

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

### Summary – FEMA Long-Term Community Recovery and EPA Smart Growth

In January 2009, FEMA approved an interagency agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to supplement Long-Term Community Recovery (LTCR) activities and provide smart growth assistance to communities in Iowa. Five communities were selected to receive technical assistance on how smart growth approaches could be incorporated into their recovery. Together, FEMA and EPA were able to bring nationally-recognized smart growth and planning & design professionals to provide targeted technical assistance to flood-impacted communities. Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO) completed the partnership by providing local coordination and organizing community site visits. Community-specific technical assistance activities are listed below.

#### Cedar Falls/Waterloo

- **Scope:** Provide technical support to examine subdivision and zoning ordinances to incorporate smart growth principles. Specific emphasis on street connectivity, design standards, mixed used zoning and comprehensive planning for large developments.
- **Deliverable:** EPA consultant report based on site visits, analysis of the existing code and development policies, public participation and stakeholder feedback on a vision for the North Cedar neighborhood, and a “next steps” memo for achieving a more sustainable redevelopment. The site visit was held September 30 – October 1, 2009.

#### Cedar Rapids

- **Scope:** Identify existing or potential barriers for implementing smart growth approaches in existing policies and codes. Smart growth principles will be used to make the community more resilient and mitigate potential future flooding.
- **Deliverable:** EPA consultant report analyzing Cedar Rapids’ existing codes and ordinances, an analysis of how green infrastructure approaches can be used to achieve better water quality outcomes, and a set of “next steps” options for creating a local regulatory environment for sustainable growth and redevelopment. Consultants will also deliver a retrospective memo on incorporating smart growth approaches into Long Term Community Recovery based on the Cedar Falls and Cedar Rapids work. The site visit was September 9 – 10, 2009.

#### Coralville

- **Scope:** Develop preliminary concepts through a community design process and analysis of community codes and regulations to provide guidance on streetscape standards, mixed-used zoning and subdivision regulations.
- **Deliverable:** EPA consultant report with suggested policy amendments and guidance based on an analysis of the existing codes and ordinances and from stakeholders and results from a design workshop. The site visit was November 4 – 5, 2009.

#### Iowa City

- **Scope:** Develop a set of development policy options, transportation policy options, and the beginnings of a vision for development in Iowa City’s Riverfront Crossings District. These options and drawings outlining the vision will be based on an analysis of current city ordinances and a market overview assessing the demand for housing and mixed-use development and how student housing can be balanced with other types of housing focusing in the District.
- **Deliverable:** EPA consultant report that includes the market overview, key drawings and sketches that shows the vision of the district, and a set of development and transportation policy options that Iowa City could adopt to achieve the vision. The site visit was November 11-13, 2009.

#### New Hartford

- **Scope:** Assist with the application of smart growth approaches to support a storm water management system that can help to deal with future rain events. By introducing green infrastructure concepts during a one- and one-half day workshop, the community identified strategies to address storm water and flooding challenges.
- **Deliverable:** EPA report summarizing smart growth and green infrastructure strategies that could be adopted by New Hartford. The site visit was July 16 – 17, 2009.

### Smart Growth Assistance through the US EPA Smart Growth Program

- This technical assistance, provided through a team of national experts and EPA staff, delivers public participation processes, an analysis of development policies, and a set of implementation options that communities could adopt to achieve development goals.
- [http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/iowa\\_techasst.htm](http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/iowa_techasst.htm) for additional information.

### FEMA Long-Term Community Recovery

- This technical assistance, also known as ESF-14, helps communities identify opportunities, create partnerships and optimized resources in a post-disaster environment.

### Collaboration

- FEMA and EPA have partnered through the ESF-14 Long-Term Community Recovery program since 2007 while working in Greensburg, Kansas on 1699-DR-KS.
- The 2009 Iowa Smart Growth Assistance project serves as a model for a pending memorandum of understanding between FEMA and EPA for continued partnering on smart growth and LTCR program activities.
- Mitigation is supported by communities incorporating smart growth principals. For example, through public processes, citizens make informed decisions about where to build and how to address open/green space. White Papers, Lessons Learned Memos and professional sketches help communities see specific steps to be more sensitive to the natural environment and more resilient to economic downturns and natural disasters.

