

# METROPOLIS P/O/V

## Recover Act

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Monday, November 1, 2010 12:30 pm

While it's fashionable to complain about too much government spending and lack of jobs, we found quite the opposite of this pessimistic view at [Neocon East](#), the trade show for contract/commercial furnishings held this past October at the Baltimore Convention Center. There we caught up with Mark Falanga, senior vice president of Merchandise Mart Properties Inc. (MMPI), the producers of all Neocon shows. This multi-faceted man, who is also the author of the controversial book, *The Suburban You*, based on his family's life in a North Shore suburb of Chicago, spoke into my Flip camera. Among other things he said that this year the federal government will spend \$1.6 billion on interior furnishings, upgrading its facilities, making them more energy efficient as well as healthier for thousands of federal workers. MMPI's Baltimore show, in fact, had new dates this year to coincide with the [GSA's](#) and other federal agencies' purchasing schedule. The majority of exhibitors at Neocon East work sell furnishings to the feds. That's good news to a hard-hit industry.



*Energy efficient furnishings for federal buildings are of special interest to us, as an important component of the [Metropolis 2011 Next Generation Design Competition](#).*