



NEWS

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LOCAL CONTACT

**“A CELEBRATION OF VISION AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT”
CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CA To Receive National Award for Entrepreneurial Leadership
Presented By Partners For Livable Communities
January 11, 2007
Willard InterContinental, Washington, D.C.**

(Washington, DC) — The City of San Diego, California will be honored with the *Entrepreneurial American Community Award* for the city’s 25 years of collaboration with Partners for Livable Places/San Diego on quality of life improvements and community building practices. This prestigious award will be presented by Washington, D.C.-based Partners for Livable Communities at its “Celebration of Vision and Community Spirit” formal dinner and awards program on Thursday evening, January 11th at the Willard InterContinental hotel in Washington, D.C. The awards will be presented by *Governing Magazine* Editor and Publisher Peter Harkness.

Partners for Livable Communities will honor a total of 9 individuals and communities throughout the country for stewardship and innovation in the improvement of communities and government. Five cities and counties will receive the Entrepreneurial American Community Award, which acknowledges the civic capacity building, commitment, vision and entrepreneurial spirit of a community. Those communities honored with this award are true innovators and have found success in providing unique solutions to local problems.

Recognizing the need for new vision and innovation in the late 1970’s when San Diego was suffering from center city blight, former Mayor Pete Wilson formed the community development organization Partners for Livable Places/San Diego (PLP San Diego) to provide consultation to the city administration for the creation of programs and partnerships on the themes of culture and livability to revitalize the downtown area. Some of the major initiatives PLP San Diego has advised the City on include a trolley system, a Culture Builds Community program that encourages the use of cultural assets in community development, a 24-hour city program, the ‘KidsPlace’ project to make downtown friendlier to children, and an intense effort to ‘Green’ the City.

Noting the immense benefits and resources PLP San Diego has and continues to bring to the table, the newly elected Mayor Jerry Sanders has embraced their ideas actively welcomed their advice and participation, leading San Diego to become a model city for successful cooperation between a community development organization and a city administration resulting in quality-of-life improvements for all. Important collaboration has come from the San Diego Chapter partnering with UCSD and their Helen Edison Lecture Series, as well as several UCSD-TV productions on Place Making. Board Members from PLP San Diego recently funded the filming of the UCSD-TV project: “*The Thirty-Four Great Waterfronts of the World, And What San Diego May Learn From Them*” and has made that available on DVD, as well as being broadcast on the UCSD-TV network. Fred Kent and Kathy Madden of Project For Public Spaces generously donated their time to this project for the benefit of PPS San Diego.

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Partners for Livable Communities will also be honoring the City of Atlanta, GA, for its collaborative efforts and creativity in the development of the BeltLine Project; the City of Easton, PA, for its innovative use of public/private partnerships in its economic revitalization plan centered on high-end residential development; Hillsborough County, FL, for its strategic planning and budgeting process that links funds in the budget directly to eight major goals to create more effective budgets; and the City of Kalamazoo, MI, for its spirit and risk-taking in the implementation of the Kalamazoo Promise, a tuition assistance program for the Kalamazoo residents.

Past community awardees of the Entrepreneurial American Leadership Award include Arlington County, for its distinctive aging initiatives; the City of St. Louis, for the fostering public and private partnerships which ensured the creation of the Grace Hill Neighborhood Services organization; the City of El Paso, for the community partnership that went into the creation of the Plaza Theatre Performing Arts Center; the City of San José for its successful affordable housing programs; and the City of St Louis, for having one of the most remarkable city center transformations in the nation.

For thirty years, Partners has celebrated the leadership of people, institutions, and partnerships that have discovered unique assets that communities can build upon to become a more livable place. Formed by a diverse coalition around a principle that quality of life is a key resource to be capitalized upon, Partners believes the powers and skills of individual citizens are prime resources to build a better future, both business and the civic community have a common interest in ensuring equity and livability, beauty and heritage is a unique asset for long term value, and important institutions can become fulcrums of change to reflect the needs of their communities.

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