

Cities of the Year | 25 Must-Have iPhone Apps

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MAY 2009

AMAZON  
vs. SONY  
THE HIGH-TECH  
BOOK WARS

A BILLIONAIRE'S  
BATTLE  
AGAINST METH

P&G'S  
QUEEN  
OF SWEAT

THE  
DOCTOR  
OF THE  
FUTURE  
WILL SEE YOU NOW

## Hollywood's ROGUE MOGUL

How Terminator Director **McG**  
Is Blowing Up the Movie Business

By Mark Borden

“OUR DINOSAUR  
STUDIO SYSTEM  
DOES NOT  
MAKE SENSE.  
THIS IS  
A REVOLUTION.”

—McG  
director,  
Terminator Salvation

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# 12 IDEAS TO BUILD ON

There's nothing we need more right now than **brilliant initiatives** that can help our communities **go greener, be safer, live smarter, and invest for the future.** Here are a dozen cities that are hatching plans we love.



Cleveland is turning its garden plans from sketch, above, to reality, left.

**Cleveland //** Reimagining a More Sustainable Cleveland Initiative  
One of America's most blighted cities, hard hit by rustification and foreclosure, is also home to one of its loveliest urban initiatives, a plan to create acres of tree nurseries, oases of native plants, and community gardens with bees and chickens. Devised at Kent State University's Urban Design Collaborative, the strategy is part of Reimagining a More Sustainable Cleveland Initiative, funded by the city and the Surdna Foundation. It's meant to boost property values and community spirit in neighborhoods plagued by vacant lots and condemned buildings. A proposed "Mow-to-Own" program will encourage neighbors to maintain nearby lots, while a variety of land-reuse projects point to a greener future—a solar array in a previously empty 3-acre lot, for example, will provide enough power for 200 homes. —ABHA BHATTARAI

## San Francisco

### Bank on San Francisco

Many people joke about stashing their cash under the mattress, but what if that were really the only option? Bank on San Francisco, a public-private partnership formed by the city and several financial organizations, gives citizens access to bank accounts and financial education. When the pilot launched in September 2006, there were 50,000 unbanked households in the city. After two years, 25,000 of them had signed up for accounts. One reason many people hadn't had checking accounts is they lacked government-issued U.S. IDs. Under the Bank on San Francisco program, the 17 participating banks and credit unions must accept Mexican and Guatemalan IDs. The initiative allows participants a safe place to keep their money as well as an alternative to the check-cashing services that often take 5% or more of their net income each year. It also includes money-management training. Other cities across the country are copying the program, and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a bill in December to expand it statewide in California. —ZACHARY WILSON



## Tucson

### Healthy City Initiative

It all began with a dare. In 2003, Tucson native and former surgeon general Richard Carmona challenged his friend, Mayor Robert E. Walkup, to turn their hometown into the model of a healthy city. He has done it, reshaping his city into a place where health and safety aren't an afterthought, but an integral part of municipal planning.

The sprawling, multi-faceted Healthy City Initiative is based on Carmona's five pillars of a healthy community: the physical, the emotional, safety, violence prevention, and substance-abuse prevention. Tucson now has 700 miles of bikeways and 72 miles of shared-use paths, and plans to spend more than \$80 million to make it an entirely walkable, bikeable city. There are regular bike and foot races, and "we've partnered with neighborhood associations to encourage walking programs," says Annemarie Medina, who leads the health effort for the mayor.

All that moving around has also turned Tucson into one big neighborhood-watch program—crime is down 20% since 2006. High-profile locals including Mike Stoops, coach of the University of Arizona's football team, serve as ambassadors for domestic-violence prevention. And by targeting four neighborhoods with a public-private enforcement-and-treatment project, Tucson has seen a 45% reduction in crystal-meth availability since 2006.

Walkup intends for the benefits of his initiative to ripple well beyond Tucson. In December, he hosted mayors from around the U.S. for a Healthy City Summit. And he created the Mayor's Global Alliance for Community Wellness, a Web site where civic leaders can share best practices; 41 city managers from six countries now participate. —ELLEN MCGIRT

## Taipei, Taiwan // Zero Landfill, Total Recycling

Taipei has strived to achieve "zero landfill, total recycling" by 2010, 30 years ahead of the UN's trash targets. It will probably fall short, but its policies are still exemplary. The city has encouraged the private sector to build composting facilities and recycling plants, and requires residents to pay for trash collection by the bag. Garbage trucks playing Beethoven's "Für Elise" and Badarzewska's "The Maiden's Prayer" collect trash, which must be in city-approved bags, from residents, who toss the bags into the trucks themselves. Taipei promotes trade in secondhand goods and introduced new methods of kitchen-waste disposal—one pilot program turns food waste into pig feed. The result: The volume of trash has been slashed by well over 60%. —AB



Taipei's waste-trimming has cut trash volume by more than 60% since 2002.

## NEW ORLEANS



LaToya Cantrell leads a coalition that has rebuilt a historic part of New Orleans.

### The Broadmoor Improvement Association

The recovery of post-Katrina New Orleans has unleashed a new generation of social entrepreneurs. A sterling example: the Broadmoor Improvement Association and its dynamic president, LaToya Cantrell. Broadmoor is a racially mixed, middle-class historic district dating to the 1920s. During Katrina, it saw 7 feet of flooding. The venerable associa-

tion found a new mission after the storm, when much of the area was in danger of demolition and rezoning as green space. Neighbors collaborated with researchers from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and students from Bard College on a comprehensive development plan. More than 70% of the area's homes have been restored. The group successfully

lobbied for better police presence and emergency services, reopened their local school as a charter, and built a new playground. Besides fostering exceptional cohesion—BROADMOOR LIVES! signs are on every lawn—they've become a model: Cantrell has spoken around the country about the power of community.

—ANYA KAMENETZ

# Malmö, Sweden

## Sustainable, Eco-friendly Enclaves

After recession nearly wiped out Malmö's industrial base in the 1980s, the city had a chance to start over. It created eco-friendly neighborhoods of transformed tenements and old shipyards. Much of Western Harbour now runs solely on renewable energy, including wind and solar, while organic waste from the area is turned into biogas. In Augustenborg, roof gardens reduce runoff and insulate homes, while a carpool system and pedestrian- and bike-friendly roads help cut vehicle use. The city expects to reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 25% between 2008 and 2012, blowing past the Kyoto Protocol's 5% target. —AB



In Malmö, roof gardens have taken root as part of a citywide eco-makeover.

## Chicago I-Go + CTA Smart Card

It seems almost too simple: one card that gives access to the trains, buses, and a local car-sharing program. The Smart Card is Chicago-based nonprofit I-Go Car Sharing's idea to extend public transportation to include public

cars. According to a recent study, most cars in Chicago—FAST COMPANY'S 2008 City of the Year—sit parked 95% of the time. "We have to make better use of our assets," says I-Go CEO Sharon Feigon. "We want to integrate the public-transit systems and car sharing any way we can, and

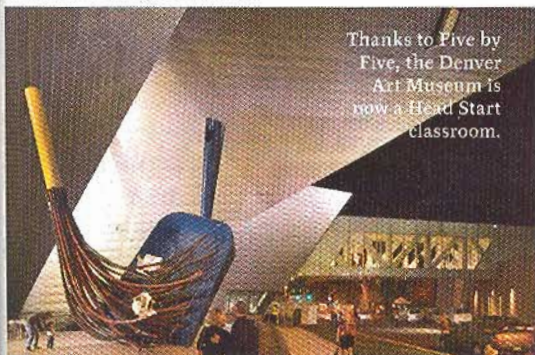
sharing one card is a good way to demonstrate that these different ideas are linked." The pilot program started in January with 5,000 Smart Cards and more than 200 cars. Coming soon: shareable plug-in hybrids that can power up at kiosks with real-time info on buses and trains. —ZW

## HOUSTON Discovery Green



A street, a few gray parking lots, and a little patch of unused green. Dreary. When the property in downtown Houston came up for sale, city leaders knew they could find a better use for it than yet another condo/office building or a parking garage.

They proposed Discovery Green, a 12-acre, \$122 million park in the heart of downtown that has reminded urban planners of the power and potential of green space. Year-round programming—exercise classes, concerts, films, festivals, a farmers' market—have helped Discovery Green beat attendance forecasts. "Downtown hasn't been known as a place to come on the weekends, but now you see thousands of people, families, and kids from all parts of the city," says park director Guy Hagstette. Despite a weakening real-estate market, development around Discovery Green is still strong. And, of course, the park is appropriately earth-loving, recycling its water and waste and drawing 100% of its power from renewable sources. Yes, we agree: much better than a parking garage. —ZW



Thanks to Five by Five, the Denver Art Museum is now a Head Start Classroom.

## Denver // Five by Five

The arts may often be associated with money and power, but the Mile-High City's Five by Five program opens the doors of Denver's cultural institutions to some of its youngest and poorest residents. Five by Five gives all children and families in the Head Start program free access to 12 museums and cultural venues, including the Denver Art Museum, Colorado Ballet, and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. In 2008, 3,000 participating families clocked 30,000 visits. "Eliminate the barriers to accessing culture, and our families will show up," says executive director Maria Guajardo. "As one father told me: 'I feel like the city belongs to me now.'" —ZW



Philly homeowners ask for help.

## Philadelphia The Mortgage Foreclosure Protection Program

How do you save your home from foreclosure? Philadelphia's answer: communication. The city's Mortgage Foreclosure Protection Program relies on door-to-door outreach, free counseling, and meetings between those on the brink of losing their homes and their mortgage lenders. Judges serve as mediators. Since Mayor Michael Nutter's administration established the plan in June 2008, it has saved more than 900 home owners from foreclosure; 1,400 more are midrescue. More evidence of success: Philadelphia officials say the program inspired a provision in President Obama's \$75 billion ant foreclosure plan that calls for judges to arbitrate negotiations between lenders and home owners. —AB

Vancouver's 2010 facilities—being built, right, and in a model, below—go for LEED Gold.



## Vancouver, British Columbia Green Games

The host of the 2010 Winter Games is going for green, using its big moment as a chance to catalyze change. All 18 buildings in Vancouver's Olympic Village are being built to LEED Gold standards, except the community center and one residential building, which are targeting LEED Platinum. Heat recovered from wastewater treatment will warm the Olympic Village's buildings. Elsewhere in the Olympic complex, the granite for paving and weirs is being harvested from demolished buildings. And new solar-powered trash compactors throughout the city will help cut the volume of trash bound for landfills by up to 80%. —AB

## NEW YORK The NYPD Counterterrorism Unit



Watching New York police commissioner Ray Kelly play the bongos alongside Cyndi Lauper at a recent NYPD Foundation fund-raiser, it's easy to forget that he has made battling terrorists part of his daily grind. His favorite refrain: "If we've been safe after 9/11, it's because of us, not the feds."

In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, Kelly built the most successful local counterterrorism unit in the U.S. and perhaps the world. The high-tech gizmos that the counterterrorism unit uses in its real-time crime center would make the producers (and fans) of *CSI*

Commissioner Kelly built a counterterrorism unit.

drool. The team, which has more than 600 experts and proficiency in some four dozen languages, is representative of "a police department that now mirrors our diverse population," Mayor Michael Bloomberg proudly tells *FAST COMPANY*. The unit routinely dispatches officers overseas for work in cities believed to be terror targets, including Amman, London, Singapore, Tel Aviv, and Toronto, where they can listen for threats. In the aftermath of terrorist attacks in Madrid and Mumbai, they helped gather intelligence.

Creating the unit was no easy construction project. The FBI and CIA were not taken with the notion of anyone else on their counterterrorism turf, so Kelly had to deal with interagency politics. And then there was the significant problem of funding: Nearly 94% of the city police budget goes to personnel costs, leaving little for new programs and technology. Fortunately, the NYPD Foundation stepped in with a \$1.2 million grant in 2002 to seed the project.

These days, counterterrorism strategy is something many municipalities—urban, suburban, rural—need to think about. But there's a broader lesson here too: Leaders in any community must find creative ways to respond to their constituents' changing needs—and properly managed public-private partnerships can be the way forward in an era of budget cuts. That's a drumbeat worth keeping up. —EM