



NADDO
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS
RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Sustainable Communities
Learning Network



**NOVEMBER
18-19, 2014**

**LITTLE
ROCK, AR**

Lessons from the Storm: Building (and Rebuilding) Strong, Sustainable, and Disaster Resilient Communities

A Peer Exchange and Training Workshop

Photo credit: Flickr user Kay Gaensler

Workshop Information and Agenda

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Welcome!

Thank you for joining us in Little Rock for *Lessons from the Storm* – we’re glad you’re here!

Across the country, many communities that have been struck by natural disasters in recent years are looking for ways to rebuild that capitalize on their distinctive assets, increase housing and transportation choices, enhance quality of life, and strengthen long-term resilience and economic competitiveness. Others are working to set the stage for sound recovery decisions when a disaster does occur. This workshop has brought together local, regional, and federal leaders from around the U.S. for a conversation about disaster recovery and preparedness strategies that also advance broader environmental, community, and economic development objectives. *Lessons from the Storm*, which will focus on the needs of small to mid-sized metro areas and rural communities, includes peer exchange opportunities, training, and educational tours of the local region.

This event is being hosted by the NADO Research Foundation as part of its capacity-building programs for HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative grantees, EPA technical assistance recipients, and other regions and communities that have been impacted by natural disasters. Presentations and other materials from this event, as well as reports, case studies, and additional resources related to planning, economic and workforce development, transportation, and disaster resilience can be accessed at www.NADO.org.

A very special thank you to all of our presenters and facilitators, FEMA Region VI staff for their planning assistance, and the cities of Mayflower and Vilonia, Arkansas for welcoming us to their communities and sharing their story.

Photo credit: Flickr user Kay Gaensler

Sponsors

This workshop was coordinated and organized by the NADO Research Foundation through grants from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (as part of the Sustainable Communities Learning Network through cooperative agreements with the Institute for Sustainable Communities). Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed at this event do not necessarily reflect the views of EDA, HUD, or EPA.



Sustainable Communities
Learning Network

About NADO and the NADO Research Foundation



The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) is a national membership organization for the nation’s 500+ regional planning and development organizations focused on strengthening local governments, communities, and economies. Regional planning and development organizations—known locally as regional planning commissions, councils of governments, area development districts, or similar names—play a key role in regional and community economic development, business development finance, technology and telecommunications, transportation planning, workforce development, GIS analysis, disaster preparedness and recovery, and a variety of other types of services and support for member local governments.

Founded in 1988, the NADO Research Foundation is the nonprofit research affiliate of NADO. The NADO Research Foundation identifies, studies, and promotes regional solutions and approaches to improving local prosperity and services through the nationwide network of regional planning and development organizations. The Research Foundation shares best practices and offers professional development training, analyzes the impact of federal policies and programs on RDOs, and examines the latest developments and trends in small metropolitan and rural America. Most importantly, the Research Foundation is helping bridge the communication gap among practitioners, researchers, and policymakers.

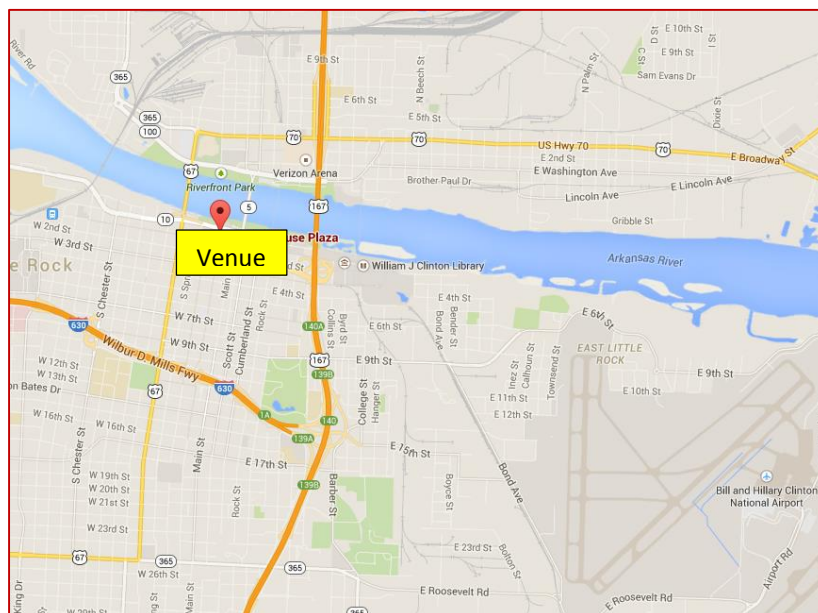
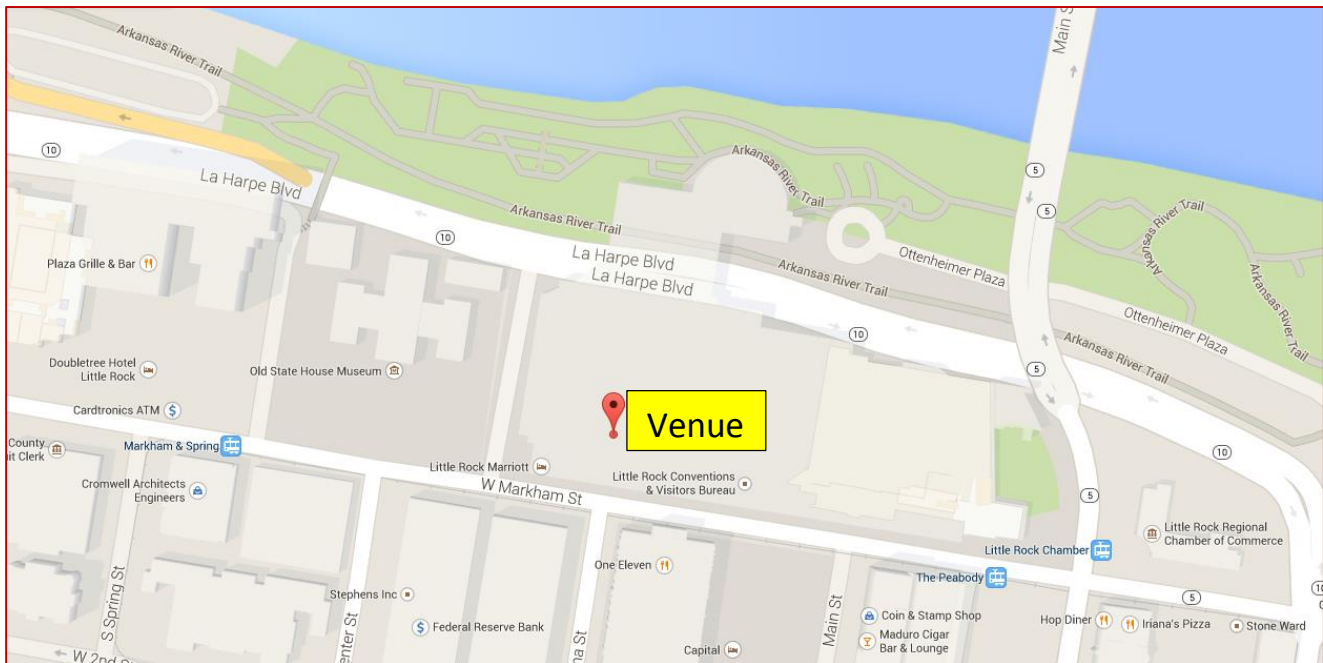
#StormLessons

Venue Information

Accommodations / Venue: Little Rock Marriott
3 Statehouse Plaza
Little Rock, Arkansas, 72201
501.906.4000

Meeting Space: Conference Level 1 (Riverview, Neosho, and Ouachita rooms)

Attire: Business Casual (don't forget comfortable shoes for the tours!)



Lessons from the Storm:

Building (and Rebuilding) Strong, Sustainable, and Disaster Resilient Communities

Little Rock Marriott, Conference Level 1

Day One • Tuesday, November 18

8:30 am **Registration and Breakfast Meet & Greet (*Riverview*)**

9:00 am **Welcome and Introductions (*Riverview*)**

- Megan McConville, Program Manager, National Association of Development Organizations Research Foundation, Washington, DC
- Brett Schwartz, Program Manager, National Association of Development Organizations Research Foundation, Washington, DC
- Wayne Rickard, Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator, FEMA Region VI, Denton, TX

9:15 am **Morning Plenary: Lessons from the Storm (*Riverview*)**

The workshop will kick off with inspiring remarks from three leaders who have seen their regions through natural disasters and helped them rebuild in ways that are more sustainable, vibrant, and resilient to future extreme weather.

- Moderator: Allen Dodson, County Judge, Faulkner County, Conway, AR
- Carol Pedigo, Executive Director, AIA Middle Tennessee, Nashville, TN
- David Perkes, Director, Gulf Coast Community Design Studio, Biloxi, MS
- Joshua Schwartz, Executive Director, Mad River Valley Planning District, Waitsfield, VT

10:30 am **Break**

10:45 am **Small Group Discussions on Disaster Resilience and Sustainable Development**

Participants will gather in small groups to share successes and challenges related to their work and experiences. Look on the back of your nametag for room assignments. Riverview: [Blue dot](#) or [Yellow dot](#) / Neosho: [Red dot](#)

12:15 pm **Lunchtime Activity: Build Your Resilientville (*Riverview*)**

During this interactive tabletop exercise, participants will work in teams to brainstorm neighborhood- and community-based approaches to prepare for natural disasters and other unforeseen challenges. Attendees will emerge with a stronger understanding of how to tap into local assets and relationships to build resilience.

- Daniel Homsey, Director, Neighborhood Empowerment Network, San Francisco, CA
- Chad Reynolds, Arkansas State Ops. Coordinator, Team Rubicon, Little Rock, AR

2:00 pm **Break and Meet in Hotel Lobby for Tour**

2:15 pm **Bus Tour of Mayflower and Vilonia**

The small towns of Mayflower and Vilonia, north of Little Rock, were hit hard by a tornado in April 2014, which barreled down their main streets, destroyed residents' homes, and devastated businesses and public buildings. Local leaders will share the challenges they have faced over the past several months and their compelling visions for rebuilding and recovering from the recent tornado as well as a previous one in 2011 and a 2013 pipeline rupture and oil spill.

5:30 pm **Return to Hotel, Adjourn Day One**

Day Two • Wednesday, November 19

(Participants will receive vouchers for breakfast in the hotel restaurant this morning)

- 8:30 am** **Walking Tour of Downtown Little Rock’s Creative Corridor (Lobby)**
City leaders and staff will showcase the exciting, recently-revitalized Creative Corridor, which has brought new life to Little Rock’s historic Main Street, attracted cultural institutions and a tech startup incubator to the downtown core, incorporated leading-edge green infrastructure and complete streets practices, and created a vibrant neighborhood complete with homes, businesses, and entertainment.
- 10:00 am** **Return to Hotel**
- 10:15 am** **Morning Plenary: Lessons from the Storm Part 2 (Riverview)**
Local leaders will share their forward-thinking work to recover from disasters while supporting economic competitiveness, enhancing quality of life, strengthening local identity, and building resilience to future natural hazards and other shocks.
- Brooke Gregory, Community Program Coordinator for Clark County, Southern Bancorp Community Partners, Arkadelphia, AR
 - Robert Klobberdanz, Chairman, Charles City Park Board, Charles City, IA
- 11:45 am** **Lunch Presentation: Imagine Central Arkansas (Riverview)**
Learn about *Imagine Central Arkansas*, a planning effort to expand transportation choices that contribute to quality growth and economic development while preserving the region’s rich culture, history, and resources. The initiative, funded by a HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative planning grant, is also being leveraged to support Mayflower and Vilonia’s recovery from the recent tornadoes.
- Richard Magee, Deputy Director, Metroplan, Little Rock, AR
 - Brad Lonberger, Principal, Gateway Planning, Dallas, TX
- 1:15 pm** **Breakout Sessions**
- Building Economic Resilience (Neosho)**
This session will explore how communities and regions are positioning their businesses and overall economies to succeed through natural disasters and the effects of climate change. Topics will include post-disaster economic recovery, assessing economic vulnerabilities, protecting critical industries and employers, diversification, identifying economic opportunities related to disaster resilience, breaking down silos between emergency management and economic development, and more.
- Josh Human, Director, Center for Hazards Research and Policy Development, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY
 - Melanie Jewett Army, Supervising Planner, Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, Providence, RI
 - Robin Keegan, Director of Community Resiliency, GCR Inc., New Orleans, LA
- Rebuilding and Preserving Affordable Housing (Ouachita)**
This session will examine the impacts natural disasters can have on affordable housing stock and highlight local and regional approaches to rebuilding this important asset post-disaster, providing it safely in disaster-prone communities, and dealing with difficult public engagement challenges around housing, recovery, and local character.
- Moderator: Cherre Palenius, Housing Development Manager, Minnesota Housing Partnership, St. Paul, MN
 - John O’Brien, Mayor, Town of Lyons, Lyons, CO
 - Susan Reid, Executive Director, First Tennessee Development District, Johnson City, TN
- 2:45 pm** **Wrap-up**
3:00 pm **Adjourn**

Tour Site Visit Information

Day One • Tuesday, November 18

Bus Tour of Mayflower and Vilonia, Arkansas

Over the past decade, the cities of Mayflower and Vilonia have become attractive bedroom communities for central Arkansans who want to raise their families in a small town while still having access to the larger cities of Conway and Little Rock. With small, but steadily growing, populations (Mayflower – 2,234; Vilonia – 4,226), both of these tight-knit communities offer family-friendly neighborhoods, excellent educational systems, and look forward to adding new recreational opportunities for youth and adults. Guided by strong local leadership and citizen involvement, Faulkner County and the cities of Mayflower and Vilonia offer a compelling story of recovery.

The April 27, 2014, tornado that tracked 41 miles through Faulkner County was the second tornado to hit both cities over the last three years. In addition to causing loss of life and injuries, the tornado destroyed key businesses and residences in Mayflower as well as subdivisions, the intermediate school, and the downtown section of Main Street in Vilonia. Seventy-one percent of businesses in Vilonia and 31 percent of businesses in Mayflower were damaged or destroyed by the tornado. In spite of the damage and devastation, both cities have embraced this disaster as an opportunity. Representatives from both cities and the county will share their stories of recovery and the vision that city leaders are using to make their cities more attractive, competitive, and resilient to disasters.

[Summary provided by FEMA Region VI]



VILONIA

Image credits: City of Mayflower and Vilonia School District

Day Two • Wednesday, November 19

Walking Tour of Downtown Little Rock's Creative Corridor

The recent effort to revitalize the City of Little Rock's (CLR) abandoned and neglected Main Street grew from a vision developed by Mayor Mark Stodola after he attended the Mayors Institute on Design. To grow the vision, the Mayor arranged for the Institute to conduct a design charrette in 2009 in Little Rock for its Main Street. The Downtown Little Rock Partnership, a non-profit organization, created a Main Street Revitalization Task Force to focus on this area. Little Rock was then selected in the first round of funding for an EPA technical assistance project entitled "Greening America's Capitals." The EPA hired the nationally-known firm Nelson, Bryd and Woltz to conduct an envisioning process with locals and develop implementable, distinctive schematic designs that were environmentally friendly and incorporated innovative green infrastructure strategies.

A 2011 National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) Our Town grant for Creative Placemaking followed and funded a visioning process among stakeholders and the development of an additional schematic design plan catalyzing Main Street through aggregation of the cultural arts organizations previously scattered throughout the metropolitan area. The plan, "Little Rock's Creative Corridor," has been nominated for numerous national and international awards. Parts of the plan are currently being implemented and CLR is seeking funding to implement others. A developer is renovating five buildings for mixed use to cluster local performing arts non-profit organizations such as Ballet Arkansas, Arkansas Symphony, theater education class space, and visual artist studios. The buildings will also feature affordable living units for the artists. Construction on an EPA/CLR funded non-source point water quality demonstration project will be completed in 2015. It will feature low-impact development modalities such as porous pavers, rain gardens, and bioswales. Since 2009, it is estimated that approximately \$76 million in economic development has evolved.

In 2013 it was announced that a \$22 million science and technology incubator will soon be constructed within the Creative Corridor. As a result of these investments, Little Rock is experiencing unprecedented development and expansion in the downtown corridor.

In 2015 the next steps will be to engage local artists to design signs for the arts organizations, install a light garden for extra lighting, and have an arts competition to decorate and brand the skywalks. To add to a sense of vibrancy and to promote the arts, monitors will be in the window fronts of the arts organizations and a scrolling sign will scroll information related to the Creative Corridor. Programming for young artists will be highlighted within each of the arts organizations. All of these elements will be paid for with grants awarded in 2014 from ArtPlace and the Educational Foundation of America. [Summary provided by the City of Little Rock]



Image credits: City of Little Rock

Participant Contact List (1/2)

First Name	Last Name	Professional Title	Organization	City	State	Email
Scott	Allen	Community Development Director	City of Blue Springs	Blue Springs	MO	sallen@bluespringsgov.com
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