



NADO NEWS

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Registration Now Open for Two NADO Conferences

Registration is now open for NADO's **National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference** (August 24 – 26) and **2011 EDFS Conference** (August 23 – 25) to be held in Washington, D.C. For more information on these events, please reference the articles below or visit <http://www.nado.org/training>.

NADO President Tim Ware Participates in White House Rural Meeting

On July 25, NADO President Tim Ware, Executive Director of the Mid-East Commission in Washington, North Carolina, participated in a White House Rural Council meeting led by U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, White House Office of Public Engagement Director Jon Carson, and White House Domestic Policy Council Senior Policy Advisor for Rural Affairs Doug McKalip.

Last month, President Obama signed an Executive Order establishing the White House Rural Council which was formed to provide recommendations on investments in rural areas. The Council is focused on economic development, job growth and quality of life improvements in rural America by increasing opportunity and access to investment capital in rural areas and promoting innovation including broadband and renewable energy development. The Council is also working to streamline and improve federal program delivery to better engage rural stakeholders.

During the meeting, Secretary Vilsack outlined the upcoming Rural Roundtables where Administration officials will travel across the country to hear from residents in rural America about what the Administration and specifically, the Rural Council, should be addressing and how they can improve services. Additional information on the Council and the roundtables is available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/06/09/obama-administration-establishes-white-house-rural-council-strengthen-ru>.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

NADO Board Officer Steve Etcher Testifies on Federal Economic Development Issues

On July 27, NADO Secretary Steve Etcher, Executive Director of the Boonslick Regional Planning Commission in Warrenton, Missouri, testified before the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management, on the importance of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA).

The subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Jeff Denham (R-CA), held the oversight hearing, "The Economic Development Administration: How to Improve Effectiveness through Reforms and Consolidations," to examine ways to improve federal economic development programs, including EDA collaboration and potential consolidation with other federal programs. This was the first EDA oversight

hearing by the subcommittee in the 112th Congress.

In his testimony, Etcher discussed how EDA is unique among the federal portfolio of economic development programs and how EDA is positioned to be the lead federal economic development agency. **“As GAO noted earlier, there are currently more than 80 federal programs related to domestic community and economic development,”** he said. **“While many of these line-item programs are housed within larger departments and agencies, EDA is the only federal agency with the sole mission of creating high quality jobs in the United States.”**

Etcher also identified opportunities for reforms and improvements across the full spectrum of federal community and economic development programs. **“Rather than focus solely on opportunities across the four major departments of Commerce, HUD, USDA and SBA as outlined in GAO’s May 2011 report, we see greater opportunities for agencies and programs within each of the departments to be streamlined, better coordinated and reformed.”** He also stressed the importance of “coordinating and prioritizing federal community and economic development investments based upon regionally-based, locally-driven comprehensive economic development strategies or CEDS.”

Also testifying at the hearing was David Baker, Senior Vice President of FutureFuel Corporation from Independence County, Arkansas. Baker testified that in order to grow operations, the company needed infrastructure capital. By working with their region’s Economic Development District, the White River Planning and Development District, and with a small grant from EDA, FutureFuel was able to leverage other funding sources to make improvements to their rail system. The company has since created over 100 new jobs and has significantly expanded its capacity to ship biodiesel and other products.

More information on the hearing, including testimony and a recording of the hearing, can be found [here](#).

Still No Compromise on Debt Limit

With four days remaining before the August 2 risk-of-default deadline set by the U.S. Treasury Department, Congress and the Obama Administration are still at an impasse over a final debt-limit deal. Although both House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) have plans on the table, neither seems viable enough to pass through both chambers nor be signed by President Obama.

To give some perspective on both plans, Reid’s deal (S. 1323) would immediately raise the debt ceiling by the full amount needed through 2012 (to get through the next election). According to the Congressional Budget Office, it would cut spending by \$2.2 trillion, although \$1.04 trillion of that savings would come from a decrease in funding for Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Boehner’s deficit package (S. 627) would initially cut the deficit by \$917 billion over 10 years and increase the debt ceiling by \$900 billion, which would allow the government to continue borrowing money to pay its bills until early 2012. Another \$1.6 trillion increase in the debt ceiling would be contingent on enactment of a second \$1.8 trillion deficit reduction plan.

The problem is this: the House has fully rejected Reid’s plan, both Reid and President Obama have rejected Boehner’s plan declaring it “dead on arrival,” and Boehner has been struggling to win the support of his own caucus as Tea Party conservatives have criticized his plan for not seeking more substantial cuts and not mandating a balanced budget amendment.

Quietly working on the side, Senate Minority Leader McConnell (R-KY) has been putting together his own plan, a grand compromise, that he hopes will appeal to both chambers. His ultimate goal is to find one magic number (for both the new debt limit and an equal down

payment on deficit reduction) that is large enough to prevent default and subsequent downgrading of the government's Triple-A credit rating, big enough for Tea Party Republicans to be comfortable with their vote, and small enough for Democrats to think they have preserved critical programs. Negotiations will continue today and into the weekend.

FAA Deal Nowhere in Sight

Ending the partial shutdown of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) looks to be the only other thing on Congress' critical to-do list before the August recess. Six days into the impasse, Congressional leaders are no closer to a deal and any further moves will have to wait in line behind a debt limit deal.

The shutdown, which occurred after Congress failed to approve the 21st extension of funding for the FAA programs, immediately affected all non-essential federal aviation programs, resulting in the suspension of some 4,000 FAA employees. In addition to the FAA furloughs, an estimated 70,000 construction workers are out of work and the FAA has been forced to issue stop-work orders on approximately \$7 billion in contracts. Essential operations, like air traffic controllers, are operating normally.

The Congressional standoff is over a House provision requiring a minimum distance for Essential Air Service (EAS) airports of 90 miles from the nearest medium or large hub airport which would eliminate 10 airports in current EAS communities. There would also be a \$1,000 per passenger cap on EAS subsidies. Airports requiring a subsidy of more than that would be excluded from the program. This would cut about \$16 million from about \$150 million a year in subsidies for commercial flights to remote and rural areas.

FEDERAL NEWS AND NOTES

HUD Accepting Applications for Sustainable Housing and Communities Grants

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities announced the availability of \$95 million for the FY2011 Regional Planning and Community Challenge Planning Grant programs. This year, the Regional Planning Grant program will place a priority on partnerships and funding may be used to prepare regional plans for sustainable development, or to modify existing regional plans so that they are consistent with the Administration's Partnership for Sustainable Communities livability principles.

Separately, this year's Community Challenge grants may be used for a number of efforts which promote sustainability at the local and neighborhood levels, such as amending or replacing master plans, zoning and building codes to promote mixed-use development, building affordable housing, or rehabilitating older buildings. This year, \$3 million of Community Challenge funds will be set aside for jurisdictions with populations less than 50,000. Pre-applications for the Regional Planning Grants are due by August 25, and applications for the Community Challenge Planning Grants are due September 9. Additional information concerning these grant opportunities is available at http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/Apply_for_a_Grant.

FTA Funds Now Available for Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is now accepting applications for \$30 million in grant funds for the Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative (VTCLI). This opportunity will be funded using Section 5309 Bus and Bus Facilities Program Funds. Funding may be used to assist local governmental

agencies to finance the capital costs of implementing, expanding, or increasing access to local One-Call/One-Click Transportation Resources Centers. Applicants must be direct recipients under FTA's Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula program, local governments, states, and Indian Tribes. The application deadline is September 16. Additional information is available at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-07-27/pdf/2011-18928.pdf>.

FEMA Accepting Submissions for the 2011 Individual and Community Preparedness Awards

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is now accepting submissions for the 2011 Individual and Community Preparedness Awards (formerly the National Citizen Corps Achievement Awards). The awards program showcases the work of FEMA partners at all levels of government, and includes nongovernmental, nonprofit, faith-based and private sector organizations, and individuals, families, and communities. Submissions are due by August 26, and should emphasize achievements that occurred between January 1, 2010 and June 1, 2011. Additional information, FAQs, and lists of past winners are available at <http://citizencorps.gov/councils/awards/2011/awards2011.shtm>.

USDA Rural Development Seeks Public Input

Earlier this year, President Obama issued Executive Order No. 13563, Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review, which requires all federal agencies to review existing regulations and outlines principles that promote public participation in government. In response, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development is holding stakeholder outreach meetings throughout the U.S. A number of in-person, teleconference, and roundtable meetings are scheduled throughout the month of August. Rural Development encourages the submission of written comments on how Rural Development can enhance program administration and

delivery. For a list of upcoming meetings and additional information on this initiative and to submit comments, visit http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/RD_StakeholderOutreach.html.

EDA Invites Comment on SC2 Pilot Challenge

On July 11, the Obama Administration announced the launch of Strong Cities, Strong Communities (SC2), a pilot initiative aimed at coordinating the resources of multiple federal agencies to strengthen the capacity of local governments and stimulate economic growth. Through the SC2 Pilot Challenge, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) will offer \$1 million each to six cities—one in each of EDA's six regions—to conduct a challenge competition to develop a blueprint for economic development for each city and region. EDA invites public comments on the structure of the SC2 Pilot Challenge. Comments are due August 9. Additional information concerning the EDA request for comments is available at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-07-11/pdf/2011-17319.pdf>. Additional information concerning SC2 is available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/07/11/obama-administration-launches-strong-cities-strong-communities-support-l>.

NADO NEWS AND NOTES

NADO Research Foundation and HUD Sponsor Sustainable Development Peer Exchange

On July 25, the NADO Research Foundation sponsored a peer exchange, *2011 Regional Sustainable Development Forum: Building Resilient Regions*, at the office of the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) in Kansas City, Missouri. The exchange was an opportunity for regional council participants to meet directly with federal officials to discuss their organization's approach to regional sustainability planning and development, including strategies for moving economic development practices and policies toward

sustainability. Federal agencies participating included: the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Economic Development Administration, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The event included a discussion on lessons learned from regional planning and development practitioners, including policy, program and leadership options for creating stronger collaboration and leveraging of federal planning and development resources. *This includes HUD's Regional Sustainability Planning Grants, EDA's Economic Development District CEDS, DOT's Metropolitan Planning Organizations (and Rural Transportation Planning Organizations) and other related federal planning programs.*

Each regional council participant gave a short presentation which can be viewed at <http://www.nado.org/2011-nado-regional-sustainable-forum/>. You can also view the presentation given by MARC staff, on how the organization created their application for the Regional Sustainable Planning Grant project.

Rural Cluster Development in Kansas

On July 26, NADO staff joined leaders from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in a peer exchange with [Kansas State Universities' Advanced Manufacturing Institute \(AMI\)](#) and the Kansas Association of Regional Development Organizations (KARDO) on rural cluster development. To view the AMI-KARDO presentation, go to <http://www.nado.org/rural-cluster-development-in-kansas/>.

The event was held at [K-State Innovation Campus](#) which is part of a new facility, the International Animal Health and Food Safety Institute, in Olathe, Kansas.

Event participants included:

- Doug O'Brien, Senior Policy Advisor to USDA Secretary Vilsack

- Tom Guevara, EDA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs
- Patty Clark, USDA State Director for Rural Development (Kansas)

NADO Releases Report on Regional Transit

The NADO Research Foundation has just released the report [Exploring the Role of Regional Transportation Projects as Rural Economy Drivers](#) (PDF). With case studies in Alabama, Oregon, and Vermont, this report explores regions where public transit is connecting employees to work, getting people to services, and revitalizing downtown areas. Through partnerships at the local and regional level, regional planning and development organizations are facilitating improved mobility, which in turn supports the regional economy. View the report at <http://www.ruraltransportation.org/uploads/RegTransit.pdf>.

NADO Research Foundation Issues New Reports as Part of Post Natural Disaster Economic Recovery Initiative

Resilient Regions: Integrating Economic Development Strategies, Sustainability Principles and Hazard Mitigation Planning provides an in-depth look at the roles that regional planning and development organizations are taking to help local and regional economies re-build after natural disasters. The report focuses on efforts in Iowa, Florida, Oklahoma, Mississippi, and Wisconsin.

A Peer Learning Forum of the NADO Research Foundation: Innovative Approaches to Disaster Recovery and Economic Resilience covers the discussions during a two-day forum held in June 2001 in Des Moines, Iowa. Participants from Mississippi, North Carolina, Iowa, Texas, South Dakota, Florida, and Wisconsin shared their experiences and offered examples of challenges encountered and successful strategies.

Both reports were produced under a grant with the U.S. Economic Development Administration

(No 08-79-04379) to look at post disaster economic recovery initiatives of regional planning and development organizations after the catastrophic events of 2008. They are available at <http://www.nado.org/category/resources/publications>.

TIGER Webinar: August 3

The US Department of Transportation has [announced](#) a new grant opportunity for rural communities across the country. The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program is a great opportunity for rural communities to leverage federal funds for local transportation projects. To help communities apply to these very competitive grants, Smart Growth America has partnered with the American Public Transportation Association, the National Association of Development Organizations, the National League of Cities, PolicyLink, Reconnecting America, Rural Assembly, and Transportation for America to encourage rural communities to submit superior applications for this funding.

If you plan to apply for this year's round of TIGER grants or wish to learn more about the program and the application process, join us for a webinar on Wednesday, August 3, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. EDT. The webinar will feature an overview of TIGER by Beth Osborne, Deputy Assistant Secretary at USDOT, as well as a discussion of innovative rural transportation projects by Alia Anderson, Program and Policy Associate at Reconnecting America. Finally, Courtney Payne, a Government Services Specialist at the Middle Georgia Regional Commission, will showcase a successful rural project from an earlier TIGER grant cycle. [Click here to register](#).

REGISTER NOW: Economic Development Finance Service Conference (August 23 – 25)

NADO's Economic Development Finance Service (EDFS) conference is specifically designed for regional planning and development

organization staff that manage federally funded loan programs, including Economic Development Administration (EDA), Small Business Administration (SBA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), and Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI). [Click here to access the on-line conference registration](#). The early registration and hotel discounted room rate deadline are August 1.

The EDFS conference is a great opportunity for your loan fund staff to develop professional peer networks, hear directly from federal agency staff about program requirements, exchange information about program management, and learn about new strategies for building strong and successful loan fund portfolios. The conference is sponsored by SBA, Bank of America and NADO and the NADO Research Foundation. SBA's funding should not be construed as an endorsement of any products, opinions or services. All SBA-funded projects are extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis.

REGISTER NOW: National Rural Transportation Conference (August 24 – 26)

The [early registration](#) and [hotel room block](#) deadlines for the [National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference](#) are August 1. The conference will occur August 24 – 26 at the Marriott Metro Center in Washington, DC.

With potential changes coming up for statewide and regional planning and surface transportation in general, there are a few conference events not to miss:

- Opening Plenary: Emerging Issues in Transportation will feature transportation industry leaders who will share perspectives on the policy context for transportation programs
- A special session will provide information on TIGER grants and other federal funding opportunities from the U.S. Department of Transportation

- Future of Statewide and Metropolitan Planning will focus on reauthorization proposals and their impacts on planning practice and projects
- Closing Plenary: Federal Town Hall will feature the directors of several offices within USDOT discussing issues affecting rural and small metropolitan transportation and the direction of their programs and resources

For more information, visit <http://www.nado.org/training/rpo2011/> or contact NADO Program Managers Carrie Kissel, at ckissel@nado.org or 202.624.8829, or Kathy Nothstine, at knothstine@nado.org or 202.624.5256.

Join NADO at the Loews Miami Beach October 8 – 11 for our 2011 Annual Training Conference (ATC)

NADO's 44th Annual Training Conference will be held at the Loews Miami Beach Hotel on historic Collins Avenue in South Beach October 8 – 11. Conference planning is in full swing, including final touches on a number of interesting and relevant mobile workshops, timely best practice sessions, numerous networking opportunities, thought-provoking plenary sessions and much more!

Don't miss this opportunity to catch up with your peers and learn about their relevant and replicable projects and initiatives, hear from national experts on regional development, participate in one of many interesting mobile workshops that will not only take you out of the hotel but across the causeway to the City of Miami and beyond.

You may register for the conference online by visiting http://www.nado.org/event-registration/?regevent_action=register&event_id=1&name_of_event=2011AnnualTrainingConferenceMiami. This link will also take you to the preliminary conference agenda. Visit <http://www.loewshotels.com/en/Miami-Beach-Hotel/GroupPages/NADO> for information about the Loews Hotel and to reserve your rooms on line.

NADO CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **TIGER and Rural America Webinar**
August 3, 2011, 2:00 p.m. EDT
Registration is available at <https://cc.readytalk.com/r/ef34xmeoa3xp>
- **2011 EDFs Training Conference**
August 23 – 25, 2011, Marriott Metro Center, Washington, DC
- **2011 National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference**
August 24 – 26, 2011, Marriott Metro Center, Washington, DC
- **2011 Annual Training Conference**
October 8 – 11, 2011, Miami Beach, FL

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