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New NACo economic resiliency publication showcases innovative county policies

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Counties (NACo) today released a new report that suggests counties, regions and communities that can foresee, adapt and leverage changing economic conditions are best positioned to attract and grow new businesses, retain skilled workers and promote a high quality of life.

“Strategies to Bolster Economic Resilience: County Leadership in Action” features eight case studies about how counties across the country are pursuing creative and innovative policies, partnerships and initiatives to create healthy, safe, vibrant and economically resilient communities.

Counties featured in the publication include:

- Augusta-Richmond County, Ga. (population: 202,600)
- Brookings County, S.D. (population: 32,600)
- Cuyahoga County, Ohio (population: 1.3 million)
- Garrett County, Md. (population: 29,900)
- King County, Wash. (population: 2 million)
- Maui County, Hawaii (population: 158,200)
- Prince George County, Va. (population: 36,900)
- Rutherford County, N.C. (population: 67,300)

The report notes that counties invest $25 billion each year in economic development efforts and spend $106 billion annually to build, maintain and operate roads, bridges, transit, water systems and other public facilities, and own 45 percent of the nation’s roadways.

“Counties can facilitate private sector growth by accelerating economic development through public investments in infrastructure, workforce training and business assistance programs and by convening decision-makers in public agencies, private firms and regional and state institutions,” the report said.
Additionally, counties operate hospitals and health facilities, run law enforcement and criminal justice systems, build and operate parks and recreation facilities, oversee elections and maintain records, and provide a host of other social and administrative services that indirectly provide support for the local economy. Counties cannot continue to deliver these services without a healthy revenue base; robust economic development efforts are essential to ensuring that a county can operate these vital community services,” the report said.

“Counties must think creatively about their local and regional strengths and how to translate those assets into economic growth,” said NACo President Linda Langston, supervisor, Linn County, Iowa. “I am pleased that county leaders are sharing innovative ideas and approaches highlighted in the economic resiliency report and elsewhere through NACo to pursue economic opportunities and strategies that work for them.”

The NACo report was developed with support from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through a partnership with the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation. It is available [here](#).

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The National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo assists America’s 3,069 counties in pursuing excellence in public service to produce healthy, vibrant, safe and resilient counties. NACo promotes sound public policies, fosters county solutions and innovation, promotes intergovernmental and public-private collaboration and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. More information at: [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org).