

DRAFT MILLENNIUM COMMUNITIES

Background:

- The President has talked about building a bridge to the 21st Century since he first ran for President -- and now the time is upon us.
- Through the Millennium Communities Program, we have an opportunity to:
 - unite the Country through our grassroots communities around a common national theme "Honor the Past -- Imagine the Future";
 - and to reinforce the President's national priorities such as education, health care and the environment at the local level.
- Since we've been working on this project, we've been impressed with the seriousness with which communities are approaching the millennium with.
 - There's a sense of urgency to use this milestone to build a better future for our children.
 - People (especially from smaller communities) reflect with great fondness on what the bicentennial did to unite their community and they see the millennium as a greater impetus for taking action.
- The White House Millennium Council already has several national programs underway (SAT, Trails, Mars, My History is America's History) that set an example and tone for what we hope communities will do to "Honor the Past -- Imagine the Future."
- Millennium Communities affords ALL Americans an opportunity to participate and make a difference and leave a lasting legacy for our future.
- It is inspiring to learn about what is already being planned in communities around the country -- serious thought and energy are being poured into their efforts.
 - Little Rock, AR has established a Millennium Commission to pursue various projects. For example, the Mayor, in partnership with President Clinton's Church, will host a religious event at their new arena (for 18,000 people) on December 31st, 1999. In addition, local school districts are developing a curriculum for the next school year to talk about the millennium and what it means to the community.
 - Seattle, WA has a grand infrastructure in place -- their theme is "Imagine What We Can Do Together." They have three major focus areas: Legacy, Celebration and Volunteerism. From planting 20,000 trees in the forest; to water restoration projects; to bringing 13 ethnic cultural festivals to parts of their community to celebrate diversity; to establishing "Service Corps 2000" to be kicked off on

Martin Luther King Day through Earth Day 2000 where local corporations and businesses will help increase Volunteerism and spotlight existing organizations efforts -- Seattle is energized.

- Boston, MA has established a Millennium Council comprised of diverse representatives from the city. They have identified 8 major objectives and committees -- Community Building; History and Tourism; Advanced Technology; Education; Regional Economic Competitiveness etc. For example, they are working with local businesses to establish an endowment to fund college education for all children in the city. They have a public education and arts awareness project that they will bring to all parts of their city.
- The White House has an opportunity to capitalize on what's already being planned and to have a multiplying effect on other communities. In addition, we can use this network of communities to further national priorities like education, environment, health care etc.

The Program Process:

- The White House Millennium Council will partner with several intergovernmental organizations: Conference of Mayors, National League of Cities, Towns and Townships, National Association of Counties, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- Local elected officials will apply on behalf of their community to their National Association to receive the "Millennium Communities" designation. There are potentially 35,000 communities who can apply.
- Applications will be based on a pledge to:
 - Establish some sort of Millennium Committee/Task Force
 - Commit to reaching out to all parts of their community
 - Pursue projects which "Honor the Past -- Imagine the Future"
- We are working with Phil Caplan on recognition by the White House
 - Potentially a certificate signed by the President et. al. (and picture)
 - Banners which can be hung at town centers etc.
- We plan to launch this project the end of January. Our initial thought is to have program highlighted in the President's State of the Union Address followed up by an event at the White House and then subsequent visits to local communities who receive the "Millennium Communities" designation to reinforce the program. We could include representatives from all of the intergovernmental organizations who are partnering with us as well as non-profit and corporate entities to energize them.