

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

A national, nonprofit, membership organization
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Note for reporters: During the event, please check in at the conference registration desk in the Grande Ballroom foyer of the Sheraton San Diego Hotel (1380 Harbor Island Dr.) to obtain a media credential.

Economic recovery and smart growth strategies drive national conference

Leading economic and development experts converge on San Diego next week

As our nation begins to rebound from economically challenging times, smart growth approaches to development can play a pivotal role in helping communities across the country in the journey to recovery.

Many of the nation's experts and leaders with successes addressing the economic and social challenges of creating more livable communities will converge on San Diego next week for the 11th annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference to chart the course of this journey. More than 1,350 participants are expected for the multidisciplinary event – the largest and most comprehensive smart growth/sustainable communities forum in the U.S. – that runs February 2-4 at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina.

On Thursday evening (Feb. 2), the conference kicks off with "**Smart Growth for Economic Recovery**," a plenary featuring U.S. EPA Regional Administrator Jared Blumenfeld; Mary Nichols, chair of the California Air Resources Board; and Mayor Mick Cornett of Oklahoma City. They will discuss how implementing innovative smart-growth approaches at the federal, state, and local level can help communities become economically vibrant while protecting human health and the environment. Highlights include hearing about how the federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities is coordinating federal investments to save taxpayers money; how implementing California's landmark climate change legislation can protect public health and support economic development; and how Oklahoma City has become "recession proof" through smart land use planning and wise economic development strategies.

The discussion shifts to housing and transportation investments on Friday morning (Feb. 3) in "**Places for People: How Transportation Choices, Infill Development and Good City Design Can Reshape Our Communities**."

"Designing our communities with people in mind can go a long way in moving us to better public health, a cleaner environment and a more resilient economy," said Shelley Poticha, director of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, and one of the plenary speakers. "Federal investments in housing and transportation play an important role in supporting sustainable communities across the country."

The session will cover examples from Chicago to California, where local leaders and developers have increased transportation choices, created a more pedestrian-friendly environment, and made infill development a reality – bringing affordable housing and essential services closer to the people who live there, especially those most in need.

"Providing transportation choices, investing in infill development, and engaging in good city design can help communities become places where residents can thrive," said California Infill Builders Association's president Meea Kang, who will address the "Places for People" attendees.

The Saturday agenda (Feb. 4) begins with "**The Great Reset: Reshaping Our Economic and Physical Landscape to Meet New Needs**," featuring local elected officials from California, Oregon, Washington and Ohio who will offer their perspectives on the relationships between smart growth and economic growth.

"Faced with shrinking federal, state and local budgets; high rates of unemployment; rising and unpredictable oil prices; global climate change and more; it has become obvious that we must creatively change the way we live and work to set the stage for a more vibrant, prosperous future," said Judy Corbett, executive director of the Local Government Commission, which is organizing the conference.

Renowned urban designer Michael Freedman will close out the conference Saturday afternoon with his reflections on "**Community Design and Urban Innovation for a Knowledge Economy**." He observes

that our nation has progressed from economies based on agriculture and then manufacturing to today's resource-constrained, knowledge-based economy – with land use patterns to match. Freedman will examine the land use patterns that will accommodate today's knowledge-based economy, where innovation is key, and oil, water and other natural resources are increasingly constrained.

Conference tracks: With an extended focus on smart growth and economic revitalization, this year's multidisciplinary conference also features 15 tracks that feature sessions related to the economy, including infrastructure and redevelopment, housing, transportation and transit-oriented development, finance and real estate, the green economy, small-city and rural development, and equitable development.

About the conference: With a dynamic mix of over 100 sessions, trainings and implementation workshops, the New Partners for Smart Growth conference will draw a national audience of elected officials and government agency leaders as well as developers, builders, bankers, realtors, and advocates and professionals in planning, transportation, public health, landscape architecture, architecture, housing, parks and recreation, public works, crime prevention, education and the environment.

The conference has more than 230 sponsors and cosponsors, including the U.S. EPA, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Association of REALTORS®, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and leading foundations, advocacy groups and professional organizations. For a full list of supporters and more details about the conference agenda: NewPartners.org

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