



2014 AIA Design and Resiliency Team (DART) APPLICATION

A pilot program developed in cooperation between the New England Municipal Sustainability Network (NEMSN) and AIA's Center for Communities by Design.

For any community in New England and in New York's Capital Region (which collectively make up the NEMSN region).

• **Introduction**

The New England Municipal Sustainability Network (NEMSN) in partnership with AIA's Center for Communities by Design is soliciting applications for its New England Design and Resiliency Teams (DART).

A DART can help a community develop a strategic vision and framework for a resilient future. Resiliency includes climate adaptation and host of other social, environmental and economic opportunities needed for stable and healthy communities. The focus of each DART will vary depending on community needs and opportunities. The program brings together multidisciplinary teams of professionals to work with community decision-makers and stakeholders through an intensive planning process.

DARTs are interdisciplinary team is made up of experts in their field. For the resiliency and climate adaptation DARTs, approximately half the team members will be from New England and half from across the country, selected in collaboration between the AIA and NEMSN, and customized to fit the key issues present in the community. Teams can include (but are not limited to) sustainability professionals, architects, economic and finance experts, planners, landscape architects and engineers.

A DART will involve stakeholder focus groups, a town-hall style public workshop, team work time and tours, and a final community presentation on the team's findings.

• **Local requirements and timeline**

The multi-disciplinary team members provide communities with pro bono consulting services. AIA covers all of the team and AIA staff travel and other expenses. AIA does not provide any funding to communities.

Partner communities must demonstrate the capacity to convene diverse community leaders and stakeholders for an intensive, collaborative resiliency planning process. AIA is focused on identifying communities that have the ability to build strong partnerships for implementation.

Communities provide appropriate venues for two public workshops during the DART and for DART working space. DART working space needs access to a copier, internet access, and, if possible, a scanner. Most communities use municipal funds or raise funds to cover local costs associated with project implementation (public outreach materials, meeting and facilities, copy costs etc).

Application review will commence on May 27, 2014, but applicants will continue to be accepted until two projects for 2014 are provisionally selected. AIA hopes to provisionally select projects in June, 2014. AIA reserves the right to cancel the program.

Preliminary site visits involving AIA staff and the project team leader will be held between July and mid-September 2014. The preliminary visit allows AIA to determine if a DART is appropriate for the community and if local resources and support are sufficient to sustain the process. Final determination of the community's suitability will be determined by the conclusion of the preliminary visit.

Full team visits will be held in the fall and be completed by the end of 2014.

• **Background and Frequently Asked Questions**

The AIA is committed to sustainable design that creates communities and advances enduring public and environmental well-being. DARTs help communities support cultural, environmental, and economic systems, creating more sustainable and resilient human settlements. DARTs 1) use a multidisciplinary team approach; 2) ensure the objectivity of the team members; and 3) require broad, inclusive public participation and support.

The DART is modeled on five decades of experience with over 210 Design Assessment Teams. The five-decade old Regional and Urban Design Assistance Teams (RUDAT) program provides communities with specific design solutions. The decade old Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) program provides broad assessments to help frame and plan policies and design solutions.

The Design Assessment Team (DAT) program is a public service of the American Institute of Architects. Communities across the country apply to have SDATs and RUDATs. For more information see www.aia.org/about/initiatives/AIAS075265.

Where else has this process been used? What are the typical outcomes?

Over 210 communities have hosted SDATs and RUDATs, including several in New England. Each project has resulted in key priorities and recommendations formulated in a presentation and final report. As a result, DAT communities have built effective platforms for collaboration and collective action involving the entire community.

How much is this process costing the community?

For the resiliency and climate adaptation pilot, the American Institute of Architects is covering the travel and direct team and AIA staff expenses, at a cost of up to \$15,000 per community. The host community is providing all community outreach, venues for meetings and team work space but does not have any cash match requirement. All of the team members serve pro bono, so there are no fees or costs for services.

Who is the team made up of? What is their agenda?

Teams are interdisciplinary and made up of experts in their field. For the DART, the team will be a mix of members from New England and from across the country, selected by AIA and customized to fit the key community issues. Teams might include, for example, sustainability professionals, architects, economic experts, planners, landscape architects and engineers. This is **not** another team of consultants. Consultants work for somebody, DARTs are a public service for the community, for *everybody*. The team's mission is to serve the public interest by listening to the community and sharing their best professional advice about local resiliency issues and opportunities facing the area. Team members are selected from outside the community, are not paid for their service, and are prohibited from pursuing business opportunities that result from the DART.

Who should participate in a DART?

All are welcome. If you are interested in the future of the community, come!

What are the final products?

The DART includes a town hall workshop and a final community presentation and report to help identify a strategy and actions that realize a community's values and vision.

• Applications

Applications must include the following project information:

1. Table of Contents

2. Project Summary (1 page)

- a. **Project Title:** include the name of the community in a short project title (e.g., *Cache Valley, Utah: Valley on the Verge*; *Guemes Island, WA: Creating a Sustainable Guemes*; *Pittsfield, Massachusetts: and Sustainable Urbanism in the Heart of the Berkshires*)
- b. **Primary Contact:** name, email, phone number
- c. **Project Abstract**

3. Community Description (1-2 pages) include:

- a. History
- b. Population and demographics
- c. Economic information
- d. Form of Local Government
- e. Geography/Topography data
- f. Important project or contextual information
- g. Regional setting and influences
- h. Brief summaries of past and/or ongoing relevant planning efforts and reports

4. Problem Statement and Issues Analysis (3-4 pages, plus maps), include:

- a. *Define and describe the proposed study area* (e.g., the entire municipality, two municipalities, a portion of the community)
- b. *Identify existing barriers* (physical, social, economic, political) that have limited the community's ability to address its concerns or agree on solutions. Include a brief assessment of your community's most significant resiliency needs (e.g., climate adaptation, natural hazards, and public health issues). Describe any past attempts that have failed to resolve community issues. Include as much graphic material as needed to describe existing conditions.
- c. *Identify strategic areas* which the DART should focus and why those areas are critical to the community. Describe how the issues relate to development concerns at the regional, municipal, and neighborhood scales. Issues can include any aspect of resiliency, as broadly defined (e.g., climate adaptation, hazard mitigation, public and environmental health, social inequities, and unstable urban centers).

5. Objective of the DART Process (1 page) include:

A brief statement defining the project objective. DARTs evolve during the process, but it is important to understand the community objectives at the start of the process.

6. Steering Committee Information

The DART process requires that the applicant partner to form a Steering Committee to guide

and implement the process. Local government staffers often staff and serve on the local effort, but the Steering Committee should be broader than only staff because it helps coordinate community outreach and support the community conversation both before and after the DART. There are no minimum or maximum committee size or membership requirements, but your committee should be appropriate for your community and effort.

List the committee chair (or co-chair) and committee members:

- a. Name and affiliation, if any
- b. Email addresses
- c. Phone number

7. *Funding Information*

There is no cost to the community for AIA and the Team's expenses. The community, however, is responsible for providing appropriate venues for two public workshops during the DART, light refreshments for the workshops, DART working space with access to a copier, internet access, and, if possible, a scanner. The community is also responsible for all of their community outreach, including any advertising of the project.

Describe how your community will be able to provide will cover the local costs, either through fundraising, existing funds, or in-kind contributions.

8. *Educational Partners*

Reports and presentations are greatly improved if the community can partner with local or regional colleges, especially those with programs in Architecture, Urban Design, Landscape Architecture, Environmental Studies or other relevant disciplines. Please describe whether such partnerships are possible and how you will pursue these options. This item will be discussed in more detail during the preliminary site visit for provisionally accepted communities. Letters of commitment from a program to participate is a plus for any application but is not required.

9. *Communication and Media Outreach Plan*

Describe how you will reach out to media and the community to generate media coverage and invite the widest range of stakeholders to the two public workshops.

10. *DART Project Timeline*

The preliminary visit will be held between early July and mid-September with the full visit between September and the middle of December. Please include a contextual rationale and information regarding events that may affect the timing of any part of the DART process (e.g., six months before scheduled comprehensive plan revisions). Typically, a successful DART project requires a period of at least 6-8 weeks between the preliminary visit and the full team visit. AIA will work with communities to schedule DART implementation in a manner that complements ongoing planning activities, but dates may be adjusted based upon program needs and availability of team members as necessary.

11. *Community Partnerships and Support*

The key to DART success is diversity and community participation; the process involves multiple disciplines and multiple stakeholders. The DART process includes not only the national team but also government agencies and officials, private businesses, schools and students, community members, and other parties as appropriate. The process encourages the active participation of all sectors of the community. The team members who visit your

community will seek the opinions and comments of the public as well as community leaders and interested groups. Applications should demonstrate community support and participation by including letters of support from a broad base of community members (public elected and appointed officials, public agencies, neighborhood groups, community leaders, houses of worship, service clubs, businesses, local AIA chapters, and institutions).

12 **Supplemental Documents**, include:

- a. Relevant Existing and Past Planning Documents (e.g., zoning or plan excerpts)
- b. Graphic Illustrations (e.g., maps, study area plans, photos and aerial photos, illustrative maps showing locations and concentrations of specific community needs)
- c. Information on the community (e.g., newspaper articles, tourism materials, economic development materials)
- d. Anything you need to tell your story and help describe community needs, existing conditions, and prevailing issues.

• **Evaluation Criteria and Process**

The evaluation process will be conducted by a DART Application Review Panel. Review begins on May 15, 2014 and continues until two projects are provisionally selected. AIA hopes to select projects in June, 2014. AIA reserves the right to cancel the process or do fewer than two DATs.

Preliminary site visits (by AIA staff and the project team leader) will be held in July, August, or the first half of September 2014. The preliminary visit will allow the team leader and AIA staff to determine if a DART is appropriate for the community and if local resources and support are sufficient to sustain the process. Final determination of the community's suitability will be determined by the conclusion of the preliminary visit, and logistical planning for the full team visit will then commence as appropriate.

Full team visits will be held in the fall and be completed by the end of 2014.

The Application Review Panel will analyze based on:

- Application comprehensiveness and ability to portray the community
- Self-evaluation and assessment of relevant issues
- Problem statement and project clarity
- Community, political, and staff will to address issues
- Organization and project logistical support
- Clear and specific Project Objective
- Feasibility

Submission Deadline and Inquiries

Applications should be submitted as a PDF file(s) to CommunitiesbyDesign@aia.org. If the files are too large to send electronically, please email the above address for additional instructions. **Applications will be considered beginning on May 27, 2014 and accepted until the two pilot projects for 2014 are decided.**

Applicants seeking additional information should consult the AIA Communities by Design

www.aia.org/about/initiatives/AIAS075265 or email Communities by Design staff:

Erin Simmons, Director, Design Assistance, Esimmons@aia.org, 202.626.7492; or
Joel Mills, Director, Communities by Design joelmills@aia.org, 202.626.7405

DAT Case Study

DATs have been held in communities ranging from the largest cities (e.g., New York City, LA) to the smallest communities (Guemes Island, population 600) and everything in between. Port Angeles provides a case study in how one project worked.

Port Angeles, Washington (pop. 17,000)

Port Angeles, Washington provides an example of how to inspire pride in change by creating a truly public revitalization process. Their success has been built around involving everyone in the process.

In 2009, Port Angeles hosted an SDAT to focus on downtown revitalization and waterfront development. Port Angeles had suffered declining fortunes as the result of mill closures and reduced productivity from natural resource industries. The three-day charrette process created enormous civic energy to pursue a vision for the city's future.

“Just two weeks after the SDAT presented more than 30 recommendations, the Port Angeles Forward committee unanimously agreed to recommend 10 of those items for immediate action,” said Nathan West, the City's Director of Community and Economic Development. “Public investment and commitment inspired private investment, and, less than a month later, the community joined together in an effort to revamp the entire downtown, starting with a physical face-lift. Community members donated paint and equipment, and residents picked up their paintbrushes to start the transformation.”

During the first summer of implementation, over 43 buildings in the downtown received substantial upgrades, including new paint and other improvements. This effort led to a formal façade improvement program that extended the initiative exponentially. The city dedicated \$118,000 in community development block grants (CDBG) for the effort, which catalyzed over \$265,000 in private investment. The city also moved forward with substantial public investment in its waterfront, which had a dramatic impact in inspiring new partnerships and private investment. Three years later, the city had over \$75 million in planned and completed investments and had turned the corner by producing huge civic momentum across the community. In June 2012, Port Angeles was recognized with a state design award for its waterfront master plan, designed by LMN Architects. The city will break ground on construction in the fall.

As West concluded, “The City of Port Angeles SDAT experience was far more than just a planning exercise. This opportunity for our community was a catalyst for action, implementation and improvement. Three years after the SDAT team arrived, the progress and excitement continue. A primary outcome has been that the process awakened community pride and inspired a “together we can” attitude. Today the inspiration remains and the elements and recommendations of the program continue to be the driver for publicly endorsed capital projects and investments in our community. More importantly this sustainable approach has tapped into the core values and priorities of our citizens to ensure a better and more balanced future for our City.”