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WILLIAM JOHNSON ELECTED COMMUNITY PROGRESS BOARD CHAIR
Former Rochester Mayor to Champion Efforts to Reinvent Cities

WASHINGTON, DC (Feb. 14, 2011) – William Johnson, the former three-term mayor of Rochester, New York, has been elected Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Center for Community Progress, a non-profit group with offices in Flint, MI; Washington, DC and New Orleans, that focuses on prevention and adaptive reuse of vacant properties to ensure the revitalization and sustainability of cities.

Johnson, now a Distinguished Professor of Public Policy and Urban Affairs at the Rochester Institute of Technology and coordinator of the school's Urban and Community Studies Program, was celebrated during his Mayoral tenure for prioritizing "quality of life" issues in Rochester's neighborhoods and for bringing new housing, shopping, sports arenas and music festivals to the city.

After declining to seek a fourth term in office, Johnson joined the RIT faculty, where he has become a leading researcher and advocate of smart growth strategies for urban areas.

"Bill is that rare combination of brilliant theorist and accomplished practitioner," said Community Progress President and founder Dan Kildee. "He knows first-hand the challenges of disinvestment in urban areas and the complexities involved in bringing innovative solutions to bear upon them. We are truly fortunate to have his vision and leadership guiding our board."

As Chairman of Community Progress' Board, Johnson will oversee the group's strategic direction as it looks to support, promote and replicate efforts to reclaim vacant land, reuse problem properties and leverage underutilized real estate resources for the public good. In addition to providing on-the-ground technical assistance to groups looking to improve their communities, Community Progress engages in advocacy and education for policy changes on issues related to land use, in urban planning and smart growth.

"I'm looking forward to deepening my involvement with Community Progress," Johnson said, "The work they do is critical to shaping a positive future for America's cities. I'm excited about the opportunity to champion their mission of reinventing cities. In so many ways, it's what my career has been all about."

A native of Lynchburg, Va., Johnson is a graduate of Howard University. In his early career, he served as the Deputy Executive Director of the Urban League of Flint, MI; later, he spent 21 years as the President and CEO of the Urban League of Rochester before being elected mayor there.

To learn more about the Center for Community Progress, please visit www.communityprogress.net/ or call (877) 542-4842.

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