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IN THIS ISSUE

This Summer 2009 edition of *Living Cities Monthly* provides an in-depth look at the Green Boot Camp: Recovery through Retrofitting, which was held at the beginning of June in Cambridge. The coverage includes a detailed account of the camp, a focused look at the camp's purpose and curriculum as well as information on Living Cities' follow-up work to the camp. Information on the organization's New York City- and Washington, D.C.-based summer associates is also provided.

As always, feel free to contact Living Cities Director of Communications Eric Henderson with questions and comments at: 646-442-2205 or ehenderson@livingcities.org.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE GREEN BOOT CAMP The Living Cities Green Boot Camp: Recovery through Retrofitting, which was part of the Project on Municipal Innovation (PMI), was held May 31 through June 2 at the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government, and at a nearby hotel in Cambridge. The response to and execution of the camp, which was implemented by the Institute for Sustainable Communities, was extraordinary. [MORE>](#)

PUTTING TOGETHER THE PIECES OF A RETROFIT SYSTEM The primary purpose of the Green Boot Camp: Recovery through Retrofitting was to help participating cities accelerate their progress in planning and implementing large-scale building energy retrofit systems. Living Cities believes that while there is no “one size fits all” solution, early experience — building on decades of piecemeal approaches — suggests that such systems must include four primary components. [MORE>](#)

DEEPENING SUPPORT FOR CITY LEADERSHIP Living Cities will be working closely with the participating cities from the Green Boot Camp in the weeks ahead, on several levels. Living Cities will provide grant funds that enable cities to assemble the four critical pieces described in the article “Putting Together the Pieces of a Retrofit System,” especially in areas where current city efforts may not be as far along. Such areas may include integrating affordable housing into the first phase of retrofit systems building, or forging new partnerships with organized labor. [MORE>](#)

LIVING CITIES WELCOMES SUMMER ASSOCIATES Living Cities is currently hosting six summer associates, four of whom are based at the New York headquarters and two in the Washington, D.C., office. Find out a little about them. [MORE>](#)





An Overview of the Green Boot Camp

Sixteen multi-disciplinary teams attended, representing Babylon, N.Y., Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Flagstaff, Louisville, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Newark, New York City, Philadelphia, Saint Paul, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. Team members included city housing and sustainability directors, utility and workforce investment board members, community college presidents and more.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

HUD Deputy Secretary Ron Sims kicked off the camp as the keynote speaker on Sunday evening and set a perfect tone. He spoke about the recovery money creating a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that could only be realized if everyone in the room took personal responsibility for its success. Secretary Sims also emphasized the importance of building enduring systems that both address climate change and lay the foundation for a more equitable green economy.

PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

The panel presentations and workshops focused on peer-to-peer sharing of information and knowledge. After each panel, the teams met individually with facilitators to explore how to apply their learning to their city's unique circumstances. The lunch panel on the first day included high-level HUD and Energy Department officials in charge of substantial recovery dollars. The discussion was rich, spirited and conducted in a great problem-solving manner. Day one topics included increasing demand, financing change and creating green jobs pathways.

Day two built on the panel presentations and breakout discussions from day one by addressing implementation issues to create and scale building energy retrofit systems.

The morning started out with a wide-ranging discussion among all of the city-state teams on best examples and ideal elements of successful systems. Participants then spent time in small cross-city groups discussing key topics. After lunch, city teams reconvened and discussed their plans for making progress when they got home.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

When the teams shared their accounts at the end of the camp, their comments were both encouraging and instructive. A number of teams reported that they had formed strong new relationships that would be the basis for continued collaboration at home. At least four different teams said that they had never worked with their other team members in any substantive way before coming to the camp. Almost every city's team indicated a desire to create new financing mechanisms for build energy retrofits. A number of cities also reported that they would prioritize workforce development issues as their immediate next steps. It seemed clear that even these leading cities are just starting in this work — and that the jobs dimension will be a huge challenge.

Almost all of the teams said that receiving Living Cities' support for technical assistance to create comprehensive retrofit systems, especially the financing, would add great value to their camp experience. Several also noted that Living Cities could play a valuable role in fostering communication between the cities and the federal government on real-time challenges and opportunities implementing federal programs on the ground more effectively.





Putting Together the Pieces of a Retrofit System

The first component to putting together a building retrofit system is a set of strategies for driving demand — that is, educating and encouraging building owners to retrofit their properties through marketing, mandates and simplified user-friendly programs people can trust.

The next requirement is a financing vehicle, preferably more than one to accommodate different building types. These financing vehicles provide capital for retrofits that can be paid back, at least in part, from energy savings. Then there is a need for a reliable system to ensure that qualified contractors are available to meet the demand, and that they provide high-quality job, career and business development opportunities for low-income people.

Finally, and perhaps most important, is the need for an operating model to put these and other complementary pieces together. Whether housed in city government, a local nonprofit utility, or as a newly created public-private enterprise, a central aggregator of resources and expertise is required to scale up and sustain large-scale building energy retrofit systems.

These four primary “pieces of the puzzle” were each the focus of panel discussions with national experts and small group breakout meetings of city-state teams at the Green Boot Camp. They are also the core of the Green Boot Camp resource guide, “Scaling Up Building Energy Retrofitting in U.S. Cities: A Resource Guide for Local Leaders, Version 1.0.” Visit the Green Boot Camp website to download the guide.





Deepening Support for City Leadership

Living Cities will also be looking for opportunities to provide low-interest loans through the Catalyst Fund to augment financing vehicles cities are creating using federal economic recovery bill funds and private capital.

Living Cities will continue to convene local leaders to address issues of common interest, such as structuring revolving loan funds for retrofit projects and leveraging the Green Jobs and Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant funds soon to flow from Washington.

In all of these activities, Living Cities will actively look for opportunities to invest in innovative nonprofit organizations that can be resources to cities.





Living Cities Welcomes Summer Associates

NYC HEADQUARTERS

- Meembo Changula supports Program staff by conducting a scan of programmatic areas within the American City Agenda. Meembo is a Fulbright Scholar working on her Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Iowa. She received her B.S. in Urban Planning at the Copperbelt University in Kitwe, Zambia.
- Matthew Last supports staff on multiple projects. He is a rising senior at Indiana University and will be graduating with a B.S. in Public Financial Management.
- Anne Gleason provides research support for the development of the website for the Project on Municipal Innovation, which will provide information on urban policy issues, from crime to fresh food to homelessness. Anne is pursuing her Masters of Public Administration at New York University's Wagner School. She received a B.A. in Journalism from the University of Illinois.
- Sune Goldsteen provides research support for the Admiral Center. Sune attends Columbia University, pursuing a joint Masters of Science in Urban Planning and Historic Preservation. She received her B.A. in Sociology from the University of Chicago.

DC OFFICE

- Mark Severs provides research and other assistance to Capital Formation. He is currently a JD/MBA candidate at Harvard University. Prior to graduate school Mark worked as a researcher at a human rights think tank in Brazil and later as an investment analyst for a private wealth management company. Mark received his B.A. in Experimental Psychology from Brown University.
- Carlin Rosengarten provides research and other assistance on green federal policy issues, including climate/energy legislation and Living Cities' work with the Recovery through Retrofit taskforce. Carlin recently finished an internship with the Center for American Progress (CAP), where he worked on the Energy Opportunity Team. Prior to his time at CAP, Carlin was an intern for Charles Taylor's defense team at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in The Hague, Netherlands. Carlin graduated from Dartmouth College in 2005 with a B.A. in Studio Art and Biology.

