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## **What is around the corner for commercial real estate?**

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What is around the corner? Real estate investments have traditionally offered diversity and often extraordinary returns to accompany the extraordinary risks. Real estate will certainly fulfill those expectations once again. The Counselors of Real Estate meet in New Orleans October 11th-14th, and Robert White, CRE, founder and CEO of Real Capital Analytics, is attending to network with other Counselors and listen to experts on the panels. White is one of the single most respected transactional data sources in the country and he is attending "to speak to as many knowledgeable people as possible to get their opinions and insights (to reconcile) so many conflicting signals" in the market.

The Counselors have a reputation for candor and communication in addition to competence and expertise. They are notorious for aggressive listening skills! Turning It Around: Mastering the New Urban Realities will explore real property markets against the backdrop of New Orleans' rebuilding lessons learned and lessons still unfolding. The back-to-basics in lending and credit and the management of stimulus funding in New Orleans provide some empirical evidence of what might work and what might not work in the markets elsewhere. The New Orleans CRE's and their local professional colleagues promise some unconventional thinking and untested approaches that brought extraordinary results. White has been operating overseas and has been particularly generous with the Counselors in sharing his insights and the limitations of the data in the markets.

We are moving around the corner, not just peaking around the corner, as markets continue to stabilize and economic growth turns modestly positive from stimulus, business and consumer spending. Forecasting demand in the property markets from the modest recovery is still a challenge. K. C. Conway, CRE, real estate expert with the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, will be briefing the Counselors on market conditions much as he has been briefing recently reappointed Fed chair Ben Bernanke during this extended contraction and market turmoil. The commercial real estate capital markets are headed for further turmoil as forecast defaults, delayed portfolio action, and refinancing all coincide with overall persistent credit crunch conditions. Armed with a scheduled, timely government briefing from Jeff DeBoer, president and CEO of The Real Estate Roundtable, the attendees can be expected to drill down with Conway on just how the Fed and its programs will mitigate the grinding of the crunch in the next few quarters as capital requirements for commercial real estate surge.

Turning corners are often exciting, particularly when the new vistas offer promised change from the present. The Counselors of Real Estate draw from a national cross section of the commercial real estate industry and their forums of inquiry are representative of the industry. The CRE Annual Meeting in New Orleans promises to provide a timely discussion of what to expect on the other side!

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