

Mayors' Institute on City Design Selects Alumni Technical Assistance Cities

WASHINGTON, DC – (April 2009) The Mayors' Institute on City Design (MICD) awarded five mayors post-Institute technical design assistance to support the urban design and leadership lessons learned at MICD national and regional institutes.

For 2009, the MICD Alumni Technical Assistance program will serve the following mayors: Mayor William D. Euille, City of Alexandria, Virginia; Mayor Peter B. Lewis, City of Auburn, Washington; Mayor Sandi Bloem, City of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho; Mayor Mark Stodola, City of Little Rock, Arkansas; and Mayor Scott W. Lang, City of New Bedford, Massachusetts. The select mayors submitted compelling applications to the Mayors' Institute that outlined their community's design needs and the impact such technical assistance could have on their communities. A selection committee chose the five mayors, based on mayoral leadership, type of assistance requested and willingness to act upon the lessons they learned while attending the Mayors' Institute.

The MICD Alumni Technical Assistance program complements the MICD national and regional sessions that invite mayors to share their design challenges with peers and a panel of nationally renowned urban design experts. For the Alumni Technical Assistance program, MICD brings a team of three urban design experts to mayors' communities and presents a detailed project analysis, building on lessons learned by the mayors at the national or regional MICD sessions. The design team works collaboratively with city staff and local stakeholders to evaluate the communities' challenges, identifies best practices applicable to the cities' project and presents recommendations for implementation. In addition, the design teams offer public presentations of their work while onsite. This year the cities of Alexandria and New Bedford will participate individually in a one-day colloquium, while the cities of Auburn, Coeur d'Alene and Little Rock will host 3-day design charrettes.

City of Alexandria, VA, Mayor Euille attended MICD 41 in Chicago, IL (2008) and presented a case study for the redevelopment of industrial blocks adjacent to the Braddock Metro Station. Per the recommendations of the MICD 41 design resource team, Mayor Euille and the City of Alexandria created a plan that furthers development around this busy transit hub, while allowing for open space and a high quality of life for residents. The one-day technical assistance will offer the mayor and his staff a comprehensive consultation reviewing plans for Potomac Yard, a redevelopment site to the north of the station and offer suggestions for future mixed-use development and transportation planning.

The City of Auburn, WA, and Mayor Lewis will receive an urban design team to evaluate the City's downtown redevelopment area, located adjacent to the Sound Transit Commuter Rail System. In 2007, Mayor Lewis attended MICD West in Portland, OR; a regional session co-hosted by the University of Washington, and he presented his vision for the City's Downtown Revitalization Strategic Plan. The Mayors' Institute, with the help of University of Washington's School of Architecture, will revisit the City of Auburn's plan with city staff, developers and local stakeholders and offer recommendations for the eight block redevelopment area.

In 2008 at MICD West (Portland, OR), Mayor Bloem of the City of Coeur d'Alene, ID presented a case study for the City's Education Corridor adjacent to the Spokane River. During the session, co-hosted by Portland Metro, the mayor identified a 17-acre former mill site as a potential economic redevelopment area that would support the region's higher educational institutions and future urban development. Portland METRO will help the Mayors' Institute plan and implement the 3-day design assistance session for Mayor Bloem, helping the City to further realize the potential of this riverfront site.

The City of Little Rock, AR and Mayor Stodola will receive technical assistance to create a redevelopment strategy for the City's historic main street corridor. During MICD 39 (2007 - Providence, RI), Mayor Stodola presented the challenges facing this once busy commercial corridor. Since the national institute, this corridor has faced significant demolition pressures and the City hopes to develop a strategy for stabilization before most of the street's historic fabric is lost.

Since attending the 2006 MICD Northeast regional session (Boston, MA), Mayor Lang and the City of New Bedford, MA have developed several plans that identify revitalization opportunities along the busy Acushnet Riverfront. Through MICD technical assistance, the urban design team will help the Mayor, city staff and local stakeholders take steps towards realizing a comprehensive waterfront plan for the Inner Harbor District. As the Mayor acknowledged in his application, “the City of New Bedford is at a critical turning point. Completion of recent planning in targeted development districts has positioned the City to move a progressive agenda that will address the critical components for achieving sustainable growth in the city’s economy and neighborhoods.”

The Mayors’ Institute on City Design Alumni Technical Assistance program is made possible by a generous \$250,000 gift from the Edward W. Rose III Family Fund of the Dallas Foundation, directed to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) by Mrs. Evelyn “Deedie” Potter Rose, a former member of the National Council on the Arts (NCA), the NEA’s advisory board. The NEA initiated the Mayors’ Institute on City Design (MICD) in 1986. Former NEA Chairman Dana Gioia said, “Because the design decisions that shape our cities have such lasting effects on our lives and the life of a city, we view the MICD as one of our most important programs. We are deeply grateful to our former NCA member Deedie Potter Rose for her generosity and support.”

The Mayors’ Institute on City Design is a partnership program of the [National Endowment for the Arts](#), the [American Architectural Foundation](#), and the [United States Conference of Mayors](#). Since 1986, the Mayors’ Institute has helped transform communities through design by preparing mayors to be the chief urban designers of their cities. To date, more than 750 mayors and 550 design professionals have participated in the program.

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