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### In this Issue

- **Our Broken Regions - Fixing the Hidden Cause of our Economic Downfall**
- **HUD Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Promotes Sustainable Development in Mixed-Income Neighborhoods**
- **EDA Investments Advance Innovation and Entrepreneurship to Create Jobs in Auto Impacted Communities**
- **EDA-backed "Crossing the Next Regional Frontier" Research Project Wins National Award**
- **EDA Announces Award Competition to Promote Innovation**

## FEATURE ARTICLE: Our Broken Regions - Fixing the Hidden Cause of our Economic Downfall

By **Angela Glover Blackwell**  
*The Huffington Post, June 2010*

[Click here](#) to read full article.

### EXCERPT

On one hand, it's exciting to see cities again bustling and becoming hubs for regional innovation. But for the poor families who have been struggling in these dis-invested urban areas for decades, this new excitement brings with it great anxiety - the worry that as wealthier residents move in alongside the nicer amenities, longtime residents will inevitably be priced out.

That's why the Obama Administration's new \$175 million Sustainable Communities initiative is so exciting. This joint effort by HUD, EPA, and the Department of Transportation is another effort by the White House to reshape the broken and counterproductive way we've built our communities. These federal planning grants will help regional consortia —comprising state and local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, educational institutions, non-profit groups, and philanthropic organizations— lay out a smarter, more sustainable, and more inclusive future for their region.

Rather than fuel greater sprawl and surrender to the fractured status quo of government oversight, the Sustainable Communities initiative tries to think about a community in all of the ways we really live our lives. We aren't just homeowners or renters. We're not just drivers or public transit users. We're not just consumers or sellers. We're all of those things - and our communities should reflect that.

But the Sustainable Communities initiative goes beyond just trying to fix one neighborhood or one city. It aims to fix and integrate an entire region - because, as HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan said at The Atlantic's Future of the City conference last week, "America's ability to compete and create jobs in the 21st Century depends on our metro regions."

As we rethink our regions, we have to plan for success. The Sustainable Communities grants promise to prioritize building communities of opportunity for people of color and high poverty areas. Local leaders and residents must be at the forefront of these planning efforts.

Sustainable regions are only possible if all people have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Re-imagining our regions as interconnected, interdependent, inclusive places to both live and work is crucial to making a nation that can innovate and thrive. Areas that embrace this "regional equity" focus will be on the fast-track to economic stability and growth.

A new \$175 million federal program is a good start. But, of course, it can't do it on its own. Regions across America must learn the lessons of this Sustainable Communities program to break down the isolated silos of their own and unite all aspects of regional living. If we can do that, we can unleash a torrent of ignored and underutilized potential, especially in poor communities and communities of color.

Sustainable communities make successful communities.

The mission of the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities is to create strong, sustainable communities by connecting housing to jobs, fostering local innovation, and helping to build a clean energy economy. [Click here](#) to read more.

## HUD Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Promotes

## EDA Investments Boost Small Business Development in New York City



On June 22-23, Deputy Assistant Secretary Brian McGowan traveled to New York City to tour EDA-funded investment sites, discuss local economic development issues with key stakeholders, and announce EDA Investments to support small business development in distressed areas.

- \$500,000 to Operation Hope's Hope Center in Harlem to provide business technical assistance to entrepreneurs through their small business and workforce empowerment initiative.
- \$750,000 to Seedco Financial Services to provide post-financing technical assistance to early stage companies involved in high-growth sectors like clean technology and manufacturing.
- \$2.5 million to BioBAT, Inc., to renovate a building at the Brooklyn Army Terminal for use by mid-stage and growing biotechnology firms that are working to develop new technologies and products for the market.
- \$2.5 million to the Brooklyn Navy Yard Develop. Corp. to renovate Building 128 at the Brooklyn Navy yard to provide affordable space for green manufacturers to grow and produce new products and technologies for the marketplace.



## Public Comment Sought to Promote Growth in Florida's Space Coast

The Task Force on Space Industry Workforce and Economic Development has launched an

## Sustainable Development in Mixed-Income Neighborhoods

U.S. Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) *Choice Neighborhoods* initiative will transform distressed neighborhoods and public and assisted projects into viable and sustainable mixed-income neighborhoods by linking housing improvements with appropriate services, schools, public assets, transportation, and access to jobs. A strong emphasis will be placed on local community planning for access to high-quality educational opportunities, including early childhood education.

## EDA Investments Advance Innovation and Entrepreneurship to Create Jobs in Auto Impacted Communities

[Click here](#) to read full article.



President Obama has begun to lay the groundwork for an economic climate where innovation can flourish and over the last year and a half, a new foundation for sustainable growth is emerging. The U.S. Economic Development Administration is doing its part by promoting recovery and creating sustainable, economically-robust communities. We strive to create new opportunities and leave adversely impacted communities better off than they were before.

For instance, in June 2008, GM announced plans to close its Moraine, Ohio assembly plant, eliminating 5,000 direct jobs and thousands more indirectly. Within two weeks of GM's announcement, EDA's Chicago staff began working with state and local officials to develop a strategic response to the plant closure to provide technical assistance and capital.

Recently, EDA announced three major grants to support innovative entrepreneurship and national and global investment in communities that have been severely impacted by the downturn of the automotive sector.

## EDA-backed "Crossing the Next Regional Frontier" Research Project Wins National Award

A joint economic development project supported by an EDA grant and led by research centers at Purdue and Indiana Universities has been honored with the **2010 Award of Excellence by the Council for Community and Economic Research**.

The project, "*Crossing the Next Regional Frontier*: Information and Analytics Linking Regional Competitiveness to Investment in a Knowledge-Based Economy," developed practical tools and frameworks to help guide economic development strategy and decision making for regions throughout the United States - especially rural regions where strategic support is often lacking.



A report of the study's findings, together with data, decision-support tools and other project outputs, are available at: <http://www.statsamerica.org/innovation/>.

## EDA Announces Award Competition to Promote Innovation

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is accepting applications for its 2010 Innovation in Economic Development Awards to spotlight projects of national significance that advance innovation, boost competitiveness and create jobs.

Entries will be accepted until **August 27, 2010**. The award categories are:

- Innovation in Regional Innovation Clusters (RICs)
- Innovation in Commercialization
- Innovation in Global Export Promotion
- Innovation in Green Technology



For more information on the 2010 Innovation in Economic Development Awards and how to apply, visit: [www.eda.gov/NewsEvents/InnovationAwards.xml](http://www.eda.gov/NewsEvents/InnovationAwards.xml).

The competition was previously known as the EDA Excellence in Economic Development Awards.

interactive website to encourage public comment on ways to promote economic growth and sustainability in the Space Coast region as it adapts to changes in America's space program. Visit the [Task Force Web site](#) to submit your comments. On May 3, President Obama established the task force, co-chaired by Commerce Secretary Gary Locke and NASA Administrator Charles Bolden, to develop an interagency action plan to spur economic growth along Florida's Space Coast and other affected aerospace communities.

## EDA's New Grant Improvement Process

To enhance the efficiency and transparency of its grant approval process, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) has proposed a new system to better serve its stakeholders, drastically reducing the number of days it takes to process an application. EDA's proposed grant improvement process is designed to build on its record of excellent customer service, flexibility and strong performance measures.

For more information [click here](#).

To submit comments and suggestions about the proposed new process, email: [grantimprovement@eda.doc.gov](mailto:grantimprovement@eda.doc.gov).

## Upcoming Events



**July 8, 2010**  
Department of Commerce's EDA Innovation Forum:  
University of Southern Calif.  
Los Angeles, CA

**July 13, 2010**  
Department of Commerce's EDA Innovation Forum:  
University of Michigan  
Ann Arbor, MI

**July 15, 2010**  
Department of Commerce's EDA Innovation Forum:  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
Atlanta, GA

**July 20, 2010**  
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
John Fernandez Addresses  
Rotary Club of Indianapolis  
Indianapolis, IN

**August 28-31, 2010**  
[2010 NADO Annual Training Conference](#)  
San Diego, CA

**September 26-29, 2010**  
[IEDC's Annual Conference](#)  
Columbus, OH

**October 24-26, 2010**  
EDA's Atlanta Regional  
Office Conference  
Atlanta, GA

**November 7-9, 2010**  
[UEDA 2010 Summit](#)  
Reno, NV

**November 16-17, 2010**

EDA's Chicago and Denver  
Regional Offices Conference  
St. Louis, MO

**December 8-9, 2010**  
EDA's Seattle Regional  
Office Conference  
Los Angeles, CA

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