

## **UPDATE ON ACORA ACTIVITIES**

**April 15, 2004**

**George Howell**

We continue to work toward finalization of the Strategic Plan. It is fairly intensive work, trying to make sure that the strategies for achieving the Empowerment Zone benchmarks appear reasonably calculated to accomplish the desired outcomes.

Given the lapse of time between the origination of the Empowerment Zone in Atlanta and the present, many of the strategies proposed initially may no longer be feasible or the previously identified needs upon which they were based may no longer exist. In recognition of these factors, we are hoping to be allowed to incorporate adequate flexibility into the program as to make such adjustments as appear necessary and appropriate.

As for assistance to community development corporations, we have not begun to focus on the specifics of the part of the Strategic Plan providing for operating funds for CDC's. We anticipate also that CDC's may receive other assistance as well, including assistance with property acquisition through the Land Bank Authority and generally, in connection with their efforts to make the communities within which they operate safer, more livable and viable.

As for our timetable, we are still awaiting the transfer of authority from the City of Atlanta to the AcoRA Board. We must receive approval of the Strategic Plan. from the State Department of Community Affairs and from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We are, however, hopeful of soliciting RFP's and to begin active implementation of the Strategic Plan sometime during the summer.

The AcoRA Board members and the ANDP staff are working diligently to get the program underway, and to construct a framework for the effective, efficient, productive and fair utilization of the remaining Title XX funds and Renewal Community incentives.