

Getting to Sustainable Communities

Talking Points

Rocky Mtn. Urban Leadership Symposium

Four Seasons Hotel-1111 14th Street- Denver

November 9, 2010

2:30 pm

Thank you. Good afternoon.

I began months ago working with Tammi and her staff, thinking through the symposium and I want to acknowledge Tammi, the Partnership Board and the staff for their dedicated work to bring today into fruition. It takes a great visionary organization to broaden the perspective and invite other states, federal partners and in the western region. So join me and let's give them a hand.

I'm pleased to join Kate Mattie from the Federal Transit Administration and Regional Administrator Jim Martin of EPA to share with you our vision of Sustainable Communities.

I am going to talk about how the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is playing a role, directly, as one of the three partners of this new Federal partnership with EPA and DOT.

You may be asking yourself why is that new that federal agencies be working together. Truthfully, it takes strong leadership at the top of the organization, in order to bring conversation to the table to practically implementing the change. And that reflects on President Obama as he charged Secretary Shaun Donovan, my boss, Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood and EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson to lead us through this transformation. In the past 18 months, the federal agencies have been

meeting at the regional level. Each regional office---there are 10 across the country---we're in Region 8, to make this regional partnership and our projects work. This is where the work is delivered.

One of the duties that I have as Regional Administrator, is to help and advise Secretary Donovan on this partnership at local level. Folks like you in this room, who have been on the forefront of sustainable development, frankly have done much to lead the way in this process. Denver, Colorado, and the front-range of Colorado are in the minds and hearts of the Obama Administration because of the great work that has been done over the years. And I mean years, this kind of work does not happen overnight.

The federal government can be a player, to support and be an asset for this type of development and partnership. If it doesn't make sense that the federal government be involved in a project, then we just need to get out of the way, as Secretary Donovan says from time to time.

What I have to share with you today are a couple of examples in Region 8 where HUD, EPA, and DOT are coming together, making sure that the focus is on the six livable sustainable principles and the projects live up to the values and perspectives so we can demonstrate success. We want to assure you in the private development community and the non-profits, and many other players in this arena understand that at the federal level, that the federal partnership is here to assist and facilitate in anyway in our Region and our country.

Let me begin, with a few demographics for our Region. No big surprise the largest population is found in Denver and Salt Lake City. Outside of those two urban cities, is the non-metro, often times referred to as rural. The population base in North and South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana reflect more despaired population throughout their large states. In fact in Region 8, we represent approximately 3% of our country's population and 20% of its land mass. We can be leaders in our future development. We have a great opportunity to use our leadership and take strong control our destiny to develop sustainable communities in our Region.

Slide #3-LoDo

The slide of LoDo depicts that part of the six principles includes PRESERVATION. Think back, 10-15-20 years ago, when the lower part of downtown Denver was slated for demolition. It was the area that no one

wanted anything to do with it. Through the great efforts of the Historic Denver League stepped up and preserved this area. Today, it is one of the great economic booms and the cornerstone of the regional transit corridors for the fast tracks at Union Station.

You have to think regionally. I think that is what Denver has done well over the years. You understand that there are jurisdictional boundaries that maintain the revenue tax base. But people, goods, services and businesses routinely cross those boundaries routinely, every day. People in this area think of Denver as a region and that is why it is successful.

Slide #4

The slide of historic Five Points is shown as one of the recipients of \$1.2 Sustainable Challenge – Tiger II grants recently awarded by DOT and HUD. Five Points was one of several communities in Colorado that will emulate the federal partnership to make sustainable principles work, along with three rural communities – Fowler, Monte Vista and Rifle.

Slide #5

La Alma/Lincoln Park Neighborhood is located southwest of downtown and is the poster child to demonstrate the success of sustainability. Even before I was appointed to this position, the staff at HUD, EPA and DOT were working diligently on the project making sure the principles of sustainable development were being used in a major face-lift by the Denver Housing Authority partnering with HUD-DOT-EPA and City and County of Denver and State of Colorado. Just a year ago, Secretary Shaun Donovan came to Denver and awarded a \$10 million grant for this project, a senior high-rise at 10th and Osage. Ground breaking for the first building occurred in September. The value of the project caught the eye of the White House and it is one of the top 100 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act projects in the country. The project is getting great attention because all the elements of sustainability are included in the planning. In the long run, you will see a much broader community development; here you just see phase one. The ability to transform this entire area along the Lincoln Park with the sustainable principles is on the mark.

Slide #6 Lakewood

Those of you who are local, you'll remember the older Lakewood shopping area Villa Italia. Belmar has replaced Villa Italia using the new urbanism, sustainable principals and brought to fruition Lakewood's exciting new downtown neighborhood, a 22 square city block pedestrian district that recreates the ambiance of an old town village center, with a distinctively contemporary flair.

Belmar is a great example of creating a centerpiece of a downtown in a suburban community. Belmar is a great success with great value with vibrant shopping, dining, entertainment and residential district.

Slides #7

Up on the northern front-range is Fort Collins, a great demonstration city. Fort Collins is one of HUD's entitlement cities who receives HUD's Community Development Block Grants and HOME dollars to support

affordable housing. Their city council and executive leadership have found ways to deploy their dollars to promote affordable housing as a regular mainstay of their ongoing policies in a sustainable fashion using sustainable housing materials, location, lot sizes, walkability, proximity to the downtown and amenities make a difference. That is why Fort Collins is listed as one of the most top cities to Live in the United States.

Slide #9

Kit Carson, Colorado is a rural town on the Eastern plains in Cheyenne County. Kit Carson was recently awarded a \$1 Million HOPE VI Main Street grant through the competitive process. Citizens came together and said we are a vibrant rural community but our challenge is that we can't attract and maintain professional clientele because we don't have an affordable housing inventory. Kit Carson is a base for the rural school district and had trouble recruiting school teachers, administrators and staff because of lack of housing. They put together a compelling, competitive application to rehabilitate and build five units of housing using the sustainable principles in the town of Kit Carson.

Slide #10

Garfield County, made up of smaller cities -Carbondale, Glenwood Springs, New Castle, Parachute, Rifle, and Silt, is using EPA's smart-growth process to facilitate an insightful approach to planning sustainable rural communities. We can use their work and lessons learned as an example in other parts of the region, once the product is developed.

Slide #11

East Billings, Montana, a non-urban--- non-metro community, recently completed their Urban Renewal District Master Plan. Montana did not receive funding in the recent round for Sustainable Community planning grants. The leadership has been thinking “outside the traditional box” and using a non-traditional approach to planning to attract and maintain industry and keep a population flourishing. This is an area that the partnership is looking at closely additional technical assistance, as they work towards making their planning process a reality.

Slide 12

The final slide represents the consortium of Salt Lake County, because they just received a HUD Sustainable Planning grant. The multiple organizations including The Utah Transit, the City of Salt Lake, the Watsch Front, are going to implement their vision plan. They need to make land-use changes and zoning changes. The \$5 million grant awarded to Salt Lake County allows the group in the entire front of Watsch Range to implement the changes to ensure the best use of land adjacent to their transit. Then, they can make sure the longer-term of sustainable, affordable housing becomes available to attract and maintain a population in their region.

HUD has had and will retain a strong role in the Sustainable arena. We will continue to be a major partner with our federal agencies, working together to boost economic development and ensure Americans can afford to live in communities with access to employment, schools and public transit options.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

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