



## **TODAY'S CALL TOPIC** **EPA's Sustainable Communities Building Blocks Program**

### **Speakers:**



**Kevin Nelson**  
*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*



**Richard Morrison**  
*Mount Pleasant, Michigan*

### **Next Call:**

Thursday, February 24 – Review of House FY11  
 Continuing Resolution and President's FY12 Budget  
 Proposal

**February 17, 2011**

**For more information: [www.climatecommunities.us](http://www.climatecommunities.us)**

### **Upcoming Events**

**MARCH 4-5, 2011**

**Local Clean Energy  
 Thought-Leaders Retreat  
 Washington, DC**

***RSVP today; Space limited***

**JUNE 15-17, 2011**

**Local Clean Energy  
 Leadership Summit  
 Washington, DC**

**[www.localenergysummit.org](http://www.localenergysummit.org)**



## **Upcoming Events**

### **Local Clean Energy Thought Leaders Retreat Washington, DC March 4-5, 2011**

- Convening of 30-40 local government officials (elected, city/county managers and sustainability directors) and select private sectors leaders.
- Develop new clean energy blueprint for the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress that empowers cities and counties to create thousands of new green jobs through federal investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy and local sustainability.
- Blueprint developed by local leaders for 111<sup>th</sup> Congress led to \$3.2 billion for the EECBG program, the creation of the Climate Showcase Communities program and inclusion of local government resources in major climate bills.
- Meet with key allies in the Obama Administration and Congress to share local government priorities for 112<sup>th</sup> Congress.
- Space is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- To register, visit [www.climatecommunities.us](http://www.climatecommunities.us) and fill out online registration form.



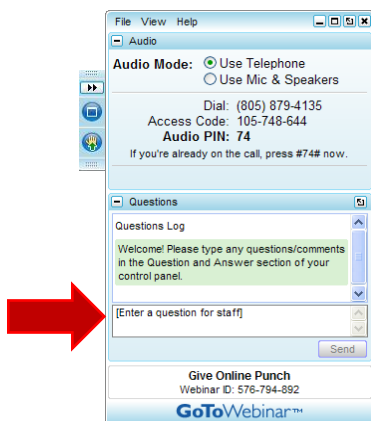
## Upcoming Events

### Local Government Clean Energy Summit Washington, DC June 15-17, 2011

- Major energy efficiency and renewable energy conference for local government sector.
- Demonstrate success of EECBG and other federal investments in local clean energy projects
- Share best practices.
- Urge Congress and the Obama Administration to make further clean energy investments in local governments.
- For more information, visit [www.localenergysummit.org](http://www.localenergysummit.org).



## Asking questions



At any point during the presentation, you can type your question into the question text box and click send. All questions will be read aloud and answered at the end of the presentations, as long as time permits.

# EPA Sustainable Communities Building Blocks Program

February 17, 2011

Kevin Nelson, AICP  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Sustainable Communities



## Partnership for Sustainable Communities

Mission: To meet the President's challenge for our agencies to work together to encourage and fully assist rural, suburban, and urban areas to build sustainable communities, and to make sustainable communities the leading style of development in the United States.

*The Partnership is focused on ensuring that federal investments, policies, and actions do not subsidize sprawl and, instead, support development in more efficient and sustainable locations.*



**Partnership for Sustainable Communities**

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# EPA Sustainable Communities Technical Assistance

- Smart Growth Implementation Assistance
  - program in its 5<sup>th</sup> year
  - over 30 communities assisted
  - year long and cutting edge in scope
- Sustainable Communities Building Blocks
  - Expanding the Toolbox: assistance on EPA generated tools
  - Ready to Go Tools: tools developed outside of EPA
- Greening America's Capitals

## Sustainable Communities Building Blocks

- Pilot Effort February 2011 – June 2011
- 32 total communities served
  - 12 *Expanding the Toolbox* communities
    - Communities currently identified
  - 20 *Ready To Go* communities
    - Communities identified through a solicitation of letters of interest
    - Letter of interest due February 23

## Letter of Interest for Sustainable Communities Building Blocks

- What the Assistance Includes
- How to Apply
- Tools Offered
- Delivery of Technical Assistance
- Next Steps...Expansion of the Program

### What the Assistance Includes

- Public engagement in the assistance being offered
- Direct consultation with significant decision-makers whose work relates to smart growth barrier
- Short memo describing next steps

## How to Apply: 2 page letter

- Identify the one tool for assistance
- Describe smart growth relate problem(s)
- Relevance of the problem to selected tool
- Short description of the expected results of the assistance
- Affirmation that community can provide information
- List of primary contacts

## Tools Offered

- Walking Audits
- Parking Audits
- Sustainable Land Use Code Audits
- Smart Growth Zoning Codes for Small Cities and Rural Areas
- Commuter Benefits
- Using Smart Growth to Produce Fiscal and Economic Health
- Complete Streets
- Climate Action Planning

## Delivery of Assistance

- 2 pre-site visit calls to discuss parameters of the assistance and to review relevant materials
- One-day on-site workshop with relevant stakeholders
- 2-page next steps memo focused on implementation

## Next Steps...Expansion of the Program

- Building Blocks Program (including Expanding the Toolbox and Ready to Go) will be brought to scale later in the year
- Goal to reach up to 100 communities per year, each of the next 5 years depending on funding
- Additional tools offered
- Communities that submit letters now will be eligible later

Thank you.

<http://epa.gov/smartgrowth/buildingblocks.htm>

Kevin Nelson, AICP  
US EPA, Office of Sustainable Communities

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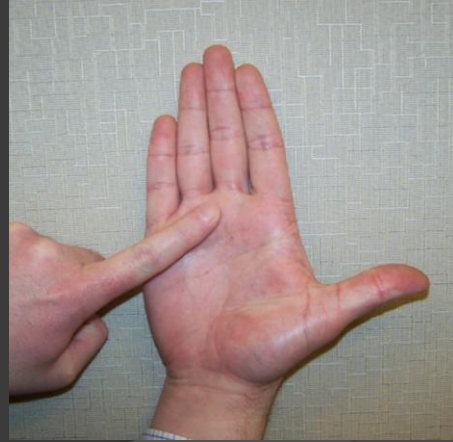
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## SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS STARTING WITH WALKING AUDITS

Rich Morrison  
Director of Community Services and Economic Development  
City of Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

## Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

- University town – Central Michigan University
- 25,000 people (~50% full-time residents)
- 5.8 square miles
- Middle of Michigan – 2.5 hours north of Detroit



## Roundabout

### Before:

- Signals
- Traffic delays

### After:

- Free flow traffic
- No delays
- Good pedestrian crossings
- Downtown landmark



## Bellows St. Reconstruction/ Back-in Angle Parking

### Before:

- 3 – 4 lane street
- No on-street parking
- No on-street bike facilities
- Standard size sidewalk

### After:

- 2 lane street – easier pedestrian crossings
- Back-in angle parking
- On-street bike lanes
- Wider sidewalk



## Main Street Downtown to Campus Connector

### Before:

- Standard sidewalks
- Minimal lighting
- Snow an impediment to pedestrians

### After:

- Extra wide sidewalks
- LED lighting
- Snow removal
- Designated bus route



## Michigan Street Reconstruction

### Before:

- “Standard” City street
- High speeds
- Wide
- No bike facilities



### After:

- Narrow traffic lanes – slows speed, reduces ped. crossing distance
- On-street bike lanes
- Bike use appears to have increased

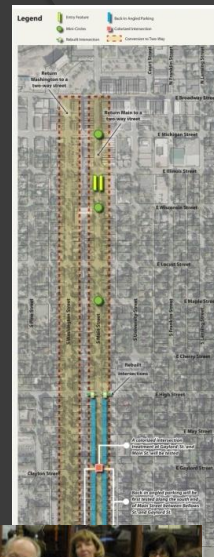
## Central Michigan University Partnership

- Finding common interest
- Consultant assistance
- Increased collaboration on projects



## How?

1. Plan ahead. Identify a geographic area to concentrate on.
2. Make sure key partners/ stakeholders participate in the walking audit.
3. Identify 1 or 2 areas of concern and work with partners/stakeholders to identify solutions.
4. Vet ideas to larger partner/stakeholder groups.
5. Acceptance from elected officials/responsible boards and commissions.
6. Execute well – get outside help.



Community Services  
and Economic Development

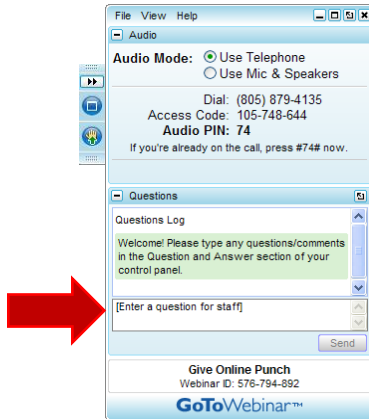
[rmorrison@mt-pleasant.org](mailto:rmorrison@mt-pleasant.org)



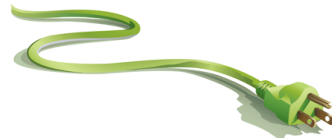
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# Questions?