

Reimagining Older Industrial Communities

Wednesday, May 18, 2011

Detroit Marriott Renaissance Center

Detroit, Michigan

Sponsored by:

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In the face of dramatic decline, new and emerging strategies are showing promise for transforming communities and enhancing the lives of residents. While there is much to be done to address decades of economic instability, the beginnings of turn-around can be found in pockets across the country. It is now time to consider our cities in their full context, and understand their evolving competitive advantages. It is time to move past failed strategies, to re-imagine our communities, to address regional equity issues, and to fully realize our communities' potential.

Come engage with your peers, and be prepared to re-energize your work as you re-imagine the possibilities of your community. This unique day-long event has been specially designed for:

- Municipal and state government staff
- Elected officials
- Executive directors and managers in housing and community development organizations
- Housing developers
- Economic development practitioners
- Community organizers
- Planners

Join colleagues, peers and partners for a compelling and thought-provoking day of learning as we delve into the latest issues facing the American city. Together, we'll work to better understand critical concerns and opportunities such as:

- Why have past policies and programs failed to address urban decline?
- What factors have contributed to an inequitable distribution of benefits across the metropolitan region?
- What innovative approaches are municipal governments pursuing, and how successful are they turning out to be?
- What is right-sizing and how viable is it?
- How can a neighborhood-based organization balance the slow progress of targeted revitalization work with pressures for high-output productivity?
- How are our roles and relationships changing, and what forms will our partnerships take in the near future?

This day-long symposium will bring together renowned innovators from the policy, private sector and community development fields to explore ideas, and share successful, real-world strategies for working across sectors and traditional neighborhood and municipal boundaries to address community revitalization issues in a proactive, comprehensive and concerted manner.

You'll walk away with the latest thinking on:

- How cities and metropolitan areas are now being reshaped for market competitiveness
- Successful innovation by community development corporations acting at the neighborhood and metropolitan levels.
- The inequitable impacts of development and how communities are responding through metropolitanwide organizing.
- How to balance targeted revitalization and high-output production pressures.
- Innovative alternatives and new partnerships to finance comprehensive approaches to revitalization across metropolitan areas.

The Day's Agenda: Wednesday May 18, 2011

8:30 am – 4:00 pm

WELCOME AND PROGRAM REVIEW

The Honorable Dave Bing, Mayor of Detroit;
George McCarthy, Ford Foundation.

II . PANEL: Post-Industrial Communities: Hard Realities and Reimagined Solutions

How are market, demographic and political forces re-shaping American cities and metropolitan areas? What are metropolitan jurisdictions doing in response? What are the obstacles to effective governance and what are the innovative strategies for success?

III . PANEL: Reimagining the Role of Community Development Organizations

Now that some pioneer community development organizations have turned 50, the field encounters new challenges, and old ones redefined. How are CDCs adapting to this changing reality? What work will they do in the future and how will that work continue to transform them?

IV. LUNCH KEY NOTE: Equity and the Changing Metropolis

Can the American city create and expand opportunity for all? Can we envision a society that is fair and just for all people, where opportunity is not limited by race, ethnicity, gender, or class, where democratic ideals inform social policy, and where all people recognize and embrace the universal responsibility that each person has for the welfare of every other person? And how can we then push to make all of this a reality?

*John Powell – Executive Director, Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, Ohio State University;
Williams Chair in Civil Rights & Civil Liberties at the Moritz College of Law*

V. PANEL: High-Production Expectations and a Targeted Mission Impact : Contradiction or Reconcilable Difference?

We'll explore the tensions between expectations for high levels of production and the slower work of strategic, neighborhood-focused, impact-oriented development. What are the limits of brick-and mortar outputs on regenerating healthy communities, and the challenges of documenting and measuring a CDC's full impact?

VI. PANEL: Re-Making a Community's Image

A positive neighborhood image is cultivated through sound strategies to dispel myths with outsiders, and to reassure residents. Panelists will discuss the transformation of their communities, the challenges they've faced, how they've built a positive community image and the impact this new image has had on residents and external audiences.

VII . PANEL: “Food Deserts”: Community Health and Economic Development

“Food deserts” are areas where residents are constrained in their ability to access affordable nutritious food because they live far from a supermarket. In the US, more than 23.5 million people live in low-income areas with such limited access. The situation is so dire that many are comparing “food justice” to “environmental justice.” Panelists will discuss how their organizations have turned food deserts into an opportunity for community and economic development projects integral to their revitalization efforts — through farmers’ markets, community gardens, and development of commercial real estate for grocery stores.

VIII . CLOSING: A Final Reflection

What does it all mean? What have we learned and how can we use this to make a bigger difference back home?

Hosted by:

NeighborWorks America

NeighborWorks America creates opportunities for people to improve their lives and strengthen their communities by providing access to homeownership and to safe and affordable rental housing. Since 1991, we have assisted nearly 1.4 million low- to moderate-income families with their housing needs. Much of our success is achieved through our support of the NeighborWorks network—more than 230 community development organizations working in more than 4,400 urban, suburban and rural communities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In the last five years, NeighborWorks organizations have generated more than \$16 billion in reinvestment in these communities.

NeighborWorks Training Division

Since 1988, NeighborWorks America’s Training Division has provided intensive core and specialized community development training through its NeighborWorks Training Institutes, regional “place-based” trainings, and e-learning offerings, to more than 25,000 professionals at all levels of experience.