

Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities

**New Partners for Smart Growth
Conference**

Baltimore, MD

January 29, 2015



Roadmap for Today's Workshop

- Overview
- A Discussion of Benefits and Analytics of Using These Tools
- Review of the Walkability Audit Tool
- Break
- Other Transportation Tools
- Facilitated Discussion of Impacts of Building Blocks Assistance
- Testimony from Community Assistance
- Review of Case Studies
- Wrap Up/Next Steps

Program Background



Office of Sustainable Communities: What Does it Do and Why?

- **Change the conversation** about development patterns;
- **Change the rules** by removing barriers to smart growth; and
- **Help the willing**, by choosing to work with communities that seek out EPA assistance.

All in support of the economy, equitable development, public health and the environment.

One way to accomplish this is through technical assistance.

Program Background



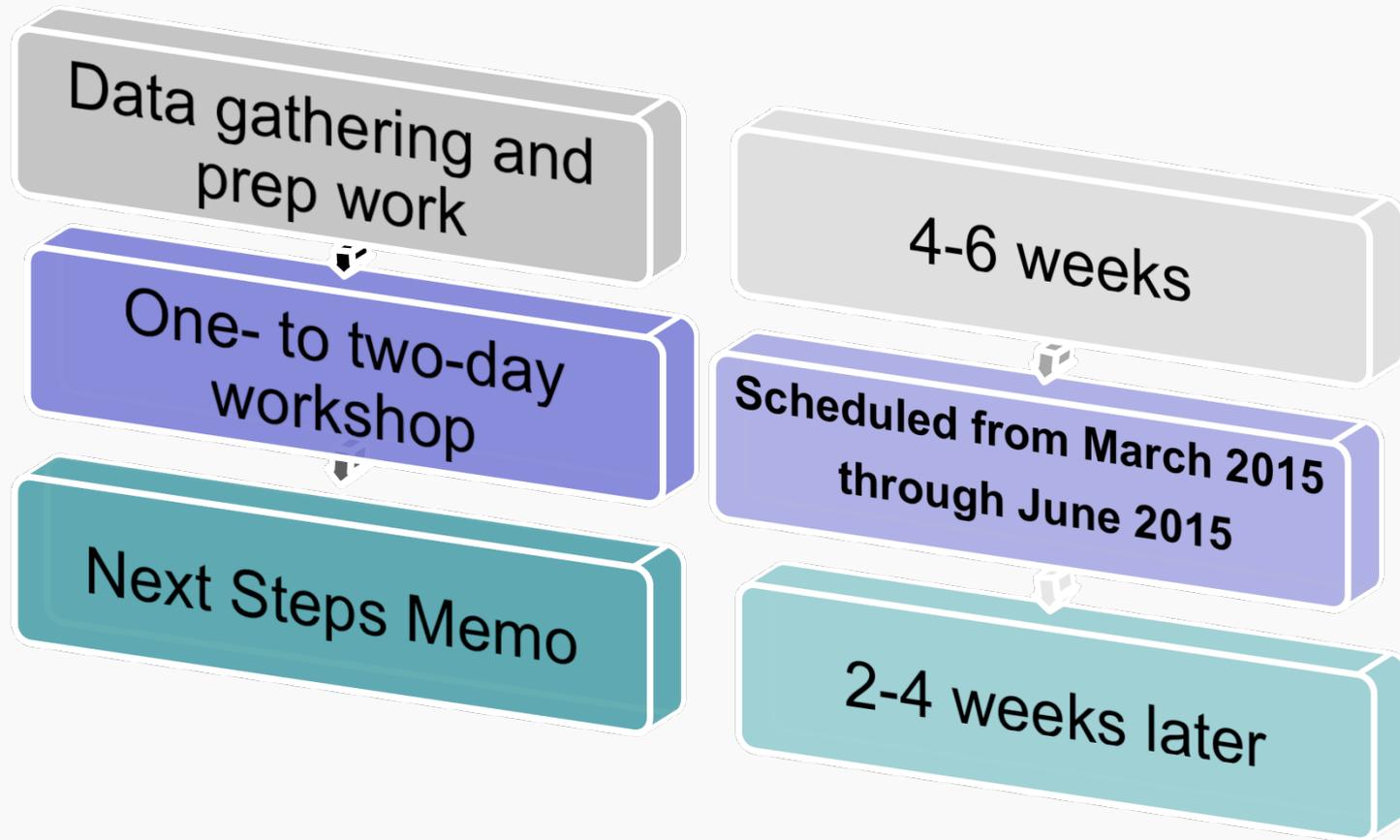
The Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Program is often the first *building block* for a community trying to change its development patterns.



Program Background



Building Blocks Program



Program Background



Typical Building Blocks Workshop Agenda

Day 1

- Meet with local stakeholders
- Tour the community
- Hold an open house to introduce key concepts and issues
- Debrief with stakeholders

Day 2

- Review key concepts with a targeted audience
- Review technical policy solutions
- Review core concepts with elected officials during lunch
- Discuss next steps for policy and implementation

Program Background



Widespread Demand for Assistance

- High demand from communities everywhere for help with similar challenges – examples, parking, complete streets, water quality.

Round 1: 354 applications received; 30 communities assisted

Round 2: 103 applications received; 56 communities assisted

Round 3: 121 applications received; 43 communities assisted

Round 4: 118 applications received; 20 communities selected

Tool Development



Tools Are Developed Through an Evolving Process

- EPA-formulated Tools
- Tools based on existing efforts
- Tools developed and provided by external experts

Tool Development



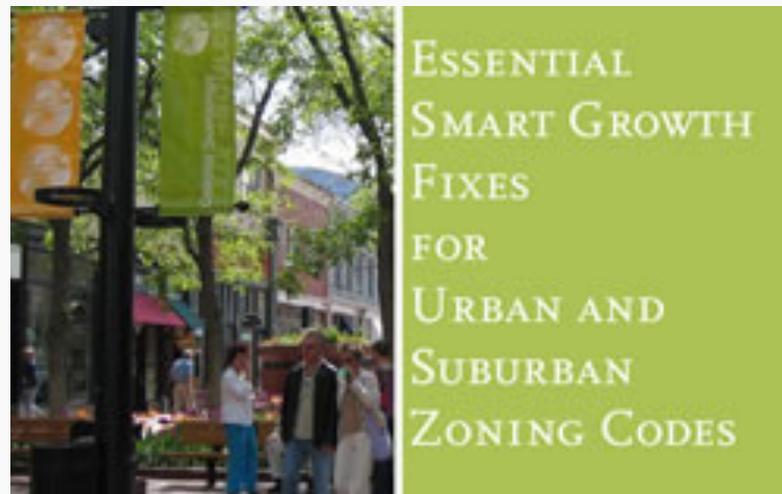
- Building Blocks Program and Regional Collaboration



Tool Development



- Preferred Growth Areas:
 - Moving from a concept, to a report, to a tool



Tool Delivery



- Workshops are scheduled with communities and focus on key stakeholders
- Schedule is organized to learn from each workshop and make adjustments
- Tool is refined through the process
- Communities are engaged through development of next steps discussed during workshops

Taking Program to Scale



FORT&RRA



Coordination
with EPA



Taking Program to Scale



Building Blocks Training Academy

- “Train the Trainer” event in Washington, DC
December 9-11, 2014
- Focus on 4 transportation related tools:
 - Walkability Audits
 - Parking Audits
 - Green Streets Strategies
 - Preferred Growth Areas
- 35 staff from metropolitan planning organizations,
and 10 staff from federal agencies

Tool Contents

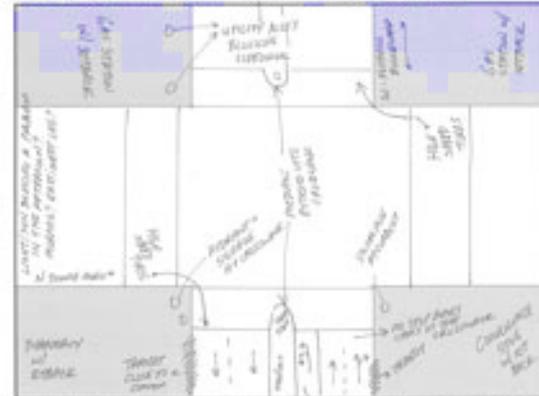


Walkability Workbook



Intersection Sketch

LOCATION: N. THIRTY ST. W. FAIRVIEW BLVD.
TIMING: DATE: 10/10/12 TIME: 11:00 AM
Use the intersection sketch to write notes and capture existing conditions at a particular location. Through words or images, document what you see. In addition, note what you would like to see.



Comfort: Does the built environment make you feel that you belong here? → HIGH VISIBILITY, WIDE
LANE WIDTH, OPEN + CLEAR VIEW → LOW RISE VEHICLES +
GOOD LIGHT SIGNAGE; GOOD MAINTENANCE → FEEL COMFORT TO
WALK THE CORNER → FEEL SAFE TO
WALK
Safety: Where do you feel safe or unsafe? What made you feel that way?
WALKING SPEED FEELS A TIGHT TO WALKING W/ OTHERS
AT THE CORNER - CARLS COME AROUND THE CORNER + DON'T STOP
AND STAYED IN / OUTSIDE OF PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY BEHIND DOWN CORNER
Behaviors: Please describe pedestrian, bicyclist and driver behaviors. Are people behaving with courtesy?
PEDESTRIAN: LEFT TURN + HAND WAS ACCURATE SIGNAL AND WERE COURTEOUS +
WALKING SPEED FEELS A TIGHT TO WALKING W/ OTHERS
Overall Impressions: Did you like being in this environment?
HIGHER LEVEL OF VISIBILITY, PEDESTRIAN PATH, BICYCLE PATH, COURTEOUS, GOOD TRAFFIC
SIGNALS, GOOD MAINTENANCE

Tool Contents



Parking Audit



What Is Success?



- Short Term (2014) Outcomes/Outputs
- Long Term (5 year horizon) Outcomes/Outputs
- For example
 - X number of organizations reached
 - X number of communities that use tools as a result of “Third Party Providers”
 - X of tools used by Y number of providers
 - Address core office purpose:
 - conversation changed/rules changed/communities served

Measuring Results



- Develop a **tracking mechanism**, so that each tool delivery, or engagement with an outside organization is documented in a written 'report-out/summary'
- **Qualitative versus quantitative:** communities seek hard numbers and data, not just case studies: what does this look like?
- Building into work assignment, but then what afterwards. Can **documentation be tied to other metrics?**



Contact Information

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