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AMERICAN CITY
QUALITY MONTH
- April 2010 -

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AMERICAN CITY PLANNING DIRECTORS' COUNCIL
AMERICAN CITY QUALITY FOUNDATION

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

E-mail: ACQF@aol.com Websites: www.cityquality.org or www.cityplanningdirectors.org

Press Release

For Immediate Release – February 20, 2010

Contact: Gerald R. Mylroie

207 / 712-6333

ACQF@aol.com

or your City Planning Director at City Hall

American City Quality Month April 2010 and Every Month

Support Planning and Action for Better Quality Communities

Citizens and public and private sector leaders must get involved and support better city and regional planning and action for better quality communities according to National League of Cities President and Mayor of Riverside, California Ronald O. Loveridge in announcing April 2010 as the 23rd annual, national American City Quality Month. “Continuing public concerns about jobs, property tax increases, urban sprawl, sustainability, livability, loss of working farm and conservation land, lack of affordable housing, increasing traffic congestion, and other community issues require getting involved and supporting better planning and action now to improve the quality of our urban and regional areas.”

The nation’s city planning directors see the need for jobs and to redevelop and build new cities and regions to accommodate US Census projected 34.5 million more citizens by the Year 2020 and 100 million within twenty to thirty years. But citizen and public and private sector support for a nationwide Better Quality Communities Plan and Action program is required now according to Gerald R. Mylroie, ACIP, Chairman of the American City Planning Directors’ Council and its American City Quality Foundation. “A nationwide Better Quality Communities Plan and Action program would better guide the billions of dollars of investments required while

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

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insuring taxpayers receive a real financial return on their investment just like a private sector investment and it would immediately create millions of jobs.

“We need higher quality, smarter, greener and sustainable land use patterns and densities, housing, buildings, public transportation, infrastructure, public open spaces, agriculture, industry, renewable energy, environmental protection, and urban design and beautification that reduces municipal operating costs and property taxes and improves the health and well-being of all citizens,” according Mylroie.

This year’s theme, links with what former NCL President and Mayor of Indianapolis, Bart Peterson, said, “We can have better city planning, but unless we have better decision-making, and action, city quality will not improve. More informed elected and appointed officials, legislators, planning commissioners and citizens are needed to participate in the city planning process. Otherwise opportunities will be lost. Now is the time for action. Decision-makers and citizens need to meet with city planners and learn about options for new visions for development and an improved quality of life.”

According the City Planning Director of Boston, Kairos Shen and Riverside, California, Kenneth Gutierrez, co-chairs during the month long observance and beyond, cities across America will be inviting citizens to discuss how quality planning for communities and smart growth will improve cities and regions as well as protect them. Urban sprawl, the opposite of better quality or smart growth, continues to be identified as one of America's biggest concerns by citizens.

American City Quality Month program honorary chair is internationally recognized urban affairs columnist, Neal Peirce with the Citistates Group, Citwire.net, based in Washington, DC. Also Mr. Peirce is the co-author of “Century of the City: No Time to Lose” published by The Rockefeller Foundation and recipient of a UN-Habitat 2009 Scroll of Honor Award.

American City Quality Month is sponsored by the National League of Cities, The US Conference of Mayors, American City Planning Directors’ Council/ American City Quality Foundation, Urban Land Institute, National Building Museum, Partners for Livable Places, City

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Planning and Management Division of the American Planning Association, American Public Transportation Association, Mayors' Institute on City Design, International City/County Management Association, American Society of Landscape Architects, Association of Pedestrian & Bicycle Professionals and Eco-Home Network. See www.cityquality.org for others.

Citizens are urged to contact their city planning director to find out how they can get involved.

In 2009, National League of Cities President and Mayor of Northglenn, Colorado, Kathleen Novak said, "Given our economic crisis, now more than ever we need better planning and action to coordinate our investments and projects so they not only immediately create new jobs, but actually do improve the quality and sustainability of our communities and surrounding regions."

In 2008, National League of Cities President and council member of Madison, Alabama, Cynthia McCullum, said we need, "a better partnership between municipalities and the federal government to better plan and achieve quality communities."

Previously, former National League of Cities President James Hunt, Councilmember, Clarksburg, West Virginia, said, "More can be done via multi-community collaborative programs. Local officials understand the benefits of leveraging resources across communities and collaborating at all levels. Programs can bring together rich, and poor, young and old, educated and uneducated. They increase citizen participation while promoting equal opportunity and fairness."

"Hundreds of millions of taxpayers dollars can be saved annually with better quality city planning and development," said Mylroie. "To achieve this, it is critical to constantly raise public awareness about the status and future of America's cities and demonstrate the need and value of better city planning and action to achieve Quality Communities."

"It is critical we continue to focus national attention on the need to plan for smart growth and achieve quality communities for our citizens," said former National League of Cities President Charlie Lyons.

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Cities will be conducting public meetings to adopt or update their comprehensive city plan including implementation program as well as budgets to improve city quality. Also they will be raising public awareness by adopting proclamations; and holding media events, exhibits and “teach-ins” at local schools. City planners, officials and citizens are talking about changing demographics, local economic and social issues, land use for development and conservation, smart growth concepts, transit oriented development, renewable energy sources, conservation, sustainability and lowering municipal operating costs and property taxes. All are aimed at achieving better quality communities.

Details: For further information, call your city planning director or American City Planning Directors' Council / American City Quality Foundation office at 207-712-6333 or send e-mail to ACQF @ aol.com.

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