



American Planning Association
Making Great Communities Happen

APA 2010 DISTRICT MEETINGS TOOLKIT

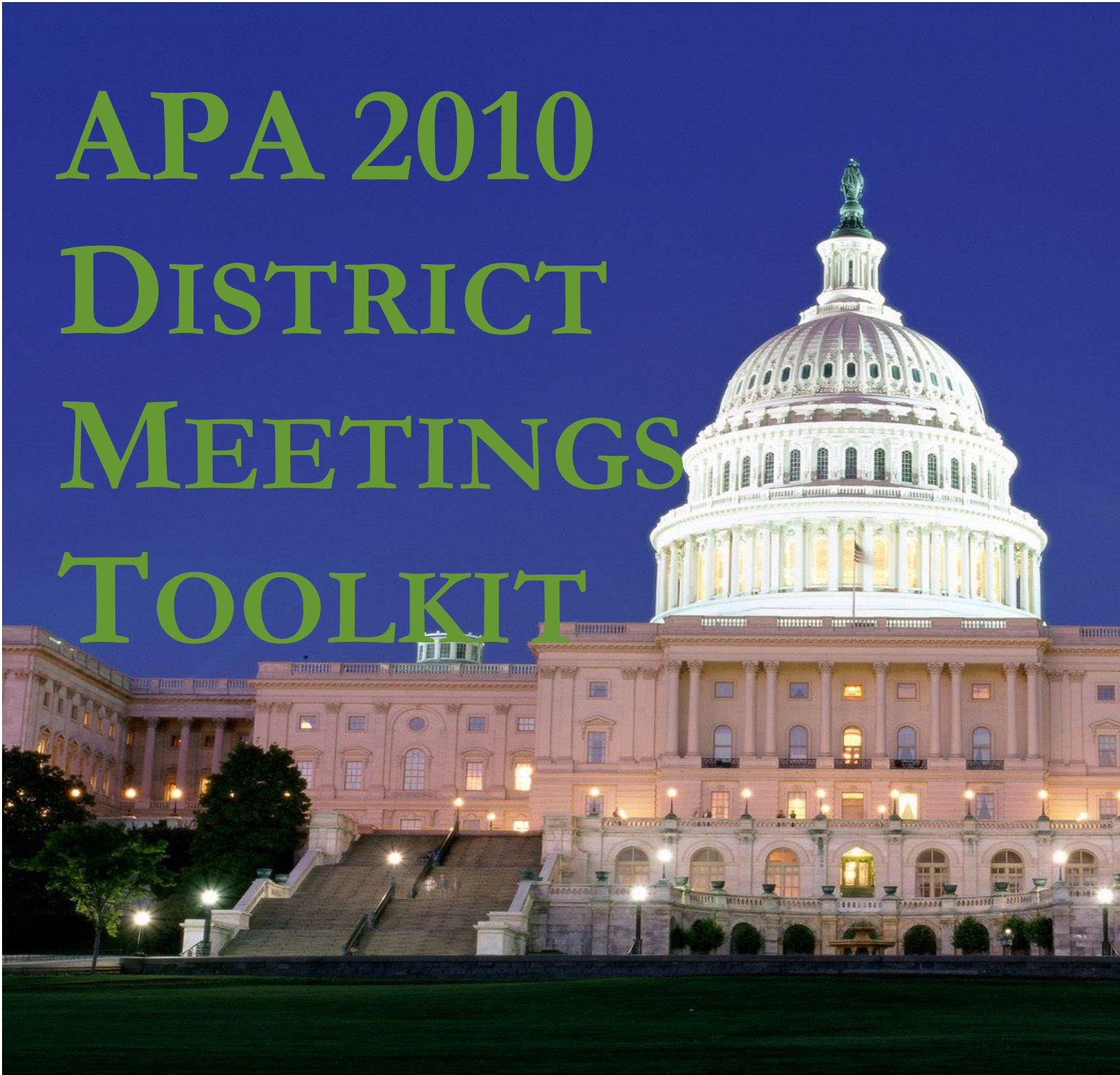


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2010 Federal Policy & Program Briefing Flier

Livable Communities Act Fact Sheet (Print and Leave Behind)

Introduction

During this year's August congressional recess, Aug. 9–Sept. 10, APA is mobilizing advocates to educate legislators on important legislative issues that build and maintain communities. APA will provide assistance to help APA members, Chapters and planning advocates communicate with their members of Congress to express support for a variety of policies that create communities that offer better choices for where and how people work and live.

This campaign is an opportunity to communicate directly with members of Congress and express support for a variety of policies that shape the health and vibrancy of our nation's communities. From strengthening infrastructure by providing adequate resources to supporting the interagency partnership on sustainable communities, APA members can help build support for these vital legislative priorities.

The purpose of this toolkit is to give you, the advocate, the information and tools to raise awareness of planning's critical role in creating communities of lasting value. It includes information and resources on strategies for engaging in grassroots advocacy—all the steps to scheduling and running a face-to-face meeting with your representative—to educate members of Congress on several of APA's legislative priorities and the role they play in building healthy communities across the country.

APA members, planning students, and Chapters are especially encouraged to use and disseminate the toolkit in preparation for the August recess when members of Congress return to their home states and districts to connect with constituents.

Thank you for your assistance in promoting APA's policy agenda. Each voice heard, each story shared is another step in the right direction toward creating communities that offer better choices for where and how people work and live.

When meeting with your congressional representatives, you will be communicating two very important legislative priorities for planners.

Ask them to:

- **Co-sponsor S. 1619, the Livable Communities Act.**
- **Support HUD's FY 2011 budget request for \$150 million for the Sustainable Communities Initiative.**

More information on the Livable Communities Act and the FY 2011 budget are included in this toolkit. If you have questions, please contact Jason Jordan, Director of Policy and Government Affairs at govtaffairs@planning.org.

The Livable Communities Act

Background

Last year HUD, DOT and EPA came together to form an interagency partnership to foster sustainability through better coordination of federal housing, transportation and environmental programs. The partnership has worked to define core principles of livability. The initiative is examining opportunities to integrate existing planning requirements and focus research and technical assistance programs on joint sustainability priorities. The HUD FY 2010 budget set aside \$150 million within the Community Development Block Grant program for the Sustainable Communities Initiative, and the FY2011 budget calls for an additional \$150 million. The initiative will provide planning grants and metropolitan challenge grants.

Summary

Sen. Chris Dodd and Rep. Ed Perlmutter have introduced the Livable Communities Act (S. 1619 and HR. 4690). This legislation would provide a multi-year authorization for the sustainability initiative. The bill authorizes funds for regional planning to make communities more livable and seeks to eliminate barriers to federal coordination in promoting sustainable development.

Key provisions of the Livable Communities Act (S. 1619 and HR. 4690) include...

- Incentives for regional comprehensive planning. The bill authorizes \$400 million over four years to help regions develop plans that link transportation, housing, community and economic development, and environmental needs.

- Funding to implement sustainable development projects. Through challenge grants, communities could seek funding to implement key projects contained in regional plans. This new capital fund source would focus on affordable housing, transit oriented development, transit, bike-ped projects, brownfield and infill redevelopment. The bill calls for \$3.75 billion over three years.

- Assistance for regional livability initiatives. The legislation ensures that federal agencies are a supportive partner in regional planning by establishing critical research and technical assistance capacities. A new

Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities would become resources for best practices and technical assistance.

-An interagency council on sustainable communities. This group would bring together a variety of agencies to coordinate federal policy, research, training, and funding. This council would also identify barriers to sustainable development and promote the linkage of transportation, housing, environmental, and energy policies.

Status

The Livable Communities Act was marked up and passed by the Senate Banking Committee before the August recess with some changes. The bill will now be considered on the floor of the chamber. In the House, the bill has been introduced, and will be considered by the House Financial Services Committee. If the bill is passed in both chambers, it is almost certain that disparities between the House and Senate versions of the bill will exist, and have to be negotiated in conference.

Current LCA Supporters

Senate

Sponsor:

Sen Dodd, Christopher J. [CT]

Cosponsors:

Sen Akaka, Daniel K. [HI]

Sen Bennet, Michael F. [CO]

Sen Brown, Sherrod [OH]

Sen Cardin, Benjamin L. [MD]

Sen Durbin, Richard [IL]

Sen Franken, Al [MN]

Sen Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [NY]

Sen Harkin, Tom [IA]

Sen Landrieu, Mary L. [LA]

Sen Lautenberg, Frank R. [NJ]

Sen Levin, Carl [MI]

Sen Lieberman, Joseph I. [CT]

Sen Menendez, Robert [NJ]

Sen Merkley, Jeff [OR]

Sen Reed, Jack [RI]

Sen Schumer, Charles E. [NY]

Sen Specter, Arlen [PA]

Sen Warner, Mark R. [VA]

Sen Wyden, Ron [OR]

House

Sponsor:

Rep Perlmutter, Ed [CO-7]

Cosponsors:

Rep Blumenauer, Earl [OR-3]

Rep Capps, Lois [CA-23]

Rep Carnahan, Russ [MO-3]

Rep Carson, Andre [IN-7]

Rep Castor, Kathy [FL-11]

Rep Christensen, Donna M. [VI]

Rep Cleaver, Emanuel [MO-5]

Rep Cohen, Steve [TN-9]

Rep Courtney, Joe [CT-2]

Rep DeLauro, Rosa L. [CT-3]

Rep Ellison, Keith [MN-5]

Rep Filner, Bob [CA-51]

Rep Halvorson, Deborah L. [IL-11]

Rep Himes, James A. [CT-4]

Rep Hodes, Paul W. [NH-2]

Rep Holt, Rush D. [NJ-12]

Rep Honda, Michael M. [CA-15]

Rep Johnson, Henry C. "Hank," Jr.
[GA-4]

Rep Kagen, Steve [WI-8]

Rep Kildee, Dale E. [MI-5]

Rep Larson, John B. [CT-1]

Rep Lee, Barbara [CA-9]

Rep Lynch, Stephen F. [MA-9]

Rep McCollum, Betty [MN-4]

Rep McDermott, Jim [WA-7]

Rep Miller, George [CA-7]

Rep Moran, James P. [VA-8]

Rep Murphy, Christopher S. [CT-5]

Rep Pastor, Ed [AZ-4]

Rep Quigley, Mike [IL-5]

Rep Sarbanes, John P. [MD-3]

Rep Schwartz, Allyson Y. [PA-13]

Rep Shea-Porter, Carol [NH-1]

Rep Sires, Albio [NJ-13]

Rep Tonko, Paul D. [NY-21]

Rep Waters, Maxine [CA-35]

FY 2011 Sustainability Appropriations

Background

U.S. Department of Transportation Livability Programs

The requested \$527 million for the Department of Transportation's Livable Communities Program has been a repeated target as the FY 2011 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development spending bills move through Congress. The Administration requested \$200 million in funding from FHWA for a competitive grant program, \$307 million from FTA to refocus existing programs to support livable and place-based investments, and \$20 million to establish an Office of Livable Communities within the Office of the Secretary.

Despite several attempts to strip the funding, the House approved their bill with the entire \$527 million intact. The legislation does include language to prevent DOT from receiving the FHWA funding until after Congress acts to authorize the program.

The prospects for livability funding in the Senate spending bill are slightly less clear. The bill does include \$200 million for the competitive grant program, but the funding would come from the General Treasury instead of the Highway Trust Fund, and resources would be split evenly between FTA and FHWA. The \$307 million to refocus the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) formula grants, Alternatives Analysis grants and Formula grants for State and Metropolitan planning is not included. Those programs are, however, funded at the FY 2010 level as part of the existing FTA budget. The Senate has chosen not to provide \$20 million for a new Office of Livability; instead including an additional \$3 million and 5 full time equivalent staff in the Office of the Under Secretary of Policy for livability programs.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Programs

The bill's funding level for HUD, overall, is \$520 million higher than the FY2010 enacted budget and \$1 billion higher than the Administration's request for FY2011.

HOPE VI/ Choice Neighborhoods Program

One area of possible conflict is between the House bill and the Senate bill is the funding for HOPE VI and Choice Neighborhoods. Created by the Administration in its FY2010 request, Choice Neighborhoods is an initiative intended to replace and expand the HOPE VI program. The House did not choose to fund the program for FY2010, citing a lack of authorization, and decided instead to fund HOPE VI. The Senate chose to fund Choice Neighborhoods and eliminate funding for HOPE VI. In conference, the enacted FY2010 funding level was set at \$200 million for HOPE VI and \$65 million for a pilot program for Choice Neighborhoods.

The funding requests for FY2011 echo FY2010 levels; the House requested \$200 million for HOPE VI and \$0 for Choice Neighborhoods, and the Senate requested \$200 million for Choice Neighborhoods and \$0 for HOPE VI. Choice Neighborhoods is currently unauthorized, but legislation (HR 5814) was approved by House Financial Services with authorization for the program.

Community Development Block Grant Program

The House passed the lowest CDBG funding level for FY2011 since FY2011, \$520 million lower than FY2010 enacted. In his FY2011 budget request, the President proposed a new competitive grant program within CDBG, the Catalytic Investment Grants, aimed at increasing economic development in targeted communities. He requested \$150 million for the program and neither the House nor the Senate chose to fund the program. The Sustainable Communities grants, created in 2010, did receive full funding at \$150 million from both the Senate and the House, matching the FY2010 level and the President's FY2011 request.

Section 108 Loan Guarantee

The section 108 loan guarantee could also be an area of disagreement between the House and the Senate. The program was funded at \$6 million in

the 2010 enacted budget, but the President decided not to request for it for FY2011. The Senate version of the bill maintains the FY2010 funding level for FY2011, but the House decided to increase its funding by \$4 million.

Brownfields Economic Development Initiative

In his FY2010 budget request, President Obama chose to discontinue funding for the BEDI, citing a duplicate of a similar funding stream at CDBG and duplicative of programs at EPA. The House also chose not to fund the program, but the Senate requested \$25 million, claiming it is not actually duplicative. In conference, the BEDI program received \$17.5 million.

Summary

Fiscal Year 2011 Funding Levels

<i>Program</i>	<i>FY 2010 Enacted</i>	<i>Administration Request</i>	<i>House Committee</i>	<i>Senate Committee</i>	<i>House passed</i>
<i>Department of Transportation</i>					
Highways	\$43.1 billion	\$42.8 billion	\$45.2 billion	\$41.9 billion	\$45.2 billion
<i>Livable Communities</i>	-	\$200 million	\$200 million	\$200 million	\$200 million
Transit	\$10.7 billion	\$10.8 billion	\$11.3 billion	\$10.8 billion	\$11.3 billion
<i>Capital Investment Grants</i>	\$1.99 billion	\$1.82 billion	\$2 billion	?	\$2 billion
<i>Formula & Bus Grants</i>	\$8.34 billion	\$8.63 billion	\$8.961 billion	Undetermined	\$8.961 billion
<i>Livable Communities</i>	-	\$307 million	\$307 million	\$0	\$307 million
Amtrak	\$1.6 billion	\$1.6 billion	\$1.8 billion	\$1.4 billion	\$1.8 billion
High Speed Rail	\$2.5 billion	\$1 billion	\$1.4 billion	\$1 billion	\$1.4 billion
TIGER Grants	\$600 million	\$0	\$400 million	\$800 million	\$400 million
Nation Infrastructure and Finance Fund	-	\$4 billion	\$0	\$0	\$0
DOT, Office of Livable Communities	-	\$20 million	\$20 million	\$0 (Extra funding for Office of Policy)	\$20 million
<i>Department of Housing and Urban Development</i>					
CDBG	\$4.45 billion	\$4.4 billion	\$4.4 billion	\$4 billion	\$3.99 billion

<i>Program</i>	<i>FY 2010 Enacted</i>	<i>Administration Request</i>	<i>House Committee</i>	<i>Senate Committee</i>	<i>House passed</i>
<i>Sustainable Communities Initiative</i>	<i>\$150 million</i>	<i>million</i>	<i>\$150 million</i>	<i>\$150 million</i>	<i>\$150 million</i>
<i>Rural Innovation Fund</i>	<i>\$25 million</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>		<i>\$25 million</i>
<i>Catalytic Investment Grants</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>\$150</i>	<i>\$0</i>		<i>\$0</i>
Energy Innovation Fund	\$50 million	\$0	\$0		
Hope VI	\$200 million	\$0	\$200 million	\$0	\$200 million
Choice Neighborhoods	\$65 million	\$250 million	\$0	\$250 million	\$0
HOME	\$1.8 billion	\$1.65 billion	\$1.825 billion	\$1.825 billion	\$1.825 billion
Section 108 Loan Guarantees	\$6 million	\$0	\$10 million	\$6 million	\$10 million
BEDI	\$17.5 million	\$0	\$17.5 million	\$0	\$17.5 million
Public Housing Capital Fund	\$2.5 billion	\$2.044 billion	\$2.5 billion	\$2.5 billion	\$2.5 billion
Public Housing Operating Fund	\$4.775 billion	\$4.829 billion	\$4.829 billion	\$4.8 billion	\$4.829 billion

Status

In late July, the House voted 251-167 to approve the Transportation and Housing and Urban Development fiscal year 2011 appropriations bills. Included in the bill is \$67.1 billion in discretionary funding and overall funding levels of \$79.4 billion for DOT and \$46.6 billion for HUD. The Senate version of the budget has been passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee and is currently waiting floor action.

House Roll Call Vote on the FY 2011 DOT-HUD Funding Bill

Yeas - 251

Ackerman	Castor (FL)	Doyle	Hinchey	Lee (CA)	Moran (VA)	Ruppersberge	Sutton
Altmire	Chandler	Driehaus	Hinojosa	Levin	Murphy (CT)	r	Tanner
Andrews	Childers	Edwards (MD)	Hirono	Lewis (GA)	Murphy,	Rush	Teague
Arcuri	Chu	Edwards (TX)	Holden	Lipinski	Patrick	Ryan (OH)	Thompson
Baca	Clarke	Ellison	Holt	LoBiondo	Murphy, Tim	Salazar	(CA)
Baird	Clay	Ellsworth	Honda	Loebsack	Nadler (NY)	Sánchez,	Thompson
Baldwin	Cleaver	Engel	Hoyer	Lofgren, Zoe	Napolitano	Linda	(MS)
Barrow	Clyburn	Eshoo	Inslee	Lowey	Neal (MA)	Sanchez,	Tierney
Bean	Cohen	Etheridge	Israel	Luján	Oberstar	Loretta	Titus
Becerra	Connolly (VA)	Farr	Jackson (IL)	Lynch	Obey	Sarbanes	Tonko
Berkley	Conyers	Fattah	Jackson Lee	Maffei	Olver	Schakowsky	Towns
Berman	Costa	Filner	(TX)	Maloney	Ortiz	Schauer	Tsongas
Berry	Costello	Foster	Johnson (GA)	Markey (CO)	Owens	Schiff	Van Hollen
Bishop (GA)	Courtney	Frank (MA)	Johnson, E. B.	Markey (MA)	Pallone	Schrader	Velázquez
Bishop (NY)	Critz	Fudge	Kanjorski	Matsui	Pascrell	Schwartz	Visclosky
Blumenauer	Crowley	Garamendi	Kaptur	McCarthy	Pastor (AZ)	Scott (GA)	Walz
Bocchieri	Cuellar	Gerlach	Kennedy	(NY)	Payne	Scott (VA)	Wasserman
Boren	Cummings	Gonzalez	Kildee	McCollum	Perlmutter	Serrano	Schultz
Boswell	Dahlkemper	Gordon (TN)	Kilroy	McDermott	Perriello	Sestak	Waters
Boucher	Davis (AL)	Grayson	King (NY)	McGovern	Peterson	Shea-Porter	Watt
Boyd	Davis (CA)	Green, Al	Kingston	McIntyre	Pingree (ME)	Sherman	Waxman
Brady (PA)	Davis (IL)	Green, Gene	Kirk	McMahon	Polis (CO)	Shuler	Weiner
Braley (IA)	Davis (TN)	Grijalva	Kirkpatrick	McNerney	Pomeroy	Sires	Welch
Bright	DeFazio	Gutierrez	(AZ)	Meek (FL)	Price (NC)	Skelton	Whitfield
Brown,	DeGette	Hall (NY)	Kissell	Meeks (NY)	Quigley	Slaughter	Wilson (OH)
Corrine	Delahunt	Halvorson	Klein (FL)	Melancon	Rahall	Smith (NJ)	Wittman
Butterfield	DeLauro	Hare	Kosmas	Michaud	Rangel	Smith (WA)	Wolf
Cao	Deutch	Harman	Kratovil	Miller (NC)	Reyes	Snyder	Woolsey
Capps	Dicks	Hastings (FL)	Kucinich	Miller, George	Richardson	Space	Wu
Capuano	Dingell	Heinrich	Langevin	Mitchell	Rodriguez	Speier	Yarmuth
Cardoza	Djou	Higgins	Larsen (WA)	Mollohan	Ross	Spratt	Young (AK)
Carnahan	Doggett	Hill	Larson (CT)	Moore (KS)	Rothman (NJ)	Stark	
Carson (IN)	Donnelly (IN)	Himes	LaTourette	Moore (WI)	Roybal-Allard	Stupak	

Nays - 167

Aderholt	Brown (SC)	Culberson	Goodlatte	Kind	McCotter	Platts	Sessions
Adler (NJ)	Brown-Waite,	Davis (KY)	Granger	King (IA)	McHenry	Poe (TX)	Shimkus
Alexander	Ginny	Dent	Graves (GA)	Kline (MN)	McKeon	Posey	Shuster
Austria	Buchanan	Diaz-Balart, L.	Graves (MO)	Lamborn	McMorris	Price (GA)	Simpson
Bachmann	Burgess	Diaz-Balart, M.	Guthrie	Lance	Rodgers	Putnam	Smith (NE)
Bachus	Burton (IN)	Dreier	Hall (TX)	Latham	Mica	Rehberg	Smith (TX)
Barrett (SC)	Buyer	Duncan	Harper	Latta	Miller (FL)	Reichert	Stearns
Bartlett	Calvert	Ehlers	Hastings (WA)	Lee (NY)	Miller (MI)	Roe (TN)	Sullivan
Barton (TX)	Camp	Emerson	Heller	Lewis (CA)	Miller, Gary	Rogers (AL)	Taylor
Biggert	Campbell	Fallin	Hensarling	Linder	Minnick	Rogers (KY)	Terry
Bilbray	Cantor	Flake	Herger	Lucas	Murphy (NY)	Rogers (MI)	Thompson
Bilirakis	Capito	Fleming	Herseth	Luetkemeyer	Myrick	Rohrabacher	(PA)
Bishop (UT)	Carter	Forbes	Sandlin	Lummis	Neugebauer	Rooney	Thornberry
Blackburn	Cassidy	Fortenberry	Hodes	Lungren,	Nunes	Ros-Lehtinen	Tiberi
Blunt	Castle	Foxx	Hunter	Daniel E.	Nye	Roskam	Turner
Boehner	Chaffetz	Franks (AZ)	Inglis	Mack	Olson	Royce	Upton
Bonner	Coble	Frelinghuysen	Issa	Manzullo	Paul	Ryan (WI)	Walden
Bono Mack	Coffman (CO)	Gallegly	Jenkins	Marchant	Paulsen	Scalise	Westmoreland
Boozman	Cole	Garrett (NJ)	Johnson (IL)	Marshall	Pence	Schmidt	Wilson (SC)
Boustany	Conaway	Giffords	Johnson, Sam	Matheson	Peters	Schock	
Brady (TX)	Cooper	Gingrey (GA)	Jones	McCaul	Petri	Sensenbrenne	
Broun (GA)	Crenshaw	Gohmert	Jordan (OH)	McClintock	Pitts	r	

Not voting - 14

Akin	Griffith	Kagen	McCarthy	Moran (KS)	Shadegg	Wamp	Young (FL)
Carney	Hoekstra	Kilpatrick (MI)	(CA)	Radanovich	Tiahrt	Watson	

Talking Points

The Livable Communities Act (LCA) will help local communities and regions plan for and create better and more affordable places to live, work, and raise families. The bill provides resources for communities to coordinate transportation, housing, environmental and land use planning in a comprehensive framework and implement innovative projects to create jobs, a stronger economy, and more livable communities.

Key Reasons to Support

Encourages integrated planning for housing, transportation and economic development.

Currently, federal planning requirements separate planning for transportation and housing. LCA allows communities to develop a plan that brings together local visions for linking investments in housing, transportation, economic development, and environmental quality. Integrated planning is more cost effective and efficient and leads to better decisions on investments in infrastructure and community development.

Eliminates federal barriers.

Communities have long been forced to deal with often-conflicting and separate federal requirements and funding streams. LCA establishes an Interagency Council on Sustainable Communities. The new council builds on the current partnership among HUD, DOT and EPA. The council would streamline federal programs and eliminate barriers to promoting sustainable communities by eliminating duplicative processes, coordinating federal investment, and improving services to communities.

Supports locally-driven approaches to achieving sustainability.

Communities and regions across the nation are focusing on sustainability. LCA provides critically needed resources for both regional planning and project implementation through competitive regional planning grants and “challenge grants” that help fund projects contained in the plans. HUD and its partner agencies would also provide capacity building and technical assistance. These plans would be driven by local needs and local visions for the future.

LCA would help communities assess housing, infrastructure, environmental, transportation, economic and public health needs. Plans would be designed to address these needs. Examples of eligible activities could include transportation infrastructure, zoning or code revisions, land use, maintenance of water infrastructure, land conservation, main street revitalization, preservation of affordable housing, brownfield redevelopment, and implementation of economic development plans.

Ensures all communities and regions are competitive for funding.

Both the planning and challenge grant programs contain provisions for guaranteeing funding to three categories of eligible communities based on population, including small regions (under 200,000); mid-sized regions (200,000 – 500,000); and, large metros (over 500,000). The FY 2010 HUD appropriations bill that funded the first round of sustainability planning grants required that 25% of funding be spent in rural areas.

Encourages local and regional partnerships.

Grant recipients must demonstrate the involvement of multiple stakeholders, which can include a consortium of local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, rural planning organizations, regional councils, state agencies, and other key local institutions and organizations. These partnerships help

ensure that plans are accountable, linked to implementation tools, and reflect a diversity of local voices and perspectives.

Builds more competitive, more resilient regional economies.

LCA investments directly support regional job creation in both the short-term and the long-term. Comprehensive regional planning also better leverages other federal, state, local and private sector investments. Regions with good planning are better positioned to develop in ways that are more economically competitive and more resilient to future challenges.

Builds capacity for better local and regional planning.

There is a scarcity of support for improving planning. LCA would provide critically needed capacity building and technical assistance. This support would help communities learn from best practices around the country. Smaller communities and those hit hardest by the economic downturn would particularly benefit.

Provides Congressional direction for new sustainability program.

In last year's HUD appropriations bill, funding was provided for the first round of HUD's sustainable communities initiative. LCA provides an opportunity for Congress to more directly shape the program's structure and implementation. LCA also provides stability for the program with a four-year authorization.

Arguments Against ... and Why they are Wrong

It is too expensive.

The planning coordination in LCA allows communities to save money on duplicative planning processes and realize fiscal benefits from better capital

investment decisions that link housing, transportation and economic development. Congress has already begun funding planning grants in the FY 2010 budget, so LCA would not add “new” spending but rather give greater direction to the program. This is an authorization bill; future spending decisions would be addressed in the appropriations process.

“Livability” and “Sustainability” are too vague to be effective.

HUD, DOT and EPA have developed six principles of livable communities that will guide program implementation. LCA further defines key aspects of sustainable development but does so in the context of empowering local communities to use the planning process to determine the local vision for sustainability.

It doesn’t help rural areas or small towns.

LCA creates a separate category of funding aimed at smaller communities and regions. The FY 2010 appropriations bill required a 25% set aside for small towns and rural areas. The capacity building and technical assistance efforts would directly benefit smaller communities that often lack resources for extensive regional planning.

It isn’t an appropriate federal role.

The federal government is already heavily involved in transportation, housing, and environmental planning and infrastructure spending with an array of requirements and programs that directly influence local decisions. LCA improves coordination, eliminates duplicative or conflicting federal standards, and preserves local decision-making.

Contacting Your Elected Officials

To call your Senators' and Representative's Washington, D.C., office, call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for the office of Representative/Senator XX.

You can also find additional contact information for your members of Congress, including their district office, by visiting their websites:

Senate websites:

www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

House of Representative websites:

www.house.gov/house/memberwww.shtml

You can also find all your elected officials on APA's Action Network website: <http://capwiz.com/amplan/>

Scheduling a Visit with Your Elected Officials

1. **Find the name of the office scheduler.** This is the only person in the office who will be able to take your request for a meeting and this is whom you ask for by name when you call. When you send your letter of request, you should put it to the attention of this person to ensure that it gets to the appropriate desk for review. Call the office and ask for the name of the District Scheduler, and confirm the spelling.
2. Be prepared to **fax or email information to the scheduler** for review. This correspondence should provide a brief background of why you want to meet with the official and when. It is important to **mention that you are a constituent**, and while it is okay and usually helpful to state the issue you'd like to discuss, you should not be too opinionated on that issue in your letter. A sample email is included on the next page.
3. Keep in mind that officials have very busy schedules, so it is recommended that you ask to meet with them for only a 15-30 minute

time slot.

4. It is recommended that before calling the scheduler you first **fax or email your request** for a meeting so they have time to look at the official's schedule and availability.
5. Next, **call the scheduler**, introduce yourself, mention that you are a constituent of Representative X, and let him/her know that you are following up on a request to meet with X in the district office. Let the scheduler know precisely when you faxed your request so he/she is more easily able to locate it.
6. Sometimes requests are lost in the chaos that typifies elected officials' scheduling offices. If the scheduler says that he/she did not receive your fax or cannot find it, don't panic. Calmly suggest that you can re-fax the same document or can send it via e-mail if that is most convenient.
7. If the scheduler tells you that the office needs more time to assess your representative's availability on that day, let him/her know that you will follow up by calling back in another few days. Keep on them! Schedulers have many, many requests coming through the office, so in order to ensure that you are not forgotten or your request hidden under a stack of other papers, **follow up and call again.**
8. Finally, **thank the scheduler** for their time and effort, and say you appreciate this opportunity to meet with your official.

Sample Scheduling Request Email

August/September XX, 2010

The Honorable XX

Attention: Scheduler

Dear Senator/ Representative XX,

As a constituent and member of the _____ chapter of the American Planning Association, I am writing to request an appointment with [Senator/ Representative XX] in [name of town where nearest district office is] on [insert date and times available] to discuss the Livable Communities Act (s. 1619, HR 4690) and DOT and HUD sustainability appropriations for FY2011.

Please contact me to let me know when the [Senator/Representative] or the relevant staffer might be available to meet. I will follow up with you in the next week by phone. Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Contact information]

Tips for Successful Legislative Meetings

..Arrive on time. If meeting with a staff member, be sure you have the correct contact name. Do not underestimate the power of the staff person in helping to shape the policymaker's opinions and positions on issues or a particular piece of legislation.

..Bring one or two colleagues with you. Prior to the meeting, you should agree on what points will be made and which one each of you will discuss.

..Try to deliver your message in three minutes. Be sure to introduce yourself and your colleagues and explain why you are concerned about the issue and why you have expertise regarding the issue. Be concise, polite and professional.

..Be prepared to answer questions. When asked what you want, clearly explain.

..Be a resource for the policy-maker and his/her staff. Offer your time and assistance if he/she wants to talk about your areas of interest and expertise in the future.

..Provide material to support your position. Leave behind a business card and a one-page fact sheet summarizing your position.

..Follow up with a thank you letter. Be sure to include any additional information you may have promised or that may be relevant to the issue. Contact govtaffairs@planning.org for consultation and help.

Post-Meeting Checklist

Follow the steps outlined below when your meeting is complete. This checklist will help ensure that there is successful follow-up from your meeting. If you have any questions or need assistance, contact APA's government affairs staff at govtaffairs@planning.org .

- Complete & return your legislative meeting report form to APA staff. Send APA any digital photos from your visit for use on the APA website.
- Send thank you notes.
- Follow-up with any information or other items promised at the meeting. Use APA staff to assist you with any follow-up. Offer APA's DC staff as a resource in providing more detailed information or research.
- Keep track of the issue and make sure that you monitor your legislator's actions. If they follow through on a promised action, be sure to thank them. If not, encourage them to do so.
- Continue to build a relationship with your Congressional delegation by inviting them to attend or speak at Chapter events, taking them to visit local projects, and keeping them informed about planning activities in the state.
- Work with the APA's policy staff to monitor legislative activity and continue advocacy on behalf of our federal legislative agenda. Stay active in grassroots advocacy activities by signing up to receive action alerts at <http://capwiz.com/amplan/>

Sample Thank-You Email

August/September XX, 2010

The Honorable XX

Attention: Staffer

Dear Senator/ Representative XX, or staffer name

Thank you for meeting with me in [name of town where meeting took place] on [insert date and time of meeting] to discuss the Livable Communities Act (S. 1619/ H.R. 4690) and DOT-HUD sustainability appropriations for FY2011.

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss these issues with you, and hope you will view this legislation as an opportunity to support good planning and communities of lasting value. Please contact APA at govtaffairs@planning.org if you would like any additional information or with questions.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Contact information]

Frequently Asked Questions

What's the role of legislative liaisons and chapter presidents?

Chapter leaders can help by spreading the word about scheduling August District meetings, helping recruit participants and meeting 'leaders' meetings, working with APA staff to provide resources and assistance to participants and helping to coordinate follow up, as well as participating in their own meetings.

What's the role of participants?

Any member can participate by requesting and scheduling a meeting (or working with designated district leader on scheduling), downloading meeting resources and prepare, following up with the Congressional office and following up with APA.

How do meetings get conducted?

The District leader should confirm meetings and promote participation. Participants should download APA Talking Points and the Leave Behind (at the end of this tool kit) and prepare local information. It is important that participants rehearse in advance, and designate meeting roles. In the meeting, link legislation to local issues and tell the "local story" of planning in your community. Most importantly, make the ask for support.

How do I encourage participation?

Start by recruiting leaders for as many districts in your state as possible, or focusing on targeted districts. Also, use resources such as social networking sites, emails lists, your legislative committee or Board or other incentive to generate interest.

Legislative Meeting Report Form

Please return this form to APA Government Affairs staff following your meeting. Complete a separate form for each meeting you conducted. Forms may also be returned via fax to APA Government Affairs at 202.872.0643 or via email to govtaffairs@planning.org.

Name: _____

Other APA Meeting Participants: _____

Congressional Office: _____

Congressional Staff Present at Meeting:

Please describe the reaction of the Senator/Representative/staff person to APA's position on the Livable Communities Act?

Please describe the reaction of the Senator/Representative/staff person to APA's position on FY2011 DOT and HUD sustainability appropriations?

Please note any other issues that were discussed?

Did the office make commitments regarding our requests?

-over-

Meeting Report Form
Page 2

Did the office request any additional information or further follow-up (please describe)?

Is any contact or follow-up required with the office by APA staff?

Additional Comments / Other Issues Discussed (including any commitments made):

APA Resources

APA provides a number of helpful resources to members to assist in their advocacy efforts, including:

The policy area of the APA website has the latest news, APA policy positions and information for planners.

<http://www.planning.org/policy/>

Policy Blog: Jason Jordan blogs about up-to-the-minute legislative events.

<http://blogs.planning.org/policy/>

Policy Guides: Available online, APA's policy guides outline official association positions.

<http://www.planning.org/policy/guides/>

Legislative Priorities: Each year APA adopts a slate of legislative priorities and a platform for policies to advance planning.

<http://www.planning.org/policy/priorities/>

Online Community: APA has an online network for Legislative Liaisons to connect and receive updates.

<http://apa-legliaisons.ning.com/>

Action Alerts: Use this online tool to receive alerts about important happenings on the Hill, send messages to your elected officials and find information on votes.

<http://capwiz.com/amplan/>



American Planning Association
Making Great Communities Happen

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS



Register Now for APA's Fall Policy Events!

Join APA in Washington, D.C., September 26-28, for the [2010 Federal Policy & Program Briefing and Planners' Day on Capitol Hill](#).

Hear from influential lawmakers and administration officials and catch up on key planning issues like federal planning grants, sustainability, FY11 funding, surface transportation legislation, climate change, housing, and economic development. Most sessions are eligible for Certification Maintenance credit and will fulfill the law requirement.

Inside Information on Current Legislation

Major planning legislation – the Livable Communities Act, funding for the HUD-DOT-EPA sustainable communities partnership, transportation authorization, and sustainability legislation are at critical junctures on Capitol Hill. All have significant implications for local and regional planning. Find out the latest developments and how the legislative debate is likely to unfold.

Insights on Getting Federal Planning Grants

APA is conducting a [special Monday workshop](#) on new federal grant programs that provide resources for planning, sustainability, and infrastructure investment. Get the latest information on regional sustainability grants, community challenge grants, the future of TIGER grants, and the upcoming Choice Neighborhoods grants. Find out what's available and the best approaches for successful proposals.

Leading Voices from Washington

Sustainability is a priority for the Obama Administration and new funding is flowing into planning programs from Capitol Hill. On Sunday, attendees will hear from some of the leading architects of this [new approach to federal policy](#) in the White House and Congress.

National Design Professionals Symposium: Policies for Cities in Transition

The conference program for Monday will highlight APA's ongoing partnership with other design professionals. Members of the American Institute of Architects and the American Society of Landscape Architects will join APA for a day-long series of sessions focused on cities in transition from rapid growth or economic hardship. Sessions will look at the [policies needed to build communities of lasting value](#) in places dealing with major economic and social change. Monday also will include a special reception and open house at APA's new Washington office.

September 26-28, 2010

Washington, D.C.

The Omni Shoreham Hotel

Check out the complete agendas for both the [Federal Policy & Program Briefing](#) and [Planners' Day on Capitol Hill](#).

Planners' Day on Capitol Hill

Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.) and Rep. Ed Perlmutter (D-Colo.) have been invited to accept APA's Legislator of the Year award at a [special lunch event on Capitol Hill](#) on Tuesday. Let APA schedule meetings with your elected representatives and open valuable opportunities to talk about important planning aspects of upcoming legislation and ways they can help.

CM Credit Opportunities

Earn credit for conference sessions and satisfy the **CM** law requirement.

Registration and Housing

Choose the [registration option](#) that suits your needs, including one-day registration for Sunday, Monday, or Tuesday only. **APA members get a discount**, and prices are lowest if you register by September 2.

[Discounted hotel rates](#) are available at the Omni Shoreham Hotel for conference participants who reserve by August 25.

A composite image showing solar panels in the foreground and a city skyline with skyscrapers in the background.

PLANNING & SUSTAINABILITY

A New Federal Focus on Planning for Sustainability

Effectively responding to today's economic, energy, social and environmental challenges requires a new approach to helping communities plan for and create more livable and affordable places to live and work. Sustainable development is the key to addressing a diverse array of problems from a lack of transportation options and increasing greenhouse gas emissions to the protection of open space and the revitalization of neighborhoods and creation of affordable housing.



American Planning Association
Making Great Communities Happen

Interagency Partnership

Last year HUD, DOT and EPA came together to form an interagency partnership to foster sustainability through better coordination of federal housing, transportation and environmental programs. The partnership has worked to define core principles of livability. The initiative is examining opportunities to integrate existing planning requirements and focus research and technical assistance programs on joint sustainability priorities. The HUD FY 2010 budget set aside \$150 million within the Community Development Block Grant program for the Sustainable Communities Initiative, and the FY2011 budget calls for an additional \$150 million. The initiative will provide planning grants and metropolitan challenge grants.

Planning and Building Communities of Lasting Value

Sen. Chris Dodd and Rep. Ed Perlmutter have introduced the Livable Communities Act (S. 1619 and HR. 4690). This legislation would provide a multi-year authorization for the sustainability initiative. The bill authorizes funds for regional planning to make communities more livable and seeks to eliminate barriers to federal coordination in promoting sustainable development.

Key provisions of the Livable Communities Act (S. 1619 and HR. 4690) include...

- Incentives for regional comprehensive planning. The bill authorizes \$400 million over four years to help regions develop plans that link transportation, housing, community and economic development, and environmental needs.

- Funding to implement sustainable development projects. Through challenge grants, communities could seek funding to implement key projects contained in regional plans. This new capital fund source would focus on affordable housing, transit oriented development, transit, bike-ped projects, brownfield and infill redevelopment. The bill calls for \$3.75 billion over three years.

-Assistance for regional livability initiatives. The legislation ensures that federal agencies are a supportive partner in regional planning by establishing critical research and technical assistance capacities. A new Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities would become resources for best practices and technical assistance.

-An interagency council on sustainable communities. This group would bring together a variety of agencies to coordinate federal policy, research, training, and funding. This council would also identify barriers to sustainable development and promote the linkage of transportation, housing, environmental, and energy policies.

The Federal Role

The federal government already requires and supports a variety of regional and local plans. However, these programs and plans are typically uncoordinated. This initiative would allow regions to take a more thoughtful and integrated approach to how transportation, housing and community development programs are planned.

Encouraging sustainability planning and supporting projects that implement these new plans provides multiple benefits: economic value to communities; expanded choices for citizens; and increased public engagement in crafting a vision for the future of their neighborhoods and regions. In the past, federal program requirements fragmented regional visioning and separated transportation and housing policies. Only a change in federal policy can support a truly comprehensive approach to regional planning.

A more integrated federal approach that focuses on sustainability will leverage current levels of federal investment in local communities many times over.

What Congress Must Do

A federal focus on promoting local and regional planning for sustainability and livability is vital.

Congress should...

-Enact a multi-year authorization for the Sustainable Communities Initiative - S. 1619 and HR 4690, the Livable Communities Act; and

-Support provisions in the FY2011 Transportation-Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill that provide \$150 million for the proposed sustainability initiative.

Contact Jason Jordan, Director of Policy and Government Affairs, at govtaffairs@planning.org.