



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Office of Communications

1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington DC 20506-0001  
202/682-5570  
202/682-5611 FAX  
www.arts.gov

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Contact: Sally Gifford  
202-682-5606

**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS AND EPA ANNOUNCE  
GOVERNORS' INSTITUTE ON COMMUNITY DESIGN**

***Former Governors Christine Todd Whitman, Parris Glendening, and Angus King encourage  
state leadership in well-designed growth***

Washington, DC — The National Endowment for the Arts announces the Governors' Institute on Community Design (GICD), a new initiative to support governors' leadership in good community design and innovative planning. Created in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Institute comprises of a series of workshops that initially will be held up to four times a year, pairing governors and their cabinets with top planning experts and practitioners to identify strategies for well-designed planning which will have a positive effect on American life.

Decisions made at the state level can have profound effects on how communities are designed and how people go about their daily lives. The Governors' Institute recognizes this and is intended to provide governors with ideas that will help them influence community design in a way that will result in enduring, successful communities.

The Governors' Institute builds on the success of the NEA Mayors' Institute on City Design (MICD), which since 1986, has gathered mayors and designers to generate ideas on better city planning. The MICD has graduated more than 675 mayors, and resulted in many specific physical improvements directly motivated by the NEA Institutes, from restored waterfronts to downtown revitalization projects. Through the Governors' Institute, the NEA hopes to inspire state leaders to capitalize on their roles as chief state "designers" to identify innovative design approaches that improve the way people live in cities, suburbs, and countryside.

"For 20 years, the NEA has championed excellence in public design at a city level through our Mayor's Institute," said NEA Chairman Dana Gioia. "Today we are delighted now to expand our program to the state level with the Governors' Institute."

**Governors Whitman, Glendening, and King lead the charge**

Former Governors Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey and Parris N. Glendening of Maryland will spearhead the new Governors' Institute on Community Design. Whitman and Glendening serve as co-chairs of the advisory council to Smart Growth America, a coalition of nearly 100 non-profit organizations working to support citizen-driven planning that coordinates development, transportation, revitalization of older areas and preservation of open space and the environment. Former Governor Angus King of Maine, who is working closely with GrowSmart Maine, also has agreed to be part of the Institute's future workshops. All three

former governors, who have worked on community design and planning during and since their terms, have agreed to work together to help other governors address these issues.

“States have always been laboratories for innovation,” said Governor Whitman. “Through the Governors’ Institute we hope to inspire a new level of innovation that will make our communities economically stronger, healthier, and more attractive places to live and work.”

“Many governors want to address housing, transportation, or other issues related to land use and development, but need the tools to do so,” said Governor Glendening. “There are many examples of successful community design, and our goal is to share those strategies with governors and their staffs.”

“There is no substitute for strong, consistent and determined leadership to create great places that people will love for generations.” said Governor King. “We hope that through the Governors’ Institute, we can equip state leaders with the strategies that can produce real change.”

“Air and water quality, brownfields, water infrastructure and wetlands protection are all linked to how and where we grow,” said Ben Grumbles, Assistant Administrator for Water, EPA. “Working in collaboration with states, we will enhance our understanding of the implications of growth. Thinking strategically, the participating governors will help their states dollars go farther while protecting and preserving their environment.”

### **A tailored approach**

While the challenges of regional planning encompass many areas from education to housing to environment, the Governors’ Institute will take a targeted approach to foster strategic leadership in civic planning, growth, and development. The Institute initially will hold up to four workshops annually, working closely with governors and their top staff to tailor each workshop to the specific needs and goals of each state. Workshops will bring together a state governor and his or her cabinet to meet with nationally renowned experts and practitioners in design, planning, transportation, housing, school, land-use, and the environment. Together, these teams will address specific issues identified prior to the workshop. During the workshops, intensive working and cross-disciplinary sessions will result in recommendations on state or regional design strategies.

The NEA is working in cooperation with the Smart Growth Leadership Institute and the National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education at the University of Maryland to develop and implement this new program. These two organizations have broad experience with state government as well as expertise with an array of land use and design issues.

With this announcement, The Governors’ Institute begins its outreach to governors and their staffs nationwide. For information on the Governors’ Institute, call 202.207.3355 x24, e-mail [htregoning@govinstitute.org](mailto:htregoning@govinstitute.org) or [jfrece@umd.edu](mailto:jfrece@umd.edu), or visit [www.govinstitute.org](http://www.govinstitute.org).

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*The National Endowment for the Arts is a federal agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts – both new and established – bringing the arts to all Americans, and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Endowment is the nation's largest annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases.*