



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-0050

Program Policy Guidance OSHC-2012-01
Date: February 15, 2012
Subject: Preferred Sustainability Status
Status: Current
Applicability: • FY2010 and 2011 Regional Planning and Community Challenge Grantees; • Applicants to the FY2010 and 2011 Regional Planning Grant Program that achieved Preferred Sustainability Status; and • Applicants to the FY2011 Community Challenge Grant Program that achieved Preferred Sustainability Status
Related Guidance: Replaces PPG 2011-03
Comments:

Dear Sustainable Communities Regional or Community Challenge Grantee or Preferred Sustainability Status Holder:

HUD's FY 2012 General Section serves as the basis for all competitive grant activities of the agency. In it, HUD included the Preferred Sustainability Status (PSS) program. Applicants that reach a certain qualifying score under the Regional Planning Grant Program or the Community Challenge Grant Program will receive PSS designation. PSS designation provides your entity access to bonus points for selected other HUD grant programs, technical assistance, and other capacity building opportunities that will strengthen future efforts to apply to the program. It can also provide applicants within your geography access to bonus points for select HUD grant programs.

For specified grant programs during FY 2012, applicants submitting requests for projects within your geographies will have the opportunity to qualify for up to two bonus points as a consequence of you holding this status. The relevant geography is as follows:

- For Regional Planning Grantees: within the regional geography of your grant;
- For Community Challenge grantees: within your project geography;
- For Regional Planning Grant Applicants with Preferred Sustainability Status, within the regional geography of your grant application;
- For Community Challenge Grant Applicants with Preferred Sustainability Status: within the project geography of your grant application.

The entity that can certify applicants for PSS bonus points (i.e., "Designated Point of Contact") is the lead applicant to OSHC's grant program.

The process to certify an application for the PSS bonus points is simple:

- 1) **If an applicant from your project geography** is applying for a grant from a program that is offering the PSS bonus points, they will contact your organization to seek certification that their project meets three basic criteria:
 - a) *The applicant is engaged in activities, that in consultation with the designated Point of Contact of the HUD designated Preferred Sustainability Status Community furthers the purposes of the Regional Planning Grant Program or the Challenge Grant Program; and*
 - b) *The applicant's proposed activities either directly reflect the Livability Principles cited and contained in HUD's General Section to the FY2011 NOFAs or will result in the delivery of services that are consistent with the goals of the Livability Principles; and*
 - c) *The applicant has committed to maintain an on-going relationship with a HUD Preferred Sustainability Status Community for the purposes of being part of the planning and implementation processes in the designated area.*
- 2) **If you determine that a proposed project meets these criteria, fill in a copy of HUD Form 2995.** This form is available on the HUD website.
- 3) **The applicant is responsible for including the form in its application.** OSHC staff will review the certification and alert the program office in question whether an entity qualifies for the bonus points. While the certification is the driving document in this process, HUD retains the right to do additional diligence to confirm that the points are merited, and to determine whether to award the bonus points.
- 4) **If your organization wants to apply** for a program where bonus points are offered, you fill out the form and then contact the HUD Regional Administrator to have the form certified. You then submit the document with your application and the process would continue as previously stated.

What This Means for You

HUD created PSS to incentivize coordinated planning and development actions within regions where measurable progress has begun to take shape. Your role in certifying qualifying projects for PSS bonus point virtually guarantees that numerous entities will approach you during the balance of this fiscal year seeking endorsement of their projects. We recognize that this will mean some staff time commitments for you in processing these forms, but we believe the potential benefit is significant.

HUD has tried to make the process as streamlined as possible. We stand ready to support you as you undertake this responsibility, and we trust that you will exercise prudent judgment in determining whether a project has the potential to advance sustainability in the region and whether you will be able to maintain synergy between your project and the applicant's should they receive HUD funding.

Suggested Checklist for Evaluating Applications Seeking PSS Bonus Points

We recommend that entities considering requests for certification for PSS bonus points review at least a detailed summary of an application, with at least a summary of the proposed project and the location of the project, along with any relevant information about transportation choices to the location and/or nearby housing choices. You may want to request a short description from the applicant explaining why the proposed project aligns with the Livability Principles and your planning effort.

At a minimum, you should consider the following questions when deciding whether to certify an application for PSS bonus points:

- 1) Does the proposed project align with the Livability Principles? For your reference, they can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/partnership/#livabilityprinciples>. What aspects of the proposed project, if any, do *not* align with the Livability Principles or my planning effort?
- 2) Does the proposed project align with and further my planning effort?
- 3) Is the applicant committed to maintaining an on-going relationship with my project?

FY 2011 General Section Language

b. Preferred Sustainable Communities Status Bonus Points. In FY2012, HUD will award 2 bonus points to applicants that are working in the following ways with communities that have received Preferred Sustainability Status under the HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program and/or the HUD funded Challenge Grant Program for FY2010 and FY2011 (hereafter referred to as the Preferred Sustainability Status Communities). When HUD announces the FY2011 awards for these programs, HUD's website will be updated accordingly with information on the additional Preferred Sustainability Status Communities.

The applicant is engaged in activities, that in consultation with the designated Point of Contact of the HUD designated Preferred Sustainability Status Community furthers the purposes of the Regional Planning Grant Program or the Challenge Grant Program; and

- 1) The applicant's proposed activities either directly reflect the Livability Principles cited and contained in HUD's General Section to the FY2012 NOFAs or will result in the delivery of services that are consistent with the goals of the Livability Principles; and
- 2) The applicant has committed to maintain an on-going relationship with a HUD Preferred Sustainability Status Community for the purposes of being part of the planning and implementation processes in the designated area.

To be eligible to receive bonus points, an applicant is required to ensure there is a clear nexus between the activities to be performed and items (1) and (2) above, as well as obtain a certification from the Designated Point of Contact for the designated Preferred Sustainability Status Community using form HUD2995 which verifies that the applicant has met the above criteria. The form will certify the nexus between the proposed activities of the applicant and the Livability Principles as they are being advanced in the Preferred Sustainability Status Community. It must be signed and dated anytime from the date of the publication of the funding opportunity on www.Grants.gov to the deadline date of the funding opportunity. Any certifications signed before or after those dates will not be acceptable. If the applicant is from the agency that holds Point of Contact status in a particular Preferred Sustainability Status Community, the form HUD2995 must be certified by the appropriate HUD Regional Administrator in consultation with field staff.

Applicants are advised to carefully review the program NOFA for which they intend to apply to determine the availability of Preferred Sustainable Status Communities bonus points. Applicants should note that the form HUD2995, Certification of Consistency with Sustainable Communities Planning and Implementation form can be found in the Instructions Download portion of the application at Grants.gov. To view the listing of Preferred Sustainable Status Communities Points of Contact and to determine if your program will be operating within a Preferred Sustainable Status Community area, go to http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/grants/nofa11/psscontacts. At that site you will find a link to a map and listing of preferred status areas and contacts.

Current List of Eligible Programs (as of January 11, 2012)

HUD anticipates making the PSS bonus points available in the following program NOFAs:

- Section 4 Capacity Building (FYs 11 & 12)
- Rural Innovation Program (FY 11)
- SHOP (FY 11 & 12) FHIP (FY 12)
- Lead-Based Hazard Control and reduction (FY 12)
- Healthy Homes Production grants (FY 12)
- Assisted Living Conversion program (FY 12)
- Housing Counseling Program (FY 12)
- Tenant Resource Network Program (FY 12)
- Public Housing Capital Fund Education and Community Facilities (FY 11)
- Choice Neighborhoods (FY 12)
- HOPE VI (FY 11)
- HOPE VI Main St. Program (FY 11)
- Section 202 (FY 12)
- Section 811 (FY 12)

Please note that HUD may revise this list at any time. Applicants are advised to carefully review the program NOFA for which they intend to apply to determine the availability of Preferred Sustainable Status Communities bonus points.

To view the listing of Preferred Sustainable Status Communities Points of Contact and to determine if your program will be operating within a Preferred Sustainable Status Community area, go to http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/grants/nofa11/psscontacts. At that site you will find a link to a map and listing of preferred status areas and contacts.