

# **Building Sustainable Communities for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

## **Breakout Sessions**

### **Top Three Responses to Discussion Questions**

#### **BCD – A**

**What strategies should be pursued at the regional level to address traffic congestion, affordability of housing, and air and water pollution?**

- Regional leadership education –workshops, regional working groups, regular (quarterly or monthly meetings). Alternative vs. conventional methods. Share success stories.
- Review of ordinances and regulations. Until it is cheaper to develop in a smarter way, it won't happen. Need regulatory/financial incentives to make smart, quality growth and redevelopment worthwhile. Provide more information to developers on brownfield development and green building.
- Link land use planning to transportation planning.

**What can you do to raise awareness of the shared nature of these problems and the need for shared strategies?**

- Comprehensive plans mandate that affordable housing, traffic, and pollution are addressed within the plan. There is no way to enforce that comprehensive plan strategies are actually enforced. Need a mechanism for implementation.
- Receive emails about local planning meetings from organizations like CCL and Sierra Club. Increases awareness. Diversity of communication tools – email, web-based interactions. What about non-tech communities? TV, community bulletin board, etc.
- Conferences, media coverage of planning processes, shared local area plans (outside of jurisdictions).

#### **BCD – B**

**What strategies should be pursued at the regional level to address traffic congestion, affordability of housing, and air and water pollution?**

- Need comprehensive mass transit plan w/ secondary and tertiary routes, including light rail connectivity.
- Stop spending transportation money on sprawl generating roads and focus on mass transit and bike paths.
- Establish enforceable growth boundary, especially in Dorchester and Berkeley Counties.

**What can you do to raise awareness of the shared nature of these problems and the need for shared strategies?**

- Provide training for citizen decision-makers (i.e. members of planning commissions)
- Show fiscal analysis of why sustainable development is better than current development practices
- Include the costs / benefits of projects, including health care costs environmental externalities

#### **Coastal – A**

**What coastal-specific information or training assistance would you need to help your community implement quality growth strategies?**

- Council member education.
- Economic analysis for growth strategy. Bang for your buck? Economic information that is relevant to counties/municipalities.
- Look at zoning ordinances to identify changes needed to allow LID.
- Training on ordinance development and PUD's, form-based codes.(tie)

**If your community has been successful in implementing quality growth strategies, what were the ingredients used (e.g., partners, strategies, ordinance changes, etc.)?**

- Bond approach for conservation program (easements) Administered by NGO (Trust for Public Land). Public input on plan to prioritize the areas of concern.
- Having a development coordinator – lead person that applicant can talk to about the process and potential projects...or combine all the levels into one department (streamlining the process).
- County resource protection commission brought together all sides/parts of county government to the table (transportation, NGO's Land use planners, utility).

## **Coastal - B**

### **What are the key strategies to making your community more resilient natural hazards?**

- Networks with communities outside area of danger (sister community) have plan in place (e.g., hospitals may partner; need to plan ahead).
- Ensure that you're considering natural buffers, natural, floodplains.
- Land uses—golf course on floodplain but not community.

### **What are the obstacles to implementing them?**

- Emergency preparedness is large and complex task; competing priorities; small municipalities don't have time (one solution is intergovernmental cooperation).
- No one person or organization in charge—need coordination. Planning and development sometimes becomes a catch-all
- Lack of funding; expense of solutions.
- Inadequacy of public dialog alternatives (e.g. talk about alternatives to building road for evacuation).(tie)

## **Inland – A**

### **What do you see as the biggest “driver” or incentive to encourage quality growth and development practices in your community?**

- Economic feasibility.
- Representing green benefits through tax structure – tax benefits to homeowners for retrofits, etc.
- Education of the benefits of quality growth to the general public, i.e. health benefits, etc.

### **What specific information or training assistance would you need to help your community implement quality growth strategies?**

- Need cost-benefit analyses – what is our return on investing in smart growth, including long-term societal and environmental benefits?
- More diverse representation on planning boards – need to educate more people on planning and engage them in the planning process.
- Need specific training for developers on the financial benefits and marketing assessments of smart growth.

## **Inland – B**

### **What do you see as the biggest “driver” or incentive to encourage quality growth and development practices in your community?**

- Need to have planning and zoning regulations that allow/require quality and sustainable development. Planning departments are behind on this.
- Better job of educating our developers and consumers.
- Leave our communities' environment in better condition than we found it for enjoyment of future generations.
- Stormwater permits that are not specific, but cause impaired water quality and lead to improved communities – key to local enforcement; no jurisdiction federally. (tie)

### **What specific information or training assistance would you need to help your community implement quality growth strategies?**

- Cost benefit analysis of BMPs so the citizens can make more informed decisions (maps).
- Elect the political-will to enact legislation that provides incentives. Create political infrastructure.
- Getting the right people to the training and assistance (decision-makers, professionals).