

5/9/2005

## **Land Use and Development Workgroup Draft Recommendations**

### **1) Coordinated Planning of Infrastructure**

Create a three-year Great Lakes Sustainable Development Demonstration coordinated by a basin wide partnership such as the National Association of Regional Councils, Nature Conservancy, Great Lakes Commission and the Urban Land Institute to competitively engage representative urban MPOs (See appendix basin map) charged to innovate and integrate regional land use plans with Regional Transportation Plans that advance sustainable development principles leading to reduced land consumption, improved water resource manage, natural areas protection, livable communities and more effective use of urban infrastructure investments including transportation. The Demonstration will provide guidelines and incentives fostering sustainable local planning with regional consistency. The demonstration would be supported with existing federal and state program funds such as US DOT TEA-21 funds, EPA Clean Water Act funds, HUD CDBG funds and DOC EDA funds as a proportional multi-year (50%?) match to TEA-21 Regional Transportation Planning funds to support technical assistance, research evaluation and performance monitoring for integrated, sustainable land use planning.

### **2) Invest in Urban Areas**

The federal government will support the investment by Great Lakes governors and mayors in their urban cores by providing \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year to the EPA's Brownfield Redevelopment Program (note the President's budget includes \$110 or 120 M nationally) for investment in clean up and redevelopment of Brownfield sites, blighted properties, and historic structures around the Great Lakes, with priority given to those sites adjoining the Great Lakes waterways. Sustainable design and redevelopment of the sites will be encouraged. This effort will serve to direct future growth toward our urban environments where we can capitalize on existing infrastructure commitments and enable people to enjoy, value and protect the adjoining natural resources.

Incentives to encourage redevelopment and clean-up of environmentally contaminated property will include clearer guidelines for avoidance of liability (e.g. aligning federal and state law so liability is causation-related; consistent application of federal law protecting buyers of known contaminated property). Economic incentives like tax increment financing or real estate tax assessment freezes will encourage redevelopment of waterfront Brownfield sites with clean up of conditions in adjacent waters included as expenses eligible for TIF recovery. Open space in lake and riverfront developments will be encouraged by providing liability protections to qualified conservation organizations that hold conservation easements or similar interests. Qualified private consultants will assist with cleanup signoff to facilitate Brownfield redevelopment process.

### 3) State & Local Governments Sponsored Green Design

The Great Lakes governors and participating mayors will follow the state of Michigan and City of Chicago's lead by requiring that all new buildings and major renovations over 50,000 square feet for state or municipal agencies, universities, community colleges and schools be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified. This effort is designed to ensure that all new or significantly renovated state and municipal facilities (including buildings and landscaped campuses) are energy efficient in operation and maintenance and are designed to have minimal impact on the environment.

Furthermore, these governmental entities will use their existing governance process to encourage sustainable design commitments in the private sector as evidenced by LEED certification of commercial construction, neighborhood design, and facility operations. (e.g. incentives could include zoning density bonuses or certification) [www.usgbs.org](http://www.usgbs.org)

### 4) Community Design

Revise all federal, state and local policies that result in public investments, including tax policy, real estate policy, public infrastructure and services, economic development and environmental protection, to invest only in projects and communities that encourage and practice sustainable community design, specifically:

- a) compact, multi-dimensional, multi-use and integrated land use patterns
- b) infrastructure to encourage walking, bicycling, and transit that is interconnected and provides access to employment, education, recreation, entertainment, shopping, and services
- c) appropriately scaled and economically healthy “town/city centers” that contain local businesses at the neighborhood level and a range of commercial, residential, cultural, civic, and recreational uses in town centers and,
- d) use of natural features and energy flows, including solar energy, natural drainage and vegetation protected and integrated as part of the functioning infrastructure to conserve resources and minimize waste
- e) unique and attractive historic, cultural and social public gathering places that reflect the local culture
- f) variety of housing choices to serve a wide range of economic levels and age groups
- g) ample supply of specialized open space in the form of squares, greens and parks in neighborhoods and town/city centers and in the form of agricultural greenbelts or wildlife corridors that clearly defines the edge of a city, town or metropolitan area.

### 5) Protect Natural Areas, Rural Communities and Landscapes by implementing Sustainable Growth strategies specific to each region.

**Implementation:** Provide rural communities and counties with financial and technical support to adopt and manage sustainable forms of development which:

- Encourage clustered development patterns centered on existing communities

- Preserve natural landscapes and functions as economic as well as environmental assets.
- Coordinate land use development among adjacent counties and communities.

**Strategies:**

- Promote uniform state land use legislation to guide development with the Great Lakes Coastal Zone while still respecting each community's identity.
- Promote regional planning commissions to provide land use planning assistance and coordination among rural communities along the Great Lakes Coastal Zone.
- Provide sustaining grants for land use capacity building at the local and regional level.
- Develop a uniform and consistent set of land use development indicators upon which to assess growth patterns and provide local officials with reliable data upon which to base land use decisions.
- Promote development consistent with the community's ability to accommodate such growth considering institutional capacity, infrastructure, and landscape values and conditions.