



## Recommendations to the Department of the Treasury Transition Team from the International Downtown Association

The Board of Directors of the International Downtown Association is grateful for this opportunity to offer recommendations to the Department of the Treasury Transition Team.

IDA understands the need for the new administration to create as many good jobs as rapidly as possible. However, we believe that retaining existing jobs in viable companies will create new jobs; and we further believe that it is more important to create permanent jobs than temporary jobs.

We wholeheartedly endorse the position taken by the new administration that as many jobs as possible be created in “green” or sustainable industries and projects.

We strongly assert that cities in general, and downtowns in particular, are in themselves a major part of the answer, both in terms of job retention and creation, and in terms of combating climate change.

We should avoid a “one size fits all” approach and promote innovation and flexibility in whatever investments we make.

Finally, we believe that any stimulus program to create jobs should be designed around a long-range vision and with long-range goals in mind. A program that strengthens our core cities, rebuilds essential infrastructure, encourages changes in the way people move about, and leverages other dollars, both public and private, should be our highest priority.

Flexible loan programs that are able to quickly address cash flow needs when commercial lenders will be unable or unwilling to do so are a high priority. Providing local units of government, such as economic development departments and urban redevelopment authorities, with substantial federal dollars geared specifically to address this need could have major job retention and creation benefits.

Transportation is an essential ingredient in job creation and retention. Investments in new “circulator” systems, such as buses and streetcars or trolleys, could make local transit systems more effective while reducing the need for private automobiles and reducing carbon emissions. Streetscaping and signage projects are in many cities “shovel-ready” and can create jobs quickly.

Closely related to transportation systems are transit-oriented developments. Stimulus funds should help finance intermodal, mixed-use developments that include affordable housing. Adaptive re-use of nearby commercial buildings is another sustainable strategy.

We strongly recommend strategies that maximize choice and convenience for those that can walk, bike, or take transit; and that connect highways and local roads to well-designed and well-placed parking structures that are part of intermodal facilities so drivers have to only “park once.”

Finally, we recommend that these funds be allocated directly to cities and intermediary NPOs so that effective public-private partnerships can design and utilize effective programs and projects that create jobs, encourage green development, reduce carbon emissions, and leverage other public and private funding. We have a network of downtown management organizations, city agencies, private firms, and academic institutions poised and ready to help.