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Jersey City redevelopment chief named year's best public official

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Robert Antonicello, executive director of the **Jersey City Redevelopment Agency**, was recently honored as Public Official of the Year by the New Jersey District Council of the **Urban Land Institute (ULI-NNJ)**.

The ULI is a worldwide organization that provides leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities by bringing together leaders to exchange best practices.

Appointed JCRA's chief in April 2006 by Jersey City Mayor **Jerramiah T. Healy**, Antonicello, a member of the ULI-NNJ, leads the state's oldest and largest municipal redevelopment agency.



Photo courtesy of Jersey City Redevelopment Agency

Robert Antonicello, executive director, Jersey City Redevelopment Agency

He is committed to partnering with Jersey City in creating responsible and sustainable growth that elevates the quality of life in all of the city's neighborhoods, ULI-NNJ officials said in handing out the award.

"We try to get a possibility virus going -- it is the idea that there is possibility in everything that we do," said Antonicello. "The possibility virus is something that I feel is alive and well at our agency and in Jersey City.

"Another core principle for us is that everyone is our partner. You can't rebuild a city with a bunch of applicants," said Antonicello. "If you walk into a city and you're an applicant you're already behind the eight ball. So, what we try to do is build our partnerships as well as we can with everybody -- the architects to the builders to the developers to the bankers."

Antonicello was one of seven winners at ULI-NNJ's Fourth Annual Leadership in Land Use awards held at the Heldrich Center in New Brunswick, N.J., on Dec. 11, 2008.

Additional award winners included: Jerry Fitzgerald English Esq., Educator of the Year; Eleven80 in Newark, Project of the Year; the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission, Special Recognition for Public Policy; New Jersey Transit - Hudson-Bergen Light Rail, Special Recognition for Infrastructure; the First Avenue School in Newark, Special Recognition for Sustainable Development; and Michael Graves, FAIA, for the Lifetime Achievement award.

"Our award winners reflect the ULI mission and the ULI principles. Their businesses and projects echo the concepts of sustainability, smart growth and the utilization of resources with a smart and consistent approach that are the hallmark of ULI," said Lawrence Jacobs of the law firm Wilentz, Goldman and Spitzer, chair of ULI-NNJ. "Recognition of these projects and principles is important to the real estate and land use planning areas -- now, more than ever."