

AGENDA



Thursday, August 19, 2010

**Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION**
Item No. 8

Subject: Approve a resolution authorizing the City of Austin's participation in a Central Texas consortium applying for a Regional Sustainability Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for development of an analytical network of tools and models to be used in planning for a more sustainable region; support the development of regional activity centers; and improve regional collaboration.

Fiscal Note: A fiscal note is not required.

For More Information: Kevin Johns, Director/EGRSO, 974-7802

The local grant application is being made by the Central Texas Sustainability Consortium, led by the Capital Area Council of Governments (which will serve as lead applicant for administrative purposes), the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Envision Central Texas, and the cities of Austin, Round Rock and San Marcos. Other members include: University of Texas at Austin Center for Sustainable Development, Capital Metro, Austin Community College, Texas State University, HousingWorks Austin, and the Lone Star Rail District. Other Consortium members may also be added. The group is currently planning to seek the maximum grant award amount of \$5,000,000.

If awarded the grant, the funds will be used locally to:

- Develop an analytical network of tools and models to help the region better plan and manage sustainable growth, and better measure the effect of its development and infrastructure investments;
- Support the successful development of regional Activity Centers (as defined in the CAMPO 2035 long-range transportation plan) and sustainable neighborhoods through demonstration projects such as site-specific plans, market studies, code and ordinance enhancements, and other pre-development initiatives; and
- Improve regional collaboration to identify and help close gaps in existing local plans in ways that will help Central Texas achieve desired region-wide sustainability outcomes in areas such as housing, energy and water use, economic growth, education, and social services in which key decisions are and need to be made at the local level.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-117, approved December 16, 2009), funded the Sustainable Communities Initiative to improve regional planning efforts that integrate housing and transportation decisions, and increase the capacity to improve land use and zoning. The Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program will support metropolitan and multi-jurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of economic competitiveness and revitalization; social equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity; energy use and climate change; and public health and environmental impact. There will be \$93,000,000 in grant funds made available for this part of the Initiative.