs or real in-kind contributions in the budget.

➔ **Applicants that obtain leveraged resources from other HUD programs,** Sustainability Partnership agencies, and other federal agencies will receive a greater rating (up to 2 points). See point distribution in chart below.

Documented Match and Leveraged Resources and Other Contributions of the Requested HUD Amount	Points Awarded
20 percent (required)	0 Points
20 ≤ 35 percent	1 Point
35 ≤ 50percent	2 Points
More than 50 percent	3 Points
Integration of state planning activities	Up to 2 points
Integration of other federal planning activities	Up to 2 points

Rating Factor #5: ACHIEVING RESULTS & PROGRAM EVALUATION (18 points)
Connecting Goals to Implementation and Positive Outcomes

The purpose of Rating Factor Five is to create a framework for demonstrating how the proposed goals and activities of the proposal align with the eight Sustainable Communities program outcomes. Applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to *identify outcomes* they seek to achieve, the *clarity* by which they articulate how the proposed RPSD activities will help achieve those outcomes, and the *specificity of the benchmarks* they establish to measure progress. This factor includes two parts: a total of eight potential points can be awarded for filling out the Rating Factor 5 form; for the remaining 10 potential points, applicants need to supplement the information provided in the form with a narrative that describes the vision of the applicant to address the mandatory outcomes and what the impacts of these outcomes will be. This is a critical place to maintain consistency with other components of the proposal—where the needs assessment aligns with the proposed activities of the regional plan and the expected outcomes of the process.

Program evaluation plays an important role in ensuring that the planning process results in equitable outcomes. Below are some key points to consider when crafting an evaluation process:

- Transparent reporting of data can be an **instrument of accountability** and feedback, capable of motivating, informing, and reinforcing positive change.
- If you form an Evaluation Team in your consortium structure, consider including representatives from equity-focused groups.
- **Evaluate throughout the life cycle of the project** – not just at the beginning and end. Data collection and reporting become interventions in and of themselves. Realize that evaluation itself is able to create change.
- Evaluations must be closely linked to planning goals and theories.
- **Focusing on process** allows an evaluation to inform decisions about ongoing strategy and approach.
- Evaluations **need to prioritize real-time learning and the community's capacity** to understand and use data from the evaluations*.*

►For an excellent overview of *Regional Equity and the Quest for Full Inclusion:*
http://www.policylink.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=lkIXLbMNJrE&b=5136581&ct=6997399

►For a helpful analysis of Infrastructure Equity issues: http://www.policylink.org/atf/cf/%7B97c6d565-bb43-406d-a6d5-eca3bbf35af0%7D/SAFETYGROWTHEQUITY-INFRAPOLICIES_FINAL.PDF

Factor #5 – Achieving Results and Program Evaluation
HUD examples in Black, PolicyLink examples in blue

Regional planning issue to be addressed	Long-term outcome desired	Livability Principle(s) addressed	HUD goals addressed	Applicable Activity in the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development	Anticipated 6-month progress	Measure of progress	Anticipated 12-month progress	Measure of progress	Anticipated 24-month progress	Measure of progress
Disconnection between low- and moderate-income workforce to employment options (sample)	a. Increased proportion of low- and very-low income households within to transit commute of major employment centers (sample)	Providing More Transportation Choices; Increasing Economic Competitiveness	**Strengthen Communities.** (2) Enhance sustainability of communities by expanding economic opportunities	Workforce Transportation 2020 plan that cements agreements between major employers and regional transit agency (sample)	Identify potential long term employers willing to participate in program; secure participation of transit agency (sample)	Letters of commitment from participating agencies	Convene working group that has 4-month charge to develop agreements to incorporate into the RPSD (sample)	Summaries of meetings; strategic plan outline	Draft plan submitted to leadership Team for review and incorporation into the RPSD – review process commenced (sample)	Draft plan, ratification by RPSD
Disparity in workforce and public contracting participation by people of color *and* Energy sustainability in building sector *and* High Housing Cost Burdens	b. Reduced social and economic disparities for the low-income and communities of color within the target region.	Enhance Economic Competitiveness, Promote affordable Housing, Coordinate Policies and leverage investment	(1)Job Creation *and* (2)Sustainability *and* (4)Capacity Building and Knowledge (5)	Workforce Energy Efficiency 2020 plan that prioritizes residential, commercial, and public building retrofits, aligns workforce and contracting pipelines for good jobs and minority firm inclusion, and reduces housing costs while reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions	Assemble Green Energy consortia of community/technical colleges, building trades unions, construction firm associations from people of color communities	Structure two planning committees: one to review Housing Element and develop regional retrofit priorities; one to articulate workforce capacity needs, skill development requirements, current training capacity, and future need	Report committee findings to community stakeholder and regional planning consortium Solicit feedback and evaluation on priorities through scenario planning	Develop workforce development blueprint based on stakeholder input Develop energy efficiency housing element that targets retrofits over next decade	Align budgets to invest in retrofits in staged fashion over next decade Develop workplan for workforce development restructuring Present to consortium and community stakeholders	Draft plan, ratification by RPSD
	c. Decrease in per capita VMT and									

	transportation-related emissions for the region.									
	d. Decrease in combined housing and transportation costs per household.									
Little participation opportunities and control over decision-making processes by low-income communities and communities of color	e. Increased participation and decision-making in developing and implementing a long range vision for the region by populations traditionally marginalized in public planning processes.	Value Communities and Neighborhoods	4C: Ensure open, diverse, and equitable communities; 4E: Build the capacity of local, state, and regional public and private organizations	A) Community Engagement Plan (created by local organizations that are partners in consortium) that 1) establishes a resource pool to provide subgrants to community-based organizations, and 2) provides training on technical issues to build capacity to effectively engage; 3) incorporates mechanisms for feedback B) Diverse community representation on all governance boards	Established process and criteria for selecting groups to fund their engagement; finalized curriculum for capacity building workshops	Completed RFP for community organizations to apply for funding; completed and approved curriculum for capacity building workshops	Funded community organizations conducting outreach to engage on planning activities; capacity building workshops completed; online anonymous survey of community members to assess their thoughts on the level of engagement; evaluation by community engagement to assess integration of community decisions into the regional planning process	Summary of workshops and community meetings; number of organizations present and diversity of interests represented	Communities leading planning meetings and working groups to inform decisions; evaluation of community engagement team to assess integration of community input into decisions; online survey of community members	Summaries of community meetings; clear reflection of community input in final plans; evaluation by community engagement team, decision-maker responses and action to community input
	f. Increased proportion of low-and very-low income households within to transit commute or major employment centers.									

	g. Aligned federal planning and investment resources that mirror the local and regional strategies for achieving sustainable communities								
	h. Creation of regional transportation, housing, water, and air quality plans that are deeply aligned and tied to local comprehensive land use and capital investment plans								

Equity questions on your regional planning application? E-mail us at sci@policylink.org and we'll try to respond.