



For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Mimi Bilzor, Johns Hopkins University
(410) 516-8541
mimi@jhu.edu

Billions in Nonprofit Projects Halted by Credit Crisis

Johns Hopkins researchers estimate \$166 billion in infrastructure projects delayed nationwide

February 18, 2009 - Lansing, MI – Like state and local governments and private businesses, America’s 1.4 million nonprofit organizations have many major “shovel-ready” infrastructure projects on hold because of the credit crisis, according to a new survey by the Johns Hopkins University Nonprofit Listening Post Project. For a country eager to promote employment, these projects offer an inviting target.

Nonprofits always struggle to generate investment capital due to their nonprofit status and their inability to access the equity markets, but the survey results show that the recession has compounded their woes: The 1,837 organizations surveyed identified 1,065 shovel-ready projects stalled by the inability to secure financing. A state-by-state listing of these projects is at http://www.jhu.edu/listening_post/news.

The organizations that participated in the survey differ widely in size, cover all regions, and represent a diverse array of fields, including children and family services, elderly services and housing, community development, arts and culture, and others. Based on survey results, the researchers estimate that even excluding hospitals and higher education, which were not covered in this survey, nonprofit organizations nationwide have over \$166 billion worth of community infrastructure projects ready to go if funding were available.

“As Congress, the president, and state governments begin making concrete plans for allocating the economic recovery funds recently enacted by Congress, they would do well to consider the considerable backlog of worthy projects stalled at the country’s nonprofit organizations,” said Lester M. Salamon, director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies, which conducted this survey as part of its Listening Post Project.

“Nonprofit infrastructure projects have the double benefit of strengthening our communities and generating jobs—both of which are needed in this time of testing for our nation,” observed Peter Goldberg, president of the Alliance for Children and Families and chairman of the Listening Post Project Steering Committee.

Examples of projects delayed indefinitely by the credit crisis include the Southside Youth Center planned by the 25-year-old San Antonio Youth Centers to provide classrooms, a workforce training center, and a child development center to a deeply impoverished community; and the 105-year-old Family Service of Roanoke Valley’s plans to renovate a downtown facility to provide mental health services for children, families and older adults.

-more-

*Increasing the capacity of Michigan’s nonprofits to serve, strengthen and transform communities.
Michigan Campus Compact, NPower Michigan and Volunteer Centers of Michigan are affiliates of the
Michigan Nonprofit Association*

Other key findings of this survey include:

- More than 40 percent of the responding organizations reported that they had “shovel-ready” infrastructure projects, and 13 percent said they had more than one.
- Of these projects, 27 percent are for new construction projects and 73 percent are renovations or expansions;
- Typical examples of these projects, in addition to those cited above, include an employment training center in Louisville, a social enterprise and volunteer center in Michigan, the expansion and renovation of a children’s museum and art gallery in Florida, and a range of continuing care facilities, brownfield cleanup efforts, river restoration projects, and physical improvements to blighted neighborhoods.
- California and New York head the list of states with sizable amounts of estimated shovel-ready nonprofit infrastructure projects, but sizable amounts exist in virtually all states.

“Thanks to this eye-opening data, we now know about existing significant opportunities not just to stimulate employment but also to improve the social infrastructure of our communities,” said Tim Delaney, president and CEO of the National Council of Nonprofits, a Listening Post Partner organization. “Let’s make sure nonprofit infrastructure projects are given as much consideration as roads, public buildings, and businesses in the uses made of economic recovery and bank bail-out funds.”

The full text of the report “Shovel-Ready” but Stalled: Nonprofit Infrastructure Projects Ready for Economic Recovery Support,” complete with state-by-state estimates, is available online at <http://www.jhu.edu/listeningpost/news>.

The Listening Post Project is a collaborative undertaking of the Center for Civil Society Studies at the Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies, the Alliance for Children and Families, the Alliance for Nonprofit Management, the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, the American Association of Museums, Community Action Partnership, League of American Orchestras, Lutheran Services in America, Michigan Nonprofit Association, the National Council of Nonprofits, and United Neighborhood Centers of America. Its goal is to monitor the health of the nation's nonprofit organizations and assess how nonprofits are responding to important economic and policy changes. For full details on the respondents to the present survey, see the Web site above. Support for the Listening Post Project has been provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and the Surdna Foundation.

Michigan Nonprofit Association (MNA) increases the capacity of Michigan’s nonprofits to serve, strengthen and transform communities. With nearly 1,200 members, MNA serves as a statewide network for the sector, a resource center on effective management practices, and as an advocate for the nonprofit community. For more information, visit www.mnaonline.org.

###

Johns Hopkins University news releases can be found on the World Wide Web at http://www.jhu.edu/news_info/news Information on automatic E-mail delivery of science and medical news releases is available at the same address.

Increasing the capacity of Michigan’s nonprofits to serve, strengthen and transform communities. Michigan Campus Compact, NPower Michigan and Volunteer Centers of Michigan are affiliates of the Michigan Nonprofit Association