

## **Regional Council of Mayors**

May 9, 2011

### **Salute to Outgoing Chair**

Led by Co-chairs Sandy Martin and Jim Hovland, RCM members recognized and thanked Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth Kautz for her many important contributions as a co-founder and co-chair of the Regional Council of Mayors.

Martin said she has “had the privilege of working with Elizabeth for 14 or 15 years, and I know what an innovative leader she is.” Hovland said Kautz demonstrated “a lot of vision” in seeing the need and opportunities for such a group, and thanked her “for all you did in getting us going.”

Mayor Kautz said RCM has provided a chance “for us to come together as a region to work on the issues that impact all of us.” She expressed appreciation to the mayors, Executive Director Caren Dewar and staff for their efforts and support.

### **Executive Director’s Report**

Caren Dewar called attention to a letter from Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak inviting fellow mayors to participate in a project to “identify, understand and replicate local government regulatory best practices” that would facilitate economic development in the region.

In his letter, Rybak said the goal of this project – being undertaken jointly with regional chambers of commerce – is to encourage not only best practices, but also greater consistency within the region. Rybak asked mayors who want their cities to be involved to contact him or Dewar by May 13.

Dewar also:

- Reported that at least a dozen cities already have approved a resolution circulated by RCM expressing concerns about proposed cuts in regional transit funding and other legislation that could “impede planning” for future transit investments in the region. She said the resolution was drafted by Mayor Hovland, and went through several revisions to incorporate suggestions from other mayors.
- Thanked Natasha Kimmet for her service as Administrative Assistant and introduced Katie Anderson as the new ULI Minnesota Associate. Anderson previously worked for the Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity.

## INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

### Regional Housing Initiative

A decline in housing turnover is affecting many communities in the region, RCM members concluded during a discussion.

The discussion came as Eagan Mayor Mike Maguire, co-chair of the housing advisory committee, and consultant Cathy Bennett provided an update on the ULI Minnesota/RCM housing initiative. The project is intended to demonstrate the competitive advantage of providing a full range of housing choices – a diverse mix of housing types, sizes and prices – in connected, livable communities.

As part of the project's data collection effort, Bennett said a key regional trend is that more householders are "aging in place," leading to less turnover in housing and fewer units that might attract and serve young professionals with families. As baby boomers age, Bennett said, this trend could become "a tidal wave."

Maguire said this trend can affect not only a community's housing supply and demographic composition, but also its political dynamics and support for key services. Maguire said schools and parks always have been among Eagan's top selling points. However, last fall the voters in the largest school district serving Eagan rejected a school operating levy increase.

Economic factors also may be contributing to the lower housing turnover rate. Shoreview Mayor Sandy Martin said in her community, many older residents with lakeshore property appear to be delaying the sale of their homes while waiting for housing values to rebound. "I think that's part of the puzzle," she said.

And Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth Kautz said she has observed a number of foreclosed homes in her community being converted to rental housing for seniors. She indicated this can affect the demand for community services and the ability to help pay for them.

White Bear Lake Mayor Jo Emerson highlighted an innovative effort in her community to promote renovation and reuse of affordable housing. Called the "Rambler Revolution," the project will demonstrate how a small post-World War II rambler can be affordably renovated to seem more spacious, more functional and energy efficient. (More information is available at [www.ramblerrevolution.com](http://www.ramblerrevolution.com) .)

As a part of the discussion, Maguire and Bennett circulated an updated list of tools and strategies being developed to encourage "a full range of housing choices in connected, livable communities." The additions include:

- Exploring options to expand the LiveMSP.org website to include suburban communities

- Expanding access and use of an MSP regional housing + transportation cost calculator for consumers and individuals working in the housing and transportation fields
- Building on University of Minnesota research and partnering with developers, Realtors and suburban communities to better understand culturally sensitive housing
- Reviewing and evaluating tools and strategies dealing with the “aging in place” trend as well as changing preferences of young families

### **Haigh, Tingerthal Speak**

The mayors were addressed by two Dayton administration appointees with key roles in shaping regional growth and housing – Susan Haigh, chair of the Metropolitan Council, and Mary Tingerthal, commissioner of the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency.

Haigh said housing is an extremely important issue “in my day job” – she’s president and CEO of Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity – and that it will be a major focus of the new Met Council.

She said the newly appointed Council members are getting acclimated to their jobs and “are eager to get out and meet with you. If it hasn’t happened yet, you will be hearing from them very soon.”

Haigh thanked RCM for the resolution of support on transit funding, and said the Met Council also is working to preserve funding for its Livable Communities program. That program provides grants to communities to help clean up contaminated land, provide affordable housing and promote development that connects housing, jobs and services.

Tingerthal described her background in housing issues at the local and national levels, as well as the programs administered by MHFA. She said those programs have four major purposes:

1. Preserving rent subsidies and home rehabilitation programs
2. Funding new housing opportunities
3. Pursuing the goal of ending homelessness
4. Mitigating the impact of the foreclosure crisis

The commissioner also talked about several developing housing trends. She said more young people appear to be putting off the purchase of their first home, not wanting to “lock up their mobility” by purchasing a home they might not be able to sell.

Tingerthal said she also sees the need for new tools to preserve “naturally affordable rental housing.” After 20 years, she said, even the best-maintained homes require capital investment or they “no longer will be a community resource, but rather a drag.”

### **Navigating the New Normal**

Local officials will soon have the opportunity to participate in a two-hour workshop designed to help cities in “Navigating the New Normal,” the new challenges of development and redevelopment in the current economic climate.

Gordon Hughes, ULI Minnesota consultant and former Edina city manager, said ULI will partner with a city – or a cluster of cities – to put on workshops geared towards mayors, city council members, planning commission members, EDA/HRA members and staff.

He said a ULI MN team will include a cross section of professionals representing disciplines such as design, finance, development, planning and marketing. They will help workshop participants gain a better understanding of:

- The impact of the “new normal” on future growth patterns, demographic trends and market preferences
- Changing city patterns in households, housing types, labor and commuting – with a focus on strategies to support a full range of housing choices connected to transportation options and jobs
- How to position your community to attract the best development

Hughes said the workshops will be conducted without charge; host communities will be asked only to arrange a meeting location, cover printing costs and provide refreshments for participants.

He said ULI MN hopes to hold the first workshop in July, and conduct about one each month thereafter. “We really look forward to rolling these out later this summer,” he said.

For more information, please contact Katie Anderson, ULI Minnesota Associate, by phone at 612-338-1331 or by email at [Katherine.anderson@uli.org](mailto:Katherine.anderson@uli.org).

## **COMING UP**

The third annual Regional Housing Initiative Summit will be held Tuesday, May 24, from 8 to 11 a.m. at Dorsey & Whitney, 50 S. Sixth St., Suite 1500, Minneapolis. Christopher B. Leinberger of the Brookings Institution, one of America's freshest thinkers, will discuss the big changes taking place in the real estate market. His presentation will be followed by a panel discussion focused on "Making it Real." More information is available at <http://minnesota.uli.org/> .

RCM meetings are held on the second Monday of every month at Dorsey & Whitney. The next RCM meeting will be held on Monday, June 13, 2011 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm.

## **ATTENDEES**

The following individuals were in attendance on May 9, 2011:

### **Mayors**

Doug Anderson	City of Dayton
Ardell Brede	City of Rochester
Bill Droste	City of Rosemount
Jo Emerson	City of White Bear Lake
Jerry Faust	City of St. Anthony
Mary Giuliani Stephens	City of Woodbury
Debbie Goettel	City of Richfield
Mary Hamann-Roland	City of Apple Valley
Mary Hershberger Thun	City of Victoria
James Hovland	City of Edina
Tim Howe	City of Coon Rapids
Tim Hultmann	City of Long Lake
Marvin Johnson	City of Independence
Dean Johnston	City of Lake Elmo
Elizabeth Kautz	City of Burnsville
Sandra Krebsbach	City of Mendota Heights
Peter Lindstrom	City of Falcon Heights
Mike Maguire	City of Eagan
Sandy Martin	City of Shoreview
Terry Schneider	City of Minnetonka
John Sweeney	City of Maple Plain
George Tourville	City of Inver Grove Heights
Janet Williams	City of Savage

**Guests**

Jim Antonen	City of Maplewood
John Bailey	Envision MN
MaryKay Bailey	St. Paul Foundation
Cecile Bedor	City of St. Paul
Amy Bleaker	Humphrey School of Public Affairs
Pat Born	Metropolitan Council
John Breitingner	United Properties
Cindy Carlsson	MnDOT
Erin Dady	City of St. Paul
Steve Dornfeld	
Beth Elliott	City of Minneapolis – CPED
Bob Engstrom	Robert Engstrom Companies
Paul Fate	Common Bond Communities
Sue Haigh	METC
Gordon Hughes	ULI MN
Katy Lindblad	Minnesota Housing
Jim Miller	League of MN Cities
Mike Mornson	City of St. Anthony
Lee Munnich	HHH
Burke Murphy	DEED
Patricia Nauman	Metro Cities
Gretchen Nicholls	LISC
Bruce Nordquist	City of Apple Valley
Guy Peterson	Metropolitan Council
Elizabeth Ryan	Family Housing Fund
Bob Schreier	City of Brooklyn Park
Tim Thompson	Housing Preservation Project
Mary Tingerthal	Minnesota Housing
Dave VanHattum	TLC

**Staff**

Katie Anderson	ULI Minnesota
Cathy Capone Bennett	ULI Minnesota
Caren Dewar	ULI Minnesota
Tasha Kimmet	ULI Minnesota