

NEWS&*views*

Economic Development Division

SUMMER 2007

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News & Views, published quarterly, is the newsletter of the Economic Development Division of the American Planning Association. We welcome articles, letters, suggestions and information regarding workshops and other educational opportunities for economic development professionals. Please forward your submissions by email to our Editor, Terry Holzheimer (address below).

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West Allis, Wisconsin Uses a Public-Private Partnership in a Successful Industrial Redevelopment

by Kristi Johnson, Planner II, City of West Allis

Whitnall-Summit Co. and the City of West Allis have formed an economic development partnership that has catalyzed redevelopment and brought creative financing to the revitalization of the former Allis-Chalmers Mfg. Co. complex. The 166-acre former industrial user, Allis-Chalmers Mfg. Co., went bankrupt in 1987 at the cost thousands of jobs. From 1979 to 1989, West Allis lost 8,500 manufacturing jobs and experienced a decline of 10,000 residents, while the average wage within the City dropped 25 percent. In the last three years, the site has dramatically increased in value, due to the collaboration between Whitnall-Summit Co., and the City of West Allis. The redevelopment is an excellent

(continued on page 3)

WINNER
2007 EDD
Planning Award



Summit Place 44,000 sq. ft. entryway construction.

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR



As the “dog days” of summer are upon us, here’s hoping you’ve had an enjoyable and restful time this season. Gearing up for the fall, the Economic Development Division is busy making plans for next year’s APA conference. We’ll be sponsoring a variety of informative sessions, and look forward to seeing you in Las Vegas.

As always, we would welcome your input and suggestions on how best to serve you, our members. We still are seeking someone to head up efforts for current updates on research and cutting edge innovations in economic development to post on our website periodically — not a huge time requirement, and the postings would be beneficial to us all. Let me know if you’re interested!

On another note, we need to extend a warm welcome to Terry Holzheimer, our incoming *News & Views* editor. Send him your ideas for articles, notes or calendar events to include in the next issue. We also need to recognize and thank Ned Murray for his wonderful work over the last few years as the Immediate Past Editor.

By the end of the fall, we’ll be soliciting responses to our two annual awards. The first is for the Excellence in Economic Development award to an innovative community project, and the Student Scholarship competition for a graduate student focusing on economic development planning. Note the article in this issue from our 2007 recipient of the Excellence in Economic Development Award, the City of West Allis. ■■■

Enjoy the rest of your summer,

— Rhonda Phillips, AICP
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SUBMIT!

Deadline for the Fall Issue of

NEWS & views

September 15, 2007

IN THIS ISSUE OF NEWS & VIEWS



You will note a change in this issue of *News & Views* in that Ned Murray is now our Immediate Past Editor. We thank Ned for three years of excellence and lots of hard work. Bravo!!! While new to the editorship, I am not new to the EDD, having served as an officer for five years, currently as the Immediate Past Chair. I pledge to continue the quality of what has been a truly practical tool for planners practicing economic development.

This issue highlights some of the work presented and rewarded at the 2007 APA Annual Conference in Philadelphia. Continuing an EDD tradition, we present an article by our student scholarship winner, Allan Mathew Freyer, on the use of disaster infrastructure initially developed for assistance in recovery from natural disasters as applied to an economic disaster — the loss of jobs in the economy of North Carolina due to globalization (see page 9). We also have an article by our Economic Development Planning Awardee, Kristi Johnson, on

the innovative use of a public-private partnership in the redevelopment of an abandoned industrial site in West Allis, Wisconsin (see page 1). Finally, Karen Gagnon presents the Michigan Cool Cities Initiative, drawn from her blockbuster presentation in the Creative Class session sponsored by the EDD at the conference (see page 12). So, you can get a flavor of the conference even if you were not able to attend.

Remember, the editor does not write the articles in *News & Views*, the EDD members do! Please be willing to share experiences, best practices, case studies, research, etc. All of our content is original; we rely on our practitioner and academic members for our material. I will certainly be available to help you, so don’t be shy about submitting something for publication. ■■■

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WEST ALLIS, CONT. FROM P. 1

example of an exceptional contribution to the economic vitality of Wisconsin and West Allis through the use of leadership, creativity, public-private partnerships, effort, and investment. The synergy between the City and Whitnall-Summit Co. has significantly impacted the West Allis community as well as the economic vitality of Southeastern Wisconsin.

Whitnall-Summit Co., in partnership with the City of West Allis, is converting vacant deteriorated industrial warehouse space into a first-class office complex. To date, over \$75 million of private and public dollars have been invested. The current success of the partnership has allowed this project to excel beyond expectations. Of the nearly 650,000 square feet of built-out space, 620,000 square feet has been leased and occupied, supporting over 3,000 jobs. Anthem BlueCross BlueShield of Wisconsin relocated their corporate offices to Summit Place in the summer of 2006. The insurance company occupies 160,000



Summit Place 44,000 sq. ft. entryway completed.

square feet of space and has brought 900 family-supporting jobs to West Allis.

Mr. Carlson, President of Whitnall-Summit Co., a successful industrialist and true visionary, often jokingly states that after 20 years of working for Allis-Chalmers

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WEST ALLIS, CONT. FROM P. 3

Mfg. Co. as a research engineer, he retired to start working. Following the 1987 bankruptcy, he purchased much of the former Allis-Chalmers complex to provide cold industrial storage. In late 2002, the City of West Allis offered Whitnall-Summit Co. a \$350,000

Wisconsin Depart-

ment of Commerce Brownfield Grant to convert the facility into a first-class office complex which included a 44,000-square-foot addition to the front of the site.

This financial leveraging was just the beginning of a public-private partnership between the City of West Allis and Whitnall-Summit Co., and a strong cooperation between the City and other governmental entities. To ensure the project's successful execution, the City demonstrated a significant commitment of financial resources by adopting a loan and grant package totaling \$7,225,000 in a Tax Incremental Financing (TIF)



750-stall parking structure.

District as financing incentives to build out industrial space and to develop parking facilities. Both parties were working to preserve the historical structures of the manufacturing complex, and the City also designated the complex under state law a "Local Historic Landmark" thereby

allowing the developer to use Historic Building Codes, saving the developer in excess of \$250,000.

The City negotiated an agreement, which required the A-C Reorganization Trust to contribute \$1.1 million for the environmental restoration of the abandoned, underutilized former Allis-Chalmers utility corridor site. With this funding and a WDNR Urban Nonpoint Source and Storm Water grant of \$518,000 the City was able to enhance the storm water quality leaving the site and to make the residual land available to allow Whitnall

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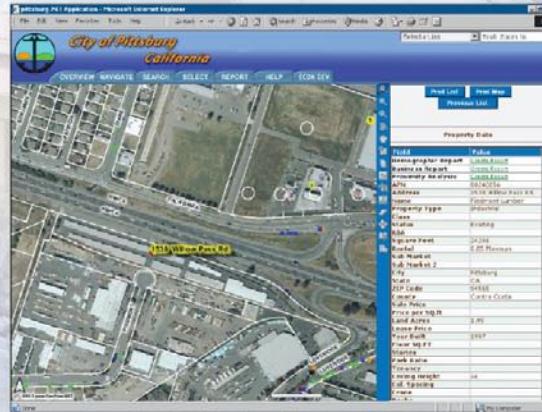
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WEST ALLIS, CONT. FROM P. 4



Open manufacturing storage bays.

Summit to develop a 750-vehicle parking structure.

The City of West Allis also offered Tax Increment Financing for the construction of a five-story, 750-vehicle parking structure. In addition, the City provided access to \$3.8 million in New Market Tax Credits (NMTC) through the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) and the Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority (WHEDA). The tax credit



Inserting floors into the old manufacturing bays.

allocations helped the project net about \$3 million in equity funds for the project. Finally, in 2004, the City of West Allis issued a \$2.0 million G.O. Bond and loaned the proceeds to Whitnall Summit when additional bank financing was not available, thus ultimately inducing an additional \$50 million in private financing. In 2005, the City loaned Whitnall Summit an additional \$2.5 million

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A photograph of a modern, multi-story office building with a light-colored facade and many windows. The building appears to be in an urban or downtown setting, with other buildings visible in the background under a clear sky.

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WEST ALLIS, CONT. FROM P. 6



New office space.



to begin the revitalization of the last vacant building which stimulated an additional \$13.5 million in private financing.

The value of the site has grown dramatically ahead of schedule. In 2004, the Summit Place property was valued at \$6.2 million. In 2005, that value escalated to \$35.8 million and to \$52 million in 2006. With the completion of the last building, the City projects a \$75 million taxable value for 2007.

The Summit Place office complex is now the second largest office building in the metro-Milwaukee area. The project not only revitalizes a vacant industrial facility that once employed thousands, but brings good family-supporting jobs to a city (population 61,000) whose

status was that of a decaying industrial town. The private and public partnership's strength not only provides opportunity, but has also been a major catalyst in the City's revitalization efforts

in the neighboring Downtown Business Improvement District and the adjacent \$85 million Six Points/Farmers Market neighborhood redevelopment project.

The former Allis-Chalmers Mfg. Co. complex offered buildings with open, high bay facilities, built to support and contains 100-ton cranes. The finger-like buildings were used during the Allis-Chalmers era for tool and die work and assembly of larger steam powered equipment. The developer inserted floors into the large open spaces and also incorporated the massive industrial construction that was used in the early 1900s. The new interior architecture exposes the original steel beams and brick walls and offers first-class office space.

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WEST ALLIS, CONT. FROM P. 7



Above and far right:
new office space.
Right: Rupena's Café.



The innovative revitalization provided the City of West Allis to effectively leverage its existing infrastructure. Summit Place is able to offer competitive lease rates with a site that has convenient access to the interstate system, established public transportation routes, commuter bike paths, and family neighborhoods. These amenities help attract growing institutions like Sanford-Brown College and companies such as Merge Technologies, a medical company that focuses on digital imagery and records, Brookdale Senior Living, Pitney Bowes, Metro Milwaukee Ballet Center, and Associa-

tion of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM). Merge Technologies has brought over 100 advanced technology jobs to the site and the company is considering adding another 150 jobs with an average salary of \$80,000.

In 2006, the City of West Allis celebrated its 100th birthday and Mayor Jeannette Bell and members of the Common Council commented that Mr. Carlson and the Summit Place project have initiated a new phase of economic growth for our com-

munity. The industrial giants of West Allis's history are no more, but the City of West Allis and Whitnall-Summit Co. are partnering towards a model of "re-urbanization" in the highest and best style. It is a great example of what can be done in other old, rust belt locations throughout the United States. ■

Kristi Johnson is a Planner with the City of West Allis, Wisconsin. Contact Kristi at (414) 302-8463 or kjohnson@ci.west-allis.wi.us. For more information, see www.summitplaceoffices.com and www.ci.west-allis.wi.us.



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A Nonprofit Response to Economic Disasters: The Resources to Recover Initiative

by Allan Matthew Freyer

On July 31, 2003, the Pillowtex plant in Kannapolis, NC closed its doors, laying off over 4,000 workers. The notion of the “economic disaster” was born, resulting in a high unemployment rate, a significant loss of local revenue, and emergency service and workforce development needs that overwhelm local resources. Drawing from plans and experiences with natural disasters, North Carolina developed a specific program model, known as Resources to Recover (R2R) to address this economic disaster which calls on nonprofits to play a critical role as labor market intermediaries, connecting dislocated workers to the workforce development resources they need for long-term recovery.

The North Carolina Natural Disaster Response Model

In explicitly calling for an “economic VOAD,” the stakeholders in the economic recovery process recognized the important role played by North Carolina Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (NC VOAD) in natural disaster response, and as such, saw the organization as a natural model for developing a nonprofit response program for economic disasters. In essence, NC VOAD functions as an intermediary at both the state and local levels between the state’s Department of Emergency Management (DEM) and the legions of nonprofits and congregations involved in disaster response. The state chapter of a broader national umbrella organization formed in aftermath of Hurricane Camille, NC VOAD manages the disaster relief and response activities of its several thousand members; it does not deliver any relief services directly, but rather coordinates the service delivery activities of its members. Organizationally, NC VOAD exists as a 501(c)3 nonprofit that maintains lists of dues-paying members across the state involved in disaster response. Tightly integrated into the state’s disaster response system, the organization sits on

the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) that plans and coordinates the State’s disaster response strategy.

Despite certain differences between natural disasters and economic disasters, the VOAD for natural disasters provides a useful model for beginning to conceptualize an “economic VOAD.” The NC VOAD offers two key

lessons to the development of the proposed nonprofit labor market intermediary for economic disasters. First, NC VOAD’s direct integration into the state’s emergency response system allows for both nonprofits and government

agencies to respond together seamlessly and in concert when disasters strike, thus reducing organizational transaction costs. Secondly, through regular meetings at the state and local levels, the natural disaster program has institutionalized the conversation space so critical for the coordination and strategic planning essential for disaster response. Accordingly, Resources to Recover (R2R) should incorporate both of these organizational strengths in its program design.

Nonprofits have a critical role to play in coping with economic disasters.

Resources to Recover (R2R)

Using Pillowtex and NC VOAD as conceptual guides, the Resources to Recover program will act as a labor market intermediary in the following fashion. First, R2R will create an institutionalized “space for conversation” between dislocated workers, the workforce development system, and nonprofits through the organizational networking of these actors at both the state level (the NC R2R) and the county level (Local R2R). Like NC VOAD, neither the NC R2R nor the Local R2R will actually deliver services; rather, they both coordinate the service delivery activities of its members. For a detailed description of the specific roles and responsibilities proposed for each partner, see Table 1.

As a standalone nonprofit entity at the state level, the NC R2R will create networks between the state’s

(continued next page)

Table 1. Roles and Responsibilities for Resources to Recover

Entity	Pre-Disaster	Post-Disaster
NC R2R Partnership (State Level) <i>Members: statewide non-profit organizations; non-profit networks with local affiliates; faith networks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds annual meeting with statewide networks/non-profits. • Facilitates annual training/technical assistance for non-profit and faith-based organizations in helping dislocated workers. • Facilitates annual "Conditions Briefing" to explore risks to the economy and the need for early planning. • Disseminates training manual to local workforce boards. • NC R2R serves on Workforce Commission or as resource. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps facilitates Local R2R meetings for nonprofit/voluntary organizations. • Facilitates State Response Meeting with state networks. • Mobilizes state networks. • Representative of NC R2R participates as a member or resource person of state response efforts (Economic Transition Response Team), if activated.
Local R2R Partnership <i>Members: Nonprofit organizations/voluntary organizations that want to help dislocated workers – can be grassroots or part of larger network</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local R2R meets quarterly for training and Conditions Briefings provided by Workforce Area staff and NC R2R. • The Local R2R will have a Local Community Coordinator and one or more Local Interfaith Coordinators. • Coordinates between these organizations and the state R2R and local workforce board. • Invites local organizations to participate in the R2R. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefed by workforce development director on needs/issues. • Receives last-minute technical assistance from workforce director and state R2R. • Designs and implements non-profit service delivery plans that complement workforce plans. • Organizes dissemination of Pocket and Resource Guides. • Liases between these organizations and the state R2R, the local workforce boards, and local affiliates of state interfaith networks.
Local Workforce Board <i>Led by the workforce development director, drawing on full board where needed.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps track of voluntary organizations through SHARE Network and CARELine. • Disseminates Dislocated Worker Training Manuals. • Hosts annual training/technical assistance for local R2R members on the workforce system and how to help dislocated workers in coordination with workforce development services. • Hosts Conditions Briefing, possibly in partnership with local economic development organization and/or ESC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosts R2R meeting. • Briefs R2R on nature and impact of disaster and needs from the workforce development perspective. • Keeps in contact with local R2R throughout the disaster about needs, feedback on nonprofit services, etc.

NONPROFIT RESPONSE TO ECONOMIC DISASTERS, CONT. FROM P. 10

workforce development agencies and relevant state-level nonprofit umbrella organizations like the United Way. When economic disaster strikes a community, the NC R2R will coordinate with the relevant public agencies and engage with relevant state-level nonprofit networks to mobilize their local affiliates. Resembling the integration of NC VOAD into the emergency management system, this type of organizational networking creates significant conversational space for coordination between the workforce agencies and nonprofits — a key component in an effective labor market intermediary. Additionally, before and after a disaster, the NC R2R will play a critical role in providing training and technical assistance to local nonprofits involved with the Local R2Rs, and as part of this mission will prepare and disseminate two documents:

- The Dislocated Worker Training Manual for Nonprofits to prepare nonprofit organizations for the unique circumstances of dislocated workers, the specialized services they require, and background information on the workforce agencies; and
- The Dislocated Worker Pocket Guide, which provides dislocated workers with a short and readable list of phone numbers of critical service delivery providers.

The Manual and the Pocket Guide provide a “No-Wrong Doors approach” to serving dislocated workers — whatever organization they walk into can point them where they need to go. Once guided by the manual or by a nonprofit’s outreach, the dislocated worker can be brought into the workforce development system through the single-access point of a county’s JobLink. This kind of networking reduces organizational transaction costs and strengthens the ability of the workforce system to reach dislocated workers.

At the county level, the Local R2R will serve as the local coordinating body for the county’s nonprofit members, in effect creating and institutionalizing networks of nonprofits. In collaboration with relevant state agencies, Local R2Rs would conduct outreach to bring relevant, local organizations to the table, including the local chapters of statewide relief organizations mobilized by the NC R2R. Prior to an economic disaster, these organizations meet together quarterly with their workforce development board to discuss planning, develop knowledge, and pursue disaster response training. This type of institutionalized conversational space resembles the capacity of both NC VOAD and the CSC in Kannapolis;

it also highlights the importance of advance planning that proved so effective in responding to Pillowtex.

In the aftermath of an economic disaster, just as NC VOAD convenes an RCC following a natural disaster, the Local R2R will convene a disaster response meeting — conversational space — to brief members on the specifics of the layoff and to coordinate their strategies for connecting workers to the workforce development system. Supported by the work of the state-level NC R2R, this meeting represents the culmination of the Action Agenda’s policy recommendation for an “economic VOAD.” Nonprofits are brought together in their network, implement their plans, coordinate their response, and ensure that dislocated workers have access to the workforce development resources they need for their long-term recovery — the essence of a labor market intermediary.

Conclusions

The Pillowtex example yields a number of general conclusions about the role of nonprofits in economic disaster response efforts. First, nonprofits have a critical role to play in coping with economic disasters by providing the “space for conversation” that allows dislocated workers to learn about and connect with the services offered by the workforce system and other nonprofits. Secondly, just as cost-reducing “conversational space” is formed through inter-firm institutional and relational linkages in geography-based industry clusters, nonprofits can create similar linkages through forming institutionalized networks. In forming these networks, they reduce the key type of costs these organizations face — the loss of time and mission effectiveness caused by inadequate information. This “networking effect” reduces incomplete information and builds organizational capacity for nonprofits and workforce development actors in the same ways that geographical clustering and networking benefits firms. Additionally, this networking effect will help dislocated workers reverse the crippling transaction costs they face in adjusting to their short-term financial situation and long-term recovery through retraining. Nonprofits need to institutionalize these networks by creating an “institutional space” for the conversation to take place — in other words, a regular organizational meeting where representatives from nonprofits and the workforce system can come together to prepare and respond to economic disasters. In this way, nonprofits are able to function as labor market intermediaries, connecting up workers to the training demanded by local industry. ■

Michigan Cool Cities Initiative

by Karen Gagnon, Director

"Eight new homes were built in 2005. This was the first time in 30 years that a permit was pulled to build a new home in this area."

Now that's success! This is one of many exciting stories resulting from the Michigan Cool Cities Initiative. The quote comes from officials with the coastal city of Port Huron, a 2004 Cool Cities Neighborhoods in Progress Award Designee, which is key to Michigan's economy as its Blue Water Bridge links trade between the U.S. and Canada. This Port Huron downtown neighborhood was one of 48 designated a Cool Cities Neighborhood over the past three years.

Michigan Cool Cities is a unique and ambitious statewide initiative that pays attention to creative place-making, land use, sustainability, retention/atraction strategies for talent, and the creative economy. Due in part to the Cool Cities initiative, the 2007 State New Economy Index Report stated that "Michigan's ranking jumped from 34th to 19th in its overall transition away from a smokestack-chasing economy to the New Economy." Michigan's Governor Jennifer M. Granholm responded, "Michigan is putting emphasis on the right things in a big way in order to transform our economy to better compete in the global marketplace."

Governor Granholm began her first term in 2002. She was concerned with the 2000 Census showing that Michigan lost over 43,000 of its population between the ages of 25-34 between the years of 1995-2000. Also recognizing that Michigan has the longest freshwater shoreline in the world and more shoreline in the U.S. except for Alaska, requires the state to protect and preserve its unique environmental assets. The Governor created a bi-partisan Land Use Leadership Council spearheaded by former Governor William Milliken and former Attorney General Frank Kelley. The Council released a report on August 15, 2003, "Michigan's Land, Michi-

gan's Future: Final Report of the Michigan Land Use Leadership Council," that included over 150 recommendations. Preserving our farmlands, focusing on our cities, and building sustainable communities were among the recommendations that would become part of the foundation of the Cool Cities Initiative.

In 2003, the Governor coined the term, "Cool Cities" when she announced that Michigan would help our cities become cool places where people want to live, work, and play to grow the state's economy. Acknowledging

that government cannot create "cool," we surveyed cities and created an online survey targeting college students and alumni receiving an impressive 14,000 responses. The Governor sent letters to more than 270 mayors asking them to form Local Cool City Advisory Groups (LCCAGs) and more than a third were onboard with this concept immediately. The purpose of the LCCAG was to raise the dialogue about supporting and investing in our cities

to a state-wide discussion and to help us identify state tools that would be most effective in their city-building efforts. Mayors were encouraged to be creative and to bring non-traditional folks to the table with traditional economic developers, i.e., youth, artists, representation from the community's diverse population, etc. It was important to build a grassroots effort for the initiative to become the success it is today.

Over the course of a couple of months, approximately 80 LCCAGs were formed throughout the State. A number of the LCCAGs tapped in the resources of existing groups such as their Downtown Development Authority, economic development agency, local arts groups, faith-based, young professions, etc. Simultaneously, the Governor asked one of her Cabinet members, David Hollister, Director, Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth, to spearhead the Cool Cities Initiative.

(continued next page)



MICHIGAN COOL CITIES INITIATIVE, CONT. FROM P. 12

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) were also key partners to launch "Cool Cities" Statewide. MEDC took a lead role in creating the website (www.coolcities.com), the Michigan Cool Cities Initiative online survey, and other aspects of the initiative. The Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs (MCACA), which was part of the Michigan Department of History, Arts & Libraries, adopted a "Cool Cities" theme for its annual December meeting/conference for the next three years to help encourage dialogue and idea sharing at the local and state level.

In 2003, MCACA encouraged and incentivized communities to attend the conference in teams. In addition to a discounted registration fee, several teams would receive a special collaboration meeting with several state agencies allowing them to tap into a wealth of knowledge and resources. These collaboration projects took place in the community bringing key stakeholders together with state staff to talk about their downtown and potential state resources. The keynote speakers at the conference were Bill Strickland, founder of the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild, and Dr. Richard Florida, author of the *Rise of the Creative Class*. The number of conference registrations quadrupled over previous years signifying a rising interest in Cool Cities as cities developed their LCCAGs and other communities came on board.

There was a definite Cool Cities "buzz" going on in Michigan. The economy was greatly challenged with a major shift in automotive manufacturing, which we had been solely reliant on for more than a century. We were losing key population, our nation was at war, the global economy was shifting, and we were being challenged to think creatively and do things differently. This approach to our economic woes resonated with our communities.

When Cool Cities was in its early stages, I was working in DLEG as a legislative analyst and had been asked to assist with organizing and analyzing community survey data. Just like others who heard of the concept — I was excited by this opportunity and quickly became immersed in this initiative eventually becoming the program manager.

By early 2004 we had formed the first state government collaborative group involving representation from all state agencies called the Cool Cities Coordinating Team. The initiative broke the silos that each of our departments once represented and brought together more than 20 departments and agencies working in tandem to achieve one goal of making our cities cool. Representatives from every department from Depart-

ment of Natural Resources to Department of Labor & Economic Growth to Treasury were sitting side by side to problem solve and generate creative concepts and solutions. Our collaborative team revolutionized the way state government did business and became a successful model for other initiatives. We worked with key stakeholders, including our universities, in creating a logic model for Cool Cities and adopted a mission statement: "The Michigan Cool Cities Initiative is an urban strategy to revitalize Michigan's cities by attracting the talent and jobs of the emerging economy. It is a collaborative model for economic engagement and community revitalization."

While we were working on activities that would support the outcomes and impacts we wanted, the Governor, in all her passion and enthusiasm for our cities, announced that Cool Cities would add grant funding to help the communities make their innovative ideas become realities. Cool Cities team members then focused their attention on creating a grant program launching the 2004 Cool City Pilot Program within one month of the Governor's announcement. We weren't aware of any models that we could use as a guide. The Governor had a definite vision of utilizing state resources in a collaborative way to make major impact in our cities. This was an exciting time filled with creativity, passion, and intensity. We had a sense that creating a grant program was real opportunity to create something that would be a true catalyst for change. To properly detail the events that led up to and include the first year of the catalyst grant program would require me to write a book!

The team looked at currently existing programs, funding, and other resources to help grant recipients. We created an innovative Resource Toolbox that combined state grants, loans, tax credits and services. In order to help the community representatives navigate the complexities of state government, we designated State Department Champion and State Neighborhood Champions. These individuals were typically higher-level employees with a great deal of agency knowledge and authority. A State Neighborhood Champion would be assigned to each of the award designees as a liaison between their neighborhood project and the State. Their key role was to help champion the applicant's project to success. Whereas, the Neighborhood Champions were MSHDA Community Development Specialists or MEDC Community Assistance Team Specialists (CAT Team, now located within MSHDA) who focus on community and economic development. Funding for housing, downtown economic development and the arts was

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identified that would be offered as \$100,000 catalyst grants for a neighborhood catalyst project. The catalyst grant funding was split to cover three years of grant offerings. When we put the call out for grant applicants, we asked for neighborhood catalyst projects that showed strength of partnerships, public and private investment, and ones that would truly catalyze and have major impact in the neighborhood. For more detail on the kinds of projects, eligibility, etc., see www.cooldcities.com, then select "Grants & Planning Programs."

We received 151 applications and awarded 19 in July 2004. Based on survey data, we learned that the Cool Cities Neighborhood Award Designation itself was more valuable than the \$100,000 catalyst

grant. Community leaders credit the designation for (re)energizing local stakeholders, increasing community pride, and leveraging other investments. We creatively found a way to expand the program without additional money by including the Main Street program and two planning programs Blueprints for Michigan's Downtowns, and Blueprints for Michigan's Neighborhoods. To date, we have 105 Cool City Neighborhood Award Designations in 75 cities.

Public Policy Associates, Inc. was retained to assist with the evaluation of the Cool Cities Initiative. An Evaluation Advisory Committee was formed of university and business experts to validate and guide

the evaluation plan. A complete evaluation of the Cool Cities Initiative will take a few years; however, there are a number of early successes reported by state staff, stakeholders, and from the Cool Cities communities. I'm currently working on completing project pages for the www.cooldcities.com website that include progress updates and pictures. Many of LCCAGs are still having input in their downtown economic development and the "buzz" of Cool Cities continues with an average of 30 positive Cool Cities-related stories per month in Michigan print media alone.

Cool Cities is more than a grant program. We collaborate with universities, schools, local government, economic and community developers, planners, architects, realtors, business leaders, tourism groups, and so many others.

leaders, tourism groups, and so many others. Some of our plans this year include updating the Resource Toolbox; working with Centers for Regional Excellence (see www.michigan.gov/cre); involving the LCCAGs and young professional groups; creating an assessment tool for our economic growth model T.I.D.E. (Talent – Innovation – Diversity – Environment), and much more. Planners may be particularly interested in checking out the Michigan State University, Land Policy Institute's Smart Growth Readiness Assessment Tool at www.landpolicy.msu.edu/sgrat and their Citizen Planner program at www.citizenplanner.msu.edu. Cool Cities continues to be an exciting and innovative program, so stay tuned! ■

Welcome to Our New Members...

Courtney E. Anderson, AICP	Richmond, VA	Cheri L. Howell	Coeur D Alene, ID	Kathryn Reynolds Perry, AICP	Baton Rouge, LA
Brannyn G. Allen	Valdosta, GA	Myra L.T. Jefferson	Tempe, AZ	Maria L. Picard-ami	El Paso, TX
Tara Buckner, AICP	Saint Louis, MO	Doug Kampe	Ottawa, IL	Albert Raymond	San Antonio, TX
Clair Byrd	Bay Minette, AL	Charles C. Kemper	Charlotte, NC	Steve Scott	Page, AZ
Casey R. Callahan	Annapolis, MD	Dan King	Zumbrota, MN	Christopher R Starra	Lincoln, NE
Jennifer Capone	Arlington, VA	Victoria K. Leslie	Vinton, VA	David A. Stebbins, AICP	Buffalo, NY
Matthew P. Chatfield	Rochester, NY	Kevin Lindeman, AICP	Princeton, IL	James Taurman	Denver, CO
Kimberly Christensen, AICP	El Segundo, CA	Ty E. Livingston	East Peoria, IL	Chris Thomas	Redlands, CA
Nicholas Crite	Chicago, IL	Jonathan H. Lynn	Waycross, GA	Pamela Thompson	Dallas, TX
Valerie Grigg Devis	Olympia, WA	Eduardo J. Martinez	Los Angeles, CA	Judith W. Wegner	Chapel Hill, NC
Gary Edwards	Moberly, MO	Becky Mendez	Deltona, FL	Kyle P. Wilkes	East Lansing, MI
Stephanie Joy Everett	Cincinnati, OH	Emily P. Mitchell	Annapolis, MD	Seth M. Wurzel	Sacramento, CA
Kevin Hamilton	Brigham City, UT	Matthew J. Morris	Clarkdale, AZ	Kate Zanon	Fountain Hills, AZ
Craig Houdeshell	Jupiter, FL	Jane Paul	Los Angeles, CA	Ken Zuiderwaart	Ripon, CA

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

September 24-25, 2007

Reclaiming Vacant Properties
Pittsburgh, PA • www.vacantproperties.org

September 26, 2007

Economic Development Symposium
Kansas City, MO • www.iедconline.org/EDA
Symposia

October 8-9, 2007

Land Development Workshop
Atlanta, GA • www.ul.org

October 16-19, 2007

Development '07: the annual conference for commercial real estate
Atlanta, GA • www.naiop.org/conferences

October 18-21, 2007

ACSP 2007: Building Ladders to the Middle-Class:
Planning for Equitable and Sustainable Prosperity
Milwaukee, WI • www.acsp.org

October 23, 2007

AICP Symposium: Great Places in America
Washington DC • www.planning.org

October 23-26, 2007

2007 ULI Fall Meeting
Las Vegas, NV • www.ul.org

October 24, 2007

2007 ULI Trends Conference
Las Vegas, NV • www.ul.org

December 3-4, 2007

Latin America: Opportunities in Real Estate
Development, Investment, and Finance
Miami, FL • www.ul.org

February 3-5, 2008

Leadership Summit
Orlando, FL • www.iедconline.org

February 13, 2008

Mastering Density –Audio/Web Conference
www.planning.org