Agenda Item #4G

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

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January 19, 2011

TO: Members of the MAG Regional Council

FROM: Amy St. Peter, Human Services Manager

SUBJECT: SUN CORRIDOR CONSORTIUM UPDATE

In August 2010, MAG submitted an application on behalf of the Sun Corridor Consortium for the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. In September 2010, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced the list of funding awards, which did not include the Sun Corridor Consortium. In November 2010, HUD provided feedback on the Consortium's application. In January 2011, the MAG Management Committee received the feedback from HUD. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update on the feedback and plans to move forward with the activities proposed in the Sun Corridor Consortium's application.

The Sun Corridor Consortium comprises the Maricopa Association of Governments, the Pima Association of Governments (PAG), the Central Arizona Association of Governments (CAAG), and 117 additional partners representing the public and private sectors, as well as nonprofit agencies. The partners contributed $21 million in leverage to support six initiatives to support the development of a regional plan for sustainability. The initiatives included a Cluster Economic Development Study, a Connected Centers Framework Study, a Native American Communities Transit Study, a Regional Housing Plan, an Arizona Health Survey, and a Canal Path Integration Study. The proposed projects and partnerships represent a significant commitment to the sustainability of the region.

Many regions throughout the country expressed a similar commitment to sustainability and submitted applications for the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. HUD received 300 applications and deemed 225 applications eligible. The 225 applications requested $550 million. With only $98 million available, this was an extremely competitive program. The Sun Corridor Consortium's application was considered eligible for review. Out of a possible 102 points, the Consortium's application received a score of 55.5 points. This did not meet the threshold of 75 points to receive the preferred sustainability status, nor the threshold of 85 points to receive funding.

Overall, HUD noted the application was a good start on a potentially strong application. They encouraged ongoing inclusive dialogue to enhance the partnerships and projects needed to be successful in the future. One of the application's strongest areas was the description of the regional sustainability plan proposed to be developed with this grant. HUD staff also praised the number of partners in the Consortium, as well as the leverage they contributed. HUD advised that more specificity in the goals, additional emphasis on marginalized populations, and greater expertise in sustainability would serve the Consortium well.

On January 19, 2011, MAG will convene local stakeholders to review the feedback from HUD and to plan how to address the initiatives proposed in the application. If you have any questions regarding this item, please contact me at the MAG office at (602) 254-6300.

Notes from the Debriefing with the
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development about the
Sun Corridor Consortium Sustainable Communities Application
November 30, 2010

Attendance

Zuleika Morales, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Peter Russo, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Dennis Smith, Maricopa Association of Governments
Amy St. Peter, Maricopa Association of Governments
Andy Gunning, Pima Association of Governments
Cherie Campbell, Pima Association of Governments

Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program Highlights

- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) received 300 applications for this program. They determined 225 applications were eligible to apply. With $98 million available in funding, the applications represented $550 million in requests.
- In total, 1,000 applications were received for this program, the Challenge grant program, and TIGGER II.
- A review team of 10 federal agencies, public policy experts, foundations, and community partners reviewed the grants and gave scores of up to 102 points.
- Of the 225 eligible applications, 68 applications qualified to move on to the next round with scores of 75 or higher. These 68 applications received the preferred sustainability status.
- Of the 68 applications moving to the next round, 45 applications were awarded grants with scores of 85 or higher. No application scored a 95 or higher. Partial funding was given to spread the funding to more regions.

Sun Corridor Consortium Application Summary

- The Sun Corridor application scored a 55.5 and did not qualify for funding or the preferred sustainability status.
    - Capacity: six out of 10 points
    - Need: four out of 10 points
    - Soundness of Approach: 32 out of 55 points
    - Leverage: three out of five points
    - Results/Evaluation: 10.5 out of 20 points
- Overall, reviewers noted this was a great start to a possibly strong application. They encouraged ongoing, inclusive regional dialogue. Reviewers indicated the Consortium

needs more time to develop the plan and adequate partnerships to be successful in the future.

- HUD's recommendation: Improve scores for Rating Factors One and Three. Also, group the 120 Consortium members into three groups of equality, economic development, and the environment.
- Comments from the reviewers were provided for each of the five rating factors as follows:

Rating Factor One: Capacity

- Score: six out of possible 10 points
- Reviewers believed the application lacked depth and sufficient expertise in sustainable development.
- Reviewers noted an overemphasis on economic development.
- The application failed to concretely indicate how it would accomplish outcomes.
- They noted good collaborations but indicated more expertise was needed.
- The collaborations were superficial.
- The number of organizations was impressive but lacked expertise in working with marginalized populations.
- The application indicated an overreliance on consultants. It was confusing to the reviewers why so many consultants were needed when the expertise could be present among the Consortium members.
- The application did not address the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) requirements.
- HUD's recommendation: Address overreliance on consultants and lack of expertise by indicating the Consortium will learn from consultants and be able to replicate their work in the future. Also, state why awards have been won in the past and how this demonstrates capacity in new areas like sustainability.

Rating Factor Two: Need

- Score: four out of a possible 10 points
    - three out of seven points for quantitative
    - one out of three points for narrative
- The application did not link the need or problems with solutions and strategies proposed in the grant.
- The narrative was too vague and needed a more in-depth explanation.
- The economic development strategy was good.
- Health and marginalized populations are not addressed.
- Housing is affordable.
- The data does not demonstrate need.
- HUD's recommendation: Provide a better link between the need and the solutions.

Rating Factor Three: Soundness of Approach

- Score: 32 out of 55 possible points (above average)
    - Eight out of 10 for general description of the plan
    - Six out of 17 points for the process to develop the plan
    - 7 out of 15 points for governance
- The partner roles were not clear.
- Internal structure and outside engagement was lacking.
- The vision was not described fully and was too vague.
- There were few specifics. This section needed greater clarity and to be more defined.
- There was no link between the sustainability strategies and the strategies.
- Explanation is needed for the rhetoric.
- The Consortium represents a diverse mixture of underrepresented groups.
- Marginalized populations are not represented.
- The application failed to say when and how activities would be accomplished.
- The detailed schedule is good.
- It is unclear how the community engagement would impact decision making.
- The intention is to engage in cross cutting knowledge but the peer exchange needs more detail.
- HUD's recommendation: Improve the link between the activities and the outcomes.

Rating Factor Four: Leverage

- Score: Three out of five points available
    - Three out of three points for the amount leveraged
    - Zero out of two points available for leveraging with funds from the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency

Rating Factor Five: Results and Evaluation

- Score: 10.5 out of 20 possible points
- The application does not address air or water quality.
- The livability principles are not incorporated.
- The application does address Native American Communities and homelessness but low-income populations are left out of the analysis.
- The application talks about community engagement but does not indicate how the plan will achieve this.
- There are no concrete steps identified for the additional indicators.
- The health indicators are good.