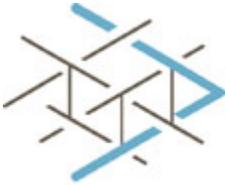


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XII, No. 33, August 27, 2012

**eRegions**

**EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

Colleagues,

While the economy's growth has been sluggish, 96,000 jobs were added in August, though one sector has been a drag on the economic recovery – local government employment. According to a report by *Governing Magazine* this week, "localities shed an estimated 4,000 jobs from payrolls in August, according to Labor Department data. Friday's monthly jobs report marks the twelfth consecutive month of **declining employment**, with a total loss of 88,000 positions since August 2011."

**PROGRAM UPDATE**   **POLICY UPDATE**  
**PARTNER UPDATE**  
**GRANT OPPORTUNITIES**   **UPCOMING EVENTS**

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**Notes from Chair Sean Dey, Executive Directors Council**

Fred tells me that a new generation of Executive Directors is assuming leadership roles in regional councils across the country, many of whom will be attending the Executive Directors' Conference in Boise. I look forward to sharing my experiences and learning new ideas from them. Regarding leadership, I am reminded of a phrase from the ancient Chinese philosophy of *Taoism*, where it is written: "... go to the people / Live among them, / Learn from them, / Start with what they know, / Build on what they have, / remember... the best leaders, / when their work is done, / the people all remark, / 'We have done it ourselves'..."

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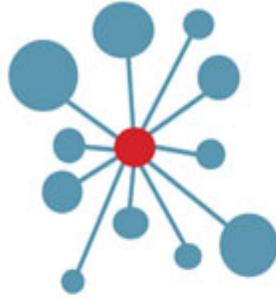
*Our thoughts are with our peers and communities affected by Hurricane Isaac. We hope recovery is swift.*

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School budgets have been hit the hardest and teacher layoffs the biggest contributor to slowness of the public side of the recovery. According to the report, "state governments also made cuts this year, but at a slower rate than localities. Total employment for state agencies, including colleges and universities, has declined by about 35,000 since last August."

On the positive side some local governments are regionalizing services. NARC has been providing reports on regionalization for years – many relevant today, including [\*\*Solid Waste Management Regionalization Report\*\*](#) which we published jointly with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The economy's impact on local government capacity is unknown at this point as talent is shed at an alarming rate. NARC will continue to update you on this, and other budget and finance trends, including a discussion later this



**converge ■ learn ■ share**

**executive directors' conference  
september 23-25, 2012  
boise, id**

**REGISTER TODAY**

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## **PROGRAM**UPDATE

**MARC Solar Workshop a Success:** As part of an on-going NARC, ICMA, and ICLEI *Solar Powering Your Community* program, the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) recently hosted a successful workshop last Friday in Kansas City, Missouri, which attracted 200 attendees and focused on implementing solar in the heartland region. After the workshop, a solar tour showcased some of Kansas City's largest solar installations including Kauffman Stadium, home of the Kansas City Royals. The workshop and tour were successful and demonstrated why the region is ranked 4th in the nation for their solar efforts. For information about additional upcoming NARC and partner hosted solar workshops in the Southeast and Midwest, click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#).

**NARC/HUD webinar: The Location Affordability Portal:** Last week NARC held a webinar featuring the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Location Affordability Portal. Click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#) to access the PowerPoint. If you are interested in becoming a beta tester for the Portal, please contact [\*\*Josh Geyer\*\*](#). Click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#) for more information on the Portal.

**NARC and NACo Need Your Opinions:** The National Association of Counties (NACo) is working to identify which livability messages resonate with county elected officials. As a part of this multi-year project, NARC is hosting a free webinar on Monday, September 24, 2012 from 2:00-4:00pm ET to review the different messages that multiple organizations currently use to create support for their livability programs. As county elected officials, this is an opportunity to help shape the national conversation on livability and influence elected officials

month at the 2012  
Executive Directors'  
Conference.

See you all in Boise,  
Fred

## **NARC LEADERSHIP**

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**Shafer,**

Clerk/Treasurer,

Town of Munster, IN

**Chair Sean Dey,**

Executive Directors

Council

Executive Director, West

Michigan Shoreline

Regional Development

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nationwide. Space is limited, but reserve your place by registering  
**HERE.**

### **EDA's New Tool Helps Economic Developers Optimize Investments:**

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), in partnership with Oregon's Portland State University, is pleased to announce the availability of a new, innovative, on-line tool to help weigh benefits of economic development projects using the triple bottom line model. Click **HERE** to access Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Matthew Erskine's blog post on this new tool.

### **EPA Awards \$15 Million to Assist U.S. Small Drinking Water and Wastewater Systems:**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has awarded nearly \$15 million in funding to provide training and technical assistance to small drinking and wastewater systems – those serving fewer than 10,000 people – and to private well owners. The funding will help provide training and tools to improve small system operations and management practices, promoting sustainability and supporting EPA's mission to protect public health and the environment. For more information on EPA's programs and tools to help small water systems, click **HERE.**

### **Case Studies on Forestry and Watershed Protection:**

The Model Forest Policy Program has compiled examples from several states and cities that have comprehensive watershed protection programs that include forestry components. These comprehensive programs deal with non-point source pollution developed out of the need to meet EPA Clean Water Act requirements. Check out the case studies **HERE.**

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## **POLICY UPDATE**

*The House and Senate are in session.*

### **Congress to Move Funding Continuing Resolution Bill:**

This month Congress is scheduled to pass a continuing resolution (CR) bill that would fund the government starting in October 2012 through March 2013. The House may vote as early as this week with the bill text anticipated for release early this week. Agreement on passing a CR is supported by both chambers of Congress as well as the White House.

**Sequestration Update:** Even with a CR anticipated for easy passage,

the issue of federal budget sequestration (automatic cuts) is still an area of concern. It is anticipated that federal agency heads are expected to be conservative in their FY13 spending from October to March due to sequestration, which is set to begin January 2, 2013. Many federal agencies could see their spending authority cut in January by nearly 9 percent. The White House, which failed to meet the initial deadline, plans to send a report to Congress late next week detailing how sequestration will affect specific programs. The Office of Management and Budget has been meeting with agencies to determine which budget accounts and programs will be exempt from the cuts.

**Farm Bill Update:** Due to limited legislative days remaining (the House only has eight in September) and competing priorities, it is likely that Congress will focus on a one-year extension of the Farm Bill instead of a full five-year reauthorization. Many interest groups, including NACo and NARC, oppose this strategy and would like to see a full reauthorization. The Senate passed its bill (S 3240) in June and the House passed its bill ([HR 6233](#)) on August 2. Click [HERE](#) to access NARC's information on the Farm Bill, including an analysis of the bills.

**Congress Working on Improving Disaster Alert System:** Legislation has been introduced in both chambers of Congress to revamp the Federal Emergency Management's (FEMA) disaster public alert system. HR 3563, passed by the House Homeland Security Committee, would authorize \$67 million to do so; HR 2904, similar to HR 3563, was passed by the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management; and, S 2319 is pending for consideration by the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. All of the bills would direct FEMA to make the nation's emergency alert system adaptable to new trends and technologies.

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## PARTNERUPDATE

**“New Frontiers for Regional Economies and Governance”** At the local level, explorations proceed apace in search of ways to solve problems that cross boundaries. Although examples of unsuccessful efforts are not hard to find, lots of collaborations are interesting, important, and successful. These efforts involve messy, often gritty, work on the ground. That work pushes in some new directions, and thus is reshaping the regional envelope. Click [HERE](#) to access this latest issue of the National League of Cities' *Emerging Issues* column by Bill Barnes.

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# GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

## **AIA Sustainable Design Assessment Teams - Technical Assistance**

*Application Due: October 12, 2012*

The American Institute of Architects' (AIA) Center for Communities by Design is seeking potential partner communities that can demonstrate the capacity to convene a diverse set of community leaders and stakeholders for an intensive, collaborative planning process focused on long-term sustainability. The Center is particularly focused on identifying communities that have the ability to leverage local resources and build strong partnerships for implementation of an SDAT process. For more information, visit the [AIA SDAT page](#).

## **NOAA Climate Program Office FY13 Grant Application Information**

*November 6, 2012*

Individual programs within CPO will now be accepting letters of intent and project applications. The full announcement of opportunity is available on the [CPO Funding Opportunities](#) page and on the [Grants.Gov website](#).

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## ***13th National Tools of the Trade Conference***

**September 12 - 14, 2012, Big Sky, MT**

Join transportation professionals from around the country to network, share ideas, and learn about the latest developments and opportunities for transportation planning in small and medium sized communities. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

## ***NLC and PTI Webinar: How a Municipal Network Can Help Your City***

**September 13, 2012, 2:00 pm ET**

Some of the fastest broadband networks are being built by local governments, according to a recent report titled "Broadband at the Speed of Light" from the Institute for Local Self-Reliance and the Benton Foundation. A community run network is a useful tool for several reasons. The Public Technology Institute (PTI) and the National League of Cities (NLC) provide information about the report from Chris Mitchell at the Institute for Local Self-Reliance and city officials and staff who have examined how a municipal network can benefit them and have

successfully implemented it. Click [HERE](#) to register.

***2012 Ohio Conference on Freight***

**September 13-14, 2012, Sandusky, OH**

The 2012 conference will focus on building professional capacity in all aspects of freight transport, strengthening relationships between public and private sectors, and examining state and federal policies that support freight related economic development. To register or receive more information, click [HERE](#).

***Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Webinar***

**September 21, 2012, 1:00 – 2:30 pm ET**

Join EPA's Office of Sustainable Communities for an overview of free technical assistance available to communities through EPA's [Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Program](#). This program provides short-term, targeted technical assistance to help communities implement smart growth development approaches, such as creating a green streets strategy, linking land use to water quality, or conducting a parking audit. This webinar will focus on assistance available directly from EPA and from four EPA grantees: ForTerra, Project for Public Spaces, Smart Growth America, and Global Green. Participants will learn about the types of assistance available and how to apply. EPA's call for letters of interest will be released the day before this webinar.

***2012 Executive Directors' Conference***

**September 24-26, 2012, Boise, ID**

Register Today! Join Executive Directors and senior staff of regional councils and metropolitan planning organizations at this premier regional training event. Registration information and an agenda are available [HERE](#).

***EcoSummit - Ecological Sustainability: Restoring the Planet's Ecosystem Services***

**September 30-October 5, 2012, Columbus, OH**

Topics covered will include ecological restoration, ecological engineering, global change, wetland management, corporate involvement and sustainable economies. For information, click [HERE](#).

***EPA to hold Water Quality Standards Virtual Academy***

**October 4, 2012, 1:00-4:00pm ET**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will launch its Water Quality Standards Virtual Academy webinar with Water Quality

Standards 101. Learn how you can use Water Quality Standards (WQS) to protect water resources! Click [HERE](#) to register.

***ICMA 2012 Annual Conference***

**October 7-10, 2012, Phoenix, AZ**

Over three days, members and guests will learn about key local government management issues and leading practices, exchange ideas and network. Visit the ICMA Conference online at

[icma.org/conference2012](http://icma.org/conference2012).

***UPEDA Conference on Bi-National Collaboration Meeting***

**October 24-25, 2012, Sault Ste Marie, MI**

Presenters include Roy Norton, Consul General of Canada at Detroit; a panel on alternative energy; Phil Becker, Executive Director of the International Bridge Authority; and other presenters still being confirmed.

Click [HERE](#) for registration and additional information.

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