



Grant Announcement: Smart Growth Seed Funding and Community Planning Assistance 2010

Communities across Louisiana are working to foster economic growth, make efficient use of tax payer dollars, maximize the use of existing infrastructure, protect natural resources, enhance public health, offer a range of housing types, and provide a safe haven for citizens. Unfortunately, many communities lack the tools, resources, or information necessary to achieve many of these goals.

In order to help meet this growing need, the Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, is offering seed funding and direct community planning assistance to communities throughout Louisiana for land use plans or Louisiana Land Use Toolkit implementation (model land development regulations). CPEX will assist communities through the process of selecting, hiring, and managing consultants who will, in turn, create community plans that are consistent with Smart Growth planning principles, the Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan, and the Louisiana Land Use Toolkit. In 2010, CPEX will provide seed funding (grants up to \$50,000) and direct staff support for approximately four selected communities. In order to apply for these resources, the interested communities must comply with the application submission requirements, as described on page 3.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has awarded CPEX a grant to provide seed funding and community planning assistance to Louisiana communities for planning efforts. CPEX is now seeking applications from municipalities, parishes, tribes, and other governmental entities that intend to employ Smart Growth principles in their planning efforts.

Examples of planning efforts with which CPEX would assist include, but are not limited to:

- Comprehensive Land Use Plans
- Infill/Redevelopment Plans
- Neighborhood Plans
- Downtown Plans
- Corridor Plans
- Transit and Land Use Plans
- Land Use Toolkit Implementation

In addition to seed funding, the selected communities will receive direct staff assistance from CPEX in the form of project management expenses.

CPEX efforts will involve the following:

- Assist Project Manager with the initial preparation and outreach necessary to kick-off the planning process prior to and during the first three Consultant Team visits.
- Assist in arranging meetings with and engaging appropriate groups (Support Committee, Staff, elected and appointed officials, focus groups, public, etc.)
- Assist with gathering data, establishing contacts with agencies/organizations, and working during public meetings.
- Review meeting notices, public meeting announcements, and media/press releases prior to publicizing all meetings and events, if requested by Project Manager.
- Meet regularly with Project Manger to review and give input on draft chapters/work products.
- Review Consultant invoices with Project Manager prior to Owner submitting payments.

CPEX's community outreach and education and part-time project management will assist the community and its planner/project manager with the process of selecting, hiring, and managing the consultant team who will create community plans that will strive to be consistent with Smart Growth planning principals and achieve the goals of the Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan and the Louisiana Land Use Toolkit.

Smart Growth is characterized by the following goals:

- Take advantage of existing infrastructure investments by directing development and redevelopment towards existing communities;
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices;
- Develop mixed land uses;
- Create walkable neighborhoods;
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place;
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas;
- Provide a variety of transportation choices;
- Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective; and
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

For more information on Smart Growth, please visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's web site at: www.epa.gov/smartgrowth.

For more information on Louisiana Speaks and the Louisiana Land Use Toolkit, please visit www.louisianaspeaks.org and www.landusetoolkit.com.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

CPEX plans to select four communities for assistance in 2010-2011. **CPEX plans to announce the selected communities in fall 2010** and will work with the communities for a period of up to 12 months.

CPEX will evaluate applications based on the criteria listed below. Following an initial review, CPEX will conduct conference calls with the finalists and make final selections. Please follow the instructions below under "Submitting the Application" to apply for CPEX funds and assistance for 2010.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Applicant must be a governmental entity in Louisiana (i.e., municipal, parish, tribal, metropolitan planning organization, downtown development district, etc).
2. Government entity must have a planner/project manager on staff to oversee and lead the planning process. Applicants must specify the staff who will work on this project.
3. Applicant must demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to the principles of Smart Growth.
4. Application must describe a specific, clearly defined planning project. The project cannot be an already submitted plan or a plan that is currently underway. Applicants must describe the type of plan they would like to pursue; discuss how it relates to local, regional, or state growth; describe partnerships in place to help make the project succeed; past planning efforts that will feed into the proposed planning effort; and explain how its success would affect the applicant community's environmental, social, and economic health.
5. Elected officials – mayors, city council members, parish commissioners, parish council, etc. – must demonstrate their support for this planning effort and their commitment to its success. This should be established through the inclusion of a letter of support from the highest elected official in the community, as well names of other elected officials or planning commissioners who support it. Also to be provided is an updated governmental resolution verifying the public's support/ votes in favor of the allocation of funding towards planning efforts.

As a proponent of collaborative problem solving, CPEX supports meaningful public involvement, especially among underserved populations or non-traditional stakeholders. Applicants are encouraged to reach beyond political and professional stakeholders and target faith-based groups, parents, senior citizens, schools, retirement centers, and community service organizations. Applicants may include a list of meetings that were held with various stakeholders regarding this planning effort.

6. CPEX requires at least a **100 percent match from the applicant** in order to demonstrate support and financial buy-in. However, CPEX encourages leveraging funds from private and philanthropic businesses. Federal funding sources and in-kind contributions will not be permitted. Application should include the amount of funds being requested and the amount the community intends to invest in the planning project. CPEX also requires the deduction of a 10% administrative fee of the granted amount.
7. Applicants should state their dedication to align the plan with the vision, goals, and strategies described in the “Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan” This only has to be a statement of acknowledgement and support for the plan.

Geographical Criteria

8. Although CPEX offers resources to communities throughout Louisiana, CPEX will not be able to provide the same level of hands-on planning assistance to communities that are not within the 60 mile radius of the Baton Rouge area. We encourage communities from outside this radius to apply but in the communities farther than a 60 miles radius, a planner/project manager must be able to demonstrate the ability to lead the effort while working remotely with CPEX. Please describe how the planner/project manager proposes to maintain assistance from CPEX while working from this distance. Also indicate the level of time commitment the planner/project

manager will dedicate throughout the planning process, and list the other job activities this person will have while simultaneously managing the planning effort.

Submitting the Application

To be considered complete and eligible for review, all applications must include a summary cover page, project description, and a letter of support from the community's highest elected official. All parts of the application must be submitted together. The following format is required:

Cover page (no longer than one page)

The cover page should include the project title, contact information for the project manager, an abstract of the project, and source of funding for the project.

Project description (no longer than 3 pages)

The grant application must describe the planning project clearly and specifically, must use no smaller than 10-point type, must be double spaced, and should have page margins all around of at least one inch. In reviewing the project description, reviewers will not consider any pages over the 3-page limit.

The narrative must:

- Provide a concise overview of the project, including how it ties into larger issues of local or regional growth, and how it relates to the "Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan" (South Louisiana community only).
- It also must specifically describe how CPEX's assistance would support the project.
- The description must detail resources (e.g., staff time, cost-sharing, etc.) that the applicant will contribute to the project.
- The narrative must also address how the application meets each of the criteria listed above.
- If other project partners or funding sources are involved, their role and contribution must be clearly defined.

Letter of support from elected official

Applicants must include a letter of support from the highest elected official in the government entity making the request (e.g., mayor, parish president, etc.). Also include a list of other stakeholders who support the project (letters from these supporters are not required). A list of stakeholder meetings held regarding this planning effort is encouraged.

CPEX must receive applications by 5:00 PM CDT, Friday, July 02, 2010. No late applications will be accepted. Applicants must submit one (1) original and four (4) copies of their full application. All applications must be submitted in accordance with the requirements described above.

Please send your application via mail or hand delivery to:

Camille Manning-Broome, Director of Planning
Center for Planning Excellence
402 North 4th Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802
225-267-6300
camille@c-pex.org

For more information, go to www.planningexcellence.org.