



N C D A
NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

March 7, 2005

Dear Members:

At the Board of Directors meeting held in Washington on September 12, 2004, NCD A President Amintha Cinotti appointed a committee to discuss the future of the Association's Executive Symposium. Chandra explained that the symposium had been losing money over the past two years due to low participation and lack of sponsorship. The Association lost sponsorship from the US Conference of Mayors— which has not had an active role in the Symposium in four years— and from Freddie Mac who, in the past, made generous contributions to this event, but has been making contributions to the Winter Meeting or Annual Conference.

The discussion at the Board meeting generated enough interest for continuing to hold the Symposium, however, they could not decide what form, or why the Symposium should be continued. Amintha asked for volunteers to sit on the committee. Tom Utter and Steve Gartrell agreed to serve as chairs. Tom Utter offered to sponsor the Symposium in Corpus Christi if the membership deemed the event should continue. He stated that if NCD A held the Symposium in Corpus Christi it would not impact NCD A's budget.

On November 30, 2004, the Executive Symposium Committee held a conference call. The discussion began with a history of the Symposium— how it got started, who attended, and the participation of the Conference of Mayors Freddie Mac other noted members in the community development arena.

The Symposium had been an event that was small and attended by upper level city officials who had "the ear" of their Mayors or City Managers and were "movers and shakers" in their communities. The Symposium was a venue for discussing policy and designing legislation that impacted housing and community development programs. It also had a training component through CDTI, which often focused on cutting edge issues, such local Community Development agencies interacting with their public housing counterparts or their welfare agencies. Jim Caruso recalled that some of the language in the Cranston Gonzales Act (which created the HOME program) came out of one the Symposiums. It was a very "think tank" type event.

The discussion continued with how the Symposium had evolved and that for many members, it had become just a third meeting with input from HUD or other HCD professionals that included a legislative update and did not have the "symposium" feel anymore. Chandra explained that many members had suggested that if they could not show a relevance to what practitioners were doing at home now, then there was not a lot of justification to travel. Since 911 and the recession, many communities have instituted travel moratoriums, and members cannot travel even with federal programs funding the travel. She also noted that there have been changes at USCM and NLC and that the CD and Housing programs were no longer viewed as high priorities or as high profile as programs such as Homeland Security, Education, Transportation and Internet Taxation.

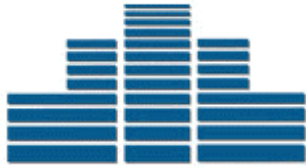
It was suggested that the Symposium should be a higher level meeting that Board members could use a planning venue. The discussion quickly segued into Strategic Planning. Chandra mentioned that NCDA had completed the five years of the last Strategic Plan and the new Committee Structure, Board and Executive Director governing structure basically fulfilled the plan. She mentioned it was time to develop a new Strategic Plan, and that perhaps the structure of the Executive Symposium could be determined at that meeting.

The group agreed that a Strategic Plan should be devised and that the sooner the better. Tom Utter suggested that the Annual Conference would be a good place for this activity. Nancy Haney and Ellen Lee suggested facilitators for the session and stated that they would get back to Chandra with suggestions.

It was proposed that the Strategic Planning session be held on Saturday and Sunday following the Annual Conference in Austin. Staff was instructed to determine if our current contract with the hotel in Austin could accommodate us. Other suggestions included asking Paul Hilgers if we could get space for the meeting at his offices. Everyone agreed.

The discussion then turned to how the membership at large should be included in the strategic planning effort. Most thought that the Strategic Planning effort should be a Board function and that the membership would trust the Board in this endeavor. Some suggested that regional input could be a means of getting members involved; but Chandra reminded them that the Association had only four active regions which would leave out the Midwest, the west coast and the great plains. It was decided that a letter would go out to the membership requesting them to respond to not more than three issues, specifically a reassessment of the Association's mission, our collaboration with USCM and NLC, what advocacy course the Association should take given the current political climate, and the continuation of the Executive Symposium and what form it should take.

Chandra recommended that the full Board of Directors should make the decision to undertake a strategic planning exercise during the Annual Conference in May, at the January Board meeting.



MEMORANDUM

TO: NCD A Membership
FROM: Chandra Western
RE: Updating the Association's Strategic Plan
DATE: March 7, 2005

This memo completes a task assigned by the Board of Directors at the January meeting to seek member input on NCDA's Strategic Plan and the overall advocacy direction of the Association.

The attached letter provides background on the various issues and concerns that led to this request. Briefly, the Board is very concerned about the direction the Association should take as we (local government representatives and community development directors) move into a new reality of federal program funding. The Association's relationship with locally elected officials—mayors and city councilors—and how the role of the Community Development Director has changed, and lastly, what can be done to safe guard the continuity of the programs that we advocate for.

To that end, the Board of Directors has decided to update the Association's Strategic Plan during a two-day session held directly preceding the 2005 NCDA Annual Conference in Austin, Texas. The dates for this session are May 16 and 17. To assist the Board in completing the new plan with your input, we ask for your comments on the following issues:

1. **Reassess the Association's Mission;** *To assist local governments to achieve high-quality, locally responsive programs for making communities better places to live and work, particularly for low and moderate income people.*
2. **Reassess the Association's Collaboration with US Conference of Mayors and National League of Cities;**
3. **What advocacy course should the Association should take given the current political climate; and**
4. **Should the Association continue the Executive Symposium? If so, in what form?**

We ask that you send your comments to my attention, via e-mail not later that **April 8, 2005**. NCDA staff will collect and summarize the comments that will assist the facilitators in designing the Strategic Planning effort. You will find a copy of the Association's Strategic Plan to assist with your comments. If you have any questions, please, contact me at 202-887-5521, or via e-mail at Chandra@ncdaonline.org