

Neighborhood Planning Unit-T

950 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd.
Atlanta, GA 30310



"Dedicated to building on our strengths in clean, safe neighborhoods"

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Kwabena "Cubby" Nkromo, NPU-T Chair
TO: NPU-T General Body
RE: Chairperson's Report
DATE: 9 January 2008

I love playing chess. It's actually relaxing for me to go online after a long day and beat some unsuspecting lower rated player, or even get beat and learn something from a superior opponent. Either way, I thoroughly enjoy the strategic process that is at the core of chess. There is always a lesson in the game.

One of the things I have learned with chess and the game of life is how important it is to have goals. Jim Cathcart, a noted professional speaker, once said, "Most people aim at nothing in life and hit it with amazing accuracy." If we don't specify exactly what we want, we have no reason to complain about what we get or where we find ourselves.

This maxim is as true for a communal enterprise like Neighborhood Planning Unit T as it is for individuals. In order for NPU-T to thrive beyond the mundane tasks of processing applications for city licenses and permits, we must be willing to challenge ourselves to achieve community building objectives. These goals must be conceivable, believable, achievable, measurable, controllable, and with purpose.

As you have seen, your neighbors have stepped up in good number to take on this challenge by chairing and serving on the various committees of NPU-T. Of course, we are always grateful for the service and leadership of our neighborhood association presidents. It is important to remember that unlike elected officials at a higher level, none of us are paid or receive any compensation beyond the satisfaction of serving our neighbors and building a better community for our families. It is truly a labor of civic love.

Given this reality, the dynamic between these volunteers and ourselves must be fundamentally different than what we tend to expect with politicians whose salary we pay with our tax dollars. It is must be much less about asking that something be done for us as a community, but rather what we are willing to help make happen ourselves. The goals of NPU-T are legitimately the goals of those who do the work. If there is something you see missing, I challenge you to find it within yourself and be about the business of sharing it with your neighbors.

NPU-T 2008 Strategic Framework

- I. **Short term goals** – the various projects and activities of NPU-T officers and committees

- II. **Middle range goals** – established by the Chair for inter-committee cooperation. These projects will typically have a 1-2 year time frame for completion and for 2008 include:
 - Citizens Patrol
 - Urban Agriculture Initiative (resulting in a local farmers market)
 - Pan African Village Trail

- III. **Long term goals** – identified by the Chair in consultation with various other community stakeholders and leaders. The projects will typically start out as a broad issue area that leads to a particular solution and will have multi-year time frames for completion. For 2008, they include:
 - Mortgage Fraud (with an eye towards a Community land Trust as a solution)
 - Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (in partnership with the Atlanta University Corridor Vision Team)
 - The Beltline Project

Other Items:

The NPU-T Executive Committee will convene in a leadership retreat February 8th-9th 2008, facilitated by the staff of **Georgia Stand Up: A Think and Act Tank for Working Communities** (www.gastandup.org). Executive Committee business for the month of February will be conducted during the retreat.