



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

American City Quality News

May 2009

Volume 09-2

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"Get Involved - Support Planning and Action for Better Quality Communities"

American City Quality Month - April 2009 - A Success

The April 2009 American City Quality Month was a great success. Cities across America used the annual national program to promote better city planning and action to improve city quality. Lead by city planning directors, they held meetings to adopt or update comprehensive plans and implementation programs, demonstrate beneficial results, and thank City Planning Commissioners for their service.

Nationally, letters and the ACQM poster were sent to President Obama, his staff and Cabinet Secretaries, all US Senators, and Representatives, Governors, and State Municipal League Offices. Additionally, posters were sent to all ACQM sponsors for distribution. Press releases were sent to major media services. Thanks to the National League of Cities the "City Planning Directors Call for a Nationwide Urban and Regional Development Plan for Quality Communities" article was published in the April 21, 2009 edition of NLC's Nation's City Weekly and distributed to Mayors, legislators and city, state and federal officials across America. (See below)

Also thanks to Maine's two US Senators Collins and Snowe, recognition of ACQM appeared in the April 27th and 28th Congressional Record. (See below)

Again, city planning meetings, hearings and workshops were held.

For example, Las Vegas' Planning Board met with the City Council to receive thanks for their work to improve city quality. (see photo) In addition, the City of Portland, Maine held an all day workshop on the future use of the Maine State Pier to accommodate more cruise ships, marine support services for the fishing fleet, restaurants and entertainment businesses and public open space activities. (see photos).

Congressional Statements from Senators Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe

[Congressional Record: April 27, 2009 (Senate)][Page S4748]From the Congressional Record Online via GPO Access [wais.access.gpo.gov][DOCID:cr27ap09-156]

NATIONAL AMERICAN CITY QUALITY MONTH



Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I rise today to recognize April as the 21st Annual National American City Quality Month. Led by the National League of Cities, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the American City Planning Directors' Council/American City Quality Foundation, this valuable program brings together a wide range of public and private partners. Their efforts demonstrate what it takes to build great communities, addressing vital issues to include land use, building design, transportation, parks and recreation, energy efficiency, and environmental protection. City planners across my State of Maine and throughout the Nation are calling on public and private sector leaders to commit to efforts that will lead to better planning, redevelopment and development of our Nation's cities and surrounding regions. This is essential to accommodate U.S. Census projected population growth of 34.5 million by the year 2020 and 100 million within 20 to 30 years. This public-private partnership is necessary to meet the growing need for higher quality, more energy efficient and sustainable housing, buildings, public transportation, infrastructure, agriculture, and industry. I applaud these collaborative efforts to improve urban and rural communities across our Nation. This collaborative planning works. Just a few weeks ago, Forbes magazine named Portland, ME, my State's largest city, as the most livable city in America. In addition, Portland's busy Commercial Street was voted as one of the country's great streets by the American Planning Association. The transformation of Portland did not happen by accident. It is the result of citizens and organizations working together. And American City Quality Month celebrates this effort.

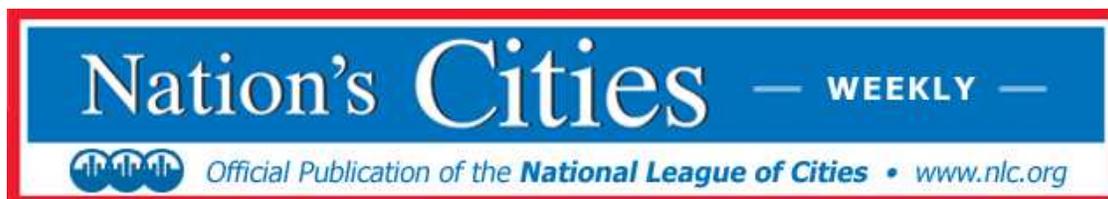
[Congressional Record: April 28, 2009 (Senate)][Page S4800-S4801]From the Congressional Record Online via GPO Access [wais.access.gpo.gov][DOCID:cr28ap09-180]

AMERICAN CITY QUALITY MONTH



Ms. SNOWE. Madam President, I rise today to recognize that the month of April is designated as American City Quality Month. Through the continued efforts of the American City Planning [[Page S4801]] Directors' Council and the American City Quality Foundation, ACQF, the April 2009 theme is appropriately labeled, "Support Planning and Action for Better Quality Communities." For many years the emphasis promoted by the ACQF and its numerous professional organizations and supporters has been to call attention to the vital need for improving American cities through quality planning--via coordinated efforts to produce effective decisions, design, development, management, and action. As our country's population growth projections appear to reach an additional 34 million people by the year 2020, the importance of proper urban planning as it relates

to area surroundings, land conservation, and quality of life becomes a crucial component of the United States' strategy to halt urban sprawl and the waste of both human and fiscal resources. Subsequently, through the devoted work, development, and planning of the ACQF and interested parties, the recognition has surfaced--that coordinated efforts on the part of city, State, and Federal governments, and the private sector need to be exacted more than ever. Such a critical mission must continue until there is mainstream coordination throughout the nation to improve our country's urban settings in terms of cultural, practical, and land conservation amenities. Therefore, through the efforts of the American City Planning Directors' Council, the American City Quality Foundation, and other interested parties, I thank all who have joined together to address the challenges posed by our burgeoning cities, as the integration of efforts has and will continue to provide us with a plan and hope for the future that assures quality growth for our Nation's urban settings. The ACQF's mission toward reaching that goal has secured both the attention and admiration of the American public.



City Planners Call for Nationwide Urban and Regional Development Plan for Quality Communities

Commitment Sought During American City Quality Month April 2009

The nation's city planning directors are asking public and private sector leaders to commit to a Better Quality Communities program and to the preparation, adoption and implementation of a Nationwide Urban and Regional Development Plan. The Plan would be a comprehensive and coordinated public and private sector commitment for better quality city planning, re-development and development of our nation's cities and surrounding regions to accommodate US Census projected population growth of 34.5 million by the Year 2020 and 100 million within twenty to thirty years. The Plan would guide the billions of dollars of investments required while insuring taxpayers receive a real financial return on their investment just like a private sector investment and 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 to the American City Planning Directors' Council chairman, Gerald R. Mylroie, AICP.

No such nationwide Plan exists now. Business as usual policies that continue urban sprawl and higher municipal operating expenses and property taxes are unacceptable. Physical development planning policies and development must be viewed differently. Issues like land use, energy source and conservation, school locations, building codes, transportation and housing must be linked for more effective and efficient planning and management. A better coordinated intergovernmental and private sector approach and commitment is required now.

City planners are asking citizens to "Get involved and support planning and action for better quality communities" during the 21st annual, April 2009 national American City Quality Month program 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 Planning and Management Division of the American Planning Association, American Public Transportation Association, Mayors' Institute on City Design, American Society of Landscape Architects, Association of Pedestrian & Bicycle Professionals and Eco-Home Network.

In announcing the program, 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.

During the month long observance and beyond, cities across America will be discussing how quality planning for communities and smart growth will improve cities as well as protect them. Urban sprawl, the opposite of smart growth continues to be identified as one of America's biggest concerns by citizens.

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 the American City Planning Directors' Council / American City Quality Foundation office at 207-712-6333 or send e-mail to ACQF@aol.com.

Photos from American City Quality Month



Las Vegas Nevada

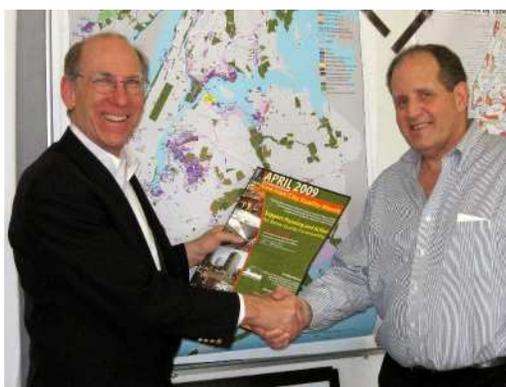
l to r Councilman Steve Ross, Mayor Pro Tem Gary Reese, Mayor Oscar B. Goodman, Councilman Steve Wolfson, Planning Director Margo Wheeler, Councilwoman Lois Tarkanian, Planning Commission Chairman Glenn Trowbridge, PC member Vicki Quinn, PC member Byron Goynes.



City of Portland, Maine's Director of Planning and Urban Development Department, Penny St. Louis Littell, (l) and City Planning Division Director, Alex Jaegerman, at the Maine State Pier Workshop during April 2009 American City Quality Month



Portland, Maine



New York City's Executive Director of the City Planning Department, Richard Barth (right) discusses April American City Quality program with Gerry Mylroie, Chair, American City Planning Directors' Council/American City Quality Foundation.



William Millar, President, American Public Transportation Association (right) discussing American City Quality Month program with Gerry Mylroie, Chair American City Planning Directors' Council / American City Quality Foundation.

International City/County Management Association New ACQM Sponsor

The International City /County Management Association representing city and county managers across America joined with other distinguished organizations to becoming a sponsor of the annual, national American City Quality Month in urging everyone to get involved and support better quality city planning and action for better quality communities. Please tell your city or county manager their support is greatly appreciated.

President, NLC and Mayor of Northglenn, Colorado

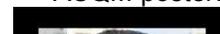


Thanks to ACQM Sponsors

Thanks to our 21st annual, April 2009 national American City Quality Month program sponsors including: National League of Cities and especially their President and Mayor of Northglenn, Colorado, Kathleen Novak; The US Conference of Mayors and especially their President and Mayor of Miami, Florida, Manuel A. Diaz; American City Planning Directors' Council/ American City Quality Foundation, Urban Land Institute, National Building Museum, Partners for Livable Places, City Planning and Management Division of the American Planning Association, American Public Transportation Association, Mayors' Institute on City Design, American Society of Landscape Architects, Association of Pedestrian & Bicycle Professionals and Eco-Home Network

Thanks to ACQM Chairmen Hayes and Gastil and to Kairos Shen

Thanks to the two ACQM Chairmen, James Hayes, Director of City Planning for the City of Northglenn, Colorado and Raymond Gastil, Director of City Planning for the City of Seattle for their work. Additionally, thanks to Kairos Shen and his urban designer Tseng-Wei Chung for designing the ACQM poster.



*President, US Conference
of Mayors and Mayor of
Miami, Florida*



Honolulu's Former City/County Planning Director Henry Eng - Viewpoint



Henry Eng, FAICP

My Life As Director of the Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) in Honolulu

By Henry Eng, FAICP

Personal Background

I was born in NYC, studied planning at Pratt Institute.

My present service represents a second tour of duty with the City and County.

Prior to this I worked 20 years in government planning, and then 15 years with the Estate of James Campbell in a unique project involving the planning and development of the new city of Kapolei, located in the west side of Oahu, in support of the adopted Development Plan for the area. I received my FAICP designation in 2003.

Major Responsibilities at DPP

The Department is responsible for maintaining and updating General Plans and Development Plans (covered in ACQ News Aug-Sep 2005), reviewing and processing zoning changes, conditional use permits, variances, and shoreline management permits. DPP also handles all building and grading permits as well as subdivision applications and handles code enforcement and inspections.

Challenges upon entry

Upon accepting the appointment, I was faced with staff shortages and major permit backlogs and a generally less than ideal public perception of the Department's effectiveness. Honolulu was in the midst of a boom period and the delays in permitting were a key topic of industry concern.

Achievements in Four Years

In four years, my staff and I have made major achievements. We have streamlined the permitting process, made progress in Development Plan review and initiated major work on Transit Oriented Development, both in terms of enabling legislation and pilot programs for implementation. Noteworthy improvements have been made to our website which now draws 1.8 million hits per month! Please feel free to explore the many features of our department website www.honoluludpp.org. Several permit categories are issuable online so that staff can concentrate on permit reviews that require special effort. The HonLine feature combined with the increased use of Third Party Review have done much to reduce process time. Last month, HonLine was responsible for issuing 38.1% of all permits.

Advancements in GIS have allowed Honolulu to remain on the cutting edge of technology with planning tools to assist not only the Department but other key city agencies such as our first responders as well.

Other services initiated include the provision of a public information officer, real time online posting of number being served to reduce wait time.

Code enforcement has increased and with it a higher instance of code compliance.

Closing observations

In retrospect, the combination of prior government service coupled with private sector experience provided me with a unique perspective to assume the position of Director. I was able to find the delicate balance between being a gatekeeper (for the protection of public health and safety) and being a facilitator (to make things happen). I have enjoyed the unwavering support of my staff who stood by me in the face of adversity. My life as Director has been filled with challenges and marked by achievements so that I can confidently say that the City is a better place as a result of concerted team efforts at the DPP during my tenure. I am confident that my successor, David Tanoue, who served as my Deputy, will be up to the challenge that lies ahead in the face of a changed economy.

Participation Requested

American City Quality Month and other activities require your personal and financial support to make them happen. Please send your dues or tax deductible contributions to ACQF or go online to pay securely at www.cityquality.org.

Dues \$125- with 2009 Recession Discount \$75

Please forward any name, title, email address changes to acqf@aol.com .

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 city planning, decisions, design, development, 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.

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Title _____

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American City Planning Directors' Council

American City Quality Foundation

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Upcoming Events:

June 12-16, 2009 US Conference of Mayors Convention, Providence, RI; www.usmayors.org

November 3-6, 2009 Urban Land Institute Fall Convention, San Francisco; www.uli.org

November 10-14, 2009 National League of Cities Convention, San Antonio, TX; www.nlc.org

Newsletter Production

Editor: Gerald R. Myroie, 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: ACQF@aol.com

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

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