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# INTA35 in Lyon & Grenoble

**NAHRO attends the World Urban Development Congress**



# INTERNATIONAL REPORT

# NAHRO ATTENDS THE INTA 35 CONGRESS

BY JOHN PAPAGNI

International Urban  
Development Association

Association Internationale  
du Développement Urbain

INTA

NAHRO's nearly 20-year partnership with the International Urban Development Association (INTA) is stronger than ever. Founded in 1976 and based in Paris, INTA functions in many ways like the Urban Land Institute in the U.S., facilitating exchanges and seminars, as well as organizing expert panels on a broad range of housing and community development topics. However, unlike national networks, INTA's focus is global. The partnership between

NAHRO, the oldest and largest housing and community development association in the U.S., and INTA, an international network with more than 3,000 members in more than 100 countries, represents an extraordinary opportunity for members of both organizations.

In November 2011, NAHRO CEO, Saul Ramirez and INTA's General Secretary Michel Sudarskis met in the Hague and executed a new five year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) continuing benefits for members of both organizations (see box on page 12). Additionally, INTA has agreed that NAHRO will be their main partner

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A view of the shopping mall  
at De Bonne Eco-district,  
Grenoble, France.

PHOTO COURTESY: SAGES

in the U.S. Discussions are underway for meetings with NAHRO and INTA leadership in 2012, as well as a proposed international roundtable on new financial instruments for affordable housing that will take place in the U.S.

The author attended INTA's 35th annual World Urban Development Congress (INTA 35) in Lyon and Grenoble, France, on November 6–10, 2011. The INTA Congress built on past congresses held in The Hague in the Netherlands; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Kaohsiung, Taiwan and San Sebastian, Spain, all of which focused on different aspects of metropolitan development. INTA Congresses are the international equivalent of NAHRO's annual conference; they feature plenary sessions, breakout sessions, leadership discussions and technical site visits.

The INTA 35 Congress, entitled "Exit, Voice, Loyalty" and subtitled "Metropolises: development strategies and alliances," focused on the particular challenges faced by mid-sized metropolitan areas. In the conference, "voice" referred to the

role of citizen participation in addressing metropolitan challenges; "loyalty" refers to alliances and identity; and "exit" was variously interpreted to refer to the challenges of social exclusion, migration and choice to opt in or out of certain activities.<sup>1</sup> Its premise was that large metropolitan areas are not representative of the majority of urban settings—most metropolitan areas are mid-sized. These "intermediate metropolises" face their own unique challenges of governance, social organization, metropolitan identity and integration into the global economy.<sup>2</sup>

The INTA 35 Congress drew nearly 300 people from 35 countries. Congress participants benefited from shared knowledge, networking and the broad fellowship of community development

<sup>1</sup> Budiarso Sastrawinata, President of INTA, INTA 35 Conclusions, [www.inta-avin.org](http://www.inta-avin.org), November 2011.

<sup>2</sup> The subtitle is taken from a 1970 treatise by American economist Albert Hirschman. For more information on the other conference themes, see: <http://www.inta35.org/en/pages/inta35-themes>



The City of Grenoble, France, a host city to INTA's 35th annual congress, fits the congress theme of an "intermediate metropolis."

professionals that INTA's past president, Joe Montgomery once referred to as "the joys of having a shared vocabulary."<sup>3</sup>

While historically a European organization, INTA has been actively seeking to expand membership. These efforts were reflected in delegations from locations as varied as Columbia, Taiwan, Indonesia, Iran

bership that goes beyond Europe. I was impressed with the number of workshops [covering topics] beyond Europe.<sup>4</sup>

As a former city manager from Portland, Maine, Mr. Gray spoke on a panel that included an architect from Italy, a mayor from Iran, and an artist from France, and had the opportunity to experience the

use decisions in the U.S., in contrast to more centralized government in other countries; he also discussed the evolving role of the federal government in housing assistance and choice, and the impact of transportation decisions on metropolitan development.

Gerry Brough, of Aberdeen, Scotland found an immediate con-

## "INTA is an inclusive and exponentially growing network."<sup>5</sup>

and Israel. U.S. representatives at INTA 35 included a delegation of four NAHRO members. NAHRO delegation member Joseph Gray was impressed by "the opportunity to have a growing relationship with an international urban development organization" and stated, "It's clear that INTA has a broader mem-

Congress' diversity firsthand. The session, titled "Spatial Segregation and Responsibility," focused on the challenge of spatial segregation in urban centers and initiatives being undertaken to build connections within metropolitan regions. In his remarks, Gray emphasized the local government's strong role in land

nection between his experience at the INTA Congress and his work as Economic and Business Development Project Director for Aberdeen. A mid-sized port city with an economy oriented toward international trade and investment, Aberdeen fit neatly into the INTA conference theme of an

<sup>3</sup> Joe Montgomery, Chief Executive, ULI Europe, past president, INTA (2006-2008). Personal communication, December 16, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Gray, former City Manager, Portland, Maine, Personal communication, December 8, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> David Kooris, Vice President, Regional Plan Association, Stamford Connecticut. Personal communication, December 6, 2011.



"intermediate metropolis." Mr. Brough agreed with other participants that INTA's biggest asset is its global network. He was impressed that, "the network is not just public sector" and offered the "opportunity to connect with senior private sector officials focused on [urban] regeneration." Mr. Brough was able to speak with

resented at the Congress was the Connecticut-based Regional Plan Association (RPA). RPA brings together stakeholders to address regional planning and investment strategies with a focus on the New York metropolitan region.

"INTA is an inclusive and exponentially growing network," RPA Vice President David Kooris

are sharing a larger world," Mr. Ortiz said. "INTA is a knowledge platform able to respond to requests from governments [for technical assistance]."<sup>9</sup> INTA's primary mode for providing technical assistance is the international, peer-to-peer advisory panel. Similar to planning charettes in the U.S., the panels bring together an interdisciplinary

## "It's about networking. The benefits [of INTA] are sharing a larger world."<sup>8</sup>

David Kooris of the Regional Plan Association at the congress about the economic benefits of parks, using the case of Battery Park in New York as a model. "That was a very specific piece of advice that I wouldn't have found on my own,"<sup>6</sup> he said.

Another U.S. organization rep-

affirmed. "I created professional connections around a whole range of issues from park impacts to TOD (transit-oriented development). ... We've been talking about specific issue areas and hearing lessons from our international partners—particularly on high-speed rail."<sup>7</sup>

INTA's Vice President, Pedro Ortiz, was more direct. "It's about networking. The benefits [of INTA]

advisory panel of professionals from around the world for an intensive planning process that lasts several days and results in a public report or set of recommendations. Examples of topics from recent panels include:

- Local governance and decentralization in Benin (2009)

<sup>6</sup> Gerry Brough, Project Director, Economic and Business Development, Aberdeen, Scotland. Personal Communication, December 20, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> David Kooris, *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Pedro Ortiz, Vice President, INTA. Personal communication, December 8, 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Pedro Ortiz, *ibid.*

- Local development strategies for the City of Fukuoka, Japan (2009)
- Sports facilities and revitalization in Trento, Italy (2007)
- Waterfront and heritage development in Tainan, Taiwan (2009)

Taichi Goto, an urban designer and planner in Fukuoka, Japan has experienced firsthand the value of INTA's advisory panels. In 2009, he participated in an advisory panel to look at corridor development strategies. The panel offered international perspectives and best practices. Following dialogue with local business and public officials, and interaction with community groups, panel results were presented at a public meeting attended by 500 professionals from local and national institutions. In response to a recommendation from the INTA panel, the regional partnership for sustainable growth, or Fukuoka, D.C. was founded in 2011. The public-private partnership is charged with developing and implementing strategic projects aimed at increasing Fukuoka's competitiveness in the global economy.

"INTA provides cutting-edge knowledge...[and] a place for reflection," Mr. Goto said, noting that as a busy professional, he doesn't often "have time to think about what I achieved."<sup>10</sup> Like other participants, Mr. Goto views participation in INTA panels and conferences as more than networking. It's an opportunity to "attract global players, world class knowledge, investment and talent,"<sup>11</sup> he said.

Corinne Monnet of AIVP, an international network of Port Cities, was interested in INTA as a model for international networks. Ms. Monet stated, "I wanted to see how smaller cities (like Grenoble, France) have succeeded in attract-

<sup>10</sup> Taichi Goto, Principal, Fukuoka Urban Laboratories, Fukuoka City, Japan. Personal Communication, December 11, 2011.

<sup>11</sup> Taichi Goto, *ibid.*

## NAHRO's International Committee

NAHRO's International Committee collects and disseminates information on housing and community development in foreign countries. The committee identifies innovative programs, development techniques, and management systems that may be usable in the United States. The committee also shares information on U.S. programs with its foreign counterparts. For more information regarding the International Committee, resources and international partners, visit [www.nahro.org/international-resource-page](http://www.nahro.org/international-resource-page).

ing an international audience" and recognized the value of INTA as a vehicle "to network and exchange experience with other organizations facing the same problems."<sup>12</sup> Ms. Monet hopes to apply her experience at INTA 35 and the INTA model to an AIVP conference on port cities planned for the summer of 2012.

In what has become a tradition for urban planning and policy conferences, the setting—in this case, the Rhône-Alpes region of France—reflected the conference theme and became a laboratory for technical visits and tours. The Congress took place in Grenoble and neighboring Lyon in southeastern France, about a two-hour train ride from Paris. As first-time travelers

to the French Alps, we discovered that the region was very urban. Grenoble's density is, at least in part, a function of necessity. The third-densest city in France, Grenoble is surrounded by mountain ranges and suburbs, limiting room for new development. With 160,000 inhabitants,<sup>13</sup> Grenoble's, dense historic core makes it feel like a much larger city. Throughout downtown, ground floor businesses with apartments above line the streets, and a network of trams carry passengers around town.

One of Grenoble's achievements, highlighted in a technical visit at the Congress, was De Bonne, a new eco-quartier or eco-neighborhood in the historic center of the city that fills the void left by the closing of a military installation. The result of a planning process that began in 2000, De Bonne is a mixed-use, transit-oriented development that combines adaptive re-use and new construction with energy efficiency

and environmental design all in close proximity to one of

COURTESY: SAGES.



<sup>12</sup> Corinne Monnet, Promotion and International Relations, AIVP, La Havre, France. Personal communication November 29, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> De Bonne, A City-Centre Eco District, Sages, 2011.

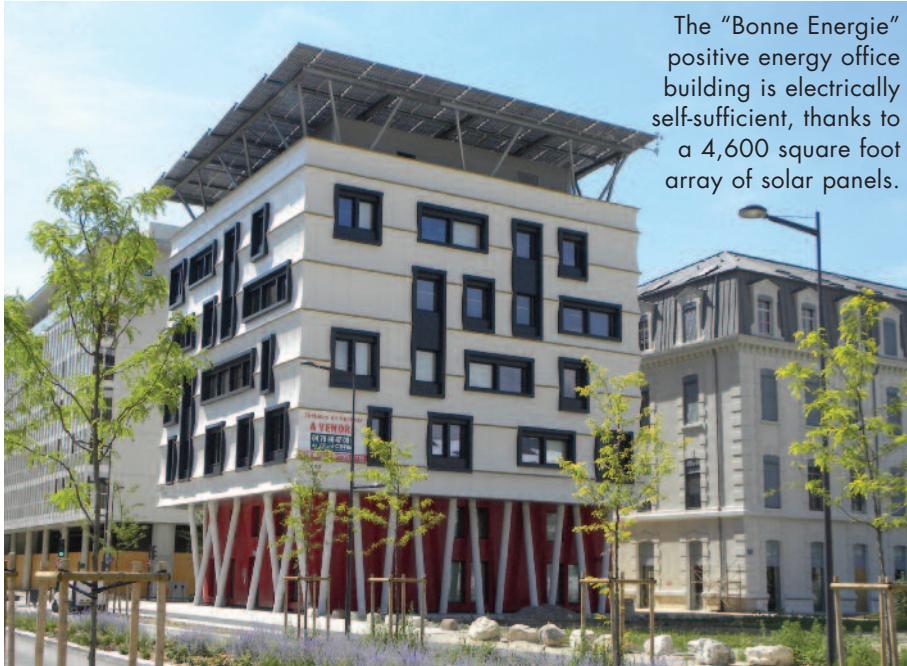


PHOTO COURTESY: SAGES.

The “Bonne Energie” positive energy office building is electrically self-sufficient, thanks to a 4,600 square foot array of solar panels.

Grenoble's tram lines. Major elements of the development are already complete. Key aspects include:

- 900 family dwellings with 40 percent “social” or subsidized units
  - A shopping mall with 55 retail outlets
  - Nearly 54,000 square feet of office space including a 17,000 square foot “positive energy” building that produces more energy than it consumes
  - Housing for seniors, students and disabled residents
  - 12 acres of public open space<sup>14</sup>
- De Bonne's environmental speci-

fications are as impressive as its design. Thanks to an array of solar panels covering 4,600 square feet, the Bonne Energie office building is electrically self sufficient. The roof of the shopping mall is fitted with more than 10,700 square feet of photovoltaic panels. This is the largest photovoltaic system in a French city. For more information about De Bonne, visit: [www.debonne-grenoble.fr/](http://www.debonne-grenoble.fr/)

The De Bonne technical visit at INTA 35 exemplified the practical knowledge sharing taking place at INTA congresses, roundtables, advisory panels and the new Communities of Competence online forum. Thanks to an ongoing

<sup>14</sup> Sages, *ibid.*



A view of the De Bonne Eco-district (Grenoble, France), including shopping mall (with solar panels above), service flats, the public Garden of the Small Valleys, and dwellings.

## About INTA<sup>15</sup>

INTA was founded in 1976 as an outgrowth of the New Town movement in Europe. Its founding principle was the importance of international exchanges among urban development professionals, both public and private. As new towns became less frequent, INTA transformed into an international forum for urban development professionals.

INTA now has about 3,000 members in 100 countries, many of them senior level policy-makers, academicians and private developers. INTA is their way of sharing knowledge, tools and experience in this profession.

INTA activities all have the purpose of the exchange of knowledge and experience, cooperation between public and private urban actors and building professional competencies. INTA's members co-produce solutions through international and regional exchanges on urban issues that require serious attention. The Secretariat coordinates the network and its activities, and disseminates the results first to members and then to larger audiences.

INTA's activities are structured into three areas:

**Exchange:** Annual Congress, conferences and seminars, World Urban Development Council, roundtables and Communities of Competence.

**Advice:** Peer-to-Peer Advisory Panels and brainstorming sessions.

**Training:** Annual Summer Course, professional skills development seminars, crash courses, master classes and study visits.

For more information, visit INTA's web site: <http://www.inta-aivn.org/en/>

<sup>15</sup> INTA background compiled by Kerron Barnes.

# NAHRO-INTA Partnership Benefits Both Organizations: How NAHRO Can Participate

BY KERRON BARNES

THE MEMORANDUM of Understanding (MOU) between NAHRO and INTA provides for three free registrations at each other's annual conferences, members' rate registration at other conferences and the open invitation to provide speakers at the INTA Roundtables, the Peer-to-Peer Advisory Panels and participation

made and followed by reactions from the local experts, translating the international practice to the local context. The result is a constructive, forward-looking dialogue. Recent roundtables have included Rethinking Public Buildings, Tallinn, Estonia; Tourism Development, Reunion Island, Indian Ocean (French);

November 2011 to review the strategic development potential of the town center of Brignoles, France.

## **Communities of Competence.**

This new INTA initiative provides online forums that are practical working platforms created at the request of members to address issues identified by the members.

NAHRO has a standing invitation to submit qualifications of members interested in being panelists. Of note is that travel and accommodation expenses for international panelists are usually paid.

in a new online working forum called Communities of Competence. Each is described in detail below.

**Annual Congresses.** The equivalent of the NAHRO annual Conference and Exhibition, these are four-day gatherings of 400 to 500 participants from up to 50 countries and rotate among the major continents. NAHRO members participating as speakers also receive free registration.

**Roundtables.** The roundtable is a fairly accessible dialogue format. For two to three days a selected group of international INTA members with specific experience in a certain field is invited by the host institution to review a particular urban development project or strategy, followed by a roundtable discussion with local decision or opinion makers. Presentations are

Innovative Development, Tainan, Taiwan.

## **Peer-to-Peer Advisory Panels.**

The INTA Advisory Service is a unique problem solving charette process that assists urban policy makers to make policy choices and provides them with support for strategic debate. Panels are a worldwide flexible resource that brings together up to 15 international urban practitioners, local and regional development officials, and local experts. Panels provide policy makers with an external vision, new operational plans as well as recommendations for their implementation. NAHRO has a standing invitation to submit qualifications of members interested in being panelists. Of note is that travel and accommodation expenses for international panelists are usually paid. The most recent panel was held in

Of the four communities currently operating, NAHRO has been given membership in the "Innovative Habitat" forum, which focuses on knowledge transfer, comparing challenges faced by different size cities, and testing innovative solutions and their outcomes regarding housing. Communities are composed of a knowledge partner, a leading institution with expertise in the subject area; strategic partners, who produce products or services in the area of interest; and members, who contribute by sharing and adding their experience to the overall input. Some preliminary subjects proposed for the Innovative Habitat forum are prevention of mortgage foreclosures and affordable housing.

For more information, visit INTA's web site: [www.inta-aivn.org/en/](http://www.inta-aivn.org/en/) or e-mail: [intainfo@inta-net.org](mailto:intainfo@inta-net.org)

## NAHRO Delegation Members

Kerron R. Barnes, Walden, N.Y.  
Joseph E. Gray, Jr., Portland, Maine  
John N. Papagni, Baltimore, Md.  
Helen L. Sause, Alameda Calif.

partnership with INTA, these are opportunities that will continue to be available to NAHRO members.

The experience of NAHRO members at INTA 35 underscores the value of international committee in building relationships with international partners and bringing best practices home. The delegation of Joe Gray, Kerron Barnes, Helen Sause and myself was the largest number to attend an INTA Congress to date. Traveling on their own time and expense, the delega-

tion provided tangible evidence of NAHRO's commitment to strengthening our international partnerships. NAHRO delegation members left Lyon and Grenoble excited about the opportunities that NAHRO's growing partnership with INTA offers practitioners in the United States and overseas. Beyond the partnership, we were hopeful about the broader benefits of what Mr. Ortiz described as "sharing a larger world." Readers can expect to hear about more opportunities afforded by the partnership in the coming year.

Special thanks to INTA, and the City of Grenoble for prompt replies to requests for background information and to Mr. Frederic Cacciali of Sages for background information regarding De Bonne.

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John Papagni serves as a Program Officer in the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization at the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. A member of NAHRO's International Committee, he has participated in conferences and exchanges in Brazil, Europe, Mexico and Canada.

Kerron Barnes, a 31-year member of NAHRO's International Committee, has attended nine INTA Congresses since 1984. He authored NAHRO's first MOU with INTA in 1993 and NAHRO's MOU with Israel. He has directed county and municipal CDBG programs in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. He is currently a grant writer in Mid-Hudson Valley, New York and manager of the housing rehabilitation program in Village of Walden New York.