



## The Home Depot Foundation Provides Tools To Make Cities More Sustainable

Cherie Duvall Jones

December 7, 2009



The Home Depot Foundation president announced the launch of an initiative for city leaders, providing them with tools and best practices that can be used to implement sustainable practices in their communities, during the Congress of Cities in San Antonio last month.

Kelly Caffarelli, president of The Home Depot Foundation, which is an NLC Capstone Corporate Partner, addressed conference delegates about the Sustainable Cities Institute initiative.

The mission of the initiative is to provide the right resources to cities to integrate sustainability principles into policies and practices.

“As a national organization, we’ve seen how sustainability planning and green building efforts in cities have really significantly grown as a result of rising energy costs, the housing crisis and other issues,” said Caffarelli. “However, we also know that it’s not easy; that many of you face challenges because sustainability planning and implementation require a long-term, integrated approach that considers all of the competing interests you have to balance.”

NLC has been working closely with The Home Depot Foundation in support of the Sustainable Cities Institute as a part of NLC’s expanding Sustainability Program.

The Sustainable Cities Institute is a two-part initiative.

First The Home Depot Foundation launched a website — [www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org](http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org) <<http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org>> — featuring content and tools from some of the nation’s top sustainability experts. From the website, city officials can learn about a number of areas, including economic development, water, materials management, land use and transportation.

There are also numerous ordinances, regulations, communications materials, checklists and case studies.

The second part of the initiative is a cities program, which will launch in early 2010, where two pilot cities will be selected for the program.

“We’ll bring a network of experts to cities who will help with the implementation plans, help with the development of sustainability plans and several projects in the cities,” Caffarelli said. “We’re really excited about that because not only will we be doing that work, but we’ll be telling about it in real-time — not just the successes, but the hiccups along the way so everyone can learn from that.”

In helping to teach cities how to be sustainable, The Home Depot Foundation, which was established in 2002 to further the community building goals of The Home Depot, is dedicated to building healthy, affordable homes for working families.

In thinking about how to create homes and neighborhoods that are attractive to all kinds of families, The Home Depot Foundation faced the same issues that cities address every day:

- How to create housing that's healthy, efficient and affordable to live in, not just to move into;
- How to ensure there are safe and green places outside for people to walk, play and learn; and
- How to ensure that people have access to good jobs, good schools and the services they need.

“We know that none of these issues came about over night nor will they be fixed over night,” Caffarelli said. “So in 2007, we made a 10-year commitment to invest \$400 million to build 100,000 affordable homes and plant 3 million trees in our communities across the country.”

Caffarelli was pleased to report that in two years, The Home Depot Foundation has already created 27,000 homes and planted half a million trees in communities throughout this country.

**Details: For more information about the Home Depot Foundation, go to [www.homedepotfoundation.org](http://www.homedepotfoundation.org). To learn more about the Sustainable Cities, go to [www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org](http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org)**