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—FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—

DETROIT MAYOR DAVE BING COMMITS TO WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES TO “RIGHT-SIZE” DETROIT

DETROIT, November 25, 2009 – On Thursday, November 19, 2009, over 180 community leaders convened in Detroit as Mayor Bing and community leaders addressed critical issues facing Detroit neighborhoods. The 15th annual event, whose theme was “**Finding Common Ground for a Sustainable Detroit,**” was sponsored by the Detroit area Financial Institutions along with Community Development Advocates of Detroit and WARM Training Center.

“We’re in a financial crisis,” Mayor Bing told attendees, but he assured the group that “our team is competent and we’re making changes.” Bing stated that his goal is to stabilize Detroit’s finances and end the fiscal year without adding to the deficit.

“We don’t have the luxury of targeting specific areas within our city, Bing told the crowd. There’s been a lot of effort given to those who have the least—but everybody is hurting. Good neighborhoods are slipping—and they need help too.” Bing noted that Detroit is currently using about 50% of its 139 square miles, and stated that within six to twelve months, Detroit will have a long-term land-use plan for the city of Detroit.

Mayor Bing stated that the development and execution of a long-term plan for the city will require community involvement. “We must be open to the community—be very inclusive and get help with our priorities,” Bing stated.

After Mayor Bing’s address, the conference featured an interactive panel of community leaders and key stakeholders involved in shaping Detroit’s right-sizing discussions. The goal of this panel discussion was to gain consensus about where there is common ground on important issues. Panelists included **Karla Henderson**, Director of Detroit’s Buildings and Safety Engineering Department; **Steve Ogden**, Executive Director of Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative; **Steve Bancroft**, Executive Director of the Detroit Office of Foreclosure Prevention and Response; **Kurt Metzger**, Director of the Detroit Area Community Information Systems; **Dan Pitera**, Director of the Detroit Community Design Collaborative; **Maggie DeSantis**, Board Member of Community Development Advocates of Detroit; **Heide Muchiere**, Executive Director of Community Legal Resources; **Deborah Younger**, Executive Director of Local Initiatives Support Corporation; and **Tom Goddeeris**, Executive Director of Grandmont Rosedale Development Corporation.

In the afternoon, the conference featured a Community Toolbox with tabletop discussions where community leaders were made aware of resources and strategies that can be used to add value, and improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. Community Toolbox discussion topics included: Urban Agriculture, Vacant Land, Green Economy and TimeBanks.

“The remarkably well-attended conference yielded much more commonality of thought than initially anticipated. I hope participants will use this event as a springboard to continue positive conversation toward a more sustainable Detroit,” stated Tim Thorland, Board Chairperson for Community Development Advocates of Detroit.

Some of the “common ground” that surfaced throughout the conference included: **the need for Detroit to create a plan to address its large amount of open space; the importance of on-going community involvement in neighborhood planning and land use strategies; the necessity for decisions to be transparent and data-driven; and the consensus that Detroit not only faces tremendous challenges, but it also faces a tremendous opportunity to reinvent itself into a leaner, greener and more efficient Detroit.**

For the past 15 years, the Financial Institutions Community Development Conference has served as a forum for financial institutions, community based organizations, businesses, and local government to discuss, learn, and explore reinvestment and development opportunities in Detroit's neighborhoods and communities. The 2009 sponsors include: Bank of America, Chase, Charter One Foundation, Comerica, Fifth Third, Flagstar, Huntington, National City, MSHDA and LISC. The event is co-sponsored by WARM Training Center and Community Development Advocates of Detroit.

Community Development Advocates of Detroit (CDAD) is a nonprofit organization created in 1997, and serves as the citywide collaborative of over 60 community development organizations(CDO's) and supporters who share a common commitment to community-based sustainable development in Detroit's neighborhoods.

Established in 1981, WARM Training Center is a Detroit-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides expertise in energy efficiency, green building, and sustainability to residents, businesses, local governments, and professionals.

For more information about CDAD call 313.964.2888 or visit www.DetroitCommunityDevelopment.org.

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