

---

AMERICAN CITY PLANNING DIRECTORS' COUNCIL

AMERICAN CITY QUALITY FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 10363 • Portland, Maine 04104 • 207-712-6333

E-mail: Websites: or

---



# American City Quality News

January 2009

Volume 09-1

## In This Issue

### **\$1 Billion for Comprehensive City Planning and a National Urban Development Plan for Better Quality Communities Requested**

President-elect Obama and the new Congressional leadership have been asked to allocate \$1 billion toward a national Better Quality Communities program as part of the economic stimulus/infrastructure package. The funds, less than one percent of the estimated \$700 billion package, would be used for comprehensive planning assistance to state, county, and municipal planning agencies. This would insure all infrastructure and job stimulus projects would be consistent with updated city and regional comprehensive development plans to better accommodate new growth. The US Census projects the population will grow by 34.5 million by the year 2020 and 100 million within twenty to thirty years.

Letters to the President-elect, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nevada) and House Speaker Pelosi (D-California) noted the need for better quality comprehensive city planning, decisions, design, development and action to improve city quality. They said:

Allocating stimulus package funds to build community development related infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water and sewer systems, and public facilities is vital to create jobs. However, given the need to accommodate over 100 million new population growth in the next 20 -30 years, we must start now to insure any infrastructure investment is coordinated with updated and adopted community development plans and overall state and federal urban development policies; a national inter-governmental and private sector Urban Development Plan for Better Quality Communities. A plan that must reflect a better quality of planning, decision-making, design, development, management, and action to improve our urban and regional development in balance with nature and other economic development and environmental protection policies. Not only should this involve coordinating land use development policies with legally adopted municipal land use/zoning ordinances, but also coordinating them with mass public transportation, highway, water, sewer, and other public facility and land conservation investments.

Also the federal investments must provide for an actual cash "return on investment" to the public, as well as an actual public "value re-capture" financing structure just as would be required by a private sector lender or investor. Far too long have citizens funded public capital improvement projects without participating in the actual financial benefits or windfall profits captured by a few fortunate private property owners. If citizens via their governments would have re-captured land appreciation and related development values created by prior public investments in highway and public transit station improvements, we could have built free public transit in many major cities in

America and continue to operate them profitably; i.e., without subsidy.

## **Support Planning and Action for Better Quality Communities - Theme for April 2009 American City Quality Month.**



*National League of Cities  
President Kathleen Novak  
seeks improved Federal/City  
partnership to improve city quality.*

Greater support is required for better quality planning and action to achieve better quality communities. This is the April 2009 theme for the 21st annual national American City Quality Month. Comprehensive city planning is required even more in tough economic times with scarce resources. Population growth is still occurring, urban areas are still sprawling, affordable housing is still in short supply, traffic congestion continues, working farms and open space are still being lost, energy and resources are still being wasted, and the climate's temperature continues to warm. Now more than ever, we need adopted city plans with new vision, new leadership and commitment to improve the quality of our cities and regions. This is the challenge.

We have new Presidential leadership. Now we need real federal commitment to plan and act immediately for a better tomorrow. We have the planning professionals, vision and techniques. Now we need the leadership, consensus, decisions and action. It is a fact, in the private sector, any quality improvement program for a product or service first requires senior executive commitment. Otherwise it will fail. The same applies in the public sector. Yet not only is executive commitment required, so is legislative and general public commitment. To get this commitment requires a new vision for better quality communities. It requires compromise, common interest, and support. We have the professional comprehensive city planners and vision. What we need is the support and commitment. This requires raising public awareness about the status and future potential for our cities. It requires better quality comprehensive city planning, decision-making, design, development, management and action. This is the purpose of American City Quality Month.

Accordingly, city planning directors, who lead local efforts, and their staffs now are planning and organizing events to educate, promote, achieve consensus, obtain decisions, and coordinate action to improve their cities. Events range from ACQM proclamation ceremonies, testimonials by mayors, legislators, planning commissioners and citizens as to the need and value of planning and action to improve cities. In addition events include: meetings to discuss development options and plans, public hearings to adopt plans, professional exchanges with local ACQM co-sponsoring organizations, teach-ins at local schools, ribbon cutting programs to demonstrate the benefits of prior planning, awards programs, poster and essay contests, exhibits, celebrations, issuing press releases, and more.

Also this year an improved national poster will be available for local use. Copies will be distributed in February to all local city planning departments and also sent to President Obama, US Senators, Representatives, Governors and others. See for additional background and ideas. *Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels, will be serving as President of the US Conference of Mayors, a co-sponsor of the annual, national American City Quality Month in April 2009.*



## ***New American City Quality Month Co-Sponsors***

In addition to our terrific ongoing American City Quality Month co-sponsors: National League of Cities, US Conference of Mayors, Urban Land Institute, National Building Museum, and Partners for Livable Communities;

Please welcome our new co-sponsors:

City Planning and Management Division of the American Planning Association  
American Public Transportation Association  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
Mayor's Institute on City Design  
Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals  
Eco-Home Network

In addition, thanks to Howard J. Hall, President, Village Developers LLC and Advisory Board Member for his ongoing generous support.

Thanks to everyone for their support and participation.

Other co-sponsors are welcome. Please for information.

## ***Hayes and Gastil Co-Chair April 2009 American City Quality Month***



*James Hayes reviews downtown development plan for Northglenn, Colorado.*

James Hayes, AICP, Director of Planning and Development for the City of Northglenn, Colorado, and Raymond Gastil, AICP, Planning Director for the City of Seattle, Washington, are the co-chairs for the April 2009 American City Quality Month program.

Jim has been working closely with Northglenn's Mayor and President of the National League of Cities, Kathleen Novak and Ray with US Conference of Mayors' soon to be President of the US Conference of Mayors. NLC and COM are co-sponsors of ACQM. Work has centered on raising public awareness about the status and future potential of America's cities, as well as promoting better quality city planning, decisions, design, development, management and action to improve city quality.

This year's theme focuses on the need to support better planning and action for better quality communities.

Jim has served as Northglenn's City Planning Director since September 2007 as well as Acting City Manager and Finance Director for periods in 2008. Previously he worked as a Land Planning Manager with Pulte Homes in Sarasota, Florida as well as Planning Manager for Adams County, Colorado. He holds a Master of City Planning degree from Georgia Institute of Technology (1995) and a BS in Community and Regional Planning from Iowa State University (1992). Jim also serves on the Colorado APA Executive Board.

Ray Gastil was appointed Seattle's Planning Director in the Department of Planning and Development in August 2008. Previously he served as Planning Director for Manhattan in the New York City Department of City Planning. Ray's planning strengths include urban waterfronts, transit station areas, and the public realm; areas of particular importance to Seattle today. Some projects Ray worked on in NYC include the West Chelsea/Highline Rezoning, Upper West Side Rezoning, 125th Street Corridor Rezoning, Hudson Yards, East River Waterfront, Lower East Side/East Village Rezoning, Western Rail Yards guidelines, Privately Owned Public Space, and the Manhattanville in West Harlem rezoning associated with Columbia University's campus plan. Several of these project included regulatory approaches to encouraging affordable housing, arts, and active retail uses. In Seattle, Ray is part of the department's and Mayor Nickels' team and is contributing to and expanding Seattle's ongoing initiatives to integrate urban design excellence and sustainability. Prior to serving as Manhattan's Planning Director, he was executive director of Van Alen Institute: Projects in Public Architecture. There he worked closely with state and city governments, community groups, and universities as well as international organizations to raise the role of planning and design in regenerating New York City and other cities. Among the projects he led there was a design competition for a new TKTS Booth and park in the middle of Times Square, which just opened this fall. Before that, Ray was Director of the Regional Design Program for the Regional Plan Association, where his work focused on growth in rail-served communities in the tri-state area in and around NYC. Ray earned a BA in comparative literature from Yale University and a Master of Architecture from Princeton University.

Our thanks to Jim and Ray for their support.

*Raymond Gastil, Planning Director for the City of Seattle, Washington*



### ***City of Chicago Divides City Planning Functions***

Effective January 1, 2009, the Mayor announced the division of the current City Planning Department functions into two departments as follows:

Department of Zoning and Land Use headed by Commissioner Patti Scudiero. Functions will include: staffing the City Planning Commission and plan reviews.

Department of Community Development headed by Commissioner Christine Raguso. Functions will include: neighborhood planning, housing development and functions performed by the prior Mayor's Office of Workforce Housing.

Prior City Planning Department Commissioner Randall Arnold is no longer with the City.

## ***Chairman's Comment by Gerry Mylroie, AICP***



Now is the time for change. We have a new President, and new Congress. But not only a new president. We have a President who understands community planning and needs. A President who wanted to be an architect and so has an appreciation for city planning and urban design. So now is a unique opportunity to get urban issues back on the nation's agenda. It is a time to achieve real support for comprehensive city and regional planning, as well as inter-governmental and private sector coordination to improve the quality of our cities.

It is a time to initiate a Better Quality Communities program and adopt a real National Urban Development Plan. It is a time to finally link land use, transportation, housing, energy conservation, economic development and environmental protection efforts. The past lack of quality plans and coordination has led to urban sprawl, waste and pollution. Now is the time to change and do better. Business as usual is not good enough. While Mayors and Governors are calling for \$1 trillion of investment, it is critical a small, but vital amount be allocated to comprehensive planning and oversight. One billion dollars in funding is a very small investment to protect the public interest. Also it is a way to begin to insure a real cash return on investment of public funds rather than private sector windfall profits. If citizens provide the equity for infrastructure, then citizens deserve a real return on investment; no more give away funding with private windfall profits.

This will insure the public knows what will be developed and the resulting benefits. This Better Quality Communities program is just as, if not more, important than putting a man on the Moon or Mars, and requires Presidential and Congressional leadership and commitment to comprehensive city planning and implementation to make it reality.

Let us hear your comments.

Also, if you can believe it, this will be the 21st year since city planning directors' agreed to initiate the annual, national American City Quality Month. Given the goal of improving the quality of cities, it was felt a week then month long program would enable national focus on the status and future of cities and enable promoting better quality city planning, design, decisions, development, management and action. Further it was felt there would be greater public and private sector community involvement in ACQM if the focus was on promoting the goal of professional city planning i.e., improving city quality, rather than city planning itself. In addition, city planning directors agreed to lead this effort. And while it was felt this is what we are doing every day, having a nation "month long" program would elevate the attention.

Over the years, ACQM has grown. Every year more cities participate. This year we have several new co-sponsors including the City Planning and Management Division of the American Planning Association. (See sponsors article.) (For your information, national APA was invited in 1989 to participate, but has continued to decline. Finally a couple of years ago, it initiated National Community Planning Month.) ACQM is another opportunity to educate, discuss, agree, act and celebrate accomplishment. Initiate local programs. Meet with other organizations. Meet with citizens and students. There is everything to be gained and much to be lost. Seize the moment. Improving the quality of our cities is the goal of city planning. This is a unique time to really achieve results. But promoting city planning, and achieving results requires your participation and your support. Corporations spend millions of dollars on branding, marketing their products and services and lobbying. We do not have those resources. However with your involvement in cooperation with

your colleagues, we can have results. Please contact ACQF today and ask or tell us how you would like to help.  
Thank you.

**NEW Web Site Address -**

The ACQF website has been changed to or .

Continually updated information as well as photos of city planning directors, staffs, mayors, planning boards, and projects are always welcome.  
Please forward to

**Dues payment now accepted online.**

You can now pay your ACQF membership dues online at

Please forward any name, title, email address changes to .

**American City Quality Foundation Mission:**

American City Quality Foundation, Inc. was founded by city planning directors and colleagues to improve the quality of America's cities by raising public awareness about the status and future of our cities and promoting better quality city planning, design, management and action to improve cities. Members include city planning directors across America as well as prior directors, colleagues, and other public officials, private sector business and civic leaders. Activities include:

- An information exchange program (city planning reports, etc.) among the nation's city planning directors/civic leaders;
- Publishing and distributing the American City Quality Newsletter;  
Sponsoring American City Quality Month in conjunction with other public and private sponsors;
- And Holding meetings among city planning directors and other public and private officials on city quality issues.

American City Quality Foundation, Inc., is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation incorporated in the State of Delaware. It is funded by the membership and additional private sector support is being sought. All contributions are tax deductible.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: American City Quality Foundation, Inc.

Mail to: American City Quality Foundation, Inc.; P.O. Box 10363; Portland, Maine 04104

Member Dues \$125

## American City Planning Directors' Council

### American City Quality Foundation

### Advisory Board

Gerald R. Mylroie, AICP, Chairman, Portland, Maine

Richard T. Anderson New York City	Richard C. Bernhardt *Nashville	Richard Barth *New York City	George Chapman ** Raleigh	David M. Childs New York City	Michael R. Coker **Dallas	Richard F. Counts **Phoenix	Jack Dangermond Redlands,CA
Richard W. Dineen *Albuquerque	Albert Elias *Tucson	Karyn Gilvarg *New Haven	Charles C. Graves, III *Cincinnati	Maxine Griffith New York **Philadelphia	Reginald Griffith Washington, D.C.	S. Gail Goldberg *Los Angeles	Howard J. Hall Wells, Maine
William Healy *Colorado Springs	Con Howe **Los Angeles	Steven N. Jensen *Omaha	Alan Kreditor Los Angeles	Robert H. Lurcott Dana Point, CA **Pittsburgh	Andrew S. Lynn **New York City	Hunter Morrison **Cleveland	Ellen McCarthy ** Washington, D.C.
Stephen R. McClary *Columbus	Douglas B. Coach, III *Baltimore	Theresa O'Donnell *Dallas	Arnold Randall *Chicago	Sergio Rodriguez **Miami	Yolanda W. Rodriguez *New Orleans	Nannette Rodriguez-Pena *San Juan	Richard M. Rosan Washington, D.C.
Kairos Shen *Boston	Rollin Stanley Silver Spring, MD **St. Louis	Debra W. Stark *Phoenix	Margo Wheeler *Las Vegas	Jack Whitney *Virginia Beach	Nick P. Yovino *Fresno	John H.C. Barron, Jr. Esq. Secretary Washington, D.C.	* City Planning Director  ** Former Director

### Upcoming Events:

**January 22-24, 2009** 8th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference: Building Safe, Healthy and Livable Communities in Albuquerque, NM. FMI:

**March 14-18, 2009** National League of Cities Congressional City Conference, Washington, D.C.; .

**April 1-4, 2009** National American City Quality Month, 21st annual, American City Planning Directors' Council;

**April 25-29, 2009** American Planning Association National Planning Conference in Minneapolis. FMI:

**June 12-16, 2009** US Conference of Mayors Convention, Providence, RI;

**November 3-6, 2009** Urban Land Institute Fall Convention, San Francisco;

**November 10-14, 2009** National League of Cities Convention, San Antonio, TX;

**Newsletter Production**

*Editor:* Gerald R. Mylroie, AICP

*Assistant:* Betsy Stevens

The ***American City Quality News*** is published by the American City Quality Foundation as an information source for city and civic leader planners. City profiles, plans and activities promoting American City Quality are especially solicited. Articles, photographs or announcements for publication are requested to be sent to: American City Quality Foundation, Inc., P. O. Box 10363, Portland, Maine 04104; 207.712.6333; e-mail address:

Improving Americas' Cities by Better City Planning, Decisions, Design,  
Development, Management and Action.