Implementing ARRA
Framing Paper

Implementing ARRA: Innovations in Design in Metro America

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

America does not possess a single national economy. Instead, prosperity flows from a network of 366 diverse metropolitan economies.

Which is why it is hugely important that creative urban and regional leaders across a number of U.S. regions are currently working to make the most of the unprecedented resources that have been made available by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

Varied in their efforts, these implementers, abandoning business as usual, are laboring to fashion high-impact, creative approaches to stimulus spending to stabilize and revitalize their metros. The success of their efforts will help drive America's recovery from the current recession.

But there is a problem: ARRA is an imperfect instrument for metropolitan stimulus and empowerment.

Assembled in haste last winter in the face of deteriorating economic conditions, the sprawling recovery act unfortunately reflects many of the standard operating procedures and rigid delivery systems of five decades' worth of "legacy" federal government. Because of the need to intervene quickly, the package relies heavily on existing federal-state-local spending mechanisms, subject to existing laws, formulas, and guidelines.

ARRA also reflects existing federal policy's generally neutral, or even hostile, stance toward creative metro-scale action. Rapid spend-down requirements threaten efforts to build for the long haul. The use of existing programs works against interdisciplinary solutions. Inflexible formulas and strict guidelines frustrate integrated problem-solving. Siloed money flows may preclude market-catalyzing partnerships. And likewise, ARRA's many accountability provisions—with their heavy stress on curbing waste, fraud, and abuse—may discourage useful experiments and more meaningful performance assessment.

This report first reviews the challenges that ARRA poses for would-be innovators, and probes the nature and early progress of a number of the most creative implementation efforts in metropolitan America. Ultimately, the brief makes several recommendations of near-term federal actions that might help more urban communities carry out creative, high-impact strategies for leveraging the resources of ARRA.

The pages that follow find that:

1. **The most intriguing efforts to draw down and put recovery act resources to work creatively embody one or more of five key traits of 21st-century high-performance organizations and initiatives, as identified by Brookings'** *Blueprint for American Prosperity* **effort.** In this regard, each of the innovative ARRA initiatives surveyed in this report reflects one or more of the following characteristics:
   - *Reflects a (long-term) regional vision or goals.* ARRA's urban innovators frequently have a focused strategy that reflects a long-term vision of success.
   - *Adopts multi-jurisdictional or multi-sectoral approaches.* The emerging ARRA innovations transcend narrowness.
   - *Embraces integrated solutions.* Overcoming programmatic stovepiping is crucial for realizing multi-dimensional problem-solving**.**
   - *Catalyzes market and private investment.* Some of most creative urban ARRA implementation projects employ creative use of private-sector partnerships.
   - *Employs information management, data, and benchmarking to maximize performance*. Many of ARRA's most sophisticated urban/metro implementation initiatives are intensely focused on using information to optimize performance.

2. **Looking across the innovators, it appears that the presence of a preexisting regional vision or plan, strong leadership and institutional capacity, and a spirit of collaboration all contribute to local creativity.** Certainly, creative design activity has clustered around those ARRA programs— such as the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program or the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP2) program— that encourage it with either flexible rules or an explicit call for collaboration or integrated proposals. But beyond that it appears that:
   - *Places that tend to innovate are innovating again.* Creativity breeds creativity, it seems, when it comes to innovative ARRA implementation schemes. For example, Seattle and the Puget Sound have long been innovators when it comes to sustainability issues, with dedicated public offices to address environmental concerns and a regional culture primed to embrace new green initiatives. Now they offer compelling ARRA responses.

   - *Grounding recovery projects in long-run visioning and planning advances creativity by providing a framework for aligning activities.* Given ARRA's complexity and breadth, having a regional strategy in place helps local leaders to prioritize. When ARRA came down, it helped that Seattle, Chicago, and Flagstaff already had in place plans focused on energy efficiency that allowed them to move adeptly to design ways to effectively deploy stimulus funds.

   - *Strong leadership matters—and it can come in multiple forms.* Dynamic individuals played a key role in Kansas City's Green Zone, Puget Sound's New Energy Solutions, and Memphis' City of Choice initiatives. Also metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in Kansas City, Puget Sound, and Chicago, are proving catalytic by serving as forums for regional planning

and sources of institutional capacity, multijurisdictional project-management, and experience with federal grant applications.

- ▪ ***Institutional collaboration is vital.*** Achieving any degree of integrated recovery solutions requires extensive cooperation among multiple institutions from multiple sectors. In Memphis, the Blueprint for a City of Choice effort needed to bring together city, county, and school district officials, as well as area business leaders to address its broad suite of 12 economic development priorities.

- ▪ ***Sometimes new institutions and mechanisms are necessary.*** Weaving together disparate programs into integrated responses may required new ways of doing business. On Cape Cod, public and private leaders across 15 towns—concerned about the vulnerability and limitations of their local broadband system—have created a new 501(c) 3 non-profit corporation to oversee the build-out, operation, and maintenance of a robust new regional digital communications network that will draw on ARRA funding for initial deployment.

- ▪ ***States can be productive partners, or create hurdles to innovative implementation.*** In California, the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency (BT&H) invited each California region to develop its own Economic Recovery Workplan to help the state identify the best prospects for expending ARRA resources efficiently and effectively—a process fully embraced by the Bay Area.

- ▪ ***Innovation seems to thrive when participation is not forced or mandatory but voluntary, incentivized, and established with a lot of outreach to build buy-in.*** For example, Puget Sound Regional Council's ARRA Clearinghouse and other organizing efforts are purposefully designed to encourage bottom-up organizing without adding a layer of top-down bureaucracy.

3. **In view of these dynamics, the White House, federal agencies, and the philanthropic community should work to support creative design, disseminate best practices, and clear away obstacles to their spread.** Numerous statutory, regulatory, and administrative reforms will be needed to better enable local innovation (to be the subject of future briefs). For now, three modest initial responses would do a lot to nurture, empower, and multiply the best sort of creative, high-impact implementation:
    - ▪ ***The White House and cabinet agencies should explicitly promote innovative local implementation.*** The first response is simple. Words and gestures matter; so does moral support. Therefore, the Obama administration should employ its bully pulpit to explicitly and prominently affirm the value of creative, integrated, regionalist implementations of ARRA. A presidential statement, Office of Management and Budget directive or a concerted effort by the administration to identify and highlight exemplary local innovation would help catalyze more of it.

    - ▪ **The Obama administration, Congress, and the philanthropic community should foster creative implementation with additional support for organizing efforts, effective management, and active technical support.** Crafting integrated, catalytic, performance-oriented ARRA projects is hard. Weaving ARRA's rigid, disparate programs into something coherent requires much more time and administrative effort than simply executing single programs mechanically. And yet, little or no stimulus resources are now available to support the organizing efforts needed to work out new, more catalytic responses. Therefore, modest added resources should be mustered to help local collaboratives defray some of the research,

project planning, grant application, and start-up costs associated with creative implementation. Such a provision could come from Congress, agencies' discretionary resources, or the philanthropic community. In any event a modest pool of support-funding or gap-financing for leading-edge ARRA projects would complement moral encouragement with material support.

- **The administration, grantmakers, and other relevant organizations should facilitate network building to disseminate learning and innovation in a structured way.** Finally, the White House, federal agencies, grantmakers, and the private sector should collaborate with metro innovators to create a physical and virtual metro innovations forum among urban and regional communities, local officials and federal agencies. Aimed at maximizing the impact of ARRA, the new forum could be tasked very specifically with fostering innovation in metro areas; identifying and disseminating best practices in ARRA implementation; identifying needed policy adjustments; and forging a new model of governance and partnership between the federal government and metro areas. At present, much creative work is going on in isolation. By bringing online a focused metro innovations network, the cause of recovery would gain a potentially powerful learning community that could at once build local capacity, spread innovation, and educate the federal government on needed change.

* * *

Bottom line, the success of the recovery act will depend on how well it helps leaders in American metropolitan areas respond to the pain being visited on communities by the current recession.

Supporting and multiplying the cadre of creative and determined metropolitan leaders working to deploy recovery resources in high-impact ways should be a top priority of federal recovery implementation going forward.

I. INTRODUCTION

America does not possess a single national economy. Instead, its prosperity flows from a network of 366 diverse metropolitan economies.[1]

Consequently, while America's current economic crisis is a national crisis, it is most acutely a *metropolitan* crisis, in which painful job losses, high unemployment, and excess business capacity linger not just as grim national headlines but more immediately as layoffs in Toledo, office vacancies in Manhattan, and foreclosures in Las Vegas and the suburbs of Atlanta.

For that reason, it matters greatly how well efforts to revive the nation's economy—most notably the $787 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)—empower local metropolitan leaders to put recovery resources to work.

If recovery efforts deliver to metropolitan leaders the right investments in the fundamental "drivers" of prosperity and allow local leaders the discretion to marshal those investments strategically, the effectiveness of the recovery push will be maximized.

If not, the impact may be compromised.

That is why it is imperative to track the progress of creative metropolitan leaders in deploying the myriad resources provided by ARRA. These leaders' successes and struggles in implementing ARRA both foretell how strategically the stimulus package will be deployed in metropolitan America and represent test-cases of how well federal policy in general supports metropolitan problem-solving.

But there is a problem: ARRA is an imperfect instrument for metropolitan stimulus and empowerment, shaped as it is by the standard operating procedures and rigid delivery systems of five decades' of "legacy" federal government.[2]   Signed into law in February 2009, the sprawling recovery package was assembled in haste as the nation's unemployment rate surged to 8 percent and job losses exceeded 600,000 a month. The need to intervene quickly led the package's designers to channel ARRA's huge pulse of funding largely through existing federal-state-local mechanisms, subject to existing laws, formulas, and guidelines. Ready-to-hand existing delivery systems were embraced; more innovative options were set aside.[3] And because existing federal policy is generally neutral or hostile toward action at a metropolitan scale, ARRA is also. As a result, ARRA is either neutral or hostile to "creative" or innovative implementation in metro America.

And yet, in some metro areas some actors have refused to set aside the goal of "transformation" and are laboring hard to fashion truly creative, even "game-changing" uses of ARRA.

These innovators—city and county officials; leaders from neighborhood and advocacy groups and other non-profits; executives from local finance and utility companies; representatives of universities and community colleges; directors of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), chambers of commerce, and civic organizations—are in a number of regions striving to make the most of ARRA's significant funding flows by working to link, align, or otherwise utilize them to advance considered regional strategies that promote productive, inclusive, and sustainable growth. Frequently, they are laboring to use the short-term, imperfect programs of ARRA to seed more profound investments and partnerships of longer-term value.

In practical terms, these innovators' work reflects the presence in ARRA of a number of important competitive grant programs as well as several other quite flexible programs, which have stimulated creative implementation ideas in key areas such as energy efficiency (EE). But beyond that, the innovators' efforts respond to what was always at least a secondary goal of ARRA: that it would not only stimulate the economy, but produce longer-term "transformation," meaning the creation of improved institutions and outcomes including communities that are "healthier, greener, better educated and with more high quality jobs," in the words of Vice President Joe Biden.[4]

In view of these transformative goals, the early planning and implementation activities of some of metropolitan America's most creative ARRA projects offer at once important examples for implementers elsewhere and a test-bed out of which to extract—over time—key reform agendas. Where the projects are succeeding they provide usable models and demonstrate important impacts of ARRA. Where the initiatives struggle they will point to places where federal policy and delivery systems impede local creativity. In that sense, the work of the most innovative urban implementers will simultaneously maximize the power of the recovery push and reveal reform agendas relevant both to the near-term administration of ARRA and the longer-term reform of federal policy more generally.

This brief begins to track and analyze the experience of some of the more innovative ARRA implementers in metropolitan America, based on close attention to the initial design activities of a handful of creative initiatives.

Along those lines, this qualitative report first surveys the complex policy and programmatic context in which local implementers must pursue the work of drawing down and deploying ARRA money in metropolitan America. After that, the brief reviews the nature and early progress of a number of creative implementation efforts around the country, with reference to a group of initiatives that embody key attributes of a progressive brand of reformist "metropolitan policy." Finally, the brief makes a number of observations about these leading-edge projects that include several recommendations for near-term actions that might enable more innovation.

The upshot: Some actors in metropolitan America are striving to deploy the important resources of the recovery act in uncommonly creative ways. However, their labors are occurring mostly "against the grain" of ARRA's particular delivery mechanisms. For that reason, understanding what the innovators are trying to do and why their work is difficult will help others emulate them, even as it helps identify how future administration policy can better enable innovators to get the most from every dollar of federal spending.

II.   BACKGROUND

What is "innovation" when it comes to implementing ARRA in metropolitan America, and what is the context in which it will or won't take place?

Innovative implementation, for purposes of this discussion, reflects the values of the *Blueprint for American Prosperity,* a federal policy reform initiative of the Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings that seeks to foster more productive, inclusive, and sustainable growth by better tapping the assets and creativity of the cities, suburbs, and rural areas that make up metropolitan America.[5] More specifically, such creative implementation reflects the contention of the *Blueprint* that a top priority of federal policy should be the promotion of the sort of wider-reaching, more integrated governance systems that are needed to match the geographic scale and interconnectedness of U.S. metros.[6]

According to the *Blueprint*, 21st-century high-performance organizations and initiatives—whether public or private—frequently exhibit a number of defining characteristics. For example, such governments and initiatives tend to:

- Understand their environment and adhere to a clear vision of success

- Think broadly and seek multi-disciplinary or multi-sectoral solutions

- Integrate or "join-up" programs

- Engage in and support partnerships of all kinds

- Utilize information to achieve performance targets[7]

Along these lines, this discussion and the scanning for metropolitan-area best practices on which it is based assume that innovative ARRA implementation initiatives will exhibit at least some of the traits of 21st-century high-performance governance in pursuing improved regional productivity, equity, and sustainability. That is, these local urban efforts to draw down and put recovery act resources to work will embody at least one of the following characteristics:

- reflect a (long-term) regional vision or goals

- adopt multi-jurisdictional or multi-sectoral approaches

- embrace integrated solutions

- catalyze market investment

- employ information management, data, and benchmarking to maximize performance

In short, from the perspective of both metropolitan prosperity and the best practices of 21st-century governance, the most innovative local efforts to implement ARRA will exhibit some of the best traits of leading-edge organizations in any domain.

That is what is meant by innovation here. Yet innovation will not be ubiquitous among urban implementers, for some very good reasons. Most notably, ARRA was not, in the end, designed to unleash a ferment of local governance innovation, notwithstanding the frequent invocation of the word "transformation."[8] Instead, the massive and multi-dimensional recovery act was built much more for the speedy delivery of federal resources to state and local actors in hopes of securing near-term fiscal stabilization as well as job preservation and creation.

In fact, the bill's opening passage states its five purposes: (1) job preservation and creation to promote economic recovery; (2) infrastructure investment; (3) investment in science, health, and technological advancement; (4) assistance to those most impacted by the recession; (5) fiscal stabilization for state and local government budgets in order to minimize and avoid reductions in essential services and counterproductive state and local tax increases.[9]

Yet it is not so much ARRA's broad goals as the legislation's heavy emphasis on the rapid spend-down of its appropriations that has had and will have major implications for the degree of creativity that implementers can bring to bear.

The need for speed colored the stimulus debate and the design of the bill's sprawling variety of 350 individual spending or tax provisions from the outset.[10] As a result, the preexisting laws, programs, and delivery systems for health care, education, unemployment benefits, food stamps, and other programs such as surface transportation, job training, or weatherization assistance became the prime vehicles for ARRA outlays—not because they were conducive to creative local implementation but because they were conveniently available. Or as Council of Economic Advisors Chair Christina Romer affirmed shortly after the act's passage, the package "looks pretty plain vanilla" in that it "emphasizes aggregate demand stimulus over more sophisticated possibilities."[11]

The result is that, because ARRA's massive and varied flows of funding move mainly through existing delivery systems, the recovery act appears to local implementers largely as federal business-as-usual on fast-forward.

In material terms, the bulk of the initial flows of recovery resources have come down mostly as infusions of money into such standing programs as Medicaid, food stamps, and unemployment benefits. Additional billions placed in the new State Fiscal Stabilization Fund administered by the Education Department have mostly served to stabilize state education budgets and help school districts stave off cuts to staff cuts and programs.[12] These flows are helpful to local leaders but neither help nor hinder regional efforts to craft smart new ways to promote growth.
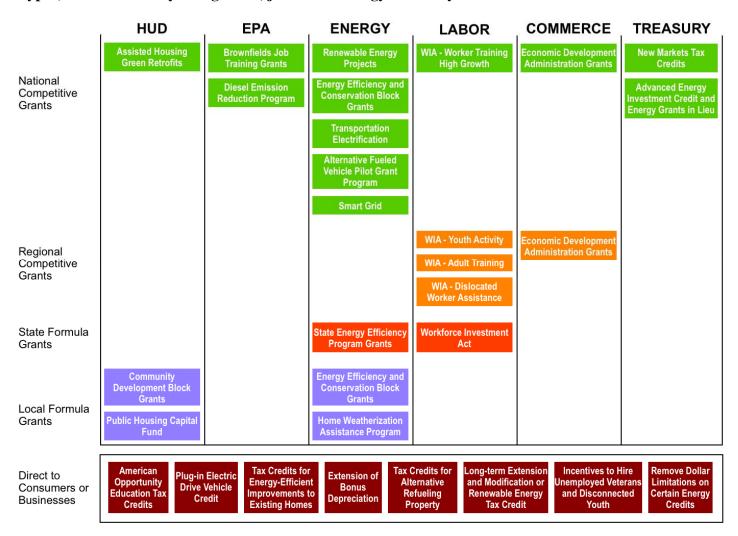
Turning to the programmatic structure of the package, ARRA raises other difficulties for would-be urban innovators. The huge role ARRA assigns to states in administrating numerous programs means that local leaders frequently lack the discretion to design creative implementation schemes.[13] A case in point is the lack of programming authority local leaders have when it comes to much of the road, bridge, and other transportation money in the stimulus package—the final decisions on which were in most cases left to the states under the preexisting Surface Transportation Program (STP) formula that was chosen to govern these distributions.[14]

Relatedly, most of ARRA's funding programs—which adopt the nation's regular array of program delivery systems—replicate the highly compartmentalized, rule-bound, and largely inflexible nature of federal business-as-usual.[15] Most investment streams are treated as separate and distinct, and arrive for the sole use of multiple specified actors. Most of these flows come to local implementers with few

provisions that would allow creative communities to link, align, or mix even obviously related funding flows to achieve synergistic effects. In this way, ARRA's multiple siloed flows largely reinforce the "vertical" nature of program delivery in the U.S. Siloed federal flows from siloed federal departments and programs are coming down to often-siloed state and local departments, which in many locations have after 40 years come to resemble their federal correlates.

In this regard, the architects of a comprehensive residential EE retrofit program in one city realized after weeks of assessing ARRA's offerings that the legislation made available—but within discrete programmatic "silos"—some 30 separate programs relevant to their contemplated project ranging from some 11 national competitive grants (such as the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant and Assisted Housing and Green Retrofits program) to state formula grants (such as the State Energy Efficiency Program Grant program) to four different local formula programs (such as the Public Housing Capital Fund and the Community Development Block Grant) to some eight different direct tax provisions.[16] This mix of "vertical" disjunctions between the relevant program administrators and the "horizontal" siloing of multiple programs has in many areas greatly complicated local leaders' planning and execution of "integrated" implementation programs.

Local executives working with ARRA need to consider some 30 different programs, of five different types, administered by six agencies, just in the energy efficiency domain

	HUD	EPA	ENERGY	LABOR	COMMERCE	TREASURY
National Competitive Grants	Assisted Housing Green Retrofits	Brownfields Job Training Grants; Diesel Emission Reduction Program	Renewable Energy Projects; Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants; Transportation Electrification; Alternative Fueled Vehicle Pilot Grant Program; Smart Grid	WIA - Worker Training High Growth	Economic Development Administration Grants	New Markets Tax Credits; Advanced Energy Investment Credit and Energy Grants in Lieu
Regional Competitive Grants				WIA - Youth Activity; WIA - Adult Training; WIA - Dislocated Worker Assistance	Economic Development Administration Grants	
State Formula Grants			State Energy Efficiency Program Grants	Workforce Investment Act		
Local Formula Grants	Community Development Block Grants; Public Housing Capital Fund		Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants; Home Weatherization Assistance Program			
Direct to Consumers or Businesses	American Opportunity Education Tax Credits; Plug-in Electric Drive Vehicle Credit; Tax Credits for Energy-Efficient Improvements to Existing Homes; Extension of Bonus Depreciation; Tax Credits for Alternative Refueling Property; Long-term Extension and Modification or Renewable Energy Tax Credit; Incentives to Hire Unemployed Veterans and Disconnected Youth; Remove Dollar Limitations on Certain Energy Credits					

Source: City of Seattle

Making matters even more complex for local implementers, finally, has been the recovery package's strong emphasis on accountability at a time of acute fiscal stress.

Accountability, of course, is crucial and beneficial to maximizing the performance of any system as it allows implementers and the public to monitor work, analyze progress, and assess progress in achieving goals.[17] However, in the matter of ARRA the many reporting requirements and public statements surrounding the law's implementation have been weighted heavily towards a notion of accountability focused on curbing waste, fraud, and abuse and too little on impact and the use of outcome data to assess progress toward specific goals.[18] For many ARRA implementers, the tilt towards monitoring and paperwork has at once consumed valuable time with compliance work and discouraged creativity by sending a strong signal that local partners should stay safely within the program's stipulated boundaries.

That all of this has come at one of the most dire budgetary moments in recent state-local fiscal history has only compounded the problems.[19] Trying to implement the sprawling recovery package and its reporting requirements at a time of budget cuts and weakened local capacity due to staff layoffs presents its own set of difficulties that make innovation even more complicated.

In sum, at a time of state and local fiscal stress and layoffs, the sheer complexity of the bill's offerings combined with the volume of application requirements and the frequent rigidity of the programs' rules represents a heavy drag on local implementer's creativity.

The "need for speed" cuts against efforts to link ARRA to long-term goals.

The use of existing programs works against inter-disciplinary solutions.

The embrace of rigidly rule-bound formula and other programs frustrates "integration."

The compartmentalization of standard money flows tends to minimize market-catalyzing partnerships.

And, for that matter, the recovery act's heavy emphasis on compliance-based accountability has squeezed out attention to broader goal-setting and more meaningful performance evaluation.

It is in these difficult circumstances that tens of thousands of local municipal officials, community leaders, non-profit staffers, and utility executives are laboring as they seek to secure and put to work the resources made available by ARRA.

III. IMPLEMENTING ARRA: INNOVATIONS IN DESIGN IN METROPOLITAN AMERICA

As it happens, some implementers are innovating.

Committed to advancing a balanced brand of metropolitan and national prosperity, these local and regional leaders and organizations are determined not just to draw down ARRA's dollars and carry out isolated programs without errors but to think broadly and with vision about how to best deploy stimulus resources to transform business-as-usual and achieve superior outcomes.

These innovators are working against the grain of standard federal-program operation procedures to create new forms of federal program delivery. These creative implementers are straining to take what is given, apply it with vision to local needs, and craft the next generation of creative solutions to the complex challenges they face.

Where are these innovators located? Work for this survey found them both in clusters and scattered across the country, where their little-remarked-upon efforts had to be discovered through repeated outreach to networks and key member organizations and through web searches, interviews, and word-of-mouth. (Other valuable efforts beyond those featured here are also occurring and more will be featured in this ongoing work as they reveal themselves in the months ahead).

What are some of the innovators' initiatives? In brief, they are varied, sophisticated, and quite often bold: (For a portfolio of "Implementing ARRA: Design Snapshots" profiling select metro innovations in ARRA implementation see www.Brookings.edu/metro/implementing_ARRA.aspx. See also Appendix A.):

- In the **Bay Area**, a regional economic development nonprofit selected among hundreds of local proposals to craft a single ARRA implementation strategy that will guide state spending and other resources in ways that creates jobs in the short-term and lays the foundation for economic growth and competitiveness in the long-term[20]

- In **Chicago**, a group of 40 struggling south-side suburbs is utilizing a pre-existing multi-jurisdictional neighborhood stabilization strategy to link and align multiple stimulus funding resources with resources obtained through the first round of the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP1) in support of energy efficiency, transit-oriented development, and overall neighborhood stabilization[21]

- In **Flagstaff, AZ**, city and county officials are working with neighborhood groups and utilities to employ ARRA money in creating a lasting system for delivering home energy retrofits, especially to low-income households

- In metropolitan **Kansas City**, the region's MPO is spearheading a comprehensive plan to channel a wide range of stimulus resources into the Green Impact Zone—a troubled 150-block area in Kansas City's urban core—in order to jump-start economic recovery and long-term community revitalization[22]

- In **Memphis**, a new partnership between the central city and core county, along with local business leaders, is working to transform the Memphis area and make it a "City of Choice" by

investing ARRA and other funding sources to meet quantifiable goals on human capital development, community safety, government efficiency, and economic growth[23]

- In the **Puget Sound** region, 17 city and county governments, all four regional utilities, and others are working together to draw ARRA and other federal funding flows into a comprehensive drive to advance creative long-term energy sustainability solutions in the region, ranging from smart grids, clean mobility options, and building energy efficiency[24]

- In **Southeastern Massachusetts**, all of Cape Cod's 15 towns, school and police districts, and leading institutions have come together to support an application for ARRA's competitive Broadband Technology Opportunities Program that would support a new public-private partnership to install and maintain 225 miles of fiber optic cabling throughout the region, microwave links, and a new regional data center serving public and private needs[25]

- In greater **Washington (D.C.)**, six suburban jurisdictions are submitting a joint application for NSP2 competitive funds to pursue one multi-jurisdictional strategy for dealing with foreclosed and abandoned properties, including bulk acquisition, rehab, resale, and rentals; financial assistance to homebuyers; and transformation of some parcels to permanent supportive housing[26]

- And in metro **Wichita**, a multi-sectoral collaboration of regional technology and workforce leaders are seeking National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health stimulus funds that could be targeted toward building a new laboratory facility to support the region's emerging medical device industry sector and augment other recent investments jumpstarting related research and development work[27]

Just a first sampling of some of the more creative activity now underway, these compelling ARRA implementation efforts are quite varied, both in their themes and topics and in their leadership and organization approaches. Leadership comes by turns from cities, counties, MPOs, neighborhood groups, local philanthropies, local nonprofit groups, banks, regional business groups, local universities, or state agencies. Some implement through existing channels and organizations while others are creating new intermediaries, working with web-based tools, and forging new agreements.

Yet notwithstanding their variety, these initiatives are similar in their commitment to do more than just pull down federal money and run it through the standard delivery system.

How are they working to do that? Each of these creative innovation collaboratives exhibits at least one of the key traits of 21st-century, high-performance governance as they seek to promote regional well-being. Along these lines, each of the initiatives, to varying degrees:

- **Reflects a (long-term) regional vision or goals**. ARRA's urban innovators frequently have a focused strategy that reflects long-term vision of regional success. The **Bay Area** Economic Council, for example, crafted a coherent regional recovery work plan out of random project proposals by applying the long-term goals of existing regional plans to discipline project-selection.[28] Likewise, **Seattle** grounded its multi-sectoral Green Building Capital Initiative in preexisting, much-earlier city plans developed by Mayor Nickels' administration in early 2008 to improve building efficiency by 20 percent by 2020 and reduce residents' energy costs.[29]

- **Adopts multi-jurisdictional or multi-sectoral approaches.** The emerging ARRA innovations transcend narrowness. At a time when standard federal program implementation remains narrowly focused on single programs' grantees and specialized, single-sector delivery systems these projects seek to connect to one another. The projects are frequently intensely collaborative because they reflect efforts to attack multi-dimensional challenges which frequently cut across jurisdictional and sectoral lines. For example, to construct a region-wide building EE system, the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) in **Chicago** is working with 42 municipalities as well as the regional MPO, philanthropies, community and economic development non-profits, financing entities, EE advocates, and several workforce training organizations.[30] For its part, at the center of **Kansas City's** Green Impact Zone the region's MPO, the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), has taken the lead in organizing participants from multiple city departments, six neighborhood groups from the zone, four community development organizations, several Kansas City employment and energy nonprofits, and other organizations with a stake in the neighborhood. Leaders are engaged from such varied domains as the local technology community, the energy and building rehab sectors, and the housing, transportation, health, environment, poverty, K-12, higher education, training, and public safety worlds.[31]

- **Embrace integrated solutions.** In the same fashion, leading-edge implementers are working to transcend programmatic stovepiping so as to forge truly integrated solutions to multi-dimensional problems. **Puget Sound** New Energy Solutions (PSNES), for example, is working to link and align infusions from ARRA's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program, competitive Clean Cities funding, and multi-party applications for ARRA's federal matching fund for smart grid investment costs to maximize the impact of recovery funding.[32] With this "whole systems" strategy, PSNES aims to raise the entire region's profile as a sustainability innovator and to establish it as a credible brand to help win competitive awards through ARRA and future federal policies. Likewise, the **Washington (D.C.)** Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is using its long-term goals as a framework to shape a cohesive package out its various allocations from and applications to such separate ARRA programs as the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)'s Fixed Guideway Modernization, Transit Capital Assistance, and Transit Investments for Greenhouse Gas and Energy Reduction (TIGGER) programs; the Department of Transportation (DOT)'s Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program; the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s Diesel Reduction Program; the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)'s Public Transportation Security Assistance program; and the Department of Justice (DOJ)'s Community-Oriented Policing Services program.[33]

- **Catalyzes market and private investment.** Another hallmark of ARRA's most creative urban implementation projects is their prolific, creative use of private-sector partnerships to enlist the market in support of progressive end. Projects in the cities of Chicago and Seattle epitomize this. To multiply the return on federal and local investment, the City of **Chicago's** new Multi-family Energy Retrofit Program draws on multi-sector collaboration, with an emphasis on private-sector involvement supported by public and nonprofit resources. In partnership with the mayor's office and the city's environment and community development agencies, JP Morgan Chase, Community Investment Corporation, the Clinton Climate Initiative, and Enterprise Community Partners are all playing important roles in outreach, identifying potential participants, raising capital, contributing to a loan loss reserve pool, or financing facilitation and technical assistance.[34] In **Seattle** the city has partnered with two regional utilities—Puget Sound Energy and Seattle City Light—to provide

5,000 home energy audits in 18 months, financed by a community development finance institution (CDFI) that will operate a revolving loan fund seeded by EECBG dollars.[35]

- **Employs information management, data, and benchmarking to maximize performance.** Finally, many of ARRA's most sophisticated urban implementation initiatives are intensely focused on using information to optimize performance. In **Chicago**, data and metrics help drive CNT's work. To inform the short-term EECBG guidance that it provides to each community, CNT prepares for each one a local energy profile consisting of basic energy consumption data, a building sector breakdown, and a matrix of energy efficiency strategies by community type. Over the long-run, CNT expects to be the lead in mapping the market for energy efficiency demands and creating uniform performance indicators on energy savings, emissions reductions, cost-effectiveness, and economic impact.[36] In **Flagstaff, AZ**, a synchronized city-county retrofit program includes sophisticated plans for tracking the performance of the energy efficiency measures implemented. Utilizing a web-based tracking mechanism that feeds information to and from local utilities, new city and county EE programs will collect energy consumption data from each participating household, including electricity, gas, and water usage, the equivalent in greenhouse gas emissions, and utility dollar costs. Pre- and post-retrofit tracking of monthly and accumulated data will establish a solid baseline for measuring progress, improving the service, enabling cost analysis as well as quantification of the impact of energy efficiency improvements.

In short, city and suburban leaders in a number of places—who toil on the front lines of America's current economic crisis—are emerging as key leaders in the push to maximize the impact of the recovery act. Against many odds, they are striving to deploy ARRA's programs in support of carefully developed regional visions. At a time of budget stress, they are seeking to mix and match and leverage recovery funds to multiply their value and enhance the return on the nation's investment. As they do, they are grappling with some of the most fundamental flaws of federal urban policy and in doing so are beginning to work out the outlines of the next round of far-sighted metropolitan practice.

IV. IMPLEMENTING ARRA: INITIAL GLIMPSES OF THE FIRST INNOVATORS

So what can be said about the initial labors of some of metropolitan America's most precocious and creative local ARRA implementers?

Clearly, care should be taken not to over-interpret the initial achievements of a very early, partial, and informal selection of novel implementation collaboratives.

As of this writing, a number of notable ARRA competitive applications are still outstanding, with a prominent exception being the Neighborhood Stabilization Program Round 2 (NSP2), which had a deadline of July 17, 2009.[37] The Department of Transportation's major TIGER grant applications are not due until mid-September, with disbursements expected in February 2010.[38] Cabinet agencies have not even released requests for proposals for the EECBG competitive funds and the Race to the Top funds.[39] The so-called "green jobs" grants most relevant for local governments have application deadlines set for September.[40]

With deadlines several months away, few of the more creative implementers have completed even the design phase of their projects. And where they have advanced far, their work concentrates in particular areas where the available resources and criteria are clear. More creative, less formula-driven implementation work in areas like education and health has yet to really begin.

In view of that, most of what can be said about the implementers' work with federal policies in the real world of metropolitan America remains partial and tentative.

Still, it is possible to say a number of things about the experiences of some of the "gazelles" of creative ARRA implementation. What follows are a few observations, beginning with two notes about what is working well in ARRA, where it exists:

- **Flexible rules yield creativity.** To be sure, the need for fast action in assembling ARRA led to the use of multiple "business-as-usual" delivery systems, the rigidity of which discourages creative implementation. However, the recovery act holds out several significant opportunities for creative metro leaders to craft novel projects. Most notable in this connection is the frequency with which ARRA's sizable energy efficiency and conservation grant program—the EECBG, funded to the tune of $3.2 billion—turns up in innovative local implementation plans.[41] This program is much-praised by local leaders for the discretion it allows to grantees to determine their own goals and strategies. More than half of the examined projects utilize the program. And for good reason: More than 80 percent of the EECBG's dollars are allocated according to the formulas specified in the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA), which directs 68 percent of funds to local and county governments. Local governments may use the funds to reduce fossil fuel emissions, reduce total energy use, and improve energy efficiency in transportation, buildings, and other sectors. In fact, EISA lists no fewer than 14 ways that local governments can fulfill the goals of the law, including the catch-all category of "any other appropriate activity determined by the secretary," and notes that localities must take into account the work of neighboring jurisdictions when they draw up their plans for reducing energy use.[42] Moreover, the program does not require an elaborate or burdensome process for local governments to receive their funds.[43] It is no wonder, then, that the underlying law's flexibility and its call for improved coordination among energy-sector actors has made the grant a frequent element in metropolitan

creativity and collaboration. It could be that some of the other more flexible programs in ARRA—such as DOT's TIGER or DOL's Pathways out of Poverty—will also spawn such creative problem-solving. Together these programs may approach the ideal of federal policymaking that really does catalyze creative local implementation. That so many work groups are deploying EEBCG money to start up programs designed for the long haul suggests that the other ARRA grants may have a truly transformative effect.

- **Solicitations that welcome collaboration prompt innovation.** Not surprisingly, explicitly calling for collaborative or multijurisdictional applications and rewarding them in the selection process also seems to be working. A case in point is key provisions in the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s NSP2 notice of funding authority that give extra points to multi-jurisdictional applications.[44] Such solicitations have in fact elicited those sorts of innovations, as they have from Chicago's southern suburbs and from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's submission for suburban Washington jurisdictions. And so has similar collaboration resulted from other announcements. Strategic partnerships are coalescing in Kansas City and Washington in the transit realm prompted by TIGER and in Kansas City and Flagstaff prompted by the Department of Labor (DOL)'s Pathways Out of Poverty program.[45] DOL's Energy Training Partnerships may prompt more of such collaborative implementation.

But those are initial overarching federal policy observations. Surveying the nature of the community initiatives more closely yields a number of other impressions about what is working in metropolitan America to foment innovation:

- **Places that tend to innovate are innovating again.** Creativity breeds creativity, it seems, when it comes to innovative ARRA implementation schemes. In this respect, the initial collection of urban innovations suggests that places with strong track records of urban innovation have been best able to take advantage of the opportunities ARRA offers. The Bay Area Regional Recovery Workplan, for example, was put together by the Bay Areas Council Economic Institute, which has emerged as a trusted broker of regional consensus thanks to its history of providing fact-based analysis to inform regional economic growth issues.[46] Seattle and the Puget Sound have long been innovators when it comes to sustainability issues, with dedicated public offices and initiatives to address environmental concerns and a regional culture primed to embrace new green initiatives.[47] Likewise, the Chicago area is blessed with many regionally-oriented actors that have extensive experience in organizing multiple players to support key regional initiatives. Selected examples include the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the regional MPO responsible for broad, overarching cross-sector, cross-issue coordinating; the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC), a business-oriented civic organization that assists and informs local actions; the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus that bring the region's different mayors to one table; and the CNT, which uses data and metrics to build on-the-ground program capacity.[48] And in Kansas City, the regional MPO—MARC—has long been distinguished as an informed, experienced, and capable organizer in carrying through complicated regional projects, such as developing and updating the area's transportation and transit plans, coordinating efforts to create over 1,000 miles of greenways and trails, and building a coalition of older suburbs to address their own common concerns.[49] The upshot: Places with preexisting regional capacity have been better able to design creative schemes for utilizing ARRA.

- **Grounding recovery projects in long-run visioning and planning advances creativity by providing a framework for aligning activities.** It helps to have a preexisting plan, in this respect. Given the complexity and "sprawl" of ARRA's 350 varied spending or tax provisions as well as the need to choose among numerous possible projects, having a regional strategy in place appears to enable locales to "pick their spots" and prioritize. When ARRA came down, it helped that Seattle, Chicago, and Flagstaff already had in place plans focused on energy efficiency that allowed them to move adeptly to design ways to effectively deploy stimulus funds. In Memphis, broad consensus around a new city-county framework to guide recovery and other spending around game-changing goals came relatively smoothly given a well-supported private sector plan developed by key business leaders two years before that focused on similar transformative aims for economic prosperity.[50] And in the Wichita region, a preexisting economic development initiative funded by the Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) program has provided a ready platform for seeking and applying for potential ARRA resources relevant to growing the region's emerging medical devices specialization.[51] In each case, having a standing vision and not having to start from scratch has sped localities' ability to set an ARRA response strategy and sharpened application development.

- **Strong leadership matters—and it can come in multiple forms.** Having a plan matters, but so does visionary, dogged, and capable leadership, whether in the form of animating individuals or strong, anchoring institutions. Dynamic individuals played a key role in Kansas City, Puget Sound, and Memphis. Kansas City's Green Impact Zone was very much the brainchild of Rep. Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO), who quickly sold it to local and regional leaders.[52] Puget Sound New Energy Solutions was largely shaped by charismatic King County executives like Ron Sims, now Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.[53] And in Memphis, the City of Choice Blueprint is being advanced by trusted city and county officials with longstanding relationships across the city-county line and so a special ability to weave together priorities and funding flows.[54] But strong leadership from institutions also matters—maybe even more. MPOs are proving catalytic in a number of regions, where they serve as forums for regional planning, sources of institutional capacity and multijurisdictional project-management, and experienced applicants in federal grant processes. Chicago's CMAP, which has been instrumental in promoting inter-jurisdictional cooperation around the NSP1, is doing the same for NSP2 and helping to convene key regional stakeholders for broader ARRA coordination.[55] The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is playing a lead role in helping that metro maximize the flow of stimulus dollars into the region and support effective regional implementation. [56] And in Kansas City, MARC has provided steady organizational, operational, and financial leadership in developing the Green Impact Zone.[57] Cities, for their part, have also been important innovators in serving as early drivers of leading-edge recovery responses, most notably in the area of large-scale energy retrofit programs, like those in Seattle, Chicago, and New York. Similarly, business, civic, and philanthropic organizations and non-profits with a particular technical expertise can be crucial leading actors. In Chicago, a well-regarded, business-oriented civic organization—the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC)—is a key partner in regional initiatives, often complementing the work of other Chicago-area entities, such as the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and CMAP, by bringing resources to bear on developing the technical capacity of local programming to better deliver results on the ground and align with broader regional efforts.[58] For its part, the non-profit CNT has been instrumental in developing a Chicagoland approach for using shorter-term ARRA resources to jump-start moves to build a true regional energy-efficiency system. CNT has helped to drive innovation in the design period by bringing to bear a critical

array of assets, ranging from extensive regional organizing experience to sophisticated analytic capacity.[59]

- **Institutional collaboration is vital.**   Creative implementation often requires weaving together multiple individual recovery programs in support of a common goal. To achieve that almost always requires extensive cooperation among multiple institutions from multiple sectors. And that is why broad inter-organizational participation across multiple sectors is a hallmark of early recovery innovation. Strong urban efforts in Memphis, Seattle, and Chicago illustrate the point. To address its broad suite of 12 economic development priorities, it has proven necessary for the Memphis Blueprint effort to bring together city, county, and school district officials, as well as area business leaders.[60] Likewise, to employ ARRA en route to transforming the entire regional energy system in the Seattle area, the Puget Sound New Energy Solutions initiative found it imperative to involve cities, counties, utilities, and developers.[61] And for its part, CNT in Chicago has found it needed to bring together cities, counties, public housing authorities, weatherization agencies, and other non-profits in working toward its goal of using ARRA to jump-start an ambitious long-term building energy efficiency drive in the region.[62] Only by drawing together the right players from the right sectors can many projects achieve their goals of weaving multiple programs into an integrated initiative.

- **Sometimes new institutions and mechanisms are necessary.** As innovators labor to weave together disparate programs into integrate responses, they sometimes need to establish new organizing mechanisms or intermediaries. New coordinating mechanisms or processes have been crafted in Seattle and San Francisco. PSRC set up a web-based ARRA Clearinghouse to facilitate self-organizing among regional stakeholders to facilitate speedier "matching" of potential partners interested in jointly applying for stimulus funding of projects of regional significance.[63] Likewise, the Bay Area Council Economic Institute devised a disciplined, transparent, and high-velocity project selection process that between March and June accepted nearly 500 varied project proposals through its website and fashioned them into a compelling plan through extensive regional consultation.[64] In other places wholly new entities are being formed to carry out and sustain recovery work. On Cape Cod, public and private leaders across 15 towns—concerned about the vulnerability and limitations of their local broadband system—have created a new 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation to oversee the build-out, operation, and maintenance of a robust new regional digital communications network that will draw on ARRA funding for initial deployment but with an eye also to sustaining the system for the long-haul.[65]

- **States can be productive partners, or create hurdles to innovative implementation.** State participation matters, too, given the centrality of states to the working of many ARRA programs. For that reason, a state's own actions can propel implementation innovation, or hinder it. In California, the California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency (BT&H) established a constructive framework for innovation by inviting each California region to develop its own Economic Recovery Workplan to help the state identify the best prospects for expending ARRA resources efficiently and effectively.[66] The Bay Area Council Economic Institute (BACEI) took full advantage of that opportunity but the state's invitation started the process. By contrast, Kansas City's Green Impact Zone would very much welcome more state-level support and could really benefit from state stimulus allocations and any help to ensure that it does not miss any important state application deadlines.[67]

- **Innovation seems to thrive when participation is not forced or mandatory but voluntary, incentivized, and established with significant outreach to build buy-in.** Given the importance of collaboration to innovation, a number of ARRA implementation projects have been built through non-mandatory, bottom-up organizing. Participation in the Bay Area Workplan selection process was not mandatory and allowed individual entities to also apply for state stimulus dollars on their own.[68] PSRC's ARRA Clearinghouse and other organizing efforts are purposefully designed to encourage bottom-up organizing without adding a layer of top-down bureaucracy.[69] And in Chicago, CNT is both advising individual municipalities on strategies for using their formula EECBG allocations (and trying to align them as appropriate) while encouraging them to consider joint applications for the competitive EECBG awards.[70]

In this fashion—notwithstanding the many difficulties ARRA presents to creative local implementers—innovation is occurring, and it has certain traits. Where it is flourishing, it takes advantage of programmatic flexibility. Where it is succeeding, it draws on past experience and capacity, gains strength from the existence of a regional vision, and profits from strong leadership. In addition, prolific institutional collaboration, multiple partnerships, and broad, transparent inclusiveness all seem to help. In these ways, in some places, on some themes, metropolitan leaders are working steadily to craft innovative—and sometimes transformative—recovery responses out of ARRA's inflexible array of disparate programs. Little recognized, their work is essential and should be fostered.

V. IMPLEMENTING ARRA: INITIAL AGENDAS FOR EMPOWERING THE INNOVATORS

ARRA would have to be radically overhauled if it were to truly maximize urban innovation in its implementation.

More funding flows would need to be channeled directly to regional and local entities like MPOs, cities, and counties. Greater discretion—and flexibilities—would need to be conveyed to municipalities. Likewise, a more innovation-friendly recovery package would explicitly encourage the "joining up" of programs, whether by providing flexible rules or providing agencies broad waiver authority to reconcile separate programs.

Beyond that, a more catalytic ARRA would offer more competitive grants and other solicitations that explicitly requested multi-jurisdictional, multi-sectoral responses—and it would link those to a broader vision of accountability that emphasized the achievement of true outcomes rather than narrow rule compliance.

Unfortunately, though, ARRA cannot be radically reconfigured in service of local innovation. Institutionalized by statute, standing formulas, and rules, very little of the structure, fragmentation, and rigidity of the existing act can be altered now that it stands as law.[71] Moreover, sorting out what changes can be made in the administration of particular programs requires meticulous item-by-item discussion.

And yet, while detailed policy comment lies beyond the scope of this brief, the statutory and administrative hurdles with which ARRA's urban innovators contend merit a few suggestions of the sort

of federal support—moral and other—that could better nurture the cause of local innovation as ARRA's implementation proceeds.

At least three modest initial responses would help significantly:

The White House and cabinet agencies should explicitly promote innovative local implementation. The first response is simple. Words and gestures matter; so does moral support. Therefore, the Obama administration should employ the bully pulpit to explicitly and prominently affirm the value of creative, integrated, regionalist implementation of ARRA. To date, the administration's signal-sending on recovery has overemphasized cautions against waste, fraud, and abuse and underemphasized calls for high-quality, creative implementation. This has had a chilling effect on states and localities, and discouraged creative efforts to work around ARRA's limitations to deliver strong results and long-term benefits. To change that dynamic, the White House and key cabinet secretaries should change the tone. Along with affirming the need for a scrupulous use of the public's dollars, the administration should send clear signals that it also values experimentation, creative efforts to maximize the impact of ARRA programs, and innovation. A presidential statement or Office of Management and Budget directive articulating a more integrated, flexible, and performance-driven vision of ARRA implementation could be most helpful here. So could a concerted effort by the administration to identify and highlight exemplary local innovation in order to catalyze more of it.

The Obama administration, Congress, and the philanthropic community should seek to foster the hard work of innovation with additional support for organizing efforts, creative administration, and active technical support. Crafting integrated, catalytic, performance-oriented ARRA projects is hard. Weaving ARRA's rigid, disparate programs into something coherent requires much more time and administrative effort than simply executing single programs mechanically. And yet, little or no stimulus resources are now available to support the organizing efforts needed to working out new, more catalytic responses. As a result, innovators like MARC and CNT are frequently left footing the bill for the valuable services they are providing in coordinating the Green Impact Zone or conducting the pre-planning and assessments to build a Chicago-region energy efficiency system of long-term value. In a word, they are uncompensated for their extra labors. All of which argues for the provision to innovators of modest added resources to help local collaboratives defray some of the costs of research, organizing project planning, grant application, and start-up associated with creative implementation. Such a provision could come from Congress, agencies' discretionary resources, or the philanthropic community. Providing this sort of boost might entail simply allowing winning, but not yet funded, grant recipients to do some modest pre-award spending of resources, where appropriate. But in any event a modest pool of support-funding or gap-financing for leading-edge ARRA projects would be an investment well made. This type of pool or loan fund would stimulate innovation by complementing verbal encouragement with material support.

The Obama administration, grant makers, and other relevant organizations should facilitate network building to disseminate learning and innovation in a structured way. Finally, the White House, federal agencies, grantmakers, and the private sector should collaborate with metro innovators to create a physical and virtual metro innovations forum among urban communities, local officials and federal agencies. Aimed at maximizing the impact of ARRA, the new forum could be tasked very specifically with fostering innovation in metro areas; identifying and disseminating best practices in ARRA implementation; identifying needed policy adjustments; and forging a new model of governance and partnership between the federal government and metro areas. At present, much creative work is going on in isolation, with little exchange between urban peers and minimal contact with federal officials. By bringing online a focused metro innovations network, the cause of recovery would gain a potentially

powerful learning community that could at once build local capacity, spread innovation, and educate the federal government on needed change. Such a network could deliver or complement the sort of active technical assistance that the philanthropic coalition Living Cities or the parallel Emerald City Collaborative have been providing recently for cities designing building retrofit projects.[72] Such a forum could facilitate direct contacts between innovators and between innovators and federal officials. Along the way, the forum could become an important center for reform work aimed at pulling down some of the federal barriers that impede local ARRA implementation and innovation. In this way, the nation would gain something it badly needs: an effective way to reveal, disseminate, and roll into a national movement the cross-boundary innovation that is now taking place in individual metros or particular program areas.

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At the end of the day, the success of the recovery act will depend on how well it helps leaders in American metropolitan areas respond to the pain being visited on communities in the current recession.

Happily, while "transformation" was not really the true goal of ARRA, a new cadre of determined leaders in metropolitan America is pressing to deploy the impressive resources of the recovery act in creative, innovative ways. Supporting and multiplying their work should be a top priority of federal recovery implementation going forward.

APPENDIX A.
SELECTED EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM DESIGNS FOR POTENTIALLY INNOVATIVE ARRA IMPLEMENTATION

City, metro, state	Initiative	Scale	Lead entity	ARRA focus (selected)	Long-term vision	Multi-jurisdiction, Multi-sector	Integrated solutions	Catalyze private markets	Information, data, benchmarks	Project descriptions
Bay Area, CA	Guiding state stimulus spending	Regional	State + regional nonprofit	NSP2, Transit, Broadband	×	×	×			Nine-county effort organizing stimulus proposals across the region into a comprehensive strategy addressing long-term regional priorities while creating near-term jobs and growth /www.bayeconfor.org/recovery/index.html
Bay Area, CA	Accelerating high-speed rail plans	3-county region	Regional transit agency	High-speed rail	×	×				Consensus-driven regional plan that would deliver track and station upgrades necessary for high-speed rail but also have stand-alone utility for improving the existing train system www.mtc.ca.gov/news/info/hsr.htm
California	Building green workforce region-wide	State	State agency	WIA		×	×			Regionally-based public-private partnerships promoting green workforce training for at-risk youth. Includes service and educational requirements www.californiavolunteers.org/index.php/GreenJobsCorps/
Chicago	Coordinating energy efficiency region-wide	7-county region	Regional nonprofit	EECBG, SEP, WAP	×	×	×		×	Nonprofit-led program using stimulus funds to push short-term retrofits and lay the foundation for a long-term Chicago-region energy sustainability strategy
Chicago	Coordinating inter-suburban recovery	Multi-suburb	Civic organization	NSP2, EECBG, SEP, WAP	×	×	×		×	Collaboration of 17 towns aims to link and align multiple stimulus funding streams with NSP1 resources to promote green, transit-friendly neighborhood stabilization www.metroplanning.org/articleDetail.asp?objectID=4816&keyword=tocci
Chicago	Expanding retrofits with private financing	City	City agency	EECBG	×	×		×		Enlists private energy service companies and bank financing to deliver retrofits to low-income residents of large multi-family rental buildings
Denver	Streamlining access to ARRA information	Region	Regional economic development organization	Broadband, Smart Grid, tax and loan incentives		×				Collaborative web project organizing information on business-related stimulus opportunities to help facilitate quick and effective private sector action on ARRA implementation www.stimuluscolorado.org/
Flagstaff, AZ	Linking green recovery goals	City + County	City + County	EECBG		×	×		×	City-county partnership expanding residential energy efficiency services to low-moderate income households while promoting job development
Kansas City	Targeting ARRA for neighborhood uplift	Urban zone	MPO	EECBG, TIGER, STP, Justice Assistance	×		×		×	Municipal partnership concentrating multiple ARRA grants on an underprivileged inner-city "Green Zone" in the interest of revitalization www.marc.org/archives/greenimpactDC.htm
Memphis	Advancing joint city-county recovery	City + Urban county	City + County	CDBG, NSP2, Public Housing, Early Head Start	×	×	×		×	City-county-business partnership which has agreed upon the top 12 game-changing priorities for economic development in the region's "urban core"

City, metro, state	Initiative	Scale	Lead entity	ARRA focus (selected)	Long-term vision	Multi-jurisdiction, Multi-sector	Integrated solutions	Catalyze private markets	Information, data, benchmarks	Project descriptions
New York	Greening buildings citywide	City	City	EECBG	×			×		Pays for mandated retrofits for large buildings with a $16 million EECBG-funded direct lending program. Engages relevant parties in identifying needed workforce training improvements
New York	Green homes and green jobs	State	State and nonprofit	EECBG, Pathways out of Poverty	×	×	×		×	Proposed state revolving loan fund for regionally based energy retrofits, complemented by nonprofit organizing for green workforce training www.centerforworkingfamilies.info/cleanenergygreenjobs/GHGJNY.pdf
Philadelphia	Regional Green Jobs Training	Metro	City	WIA	×	×				Collaborative venture between various regional stakeholders to stimulate green workforce training and link it to local employment opportunities
Puget Sound, WA	Scaling up regional sustainability	Multiple cities + counties	County	EECBG, Clean Cities, Smart Grid	×	×	×			Partnership between local governments and utilities to foster creative regional energy sustainability solutions, especially potentially catalytic demonstration projects
Puget Sound, WA	Facilitating regional ARRA applications	4-county area	MPO	ARPA-E, NSP2, Health IT			×			Innovative web-based tools and regular stakeholder meetings to facilitates partnerships and joint applications and stem unnecessary duplicative efforts www.prosperitypartnership.org/recovery.htm
Seattle	Partnering for citywide retrofits	City	City	EECBG	×	×		×	×	Comprehensive residential retrofit program that partners with utilities and nonprofits. Uses $1.2 million in EECBG to seed a revolving loan fund to pay for audits and retrofits www.seattle.gov/environment/GBtaskforce.htm
South-east Mass./ Cape Cod	Advancing inter- and intra-region connectivity	Region	Nonprofit/ community college	Broadband	×	×		×		Public-private partnership featuring 15 municipal governments and institutions to install 225 miles of fiber optic cable and build a shared, multi-purpose regional data center www.opencape.com/
Washington D.C.	Strategically selecting ARRA transit projects	5-county, 6-city zone	Transit Agency	TIGER, TIGGER, transit funds	×		×			New, agency-wide, structured process to select high-impact, ready-to-go projects for stimulus funding and drive future capital needs decisions www.wmata.com/stimulus/projects.cfm
Washington D.C.	Regional NSP2 strategy	4 counties + 2 cities	COG	NSP2	×	×				Joint application from six D.C. suburban jurisdictions for NSP2 funds to strategically target ARRA fund, conduct bulk acquisition/rehab, and provide homebuying financial assistance www.mwcog.org/publications/recovery/nsp2.asp
Wichita, KS	ARRA planning for a new industry cluster	10-county region	University + Hospital system	NSF, NIH funds	×	×				Pre-existing WIRED plans to develop an emerging medical devices industry cluster provide a ready platform for seeking and applying potential ARRA funds

Source: Brookings Institution

NOTES

[1] This is a cardinal tenet of the Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings' *Blueprint for American Prosperity*. See, for example, Alan Berube, "MetroNation: How U.S. Metropolitan Areas Fuel Prosperity" (Washington: Brookings, 2007) and Mark Muro and others , "MetroPolicy: Shaping a New Federal Partnership for a Metropolitan Nation" (Washington: Brookings, 2008). See, also, an unpublished memorandum for the Metro Program by Michael Porter, November 12, 2007.

[2] See Mark Muro and others, "Metro Potential in ARRA: A Preliminary Assessment of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act from a Metropolitan Perspective" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2009). For background on the "legacy" systems that compose the bulk of the federal program delivery system see Muro and others, "MetroPolicy."

[3] Christina Romer, "The Case for Fiscal Stimulus: The Likely Effects of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act." Remarks presented at the University of Chicago, February 27, 2009.

[4] President Obama has repeatedly promised that the stimulus would help "transform" the economy and "modernize the nation's infrastructure." See, for example, the president's March 20, 2009 memo, "Memorandum for Heads of Executive Offices and Agencies," available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Memorandum-for-the-Heads-of-Executive-Departments-and-Agencies-3-20-09/ Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood frequently says that stimulus funding will "transform intercity transportation in America." See "Statement of U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood On President Obama's Signing of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act," February 17, 2009, available at http://www.dot.gov/affairs/dot2009.htm And Education Sec. Arne Duncan has frequently said that the administration views the stimulus bill as a rare chance to put lasting reforms in place and "lay the groundwork for a generation of education reforms." See Libby Quaid, "Schools to begin receiving economic stimulus money," *The Guardian*, April 1, 2009. Available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/8433818 The Biden quote comes from a June, 2009 Cabinet meeting.

[5] For background on Brookings' *Blueprint for American Prosperity* see www.brookings.edu/projects/blueprint.aspx See, especially, Berube, "MetroNation" and Muro and others, "MetroPolicy."

[6] Ibid.

[7] See Muro and others, "MetroPolicy." To identify key characteristics of high-performance organization "MetroPolicy" drew upon a broad review of recent business management, public administration, and governance studies literature.

[8] The argument of this passage draws on Mark Muro and others, "Metro Potential in ARRA.".

[9] The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), (H.R. 1-1).

[10] As President Obama stated in his first weekly address as president, on January 24, 2009, "[I]f we do not act boldly and swiftly, a bad situation could become dramatically worse." Available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/president-obama-delivers-your-weekly-address/ Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Peter Orszag was equally forceful on the need not just to enact legislation rapidly, but to disburse the funds from the federal Treasury with haste. In a January 27 letter to House Appropriations Chairman David Obey, Orszag wrote: "[I]t is critical that we jump-start job creation with a direct fiscal boost that will lift the nation out of this deep recession." See Peter Orszag, Letter to Chairman David Obey, January 27, 2009. Available at http://majorityleader.gov/docUploads/OrszagHouseRecovery012709-Obey.pdf

[11] Christina Romer, "The Case for Fiscal Stimulus."

[12] U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Recovery Act: States' and Localities" Current and Planned Uses of Funds While Facing Fiscal Stresses," GAO-09-829 (Washington, 2009). Available at http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09829.pdf

[13] Muro and others, "Metro Potential in ARRA."

[14] See Muro and others, "Metro Potential in ARRA." The largest share of the infrastructure funds in the recovery package ($53 billion) is directed to transportation infrastructure, and more than half of that (some $27.5 billion) is being distributed under either the existing STP formula or each state's share of the highway obligation limitation for FY 2008, with as little as 20

percent of the state's funding required to pass through to metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and other local areas. See also HIS Global Insight, "Surface Transportation Infrastructure and Metro Areas" (Lexington, MA, 2009)

[15] See Muro and others, "Metro Potential in ARRA." For discussion of the compartmentalized nature of federal programs in general see Muro and others, "MetroPolicy."

[16] Personal correspondence with MaryJean Ryan, City of Seattle, July 2009.

[17] Information as a driver of performance is an important priority of Brookings' *Blueprint for American Prosperity.* See Muro and others, "MetroPolicy." More importantly, the Office of Management and Budget and its Director Peter Orszag have been strongly advocating for the use of transparency and accountability--including systematic measurement, benchmarking, evaluation, and learning—as a crucial prods to high-quality government. See, for example Peter Orszag, "Building Rigorous Evidence to Drive Policy," June 8, 2009, a blog post available at
www.whitehouse.gov/omb/blog/09/06/08/BuildingRigorousEvidencetoDrivePolicy/
  and Peter Orszag, "Planning for the President's Fiscal Year 2011 Budget and Performance Plans," Memorandum for the Heads of Department and Agencies, June 11, 2009, available at
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/memoranda_fy2009/m09-20.pdf   In the first note Orszag calls for the fostering of a "culture of learning" across the federal government in which investments get "smarter" through transparency, rigorous data collection, evaluation, and learning. In the second he challenges all federal agencies to develop a limited number of "high-priority performance goals" against which quantifiable "performance outcomes can be clearly evaluated" in a timely fashion.

[18] A number of accounts as well as conversations with local implementers, highlight the heavy burden of completing multiple grant applications and complying with detailed reporting requirements. See, for example, Tom Curry, "Local officials Scramble for Stimulus Cash," MSNBC, May 5, 2009.

[19] The fiscal toll of the recession on state and local budgets has been widely reported. See Lucy Dadayan and Donald J. Boyd, "April Is the Cruelest Month: Personal Income Tax Revenues Portend Deepening Trouble for Many States." (Albany: Rockefeller Institute, 2009). Available at www.rockinst.org/pdf/government_finance/state_revenue_report/2009-06-18-state_revenue_flash.pdf Reports of layoffs come from local governments across the country, both large and small. For a compendium of these reports from nearly 100 cities as well as fiscal discussion see Tom Cochran, "City Responses to Recession-Driven Budget Shortfalls," memo, U.S. Conference of Mayors, June 13, 2009.

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[21] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Coordinating Inter-Suburban Recovery: ARRA Initiatives Across Chicago's South Suburbs" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2009). Available at
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[22] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Targeting ARRA for Neighborhood Uplift: Kansas City's Green Impact Zone" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2009). Available at www.brookings.edu/metro/implementing_ARRA.aspx

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[24] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Facilitating Regional Stimulus Applications: Puget Sound's ARRA Coordination" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2009). Available at www.brookings.edu/metro/implementing_ARRA.aspx

[25] More information is available on the OpenCape Corporation website at www.opencape.com

[26] More information on the multi-jurisdictional NSP2 application by Washington D.C. suburbs is available on the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's website: www.mwcog.org/publications/recovery/nsp2.asp

[27] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Stimulus Planning for a New Industry Cluster: South Central Kansas' Center of Innovation for Biomaterials in Orthopaedic Research." (Washington: Brookings Institution, forthcoming).

[28] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Coordinating Energy Efficiency Region-Wide: The Chicago Area's Building Energy Efficiency System" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2009). Available at www.brookings.edu/metro/implementing_ARRA.aspx

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[32] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Scaling Up for Regional Sustainability: Puget Sound New Energy Solutions" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2009). Available at www.brookings.edu/metro/implementing_ARRA.aspx

[33] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Strategically Selecting Stimulus Transit Projects."

[34] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Expanding Retrofits with Private Financing: Chicago's Multi-Family Energy Retrofit Program" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2009). Available at www.brookings.edu/metro/implementing_ARRA.aspx

[35] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Partnering for Citywide Retrofits."

[36] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Coordinating Energy Efficiency Region-Wide."

[37] The deadline for NSP2 applications was July 17, 2009; awardees will be contacted no later than December 1, 2009. See www.hud.gov/recovery/nsp2-nofa.pdf

[38] TIGER's deadline for applications is September 15, 2009; grant awardees will be announced no later than February 17, 2010. See http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-14262.pdf

[39] No details have even been announced on the EECBG competitive grants. But the formula fund application deadline has been extended to August 10, 2009. See www.eecbg.energy.gov/ The situation of the Race to the Top fund is sketchier. Latest reporting has RFP coming out Oct 2009. See www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/implementation.html The official request for proposals won't be issued until October, with a Dec. 1 deadline for states to submit applications. Announcement of winning grants won't be made until next February. DOE originally said 10 percent of Race grants would be issued late this year, with the remaining 90 percent going out next spring. The 10-90 split apparently has been dropped. But, in addition to the Dec. 1 deadline, states also will have an opportunity to apply in June or July 2010. There's apparently no word yet on how the total $4.3 billion in Race grants may be divided among the Dec. 1 and 2010 applicants.

[40] The Department of Labor green jobs grants are broken up into several categories, with different deadlines. Programs for which localities are eligible include $150 million in Pathways out of Poverty grants, (deadline: September 29, 2009)) and the Energy Training Partnership Grants ($100 million total), which have a deadline September 4,./2009. See www.doleta.gov/grants/find_grants.cfm

[41] ARRA, Division A, Title IV, Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (H.R. 1-24). See

[42] 42 U.S.C. 17151 et seq,; Title V, Subtitle E of Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007.

[43] Applicants must provide: 1) a summary of goals and objectives, with timetable and discussion of relation to existing energy, climate or related strategies; 2) the proposed implementation plan, including summary of activities and how they support goals and objectives; 3) a description of how local plans take into account plans and activities of adjacent local government units that also receive EECBG funds; 4) a description of how the locality will share information with state; 5) an explanation of how the plan's benefits will extend beyond the funding period; 6) and auditing and monitoring procedures (required by ARRA). This fairly simply and straightforward request is in marked contrast to the detailed reporting and planning requirements for other

block grant programs, such as CDBG, which requires some 50 separate data points, plans, and explanations (see US Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Basically CDBG" Chapter 2, Activity Selection and Implementation, exibit 2-1, available at www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/training/basicallycdbgmanual/chapter2.pdf).

[44] See U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Notice Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, 2009." Available at http://www.hud.gov/recovery/nsp2-nofa.pdf

[45] For the TIGER NOFA see U.S. Department of Transportation, "Notice of Funding Availability for Supplemental Discretionary Grants for Capital Investments in Surface Transportation Infrastructure Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act." Available at http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-14262.pdf For the Pathways out of Poverty NOFA see U.S. Department of Labor, "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009; Notice of Availability of Funds and Solicitation for Grant Applications for Pathways Out of Poverty." Available at www.doleta.gov/grants/pdf/SGA-DFA-PY-08-19.pdf

[46] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Guiding State Stimulus Spending."

[47] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Scaling Up for Regional Sustainability."

[48] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Coordinating Inter-Suburban Recovery," and Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Coordinating Energy Efficiency Region-Wide."

[49] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Targeting ARRA for Neighborhood Uplift."

[50] Among these preexisting frameworks was an earlier private-sector effort called Memphis Fast Forward by a coalition of the area's largest businesses, Memphis Tomorrow. Having this private-sector framework as a source for the new City of Choice and ARRA efforts helped to speed the process of bringing the business community on board. Source: Authors' conversations with Robert Lipscomb, Executive Director, Memphis Housing Authority; Director, Housing and Community Development City of Memphis.

[51] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Stimulus Planning for a New Industry Cluster."

[52] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Targeting ARRA for Neighborhood Uplift."

[53] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Scaling Up for Regional Sustainability."

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[55] More information about CMAP's regional response to ARRA is available on the CMAP website at www.cmap.illinois.gov/blog.aspx?blogid=872.

[56] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Facilitating Regional Stimulus Applications."

[57] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Targeting ARRA for Neighborhood Uplift."

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[64] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Guiding State Stimulus Spending."

[65] More information is available on the OpenCape Corporation website at www.opencape.com

[66] More information about the State of California's role in promoting regional recovery workplans is available on the website for the Business Transportation, & Housing Agency at www.business.ca.gov/page.asp?o=cabth&s=econdev&p=352690.

[67] Authors' conversation with David Warm, executive director, Mid-America Regional Council, June 24, 2009.

[68] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Guiding State Stimulus Spending."

[69] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Facilitating Regional Stimulus Applications."

[70] Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, "Coordinating Energy Efficiency Region-Wide."

[71] What can't be changed is the authorizing legislation of any program funded by ARRA and any specific requirements, directions in ARRA itself, and accompanying joint committee report.

[72] Living Cities held a "green boot camp" convening for a dozen cities on May 31–June 2, 2009. See http://greenbootcamp.livingcities.org/ The Emerald City Collaborative is currently working with another group of cities technical assistance and information sharing. See http://emeraldcities.us/070309/ECC%20FAQ%2020090704.pdf

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The Metropolitan Policy Program Leadership Council

The *Blueprint* initiative is supported and informed by a network of leaders who strive every day to create the kind of healthy and vibrant communities that form the foundation of the U.S. economy. The Metropolitan Policy Program Leadership Council—a bipartisan network of individual, corporate, and philanthropic investors—comes from a broad array of metropolitan areas around the nation. Council members provide us financial support but, more importantly, are true intellectual and strategic partners in the *Blueprint*. While many of these leaders act globally, they retain a commitment to the vitality of their local and regional communities, a rare blend that makes their engagement even more valuable. To learn more about the members of our Leadership Council, please visit www.blueprintprosperity.org

The Implementing ARRA Series

America's current economic crisis is not only a national crisis. It is also a metropolitan crisis. Therefore, it is critical to monitor the progress of creative metropolitan leaders who are leveraging the myriad resources provided by the $787 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). To that end, the Metropolitan Policy Program's Implementing ARRA Series is tracking the implementation work of metropolitan leaders, assessing their progress and struggles, and extracting from the innovators' experiences ideas for short- and long-term federal policy reforms. Ultimately it is hoped the series will serve as a resource for best-practice exchange among regions and a source of ideas for designing the next generation of metro-friendly federal policies.

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