

NADO
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS



2013

NADO Innovation Awards

2013

NADO Innovation Awards



The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) annual Innovation Awards program has been acknowledging creative approaches to regional community and economic development since 1986. Since the program's inception, more than 1,400 projects have been honored.

The 2013 Innovation Award winners are making a difference in their regions through a variety of program areas. These include business and economic development, emergency planning, sustainability, technology, and workforce development programs. The award winners' projects are profiled according to various categories; contact information for each awardee can be found in the project descriptions.

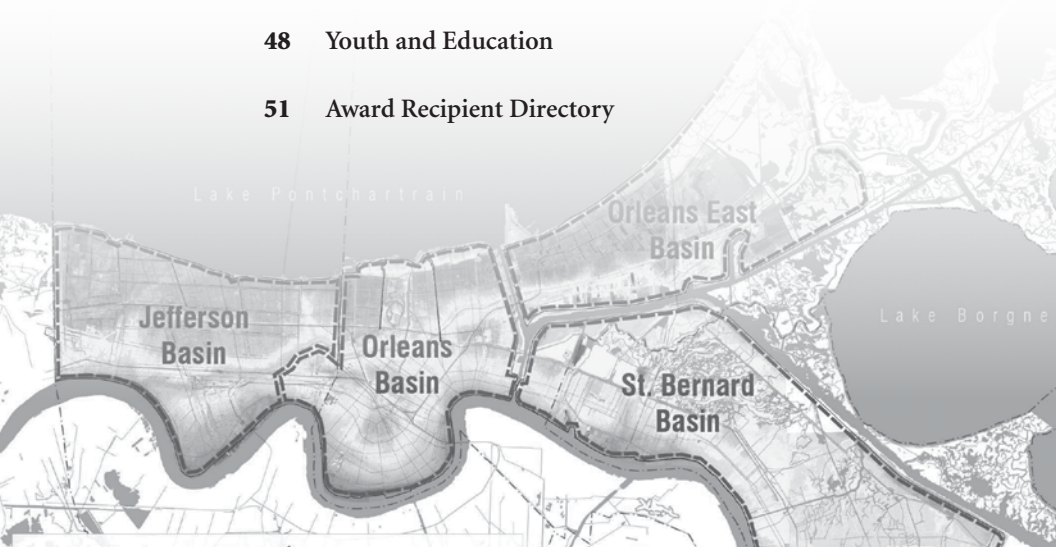
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Cover images (from top to bottom): Metropolitan Area Planning Agency, Carter Lake Water Improvement Project; Georgia Mountains Regional Commission, City of Lavonia Historic Southern Railway Depot Renovation; Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, City of Ridgeland Universal Play Area

The photos throughout the report were provided by the organizations who received Innovation Awards in 2013. Photos have been placed next to the corresponding projects.

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Aging, Health, and Human Services

The **Middle Georgia Regional Commission** (MGRC), through the Area Agency on Aging, has partnered with the National Council on Aging to provide HUD-mandated counseling to homeowners aged 62 and over that have expressed interest in a reverse mortgage. The intentions of the **Reverse Mortgage Counseling for Adults 62+** program is to allow older adults to make informed decisions to determine if the product is right for their situation, protect them from fraud, and ensure independence as long as possible. Since MGRC began the program in 2010, it has extensively trained two counselors to educate seniors and provided older adults with additional information on other programs they can utilize in their community to continue to live at home. The MGRC's Area Agency on Aging is the only AAA in Georgia that currently offers this service.

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The **Middle Georgia Regional Commission's** (MGRC) **Hospital On-Site Options Counseling** program targets patients diagnosed with congestive heart failure and aims to reduce readmission rates within the first 30 days of hospital discharge. Patients are referred directly to the MGRC's Area Agency on Aging for counseling by the Medical Center of Central Georgia staff. Based on individualized action plans created for each patient, their patients are connected to community resources and services, ranging from home-meal deliveries to peer support networks. The Hospital On-Site Options Counseling program has served 62 patients in its first four months of operation; only 10 percent of patients have been readmitted within 30 days of discharge.

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The **Buffalo Trace Area Development District** secured funding and worked with local partners to build the **Kenton Pointe Assisted Living Facility**, a two-facility campus that offers assisted living and inpatient care services to the region. The assisted living facility accommodates the changing needs and preferences of individual residents, encourages family and community engagement, and addresses residents' medical needs while promoting an independent living environment. The inpatient care center is geared towards hospice patients that are in need of short-term care to manage acute symptoms and offers a plethora of options for families to be with their loved ones. Since the Kenton Pointe Facility have opened, it has been able to provide the region a level of care that far exceeds the care that was previously offered.

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www.hospiceofhope.com/pdf/CareCenterBrochure2012.pdf

The **Lincoln Trail Area Development District's** Area Agency on Aging established the **Short-Term Home-Delivered Meals Program**. Recognizing the importance of nutrition to overall health and recovery, the program provides a short-term home delivered meal program to assist persons over 60 after being discharged from local health care facilities. Health care staff identify individuals who could benefit from a home delivered meal and connect those patients with Lincoln Trail ADD. This project has created an enhanced working relationship with local health care providers and assisted in increasing the visibility of the Lincoln Trial ADD as well as the Area Agency on Aging. Home delivered meal recipients reported improved health and reduced readmission rates.

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The **Pennyrile Area Development District's Area Agency on Aging Caregiver Education and Empowerment Project** seeks to inform the community about the potential demands of an aging population. Caregivers suffer greater rates of absenteeism due to unforeseen circumstances, leading to lost productivity and income. An informed public will result in healthier seniors and a decreased economic burden on caregivers and their employers. Pennyrile ADD worked with various organizations to provide information to caregivers and raise overall community awareness on the healthcare challenges seniors face. Pennyrile ADD's efforts to raise awareness was credited with the success of two Walks to End Alzheimer's that were recognized by the Alzheimer's Association as model fundraising examples for rural areas.

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The **Purchase Area Development District** helped start the **Kentucky Care Health Clinic in Carlisle County** by obtaining grant funding, performing project oversight, and encouraging community engagement. The Purchase ADD recognized the need for improved access to healthcare in the region and approached ARcare, a nonprofit already providing affordable healthcare to rural Arkansas, to gauge interest in offering services to rural Kentucky. Today, the community-based clinic provides treatment to patients of all ages for a wide range of injuries, illnesses, and conditions and also provides on-site X-rays, lab tests, preventive screenings, and immunizations. The clinic has had such success in this previously underserved county they are considering expanding operations into other parts of the Purchase ADD region.

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The **Central Mississippi Planning and Development District** facilitated the grant process for the **City of Ridgeland Universal Play Area**. The city constructed a universal design playground that exceeds Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility guidelines for play areas, allowing for full participation for the physically-challenged



and disabled. Local financial and volunteer resources were leveraged to complement grant funding—partly through support from the Adam’s Project, a local initiative for a resident with Duchenne muscular dystrophy. The play area includes full accessibility through the use of ramps, allowing wheelchair access to all levels. The play area draws visitors to the city, as it is only the second play area of this type in Mississippi.

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The **Piedmont Triad Regional Council’s (PTRC) Area Agency on Aging** administers the **Extended Health Community Programs**, which offer 14 weeks of continuous healthcare workshops and classes for patients to successfully ease into providing self-care and preventive healthcare management with confidence. PTRC began implementing Stanford University’s Chronic Disease Self-Management Program and Maine Health’s Matter of Balance Program to help older adults in a 12-county region. Over the past five years, PTRC’s Area Agency on Aging has dedicated significant resources to developing expertise in coordinating, implementing, and expanding evidence-based programs; resulting in participants improving self-management skills, fall prevention, and improving overall quality of life.

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The **Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG)** facilitated the **Catawba County Early Head Start Community Assessment** to examine the challenges faced young families trying to the program. Early Head Start is a federally-funded program which promotes the development of infants and toddlers who live in low-income households. Early Head Start also encourages healthy prenatal outcomes for economically disadvantaged expectant mothers. The community assessment includes a county profile which examines demographic, economic, and social characteristics allowing leaders of Early Head Start more insight into potential clients and an increased ability to target services to them efficiently and effectively. Since the community assessment was completed in 2011, the Catawba County's Early Head Start Program has grown and secured more grant funding. The next community assessment is scheduled to be completed in 2014.

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The **South Plains Association of Governments' Area Agency on Aging** coordinates "**Heat the Town**", a project where local experts provide free inspections of heating systems to low-income elderly and disabled residents in the City of Lubbock each October. Approximately 60 homes were helped in the last round of this ongoing program at no cost to the residents, as contractors donate their time. Noting a history of house fires and carbon monoxide poisonings in Lubbock, smoke detectors and carbon monoxide levels are also checked during this public safety initiative. After the "Heat the Town" event, the AAA staff follows up to see if additional assistance is needed by program participants.



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Business Development

The **Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB)** is the lead agency for the **Business Retention and Expansion Program**. The program was created in July 2012 and has met with 150 local companies to directly engage with local businesses and find ways to assist them in succeeding in Sonoma County. The project has helped businesses obtain permits and navigate the regulatory process, solve workforce issues, gain access to capital for business expansion, successfully market their business through customized reports and demographic research, and reduce operating costs through energy efficiency and rebate programs. The information gathered has also provided early detection and identification of problems that could cause employers to leave the county, guiding public policy aimed at making Sonoma County a more business-friendly community.



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Since 2009, the **Clearwater Economic Development Association (CEDA)** has sought partnerships, coordinated organizational development, secured resources, and facilitated the planning of **The American Manufacturer Network (AMN)**. AMN is a network of small manufacturers in the rural intermountain Northwest (Idaho, Washington, Montana, and Oregon) that are organized to reduce the person-hours for small manufacturers to become bid-ready, make “bid and no bid” decisions, and develop bid proposals for federal contracting opportunities. Currently, five dedicated staff have extensive federal procurement expertise and manufacturing consulting experience. AMN serves 42 small manufacturers and recently helped 10 manufacturers with no prior government experience access the federal workplace. Additionally, AMN helped several manufacturers secure over \$1.5 million in federal contracts.

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Through its **Reshoring of Jobs and the Impact on Rural Community** project, the **East Central Planning and Development District** worked with Jasper County to assist HOL-MAC Corporation in expanding an industrial building, enabling the company to bring jobs back to the United States from Mexico. East Central PDD led the project by meeting with the HOL-MAC Corporation and Mississippi state officials and facilitating the grant process. The expansion is completed and HOL-MAC is filling jobs and implementing a training program to assist with the recruitment of qualified workers. The project is expected to create 150 skilled jobs, a major development in a region with high unemployment and underemployment.

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Under the **Regional Economic Developer Program**, multiple counties and cities utilize a cost-cutting program to share an industrial recruitment, business retention, and business expansion expert. The **Three Rivers Planning and Development District, Inc.** initiated and developed the program based on the needs of local governments and continued efforts to provide services from a regional approach. Program staff handle all aspects of site location, recruitment, and marketing for new industry and business. Additionally, the staff provide business retention and expansion services by assisting with available tax incentives, loan programs, and other opportunities to make sure existing employers thrive and grow in the region. The program has resulted in numerous accomplishments for the businesses including increased marketing, website upgrades, and industrial park beautification.

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The **Isothermal Planning and Development Commission (IPDC)** recognized that the high cost of energy diagnostics tools created a barrier to entry in the market, and research showed no options to rent this equipment locally. Working with other partners, IPDC created the **Reducing Barriers to Entry for Building Diagnostics for the Isothermal Region (STEM)** program by developing an equipment rental and training program. Since July 2010, IPDC has trained over 170 individuals trained. Because of demand for their equipment, IPDC has had to purchase more equipment to rent. The program gave 21 area businesses additional competencies and illustrates how regional nonprofit agencies can serve the economy by not just providing training, but also access to required tools. A video was also developed to educate and increase awareness on the benefits of residential home energy conservation.

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Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc. (SOREDI) is continuously working to expand the economic development potential of the region through the **Emerging Business Initiative/TAG Team** programs. The Emerging Business Initiative is intended to identify prospective entrepreneurs, improve the “deal flow” surrounding SOREDI’s annual Angel Investment Conference, and identify a group of volunteer professionals to provide guidance and encouragement to help entrepreneurs move new concepts to viable commercial application. The Technical Advisory Group’s (TAG) objective is to build an ecosystem in the region that actively nurtures emerging businesses by encouraging professionals to volunteer four hours a month.

Volunteers coach and mentor both startups and smaller businesses who seek assistance in areas from finance to marketing. The Jefferson Grapevine is a series of social networking receptions followed by a more formal program designed to educate local business.



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Communicating Results and Public Engagement

The **Northeast Georgia Regional Commission's (NEGRC) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update** project involved the development of a CEDS update including the use of an innovative approach to engage diverse participants and the use of new data-analysis tools. Urban planners, economic developers, workforce staff, and GIS technicians all participated in sharing and researching technical information and data for inclusion in the CEDS update. NEGRC engaged its Council members, state and federal partners, and regional staff to assemble a diverse, yet informed, group of stakeholders. Stakeholders were involved in three facilitated work sessions to develop regional strategies based on regional and economic data that influenced the CEDS update. The limited number of work sessions did not distract participants from their regular official duties and minimized travel expenses. After drafting the CEDS update, NEGRC distributed the document for review and successfully achieved adoption by its governing-regional council for formal submission to EDA. The project was completed in five months. The accelerated timeframe was aided in part by the use of EDA's new planning tools that minimized research time.

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The **River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC)** through its **Vienna Urban Redevelopment Plan** has created a roadmap allowing the citizens of Vienna, GA to further strengthen their downtown redevelopment efforts. The RVRC worked with citizens who participated in Pattern and Place Charrette Workshops to create a redevelopment plan tailored specifically to the city. The charette process marries local knowledge, concerns, and values with outside expertise. The finished product included a market analysis to evaluate and recommend appropriate business development and redevelopment strategies, and an illustrative plan that will be used as an aid in future redevelopment efforts and grant applications.



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Fort Campbell in Hopkinsville, KY is home to the 101st Airborne Division, the 5th Special Forces Group, the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, and several other tenant units, creating a strong military presence in the **Pennyrile Area Development District**. Pennyrile ADD's goal with **Operation Military Support** is to make soldiers and their families feel welcome through various programs. A Military Affairs Committee was formed in 1986, and Pennyrile ADD still has a strong role in this organization. Initiatives of the committee included Operation Left Turn, created in 2005, to focus primarily on encouraging soldiers and family members to live, work, and play in Christian County, KY. Since its inception, the percentage of military families living in Christian County has increased. Additionally, Pennyrile ADD sponsors several appreciation events for the military such as the Salute Week Series which includes a chili cook-off and fireworks—all free of charge to the military.

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www.peadd.org*

To help strengthen revitalization efforts in downtown St. Joseph, MO, the **Mo-Kan Regional Council** has started the **Better Block St. Joe** campaign. The project is a community-led, grassroots effort that provides residents with the opportunity to take a direct and progressive approach to downtown redevelopment.

Better Block team members identified a struggling section of downtown, worked with property owners to make minor façade improvements, and staged temporary “pop-up” businesses to demonstrate downtown’s potential in a festival-like environment. The primary goals are to encourage economic development, increase community pride and ownership, and promote ideas that make downtown more livable. Mo-Kan helped facilitate the process but, by design, encouraged local volunteers to lead the initiative. The results have been encouraging, with a significant number of youth volunteers and improved relationships across the community and region.



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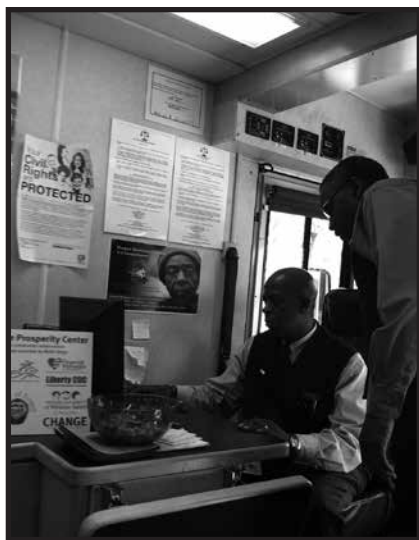
The **East Central Planning and Development District** worked with the Town of Enterprise, MS to facilitate funding for the **Enterprise Park Project**. The first phase of developing the park included construction of a walking trail, gazebo, and lighting. The second phase included construction of a playground area for children. Enterprise Park is the only recreational park in Enterprise (population 465) and, due to a tight budget, development relied on volunteers to construct the playground equipment and provide refreshments to volunteers during construction. The park will be an asset to the area for years to come and has become a community meeting place where several festivals are held.

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The United Way of Forsyth County, NC reached out to the local workforce development board and the **Piedmont Triad Regional Council** about the best way to provide financial assistance to the people in needed in the region. The Piedmont Triad Regional Council led the **Northwest Piedmont Workforce Development Board/United Way of Forsyth County Financial Capability Initiative** and partnered with the workforce board to offer free assistance to the targeted community through a mobile office focused on tax preparation, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) process, and several other topics. This effort offered the community access to a reliable and knowledgeable professional who could answer their questions. During this targeted period of time, a total of 211 persons received assistance with tax filing and 28 were helped with their job search.



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The **South Central Economic Development District Inc. (SCEDD)** provides the **Community Needs Assessment Survey (CNAS)** to its member communities. The CNAS helps small communities receive meaningful input from residents and gathers accurate information to help community leaders make better informed decisions. The CNAS also offers communities the opportunity to qualify for CDBG programs for which HUD had previously determined them ineligible. To maximize the impact of each survey, SCEDD staff customize them to the unique needs of the community, volunteers increase participation rates by going door-to-door, and the data is analyzed by the University of Nebraska. Once the results are analyzed and returned to the community, the information has been used for a host of projects from small business development to stormwater projects.

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The **Southeastern New Mexico Economic Development District/Council of Governments** hosts **Mayors' Summit** meetings twice a year specifically for elected officials at both the municipal and county levels, and for their chief appointed officials. The topics covered at the summits have included issuance and need for industrial revenue bonds, water studies, oil and natural gas economic development, challenges to main street revitalization, and legislative updates. The Mayors' Summits include a tour of industry or facilities of interest that have an impact on the region's economy. The program's success has attracted a request from the New Mexico Economic Development Department's Rural Communities Council to help launch its own version of the program for the State of New Mexico.

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The **West Tennessee Day Trippin' Campaign Video Series** is part of the **Memphis Area Association of Governments** (MAAG) regional tourism promotion plan. Produced by MAAG and unveiled in February 2013, the video series encourages both residents and visitors to enjoy unique attractions off the beaten path and "all within a day trip of Memphis." The series highlights attractions in rural areas to expand awareness about the unique recreational opportunities, cultural events, historic sites, shopping, and dining in the region. The campaign also aims to inspire millions of visitors who come to Memphis to stay in West Tennessee an additional day or two, translating into more dollars spent in the local economies. MAAG has marketed the videos through its website, e-mail newsletter, Facebook page, YouTube, and local television stations.

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In 2012, the **Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission** began gathering information from its members to assess the level of regional cooperation in various areas of public service. The purpose of the **Regional Report Card: The 2013 Compilation of Regional Cooperative Initiatives and Activities** is to raise awareness about the high level of regional cooperation currently taking place. The Report Card highlights 105 multi-jurisdictional cooperative programs ranging from local cooperation to interaction with federal and state agencies on issues affecting this region. The Regional Commission uses the report to show governments how regional cooperation and regionalism can enable local governments to meet the increasing service demands of their citizens efficiently, sustainably, creatively, and effectively.

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Citizens use the **New River Valley Planning District Commission's NRV Tomorrow Interactive Survey** to identify and rank needs in their community and indicate their level of support for a number of projects or programs to address future challenges. Results from the survey are captured by zip code so elected officials can observe their constituents' wishes and desires. The survey educates users about trade-offs, giving participants a limited amount of money to invest in projects so they better understand the community's financial capacity. Over the past two years, 600 people have completed the survey; the target is to get 1,000 residents to help to identify key policies and projects they support in their community. Since internet access is limited across the region, New River Valley PDC has held numerous public meetings to encourage greater participation in the survey.

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Economic Development

The **Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization** (SEAGO) organized and coordinated a series of events called **International Trade: Summit and Expo**. The events had a bi-national focus on solutions to existing border issues and paid attention to unique business opportunities including attracting outside investors and developers for financial resources and fresh ideas and improving the perceptions of the border in terms of crime through media outreach to foster increased tourism. SEAGO targeted individuals from both Mexico and the United States to build relationships and collaboration intended to increase economic growth on both sides of the border. The first round had such positive feedback from local stakeholders and businesses that SEAGO plans to continue the series.

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The **Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization** (SEAGO) organized the **Growing Greenlee, The Opportunity Forum** by building consensus among public and private stakeholders, helping to form a Tourism Council, and designing a CEDS that was compatible with the short- and long-term vision of Greenlee County. SEAGO worked with the Greenlee County Board of Supervisors and other stakeholders to create an economic business expansion and economic diversification plan that leveraged a \$1.4 billion capital infrastructure and equipment investment by Freeport McMoran. Additionally, SEAGO promoted local businesses, helped local entrepreneurs to network, and highlighted the importance of nature-based tourism.

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Building on a 1992 study that found an umbrella tourism promotion organization would benefit the region, the **North Central Florida Regional Planning Council** (NCFRPC) created the **Fish Natural North Florida Tourism Promotion Program** to capitalize on the \$7 billion spent annually on fishing related activities in Florida. NCFRPC and a local tourism council implemented a region-wide promotional campaign titled “Fish Natural North Florida” to elevate the status of the region as a prime fishing destination. The campaign began with the launch in February 2012 of a website, which saw traffic increase as the promotional campaign developed. In total, 100,000 fishing maps and placemats were printed for distribution to local restaurants and visitor centers. Two press tours produced considerable media coverage throughout the southeastern United States from fishing and travel writers who participated in the tours.

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The **North Delta Planning and Development District** (NDPDD) administered the grant and loan funds for the duration of construction of the **Tunica County Schulz Xtruded Products’** first manufacturing facility in the United States. SXP produces stainless steel and alloy steel seamless pipe products. The \$99 million dollar project support came from a combination of local funds, grants, loans, and a significant private investment from SXP. The project created a 10,000-square-foot office facility and constructed a 170,000-square-foot manufacturing facility to accommodate SXP. The facility is operational and has already created over 150 local jobs, with more hires forthcoming.

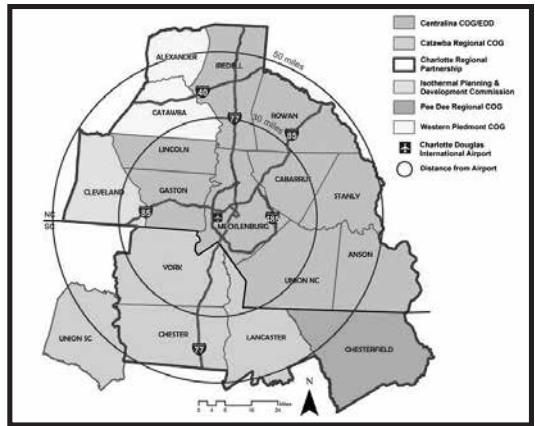
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Prosperity for Greater Charlotte was completed under the leadership of the **Centralina Council of Governments** in partnership with the 14-county, bi-state Charlotte region. The project initiated “CONNECT Our Future” to create a growth framework to align strategies across the region to grow the economy, improve quality of life, and control the cost of government. The “CONNECT

Our Future” Sustainable Communities grant supported the development of CEDS for the North Carolina Centralina EDD and the South Carolina Catawba Regional COG. The collaborative process produced the Prosperity for Greater Charlotte Report, an Economic Strategic Assessment for the Greater Charlotte Region that includes the five-year updates to both the Centralina COG and the Catawba Regional COG CEDS in compliance with the EDA requirements.



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Catawba Regional Council of Governments, Lowcountry Council of Governments, Lower Savannah Council of Governments, and Santee-Lynches Council of Governments approached the EDA Atlanta Regional office to consider consolidation of four EDA revolving loan funds (RLF). EDA allowed the **SC Revolving Loan Fund Collaboration** to move forward, and Catawba Regional COG to assume the prior RLF grant awards made to Lowcountry, Lower Savannah, and Santee-Lynches COGs. Catawba Regional COG committed to market the RLF throughout the 23 counties of the four COGs, lowering operating costs for all of the organizations while retaining the financial capital for businesses. Combined loan portfolio performance has improved, and new loans have been committed in three of the four COG regions since consolidation occurred in March 2013.

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The **Northern Neck Planning District Commission's** (NNPDC) Regional Tourism Initiative worked through a tourism council and, with business input, developed a **Northern Neck District Regional Tourism Initiative** to create immediate and long-term tourism goals for the region. The Northern Neck region is currently under study by the National Park Service to be designated a National Heritage Area. Designation would promote tourism that highlights the region's traditional industries related to agriculture and maritime business. The strategic plan calls for the preservation of vibrant waterfront communities, rural towns, and natural beauty. Visitor expenditures in the five-county area grew from \$207 million in 2009 to \$233 million in 2011, an increase of 12.5 percent. The number of visitors to the region grew overall by 7.41 percent.

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The **Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan** serves as a guide for short-term actions and long-term policies that will concurrently enable the resource preservation and recreational development of the Kettle Creek Battlefield site in Wilkes County, GA. The **Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission** assisted with creating the master plan, including drafting documents, facilitating stakeholder and public meetings, and working as a liaison with local property owners on purchasing parts of the battlefield for public preservation. The Kettle Creek Battle of 1779 was a dramatic victory for the Patriot militia over Loyalist militia opposition and served as an initial signal that the British strategy for winning the Revolutionary War in the Southern backcountry was flawed. The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan is the first comprehensive document that provides methods and priorities in property purchase, resource preservation, and amenity development.

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Emergency Preparedness and Recovery

The North Central Florida Regional Planning Council partnered with the Local Emergency Planning Committee to conduct the **Transportation Response Untangling Chemical Kaos Full Scale Hazardous Materials Exercise**. This exercise involved a variety of different agencies and combined many different objectives, addressing both



hazardous materials response and interoperable communications to increase the learning opportunities for participants. By working together under an Interlocal Agreement developed by the North Central Florida RPC, the financial burden for smaller local governments has been reduced to an acceptable level through collaboration on training, planning, and conducting exercises. The exercise promotes efficiency by combining exercise requirements from different disciplines, hazardous materials response, and interoperable communications into one exercise that has greater realism and opportunities for learning than if exercises were conducted separately. By combining resources on a regional basis, local governments have achieved reduced costs and provided a higher level of service for the multi-county area.

Scott Koons, Executive Director: koons@ncfrpc.org

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After the 2008 floods in Iowa, the State set aside disaster recovery funds to form Watershed Management Authorities (WMA). The **East Central Iowa Council of Governments** (ECICOG) organized the **Indian Creek Watershed Management Authority** (ICWMA) project to manage the watershed level to reduce flood risk through local governmental agreements. ICWMA has a Board of Directors made up



of local government staff representing various departments from the cities and counties located in the watershed. The Boards helps mitigate competition for limited funding as the organization leverages funds for the entire region.

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Douglas Elliott, Executive Director: doug.elliott@ecicog.org

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In response to tornadoes in 2012, the **Big Sandy Area Development District** decided case management services were essential to address unmet needs of individuals and families impacted by the disaster. The main goal of the **Eastern Kentucky Disaster Case Management Program** was to provide relief to disaster survivors by connecting them with the resources and services of multiple agencies, including the development of individual recovery plans to incorporate sustainable assistance for the household's recovery. Big Sandy ADD developed, organized, and carried out the initial disaster case management program as well as provided the protocol for Kentucky's grant application to FEMA for the continuation and expansion of services across the state in tornado-impacted counties. Big Sandy ADD assisted over 3,000 residences in five tornado-impacted counties.



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The **Mid-Missouri Regional Planning Commission** (Mid-MO RPC) recognized that the 2011 tornado in Joplin, MO highlighted the importance of pro-active plans to ensure the continuity of essential functions of governments and businesses during disasters. The goal of the **Continuity of Operations Planning for Local Governments** program is to provide user-friendly training, materials, tools, and the follow-up needed to assist local governments in creating Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs). The program greatly increased awareness of COOPs, and over two-thirds of participants indicated they planned to work on their own COOP.

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In response to Hurricane Irene, the **Mid-East Commission** led three other affected Economic Development Districts (EDDs) through the **Hurricane Irene Disaster Recovery Project**. The four EDDs together serve 36 affected counties in North Carolina's coastal region.

With EDA funded support, the EDDs collaborated on this regional project to provide successful planning and technical assistance activities related to economic

recovery and mitigation of impacts associated with the natural disaster. The primary focuses included preparing business and industry for future disasters, increasing the number of business that reopen after a major disaster, and increasing the speed at which they recover to drive the economy. The project included notifying all governments of EDA grants and other Hurricane Irene-related help, developing a business continuity planning brochure, and preparing disaster preparedness plans for local governments.



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The **Washington County Disaster Recovery** project was led by the **First Tennessee Development District** in response to a flash flood in Jonesborough. Despite major damage to this economically disadvantaged town as a result of the flood, the town could not get federal aid and was not designated a flood zone leaving so homeowners without resources to rebuild. Once the damage had been surveyed by the Washington County Emergency Management team, funding was obtained from the Appalachian Service project to begin reconstruction. Thanks to this funding, 25 homes are being repaired or replaced, allowing the community to move forward in its recovery. Because of the project's impressive record of leveraging funds and volunteers, the Tennessee Housing Development Agency has decided to use this project as a model and establish a statewide disaster recovery program.

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Infrastructure

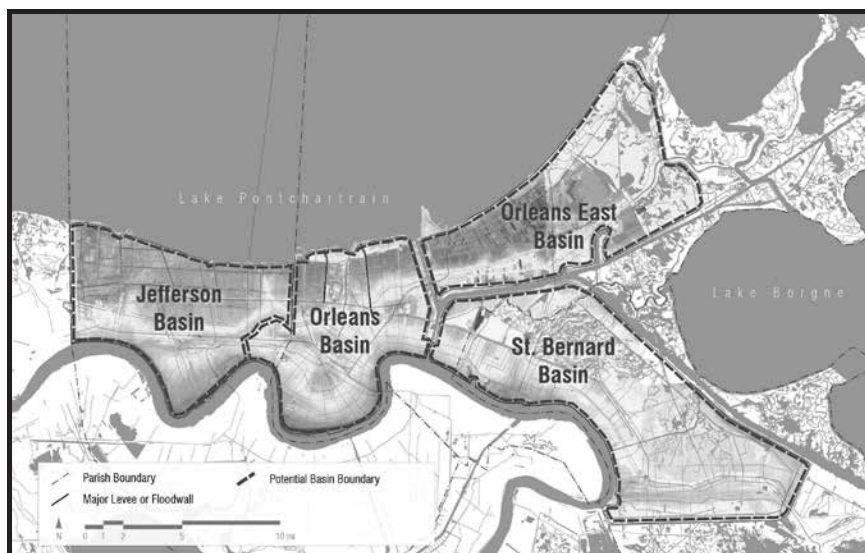
Greater New Orleans, Inc. (GNO, Inc.) procured \$2.5 million in CDBG funds from Louisiana to develop **The Greater New Orleans Water Plan** Water Management Strategy (WMS) which outlines resilient solutions to the flooding of Greater New Orleans' at-risk basins. Through a competitive bidding process, GNO, Inc. awarded the WMS design contract to Waggonner and Ball Architects. The WMS approaches water as a resource and asset and identifies ways to delay the water, store the water, and use the water. Although the WMS is designed to address each basin's specific water management issues, it also works in tandem with Louisiana's 2012 Coastal Master Plan to improve wetland resiliency and commercial and recreational fisheries.

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The **South Plains Association of Governments** helped organize the **City of Ralls Small Town Environmental Project (STEP)**, which addressed the decades old water and sewer system that began to fail in 2006, threatening the community's health and environment. The STEP Program is a subsection of Texas CDBG funds that are used for projects that show at least a 40 percent cost savings through the use of volunteer labor on the applicant's part. The City of Ralls took a project with an estimated retail cost of over \$600,000 and, through the use of volunteer labor, was able to complete the project using only \$350,000 in CDBG grant funds. The project set a new precedent, as a sewer project had never been completed with the STEP funding. Ralls is an example of how STEP grants should operate. In addition to the legacy of a functional water and sewer system, the city also continues to hold community work days to focus on other projects.

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Physical Redevelopment

In 2010, the **Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC)** received funding from EPA to establish a program to identify brownfields sites for clean-up and reuse. The **Florida Heartland Brownfields Revitalization Partnership—Mulberry Health Clinic** originated from CFRPC's work with local stakeholders and officials to find potential projects and locations. After Mulberry residents noted the lack of local health services, CFRPC approached Central Florida Health Care, a primary health care provider in the region, about opening a clinic in Mulberry. Once Central Florida Health Care indicated it was receptive to the proposed expansion, CFRPC helped Mulberry secure a \$500,000 Health Resources and Services Administration grant to build a 5,000-square-foot health clinic on a former brownfields site.

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The **Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission**, helped the rural city of Millen begin to revitalize its downtown through the **Aycock Corner (Formerly Old SOC Station) Brownfield Redevelopment Project**. Millen has experienced a population decline of 10.7 percent since 2000 and has high levels of unemployment. Using EPA Brownfields Assessment and



Clean-up Funds, Millen is transforming a former gas station and repair shop on a prominent corner of downtown Millen. Since the city is close to a designated scenic byway, it has secured funding to construct a visitor center on the newly cleaned corner of downtown to promote regional tourism and local businesses.

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*Augusta, GA; 706-650-5694; www.southeastbrownfields.com/grantee-site/millen/;
www.csrardc.org*

Due to rapid expansion and the success of its rural commuter transportation program, the **Coastal Regional Commission** (CRC) was operating out of two offices to accommodate additional staff. Looking to cut costs and place staff at a single location, the CRC undertook the **Adaptive Reuse of State Surplus Property** project. The CRC found a vacated youth detention facility in neighboring McIntosh County could house its own operations and provide additional space for other tenants. The CRC moved to this facility, bringing new life to the property. The extra space is being remodeled, the local police department has already moved in, and other tenants are considering renting there. This redevelopment is especially welcome because McIntosh County is the region's most rural county and has high unemployment and poverty rates.

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**The Georgia Mountains
Regional Commission's
City of Lavonia Historic
Southern Railway Depot**

Renovation project has preserved the Historic Southern Railway Depot in Lavonia, GA by rehabilitating the interior and exterior of the building to restore its historical character. Georgia

Mountains Regional Commission secured Appalachian Regional Commission grant funding for the project, which will attract tourist to experience the cultural heritage of downtown Lavonia. The renovation project was completed in December 2012 for the 100-year celebration of the depot.



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**The Buffalo Trace Area Development
District helped secure over \$2.2
million in funding and oversaw the
Maysville Cox Building Renovation**

project. The Cox Building, located in the historic district of Maysville, KY, was built in 1887 as a Masonic Temple.

Now completely renovated, the first floor houses the Maysville Community College's Culinary Arts Program, a bakery shop, and a café. The second floor is home to the Downing Performing Arts Academy. The third floor contains two separate ballrooms



that were restored to the Queen Anne style in which they were originally built; their extensive murals and stenciling were also restored to their original splendor. Now the space is used for public and private events.

Amy Kennedy, Executive Director: akennedy@btadd.com

*Maysville, KY; 606-564-6894; www.cityofmaysville.com/the-cox-building;
www.btadd.com*

The **Northeast Mississippi Planning and Development District** served as the economic development liaison working closely with Mississippi the state and Tishomingo County on the **Tishomingo County-Comfort Revolution Economic Development Project**. In 2007, the Schnadig Company closed, leaving its furniture factory vacant until mattress producer Comfort Revolution was able to move into the facility with relatively little rehabilitation. As of March 2013, Comfort Revolution had invested more than of \$1.2 million in the property and created over 100 jobs, a substantial number for such a rural area, helping to lower unemployment rates.

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Sharon Gardner, Executive Director: sgardner@nempdd.com

Booneville, MS; 662-728-6248; www.nempdd.com/tishomingo-comfortrev

The **Land-of-Sky Regional Council's (LOSRC) Regional Brownfields Initiative** partnered with Mountain Housing Opportunities, the Environmental Protection Agency, and Asheville GO on a unique project that combined job training with a brownfield clean-up. After participating in a state-certified asbestos removal and lead paint remediation course, 16 graduates of Asheville GO, a non-profit committed to empowering residents of low-income neighborhoods in Asheville through skills training, were hired to remove asbestos and lead paint in a building being converted into a mixed-use facility called the Glen Rock Depot in Asheville's River Arts District.

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**The South Western
Oklahoma Development
Authority (SWODA) initiated
the Housing Development
and Community**

Improvement Project due to
the need for new, moderately
sized, affordable, single-family
homes in the region. Private
sector home development has



trended toward larger, more expensive homes. Many communities have struggled to address substandard or blighted housing, and the need for affordable housing has grown further due to the recent boom in the oil and gas industry in the region's southern counties. In the first phase of its housing program SWODA been constructing moderately-sized (1,200 to 1,600 square foot) homes to meet the needs of working families, first-time home buyers, and retirees wishing to downsize. Three homes have been constructed so far. Phase II involve the clean-up of existing substandard housing units.

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Before



After



The Upper Savannah Council of Governments' City of Laurens Community Safety Initiative helped reduce crime in a neighborhood in the City of Laurens using CDBG funding. The project involved the installation of new LED street lights, security cameras with video surveillance, emergency call boxes connected directly to 911, and law enforcement WiFi hot spots to encourage crime prevention. Based on community input, the project also included minor façade improvements to 14 homes and the demolition of 23 vacant and dilapidated houses to improve the safety and appearance of the neighborhood. Since the project was completed, the Laurens Police Chief has reported that the number of police calls in the neighborhood has decreased by 17 percent. The project was such a success that a Phase II water and sewer improvement project has been developed and awarded \$500,000 for implementation.

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*Patricia Hartung, Executive Director: pchartung@uppersavannah.com
Greenwood, SC; 800-922-7729; www.uppersavannah.com*

Before



After



The **Ark-Tex Council of Governments** helped organize the **Sulphur Springs, Hopkins County, TX Downtown Reinvestment Project** to bring people and businesses back to Sulphur Springs' downtown. To make the city more walkable, streets and sidewalks were upgraded and a parking lot in front of the courthouse was turned into a park, which now hosts events most evenings and weekends. Brownfields grants were utilized to clean up the older buildings. At least 15 buildings have been improved adding over \$2 million to the tax value of downtown properties. Since the redevelopment, two regional banks that anchor downtown opposite the courthouse chose to expand and remodel their buildings to complement into the new downtown atmosphere.

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Sulphur Springs, TX; 903-438-4006; www.hopkinscountytx.org; www.atcog.org

Sustainability

The **Central Florida Regional Planning Council** (CFRPC) administers the **Florida Heartland Energy Baseline and Greenhouse Gas Inventory**, a measurement of the baseline energy usage and carbon and greenhouse gas (GHG) footprint within a six-county, 11-city region. The inventory measures energy consumption and GHG emissions from the residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional/government sectors across four main categories: electricity, natural gas, transportation fuels, and solid waste. This baseline measurement will be used to enable monitoring and benchmarking of the effectiveness of the region's future energy and GHG reduction strategies, policies, and programs. CFRPC received a total of \$1.4 million in grant funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Economic Development Administration, and the Department of Transportation to support the project.

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The **Florida Regional Councils Association** (FRCA) and all 11 Regional Planning Councils in the state created an **Energy Resiliency Strategy** to increase the use of alternative energy sources and reduce Florida's consumption of imported energy. The study included telephone surveys of a population sample that was representative of the entire state, as well as workshops to engage the public in strategy development. The plan takes into account long-term forecasts, interruptions in energy availability, price spikes, and the availability of alternatives to traditional energy usage. Proposed ideas included fleet conversions, residential net zero energy independent houses, and other alternative energy examples.

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Tallahassee, FL; 727-570-515; www.florida-energy.org; flregionalcouncils.org

To further the goal of sustaining the coastal ecosystem, the **Coastal Regional Commission** (CRC) started a practicum series to help advance policy reforms, share knowledge of effective strategies and tools, build the capacity of key constituencies, and raise awareness about the interdisciplinary nature of coastal issues. Topics identified for the **CRC Practicum Series** are based on findings from the Market Inventory and Needs Assessment of the Sapelo Island National Estuarine Research Reserve Report. The series focused on topics identified in the report as “most in demand” and that overlap with strategies adopted in the regional plan. The Practicum Series was launched in 2009, and the CRC hosts six events a year.

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The **Pennyrile Area Development District** helped the City of Madisonville, KY, meet its mayor’s objective to create efficiencies and reduce costs for the city through the **Go Madisonville Initiative**. A website and smart phone application were created, enabling residents to submit comments or concerns and learn about city programs and departments, and office was opened to provide in-person engagement. The city also began a curbside recycling program using grant funding, which has already attracted the participation of over 2,500 households. To date, the recycling program has resulted in the diversion of about 60 tons of refuse from landfills each month, saving the city \$3,500 per month in reduced fuel costs. Because of its success, the Go Madisonville initiative is being replicated in neighboring Evansville.

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Hopkinsville, KY; 270-886-9484; www.GoMadisonville.com; www.peadd.org

The **Merrimack Valley Planning Commission** (MVPC) used its focus on regional collaboration to help cities and towns, promote energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy through the **Merrimack Valley Regional Clean Energy Program**. In 2012, MVPC developed and adopted the “Clean Energy Action Plan,” detailing specific recommendations to advance the energy goals of each of the 15 cities and towns in the region. The plan calls for performance measures to help the municipalities, which range in population size from 4,400 to 76,000, assess the impacts of their policies and programs. The regional program has already resulted in cost savings and greater coordination of various stakeholders on steps to reduce energy expenses.

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The **Northwest Michigan Council of Governments** (NWMCOG) played a lead role in developing and distributing the **Food Innovation Districts: An Economic Gardening Tool Guidebook** with Michigan State University, Regional Food Solutions, Inc, and other stakeholders. Food innovation districts feature clusters of related food businesses such as food hubs, business incubators, warehousing and distribution activities, farmers’ markets, urban agriculture, and community kitchens. They can help communities create jobs, support businesses, grow their local and regional food systems, and build their sense of place. The guidebook is a package of “how-to” information and examples that can help local governments and other stakeholders engage in and benefit from the growing market for local and regional food.

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The **South Delta Planning and Development District Inc.** (SDPDD) created a grant fund for local government projects that are typically ineligible for traditional grant funding. Applicants must provide an equal match in order to apply. The **SDPDD Innovation Project Funds** allowed local governments to apply for up to \$20,000 for projects that would be completed within six months. SDPDD has gotten so much positive feedback that the board is considering sponsoring another year of funding to continue to give local governments the opportunity to do small-scale projects that make a real difference in their communities.

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The **Western Piedmont Industry Growth Analysis** is one way the **Western Piedmont Council of Governments** (WPCOG) and its workforce board are assisting the region's recovery from the loss of 40,000 jobs since 2000. The analysis identifies the region's "most favored" industries, which pay above the average regional wage and are expected to grow nationally over the coming years, and examines the range of available training and higher education programs from nearby educational institutions to determine if they are compatible with the skill sets needed for high-wage, high-growth industries. The analysis has provided useful insight into the "most favored" industries for both the goods-producing sector and the service sector, and into how degrees offered by regional institutions of higher education align with these industries. The "most favored" industries have become the focus of economic development efforts in the Greater Hickory Metro region.

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The **Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA)** played a key role in the **Carter Lake Water Improvement Project** in Iowa and Nebraska. MAPA was uniquely positioned to access funding from agencies in both states and remove regulatory and legislative hurdles governing the use of those funds for this project. Restoration of the lake included stabilizing thousands of feet of shoreline, installing sediment forebays, dredging parts of the lake, and enlarging a stormwater pond. These actions resulted in a healthy, stabilized water environment with increased clarity.



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The primary goals of the **Commercial Energy Efficiency Loan Fund** program were to reduce energy usage and emissions, save money, and create and retain jobs by installing renewable energy products and technologies in business and commercial facilities in Klamath and Lake Counties, OR. The **South Central Oregon Economic Development District** used state and USDA funds to establish a revolving loan fund that financed improvements to the energy efficiency of buildings owned or leased by businesses and nonprofits, lowering energy costs and carbon emissions. Most projects have included lighting upgrades or HVAC system improvements, resulting in estimated annual energy savings of 344,977 kwh.

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OurRegion OurPlan is a vision plan for the **Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments** (BCDCOG) region's future growth, development, and infrastructure improvements by 2040. It establishes the framework for a paradigm shift away from past development trends to new approaches that preserve the sense of place, protect 231,000 acres of land, and cut costs caused by traffic congestion by more than \$69 million while still accommodating considerable growth through strategies that achieve compact development and a network of livable centers, corridors, and green areas. OurRegion OurPlan is a blueprint for a sustainable future that frames the Lowcountry's growth and development challenges and outlines strategies, policies, and actions that are necessary to accomplish the region's ambitious goals. BCDCOG began the plan in 2008 and released it in early 2013.

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Charleston, SC; 843-529-0400; www.ourregionourplan.org; www.bcdcog.com

The **Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments** has taken a leading role in the **Alliance Reclaimed Water Storage and Supply Project**, jointly funded by EDA and the state of South Carolina. This project includes improvements at the Lower Dorchester County Wastewater Treatment Plant to allow Dorchester County to clean, store, and distribute reclaimed water. The project also assists Bosch North America in achieving its expansion plans, creating additional employment opportunities that pay much higher wages than the local average wage. Bosch estimates that 80,000 gallons of water per day could be reused, reducing energy consumption, water pollution, and the use of hazardous chemicals.

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The **ECOS Project** represents a new approach to developing a regional plan by the **Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission** (CCRPC). Both a process and a plan for managing sustainable growth in Chittenden County, ECOS integrates the Chittenden County Regional Plan, the Chittenden County Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and the county's CEDS into one document, thereby aligning priorities and implementation strategies. By working across sectors, the participating agencies and organizations and their constituents are able to see the interconnectedness of their challenges and solve them together. The CCRPC received a HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative Regional Planning Grant for this project.

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Region 1–Planning and Development Council, Region 2–Planning and Development Council, Region 3–Regional Intergovernmental Council, Region 4–Planning and Development Council, Region 5–Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council, Region 6–Planning and Development Council, Region 7–Planning and Development Council, Region 8–Planning and Development Council, Region 9–Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council, Region 10–Bel-O-Mar Regional Council and Interstate Planning Commission, and Region 11–Brooke-Hancock Regional Planning and Development Council completed the **West Virginia Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program**, a statewide program that allowed the 11 organizations to allocate over \$9 million in funding from the West Virginia Division of Energy toward energy efficient and cost effective retrofits for public facilities. The objective was to invest funds in a manner that would yield the most savings per dollar used. Energy upgrades and retrofits included window replacement, lighting upgrades, and HVAC system improvements. So far, 141 projects with 103 municipal and local governments have met or exceeded projected savings estimates after completion.



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Technology and Data

The **Apalachee Regional Planning Council** worked with the Center for Information Management and Educational Services at Florida State University to secure and launch **Florida ExpertNet**. Funded by EDA, the website aims to improve the skills of the state's workforce by providing a virtual repository of programs offered by postsecondary institutions in Florida. The inventory includes programs from the technical certificate level up to professional programs and research doctorates.

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The **Southern Georgia Regional Commission** (SGRC) built a comprehensive GIS project in partnership with Valdosta State University (VSU) to promote better infrastructure decision-making and help students get work experience. Previously, VSU maintained map and infrastructure information in CAD form, which provided professional maps and drawings but did not allow for analysis or inventory functionality. SGRC partnered with VSU to create a comprehensive GIS database with the existing CAD files. For the **Building Partnerships and GIS from the Ground Up** project, SGRC partnered with the VSU Geography Department to engage students in the project and offer them real-world work experience.

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Through the **Data Distribution and Sharing using Cloud Technology** project, the **Bluegrass Area Development District** addressed inefficiencies in local GIS data creation and improved city and county decision-makers access to up-to-date information. Initially, Bluegrass ADD purchased ArcServer to create web-map applications that performed well, but updating the data was time consuming and costly. To address the update problem, Bluegrass ADD utilized the free Dropbox cloud technology. This technology allows for an individual user to update information and for the data to automatically update on all users' computers. Thanks to additional training on using ArcServer and Dropbox, Bluegrass ADD has created access to GIS information for all participating municipalities at a relatively low cost.

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The **Green River Area Development District's** (GRADD) GIS team recently began producing high-resolution **GIS Infrastructure Map Books** for water and wastewater systems within the seven-county region. These map books overlay detailed infrastructure features on topographical and roadway layers, and each book is indexed with a reference page to allow users to quickly locate small-scale areas. The books are designed to be used as both comprehensive references for managers in the office and handy manuals for employees in the field. The project goal is to create the most accurate depiction to date of the location of each water and wastewater system's lines and features. This project has greatly improved field work efficiency for operators and produced higher quality data for the Kentucky Infrastructure Authority's Water Resource Information System online reporting system.

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The **Pioneer Valley Regional Brownfield Plan** identified 20 neighborhood Areas of Brownfield Interest where brownfields are pervasive and resources to address them are most needed. The **Pioneer Valley Planning Commission's** (PVPC) plan provides an analysis of the disproportionate number of brownfields within low income and minority communities and offers cleanup and redevelopment strategies for each site. PVPC also operates a \$1.5 million Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund, which is available to eligible projects for site cleanup. The PVPC plan is the first regional brownfield inventory for Hampshire and Hampden Counties in western Massachusetts, and it supports the region's Sustainable Knowledge Corridor initiative.



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Springfield, MA; 413-781-6045; www.sustainableknowledgecorridor.org; www.pvpc.org

In 2012, the **Central Mississippi Planning and Development District** (CMPDD) launched its flagship **Madison County GIS Map Viewer**. This technology effort started with CMPDD making a significant investment in upgrading the required hardware and software in late 2011, with implementation occurring in February 2012. These investments, coupled with the expansion of the GIS Department, resulted in CMPDD developing customized web-based applications using virtual servers and ArcGIS server technology. This ongoing countywide GIS implementation project was a collaboration of departmental, county, regional, and state GIS implementation strategies, merging datasets from multiple sources with the common goal of enhancing county data management processes and providing better information to the public.

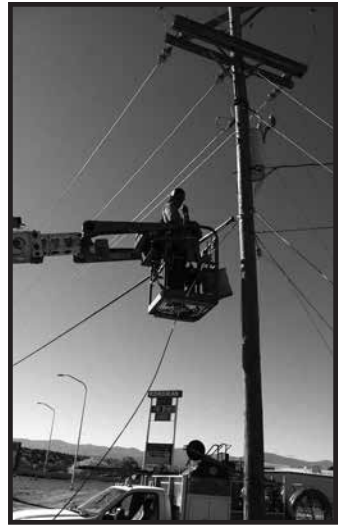
Chuck Carr, GIS Director: ccarr@cmpdd.org

Clarke Holmes, Chief Executive Officer: cholmes@cmpdd.org

Jackson, MS; 601-981-1511; gis.cmpdd.org/madison

REDI Net Community Broadband Network

is a collaborative, open access community broadband development initiative of the **North Central New Mexico Economic Development District** (NCNMEDD), four Native American tribes, three counties, and one city. The project was conceived through a regional planning process and incorporated in the CEDS in order to bring reliable and affordable broadband access to rural and underserved areas. The capacity enhancement provided by the REDI Net investment is changing the way community institutions meet the demands of constituents; activities that once took several hours now take minutes. This improvement translates into more effective and efficient responses to the needs of the region, where geographic distance among service centers and rural communities often makes access to services limited and, in some cases, nonexistent.



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The **Klickitat-Skamania Local Technology Planning Team** (KSLTPT) addresses the broadband needs of Klickitat and Skamania counties within the **Mid-Columbia Economic Development District**. By increasing broadband access, KSLTPT helps residents and businesses to capitalize on the information and resources broadband provides. Needs were identified through community and business surveys, community forums, meetings with telecommunications providers, and regional government leaders. The team built strong relationships with the region's internet service providers, library system, state broadband office, governmental entities, and communities, and also developed a robust base of knowledge about broadband conditions in the two counties. Since the arrive of broadband, the Mid-Columbia EDD has hosted community events to celebrate, highlight the work of its partners, and increase public awareness.

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The **Charleston Regional Competitiveness Center** is a website that provides comprehensive information about the Charleston metro area, providing users with indicators, research, and data to make business and policy decisions. The website organizes data within six main categories: industry, wages and income, workforce, population demographics, social, and other. All of the information is accessible to the public free of charge and is presented in an easy-to-use interface that allows users to customize the data into a dashboard-style display. The Charleston Regional Competitiveness Center is a collaboration between the **Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments**, the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, the Charleston Regional Development Alliance, and the Trident Workforce Investment Board.

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N. Charleston, SC; 843-529-0400; www.charlestonregionaldata.com; www.bcdcog.com

InfoMentum Fact Finder—Quantifying Upstate South Carolina is a comprehensive collection of tables containing vital demographic and economic information for the South Carolina upstate region, available through a custom-built, user-friendly web-interface. The new, publicly available InfoMentum Fact Finder tool is the modernization of a resource which has been the backbone of economic development research in the region for 20 years. Now online, it has lowered barriers to information. The **South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments** maintains the data in InfoMentum Fact Finder, aggregating it from many sources, and has done primary research to add information. The database covers 13 categories, ranging from population and labor market to quality of life.

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Greenville, SC; 864-242-9733; factfinder.scacog.org

Building on information available in print format, the **First Tennessee Development District** (FTDD) developed the **Interactive Map of Historic Places** for sites in the region's eight counties. FTDD identified and inventoried historic places with help from the Tennessee Historical Commission. ArcGIS software was used to create the interactive map available to the public online which includes current pictures of the historic sites. It helps to promote the historical sites and increase tourism.

Gray Stothart, Historic Preservation Planner: gstothart@ftdd.org

Susan Reid, Executive Director: sreid@ftdd.org

Johnson City, TN; 423-928-0224;

<http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=8b6b3f2877034f829da80747920f21f4&extent=-84.1149,35.3385,-80.3603,37.0539>; www.ftdd.org

In 2012, significant sinkhole activity began occurring within the **First Tennessee Development District** (FTDD) region, including one that permanently closed an elementary school. To address economic development and safety concerns, **Sinkhole Activity Maps** were created. The tool uses GIS technology and image processing to analyze sinkhole activity in the region, comparing historical United States Geological Survey topographic maps to imagery overlays from 1968 to 2010. The database serves as a valuable tool for local government officials and developers to evaluate future economic development opportunities and potential hazards.

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GEOMAP (Capital Area Geospatial Base Map) is a cost-sharing initiative to produce and maintain current geospatial base map data for local jurisdictions, developers, consultants, and other interested parties around the region. In addition to contract management, the **Capital Area Council of Governments** (CAPCOG) works with the region to encourage cooperative purchasing of datasets and reduce duplicative efforts across the region. Currently, 19 area governments participate. By securing competitive pricing for services and coordinating cost-sharing among the region, GeoMap has saved the region an estimated \$8.6 million dollars since 2002.

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The **Cumberland Plateau and Lenowisco Planning District Commission's Virginia Coalfields Wireless 4G Project** will bring wireless service to rural communities. Lack of telecommunications infrastructure is a barrier to economic development in the region. The mountainous topography and low population density make it unlikely that many areas will ever have broadband wire connections. The mission of the project is to provide wireless service to the seven-county area. Phase One of the project upgraded the backhaul facilities of 27 existing cell towers to fiber optics so they can handle the 4G network. Phases Two and Three will involve the construction of new towers, including in rural population centers in the region.

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The **Region Five Development Commission** administered and the **Creating a Resilient Region in Central Minnesota** initiative, a planning process that drew on regional data, strong engagement and existing housing, transportation, land-use, and economic development plans. The Resilient Region Plan is a unique scenario building and policy toolkit that provides sample ordinances scaled for very small rural towns, mid-sized towns, and counties. The plan is the first of its kind in Minnesota to include a regional housing plan, a regional transportation plan supported by Minnesota's Department of Transportation, a regional land use plan, and the CEDS. The plan has leverage over \$5 million in two years, to be used for the implementation of projects related to local foods, energy, housing, active transportation, and micro-lending.

*Cheryl Hills, Executive Director: chills@regionfive.org
Staples, MN; 218-894-3233; www.resilientregion.org; www.regionfive.org*

Transportation

The **Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission's (SEIRPC) Regional Speed Indicator Sharing Program** allows agencies to share speed indicators. The speed indicators can be used by multiple agencies for multiple purposes. Because they are shared across the region, they are used more frequently without sitting idle in storage, and the program limits the financial commitment from each of the participating agencies. The program began in 2012, and the communities have reported that the speed indicators have greatly slowed traffic and provided significant cost savings. The program currently includes eight regional partners and is open to any additional cities or counties wanting to join.



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The **Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD)** has secured EDA funding for the **UMMC East University Drive** project. The University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, is the state's only academic medical center, level 1 trauma center, and children's hospital. The project supports a major road widening, smarter signals, and improved lighting. For the Medical Center to continue to grow in accordance with its master plan, the East University Drive Roadway Project must be fully completed. Once finished, a planned expansion of the medical center will increase jobs and economic development in the region.

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Workforce Development

In 2013, the **South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC)** completed its 15th **Annual Jobs Fair and Business Expo**, the largest regional jobs fair with attendance averaging over 3,000. The jobs fair was sponsored and coordinated by SARPC and provided job seekers direct access to employers, human resources professionals, information from educational organizations, and career-development workshops. 2013 was the second year SARPC had specifically targeted returning veterans and military families at the expo. While most vendors were from the SARPC region, businesses from Mississippi, Florida, and Georgia were also represented. Job seekers came from Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Tennessee, Texas, South Carolina, New Mexico, and Colorado. The 2012 Jobs Fair and Business Expo resulted in 174 reported job offers.

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The **Barren River Area Development District (BRADD)** funded the **Industry Career Pathways Initiative** to address the skills gap between high school graduates and the needs of local industrial companies that are having trouble filling positions. The local workforce board oversees the program and matched students with paid internships to learn the skills needed to compete and work in specific industries. Students also participate in work readiness workshops that cover resume writing, interviewing, workplace behavior, budgeting, and more to help them transition successfully into the workforce. Due to the success of this program, it is being expanded throughout the BRADD region with other high-growth businesses and industries and at a low cost to BRADD.

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*Rodney Kirtley, Executive Director: rodney.kirtley@bradd.org
Bowling Green, KY; 270-781-2381; www.bradd.org*

In 2012, the North Carolina Business Services Representatives launched the “2012 Skills Survey of North Carolina Employers,” which outlined the challenges employers face to identify and recruit talent for their open positions. As a follow-up and companion to this report, the North Carolina Business Services Representatives launched the **2013 North Carolina JobSeeker Survey**, which outlines the challenges job seekers face when seeking gainful employment. The **Mid-East Commission** led the 2013 North Carolina JobSeekers Survey project and accomplished its goal of being able to compare the two surveys and provide talking points for connecting the two groups. This approach can have a regional and statewide impact by providing a platform to encourage greater dialogue among employers, job seekers, and workforce development boards.

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Youth and Education

The **Piedmont Triad Regional Council** provides funding for the **Creating Successful Learners** program and works with local partners. The post-secondary educational program targets young adults with developmental issues. Most are too high functioning for sheltered workshops or compensatory education classes through the community college system, but need help developing life skills. The program provides consultations to assess skill levels and interests, interview preparedness and resume writing workshops, assistance finding appropriate positions, and follow-up services once students have been placed in a job.

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The **Northeast Oregon Economic Development District** (NEOEDD) provided 20 hours of training to nonprofit staff, board members, and volunteers on organizational readiness and grant-writing fundamentals through the **GrantReady Training for Non-Profits** program. Topics that were especially helpful to participants included the project charter, project and organizational budgeting, and a project matrix tool to judge the impact and profitability of various programs. NEOEDD staff built on curriculum that was originally developed

by a staff member from Rural Development Initiatives and brought in relevant foundation and federal representatives to address the group. The program received positive feedback, and over 50 percent of those that attended anticipated preparing and submitting a grant request within the next 6 months.

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The Lower Savannah Council of Governments' Workforce Investment Area worked with local partners on the **GPS Your Career Destination Youth Forum**.

The 5th annual youth forum, hosted at Voorhees College, was a two-day event with over 300 attendees including high school seniors from throughout the region. Students who had not yet developed an employment or training plan after graduation were the target population. They were provided opportunities to take the technical college entrance exam, communicate with representatives from the three regional technical colleges, receive assistance with FAFSA and other scholarships and financial aid, and meet with recruiters, employers, and other education and training providers.



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At the **REDI College Summits**, students explore numerous colleges and post-secondary institutions without the expense of visiting colleges by meeting with college recruiters at high schools. The **Southwest Tennessee Development District's** goal was to help first-generation and economically disadvantaged students explore potential education opportunities and careers. The summits give students opportunities to learn about college programs, application processes, financial aid possibilities, and to take with admissions counselors. The College



Summits bring two to three counties and several high schools together with college recruiters and speakers; overall, the program provides services to about 1,700 students in 19 high schools and 11 counties.

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The **Texoma Council of Governments** first published its summer youth guide in 2007 in an effort to provide the region with a publication directed at families seeking summer activities for their children. In response to the high demand, the **Summertastic! Texoma Summer Youth Guide** has been published annually since its inception and grown from 500 copies to 70,000 copies distributed region-wide. Information for the guide is collected from area agencies providing summer activities appropriate for young people. Advertisements are sold to offset the printing cost and, for the latest edition, an art contest was sponsored by a local medical center. Once completed, the guide is included in local newspapers, distributed to various organizations, and available online.

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The **Texoma Council of Governments** partnered with Austin College and the Center for Rural Outreach and Public Service to create and run the **Social Entrepreneurship for Poverty Alleviation (SEPA)** project. SEPA focuses on engaging youth in community development through grant writing as an entrepreneurial endeavor, teaching the technical aspects of grant writing, and providing hands-on grant writing experience with a local nonprofit agency. Seven Austin College students and seven local nonprofit agencies from the Texoma region participated in the pilot project. Each student and nonprofit participant attended a two-day grant writing workshop to learn how to find, write, and win grants of all kinds. After the two-day workshop, students were paired with a nonprofit for a paid summer internship to write grants that support specific projects and programs of that agency.

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Downtown Reinvestment Project; Buffalo Trace Area Development District, Maysville Cox Building Renovation; Sonoma
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