

## Smart Growth and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Metropolitan Washington Region

### OVERVIEW

**Project Background:** In 2010 EPA awarded COG a Smart Growth Implementation Assistance Program (SGIA) to plan and develop local government guidelines for adapting to risks from climate change. As part of implementing *Region Forward* and the *National Capital Region Climate Change Report*, MWCOG had requested assistance to identify potential consequences of climate change in the region, consider long-term climate risks in infrastructure planning and policies, and develop strategies that increase the regional capacity to cope with climate changes.

EPA's Smart Growth Implementation Assistance program is coordinated with the HUD-DOT-EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The program is managed by EPA Office of Policy, Office of Sustainable Communities.

#### **Project Partners: EPA and SRA (consultant)**

**EPA:** EPA provides assistance through a contractor team to support communities interested in implementing smart growth policies, create regional examples of smart growth, and identify common barriers and opportunities for smart growth development. EPA believes smart growth strategies could help communities adapt to already observable and inevitable further climate changes. Besides helping communities prepare for an uncertain future, these strategies can also help them deal with natural disasters, economic changes like rising fuel prices, and other challenges that could arise regardless of climate change.<sup>1</sup>

**SRA International:** A team led by Kate Marshall will complete the tasks in this scope of work. SRA, headquartered in Fairfax, VA, has over 7,000 employees worldwide and provides the expert knowledge, technical tools and solutions to governments, agencies and companies. SRA provides technical support to the Environmental Protection Agency and local communities on land revitalization, climate change, smart growth, and economic development projects.

**Project Description and Scope of Work:** The support is expected to help MWCOG create a policy guidebook for climate adaptation. It is also expected to help EPA identify a methodology and best practices applicable to other metropolitan areas.

**Guidebook:** The Contractor will develop a guidebook of no more than 60 pages that includes strategies based on the selected sectors, as well as a discussion of how these strategies are interrelated across sectors. Each strategy will include mechanisms to implement it, benefits of implementing it (related to climate change, quality of life, economic development, fiscal savings, energy efficiency, environmental protection, and other benefits), costs/trade-offs/risks related to implementing it, funding sources to help with implementation if applicable, and examples of where this strategy has been used in the US if any exist. This guidebook will serve as the draft regional adaptation plan recommended in the 2010-2012 Regional Climate and Energy Action Workplan of the MWCOG Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee.

PROJECT TIMELINE	
Steps	Timeframe
Technical Assistance Grant Award announced	October 2010
Technical Expert Panel provides input and resources on regional climate data and studies	December 2010

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/climatechange.htm>

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Workshop to review NOAA tools for risk and vulnerability assessment and projects underway in the region	March 3, 2011
COG staff collect risk and vulnerability assessment data	Spring 2011
Consultants develop memos on methodology, best practices in US and 10-15 strategies per sector	July/August 2011
Sector-based stakeholder meetings provide input on development of adaptation strategies for each sector	September 2011
Development of draft regional plan and guidebook. Opportunity for stakeholder feedback provided	October 2011
Final regional adaptation plan and guidelines	January 2012