

Congress Planning Group Co-Chairs Meeting Notes  
Friday, August 15, 2008

The focus of the meeting between Terry Gomez (via phone), with South Robertson NC, and Jimena Toscano, with Central Alameda NC, co-chairs of the NC Congress Planning Group, and DONE's Melvin Cañas and Tom Soong was to begin developing more concrete ideas as to the content of breakout sessions at the Congress. Grayce Liu, DONE staff joined to give recommendations on Best Practices planning.

It had been previously agreed there will be three tracks available at each of the breakout sessions:

1. NC Alliances
2. NC Best Practices
3. Open Space

There would be two rounds of breakout sessions; one before and another after lunch. There would also be a separate workshop taking place concurrently with the Community Budget Day presentation. The formats of the sessions in each track would vary according to the purpose and objectives of the sessions; from classroom-style, panel discussion/presentation, to more open-ended town hall discussions. Each session will last 1½ hours, including welcoming and introductions, and evaluations at the end.

NC Alliances Track:

There should be two different workshops within this track. One workshop would serve to introduce NC alliances to attendees who may not be aware of or involved in NC alliances. It could cover questions such as What's a NC alliance? What do they do? How do they function? What are the benefits of being involved in one? Etc. A second concurrent workshop in this track would be aimed at those who are already involved in alliances. This second workshop can serve, for example, to initiate discussions on how the alliances can work together, focus on a regional or policy issues, or other topics of a more advanced nature. Current alliances' leaders and representatives can lead these presentations and discussions.

NC Best Practices Track:

Best practices workshops can serve as NC peer-to-peer learning opportunities where NC members can have the opportunity to showcase successful projects or events to provide information that may be useful to other NC members. This can include running a successful meeting, conducting community outreach, improving a street median, working with a local school on a particular improvement project, planning and implement a community festival, etc. The main idea is to have NC members who have actually carried out a successful event or project to be the ones leading these presentations.

There was also discussion to initiate an NC recognition award program in this Congress. However, given the time constraint, it was stated that this may be something better left

for the next citywide congress to allow for more time to plan. In its place for this Congress, what can be accomplished, as part of an already-existing project at DONE, is to present, during lunch time, a short NC system PR video showcasing NC's from throughout the City with successful projects or events they've carried out. With this video, we can begin setting the stage for a recognition awards program that could occur annually at each citywide congress in the future.

#### Open-Space Track:

This third track of workshops would be left to be defined by NC input and interest. Some examples of what could occur here are a moderated "Talk to Your Councilmember" session, a session with the DWP on their rate-restructuring plans, and/or a session with the Planning Department's Plan-Check L. A. There has been interest expressed by some NC's to DONE regarding the inclusion of either the DWP or the Planning Department in Congress as these are two of the City agencies with the most contact with NC's.

For any of these tracks and proposed workshop ideas, it is important to remember the short time frame we have in which to finalize their programming, considering also that we need to allow time for the public to become aware of them to register ahead of time. As discussed, we hope that the programming of the workshops agreed upon by the Planning Group can be accomplished no later than the first week of September.

Other topics briefly touched on at the meeting were outreach and fundraising. It was decided that these topics be left for discussion with the broader group at our next meeting on Monday, August 25<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you,  
Melvin Cañas and Thomas Soong  
DONE Planning Group Co-Chairs