

# Georgia Chapter Spring Conference

New Advocacy Strategies for  
Planning

March 21, 2012

[www.planning.org/policy](http://www.planning.org/policy)

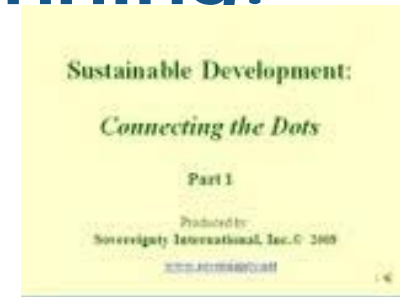
HEARD ON THE HILL



**American Planning Association**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

# Today's Challenges for Planning: Political



Carroll County Times



## Commissioners remove smart growth references from the Master Plan

By Christian Alexandersen, Times Staff Writer | Posted: Sunday, May 15, 2011 12:15 am

# BANGOR DAILY NEWS

## State suspends midcoast road plan seen by some as 'global conspiracy'



## What we've seen ...

Plans Rejected  
Federal Grants  
Returned

Resolutions  
Opposing ICLEI,  
APA, Agenda 21  
Events &  
“Briefings”

Aggressive Use of  
Social Media  
Funds Cut  
Programs Targeted  
for Elimination  
Challenging Future  
Budget Targets

# Today's Challenges for Planning:

## Fiscal & Economic

Research Brief

### LOCAL GOVERNMENTS CUTTING JOBS AND SERVICES

Job losses projected to approach 500,000

post-gazette.COM LOCAL / REGION  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

#### Federal block grant cuts slicing municipal budgets

Tuesday, July 19, 2011

By Rich Lord, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

CITY FISCAL CONDITIONS IN 2011



# What is driving the opponents?

Economics

Social Anxiety

Change

New Technologies re Political  
Organizing



# A Changing Environment?

"All the News  
That's Fit to Print"

## The New York Times

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2012

**Washington**  
Today, partly to most  
possible, high 53. To  
periodic rain, few  
mainly cloudy, rain  
high 45. Weather on

### Activists Fight Green Projects, Seeing U.N. Plot

By LINDSEY KAUFMAN  
and KATE ZERNIKE

Across the country, activists with one to the Tea Party are rallying against all sorts of local and state efforts to control sprawl and conserve energy. They brand government action for things like expanding public transportation routes and preserving open space as part of a United Nations-led conspiracy to deny property rights and hard citizens toward cities.

They are showing up at planning meetings to denounce bike lanes on public streets and smart meters on home appliances — efforts they equate to a big-government blueprint against individual rights.

"Down the road, this data will be used against you," warned one speaker at a recent Roanoke County, Va., Board of Supervisors meeting who turned out with dozens of people opposed to the county's paying \$1,200 in dues to a nonprofit that consults on sustainability issues.

Local officials say they would dismiss such notions except that the growing and often heated protests are having an effect.

In Maine, the Tea Party, organized

### After 11 Years, A Police Leader Hits Turbulence

This article is by N. R. Klein-  
field, A. Baker and Joseph Gold-  
stein.

The officers who stand sentinel over New York's streets and run the station houses rarely intersect with the police commissioner. They see the man they call "boss" at Police Academy graduations, at promotions, on the news recapitulating the latest — ugly crime or at police funerals. That is about it.

So it was jarring recently when some commanders got e-mails from the boss with photos of vagrants taken by his personal staff. The messages cited "a condition that requires your immediate attention." They specified no action, but officers said those highlighted sometimes later wound up in handcuffs.

The e-mails reminded some precinct commanders of the blanket control the commissioner exerts — even the ceremonial unit of anthem singers and ball-



Raymond  
W. Kelly

### Jobless Rate Falls to 8. Altering Face of Cam

President Gets New Hope on Crucial  
but Romney Must Weigh Strategy

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR

WASHINGTON — The burst of job growth in January gives President Obama a fresh — but tricky — opportunity to revise the grim economic narrative of his presidency while offering Mitt Romney a choice: embrace a new optimism or campaign against a sinking economy even as it shows signs of turning around.

The Labor Department reported on Friday that the unemployment rate had fallen all the way back to the level of President Obama's first full month in office, to 8.3 percent, from a high of 10 percent in late 2009. Yet unemployment also remains higher than it has been for any presidential election since the Great Depression. [Page B1.]

Those dueling realities — an improving economy that remains very weak — create serious risks for the top political advisers to President Obama and Mr. Romney as they begin to grapple with the impact of Friday's report. The image of an overly optimistic president could feel discordant

economy has added million jobs for months in five years, with the poor's 500-stock index only slightly below Mr. Obama took office.

The economy is gaining strength for months, according to a ray of data, offering for hope that the deep financial crisis starting to fade.

Still, the economy's several more years of growth, to return to something full has brought many for growing more hope year, several factors Europe's financial

Continued on B1



**Iran's Supreme Leader Is**  
Worshippers at Tehran University.

BY MICHAEL D. SHEAR

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tyer. Page A4.

# A Changing Environment?

Election Year Intensity

Expanding the Playing Field with  
State Legislative Sessions

Agenda 21 Resolutions in NH,  
KS, TN

# **BREAKING: New APA Poll on Public Attitudes on Planning**

National Poll Findings to Help with Messaging Strategies and Planning Advocacy



## APA Poll: Key Takeaways

Attacks from vocal minority

No growth in self-id opponents

Hiding is the wrong approach

Work to do on citizen engagement

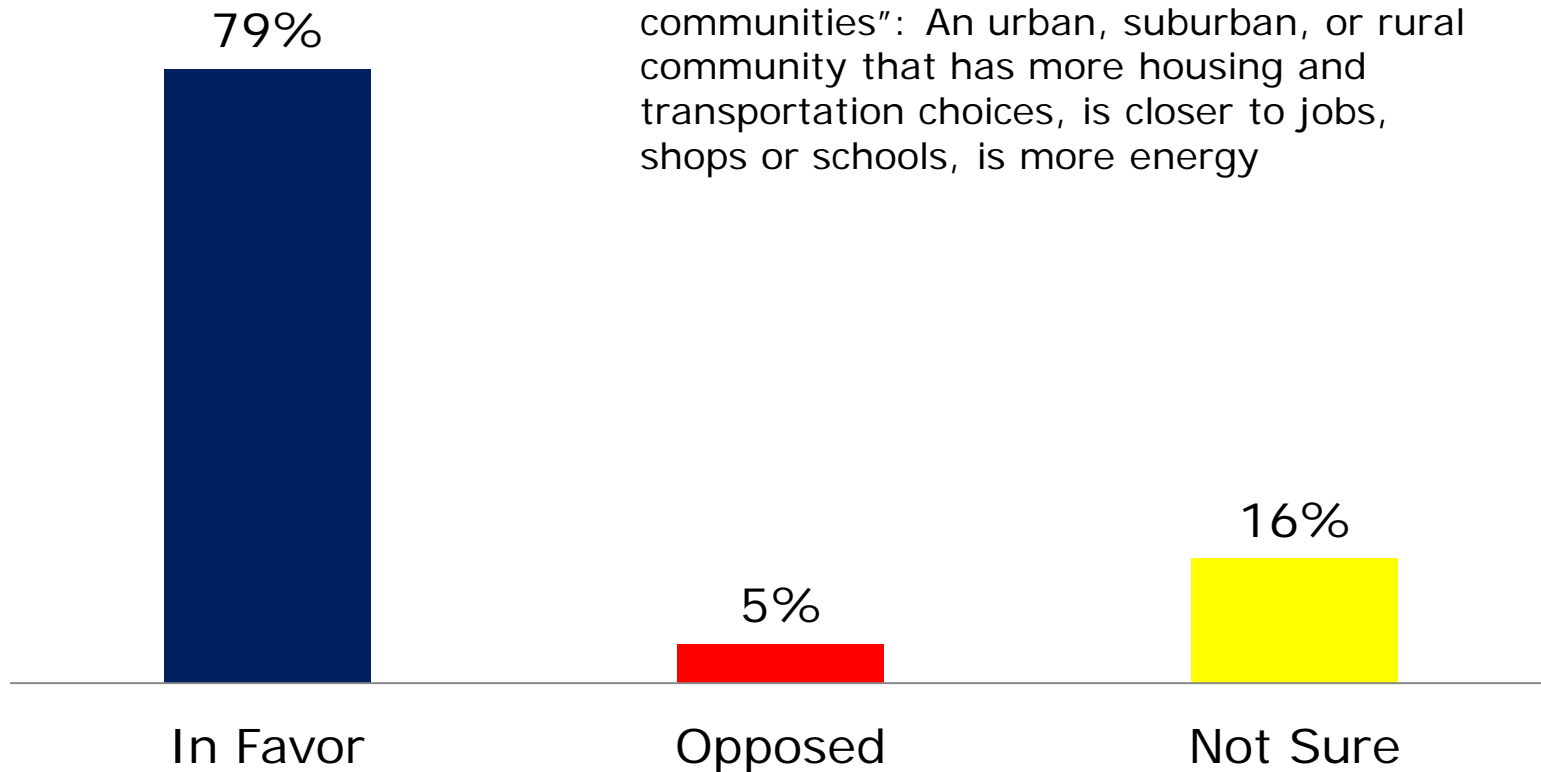
Good support but latent

Partnership w business leaders

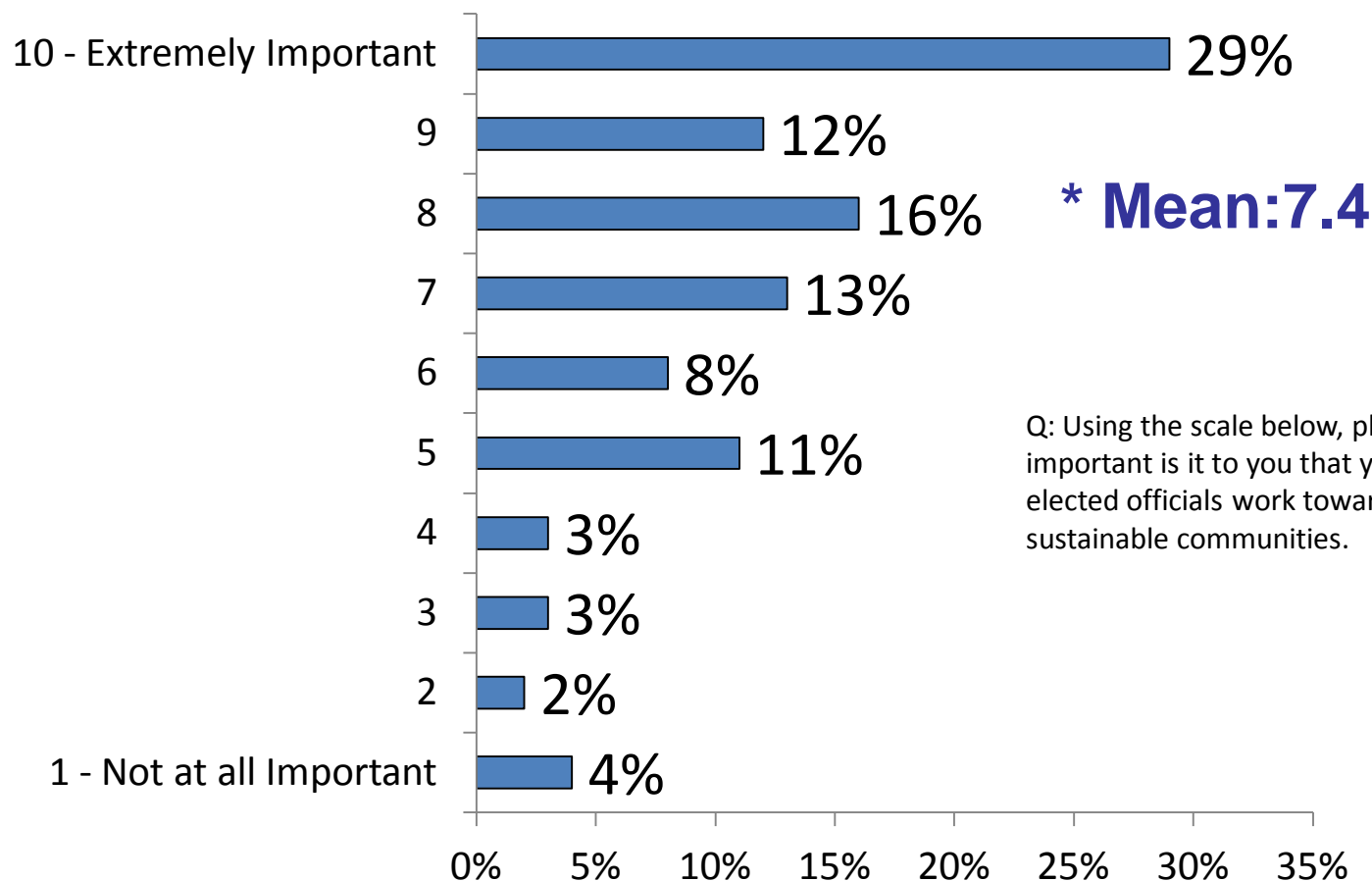
## ***National Support for Sustainable Communities***

■ In Favor ■ Opposed ■ Not Sure

Definition given for “sustainable communities”: An urban, suburban, or rural community that has more housing and transportation choices, is closer to jobs, shops or schools, is more energy



# Importance of Officials Working to Create Sustainable Communities



% Agree National Level	% Agree Southern Region	% Agree República ns	
<b>84%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>77%</b>	Our country is too dependent on oil.
<b>82%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>77%</b>	Most Americans spend more than 50% of their household expenses on housing and transportation costs. That is too much.
<b>82%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>84%</b>	Rebuilding our economy and creating new jobs is the most important issue of our generation.
<b>75%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>67%</b>	Infrastructure spending on roads, trains, and buses create jobs and help the economy get stronger.
<b>66%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>52%</b>	We need to rethink the way we develop housing and transportation in this region. The way we have been doing it isn't working for most people.
<b>58%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>44%</b>	I believe that economic growth and environmental quality are interconnected goals.
<b>58%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>46%</b>	Housing and transportation make up 35% of the US economic base. We can't fix our economy unless we fix our housing and transportation problems first.

## **Key Strategy:** **Have a Plan**

Analyze the Situation

ID Allies, Opponents, Influentials

Define Your Terms ... First

‘Reframe’ Planning in Economic Terms

Craft Conscious & Consistent  
Messaging

Conduct Aggressive Outreach

Have a Game Plan for the Opposition

# **Key Strategy:** **Cultivate Allies & Messengers**

Internal Advocates

Outside Allies

Proactive Media Outreach

Social Media Outreach

Key Messengers



## **Key Strategy:** **Inoculate Elected Officials**

Meet Early & Often

Keep Them Prepared

Understand the Political Context

Avoid Excessive Jargon & Technical  
Detail

Cultivate Influentials

‘Push Back’ as Necessary

## **Key Strategy:** **Prepare for Rapid Response**

ID Arguments and Prep Responses

Monitor Opponents

Mobilize Supporters

Get in Front of Opponents' Claims

Correct the Record

# Key Strategy: More is More

Preparation

Participation

Partners

Politics

## **Key Strategy:** **Be Prepared**

Know your Message

Define the Debate

Identify the Benefits

Watch the Opposition

Prep your Champs

Have Responses Ready

# Key Strategy: **Eliminate Jargon**

Focus on Outcomes

Identify Local Values and Connect  
to Planning

Specify the Benefits

Tell a Story

# New Framing for Planning

Economic Value

Democratic Participation Value



# Messaging

Planning =

economic recovery

fiscal responsibility

secure economic future

Demolish the idea that a secure future can ever happen w/out planning

Retake the high ground of freedom and fairness

## Crafting Messages ...

Specific, Concise, Positive

Focus on Values & Outcomes

WIIFM

Write it Down

Test it Out

Spread it to Allies

Use it Early and Often

Stick to it

# APA Core Messages

Choice

Value

Engagement

Community

“Planning creates communities of lasting value.”

ADD LOCAL PROOF POINTS!

# Message Development: Creating Audience-Centered Messages

- Know your audience:
  - What do they know about your topic?
  - What do they care about?
  - What information and facts will capture their attention?
  - What values do your audience care about?
- Create messages that will appeal to them

# The Framing Used by Disruptive Groups

- **Planning = Tyranny**
  - End of Property Rights
  - Global Re-education of Children
  - Forcing People into Cities
  - De-population
- **Planning = Communism**  
End of American Liberty
- **Planning = Rich Elites**  
Imposing a “New World Order” Via the United Nations Agenda 21

# Attacks are Orchestrated

- Not a “loyal opposition” or interest group
- Not there to testify on a specific topic or plan
- The principal objective is to disrupt and discredit the planning process
- It’s personal





# Messaging Preparation

Know the attacks

Be proactive

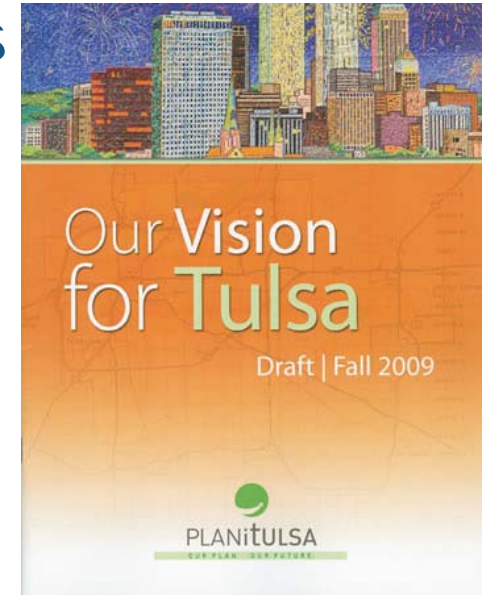
Build your base

Good defense

Be prepared ... esp @ public meetings

# Themes for Positive Messages

Local  
Outcomes  
Benefits-Driven  
Inclusive  
Prosperity  
Fair  
Choice  
Good Business Sense



# Building Blocks of a Communications Plan

## 1. Analysis

Stakeholder  
Analysis

Opposition  
Research

Context  
Summary

Issue  
Review

# Building Blocks of a Communications Plan

## 2. Messages

Develop  
Benefit-  
Driven  
Responses

ID Core  
Messages

ID & Arm  
Messengers

ID Delivery  
Vehicles &  
Timelines

# Building Blocks of a Communications Plan

## 3. Implementation

Outreach

Monitoring

Feedback &  
Adjustment

Intel

# Message Discipline: How to Deliver Them

1. Prepare – know what your key messages are and memorize/internalize them
2. Don't wait until you are asked about your key messages by others: proactively deliver them and set the framework for the discussion
3. Start with your "conclusion" and then move to develop it; use phrases such as "The key thing to remember is. . . ", "That has to be put in the context of. . . "
4. Generate "proof points" using examples from your own community – plans tell stories and these stories are a great way to explain the benefits



# Message Discipline: How to Deliver Them

5. Repetition is important to retention.
6. Remember that body language and voice tone are critical elements of your delivery: remain relaxed and maintain a pleasant, firm, authoritative tone (don't match your opponent's level of intensity and conflict)
7. Don't repeat your opponents negatives in the process of denying them: i.e. don't say things like "Planning is not a government plot to take away individual rights."
8. Practice your presentation/messages in advance with your staff

**When pressed ...**

**learn to counter**

**and pivot.**

**“You may be out gunned, but you have to bring a gun.”**

**- Maine State Legislator to Public Health Advocates**

# Coordinated Campaign



Legislative  
Strategy



Ground Game



Communications  
Plan



# Your Campaign Plan

- Situation Analysis
- *Specific* Goals & Objectives
- Targeting
- Strategies to Reach Target Audiences
- Timeline and Tactics
- Structure & Operations
- Resource Needs
- Measurement, Evaluation & Course Corrections

# Early Strategic Decisions

- Offense or Defense?
- Inside Game or Outside Game (or both)?
- Lead or Follow or Facilitate?
  - Agency? Chapter? Allies?

# Three Keys

- Information

What? Who? Where? How?

- Relationships

Legislators, Leaders & Champions, Allies,  
Constituents

- Leverage

Data & Impact, Local Leaders, Allies &  
Power Brokers, Legislative Process

# Relationships with Legislators

Constituency is Paramount

Regular Contact

Involve Them in Planning

Specific Requests

Understand the District

Use Local Electeds

& Civic Leaders



# Cultivating Influentials & Linking to Electeds

Find partners who can reach decision makers

Involve champions who can move public opinion

## Power Mapping



*Advocacy is about building personal relationships*

# Finding & Creating Champions

## Finding

History

Issue Interest

District Connection

Key Constituent

Connection

Committee Role

Expertise & Past Experience

## Creating

Build Relationship

Show District Impact

Involve 'Influencers'

ID Opportunity

Show Value

# Relationship Building Activities

Meetings

Briefings

Site Visits

Planning Events

Agency Requests

Visibility Opportunities

District Data

Trend Analysis

'Low Impact' Asks

# Messages that Move Legislators

What's the impact in the district?

What's happening in the district?

How can economic conditions be improved for constituents?

How does a policy / program affect key constituents?

Real world stories highlighting policies

# Working with 'Hostile' Legislators

Consider the district and legislator's primary interests in crafting a message

Recruit new messengers

Find legislative champions or supporters who can influence a hostile target

Use your region's delegation

Look for potential trade-offs

Build working relationship over time and appeal beyond ideology

Not necessary to convince if you can neutralize

# Coalitions, Outreach & Engagement

# Why Coalitions?

- You need help
- Strength through diversity
- Leveraging partners' relationship with policymakers, leaders
- Issue awareness, messaging and framing
- Network intelligence
- Influencing (or confronting) critics
- Building broader support

# Identifying Partners & Allies

- Make a list

Include unlikely targets

- Consider target audiences ... and who reaches them effectively
- Review your competencies and conduct a “gap” analysis
- Consider roles
- Communicate early and often
- Doesn't have to be formal but must be intentional



# Preparing & Deploying the Coalitions

- One message, many messengers
- Clear roles based on need and core competencies of partners
  - use their strengths and play to their credibility
- Information flow is vital
- Develop rapid response system
- Train and arm your allies
- Keep people active and engaged ... not just during an emergency

## Outreach

Not about giving information

Go to them

Listen

Reflect

Include critics

Be broad ... and strategic

# Engagement

Partnership and Process ...

Not an Event

# A last word on federal policy

Appropriations

Transportation

# Transportation

Senate Passes MAP-21

2 years, \$109B

Some Planning Changes,  
Program Reforms

House Progress

Stalled, Controversial

March 31 Deadline

Short term Extension Likely

# Appropriations Priorities

CDBG

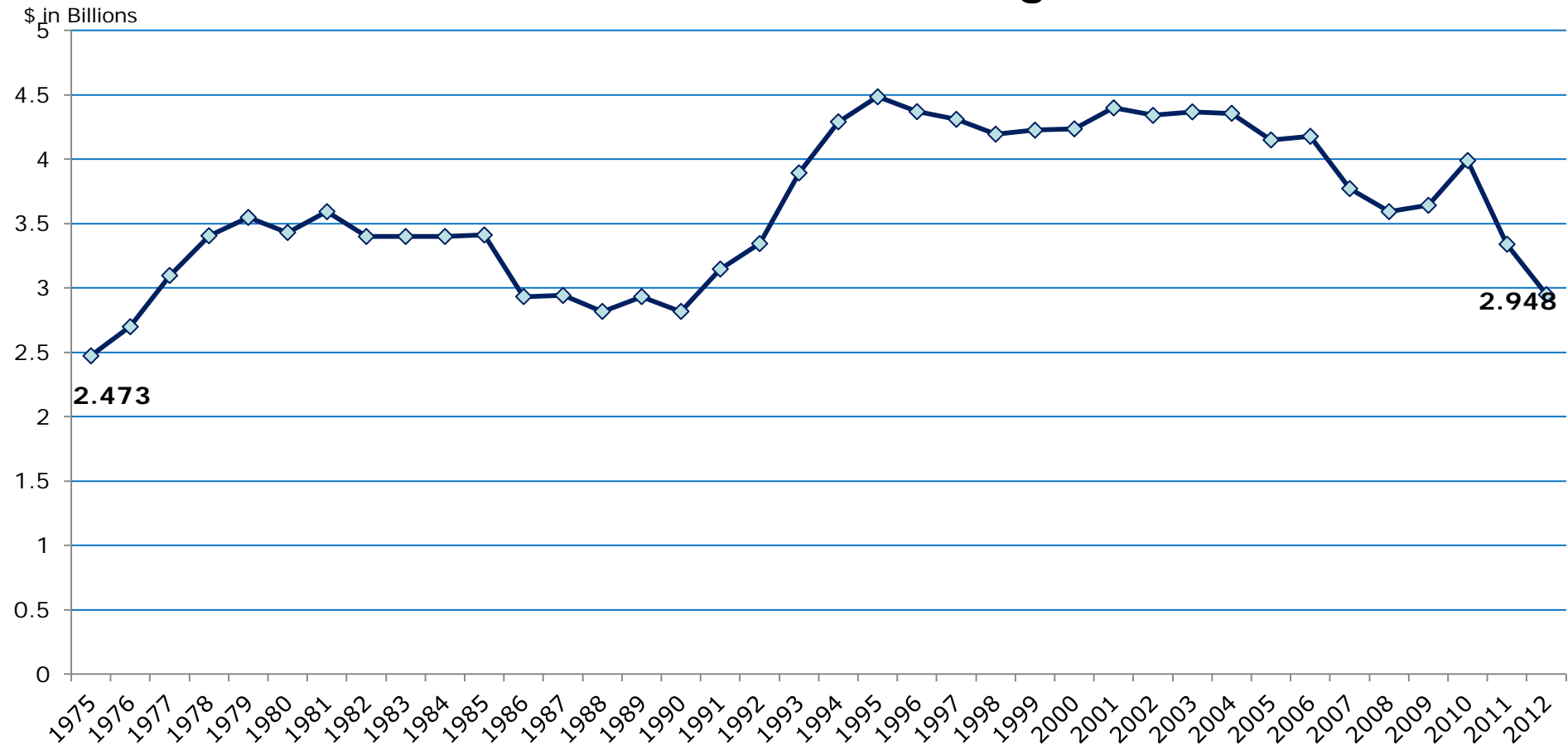
Choice Neighborhoods

Partnership for Sustainable  
Communities

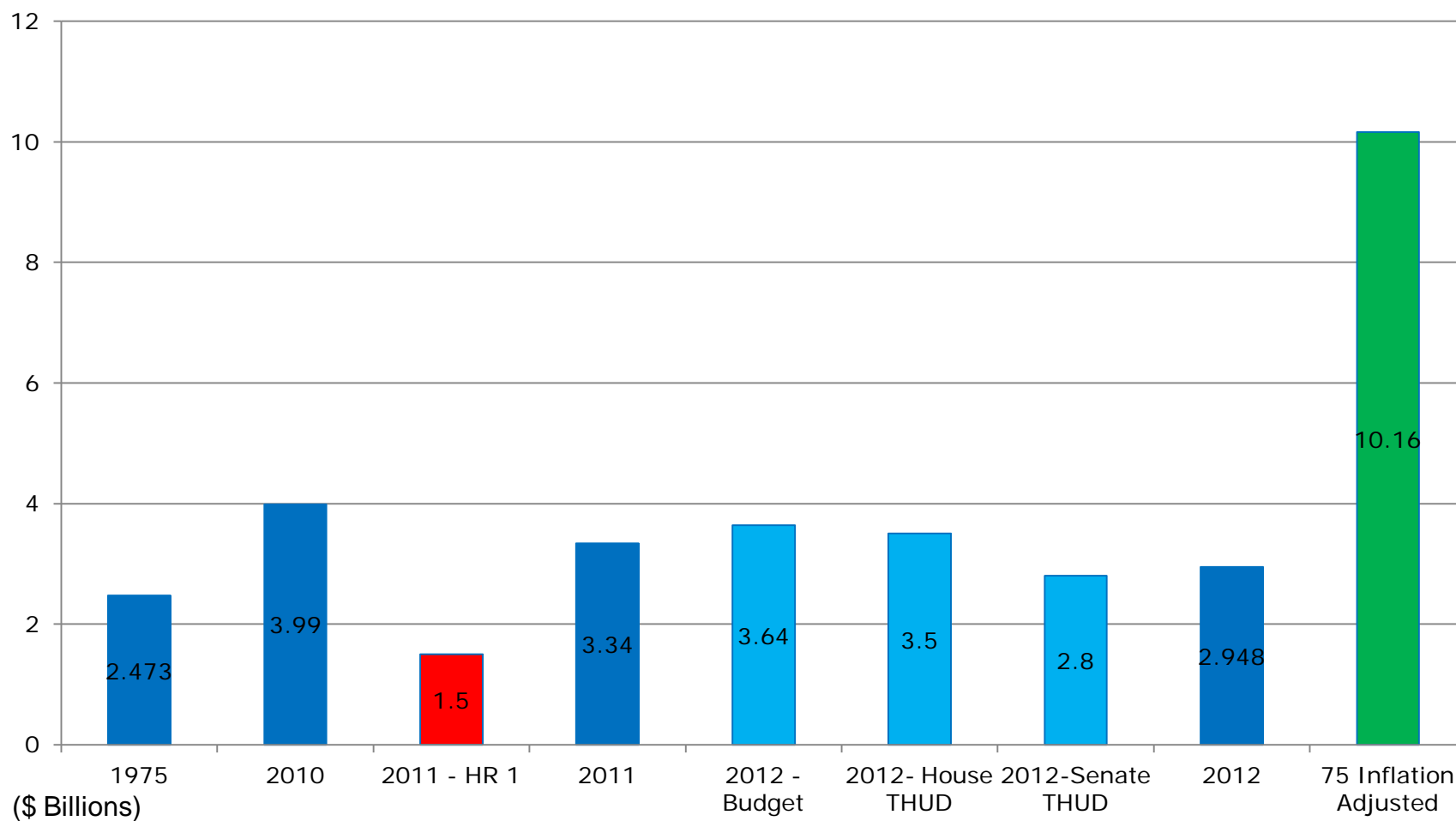
TIGER

Water Infrastructure

## CDBG Historic Funding

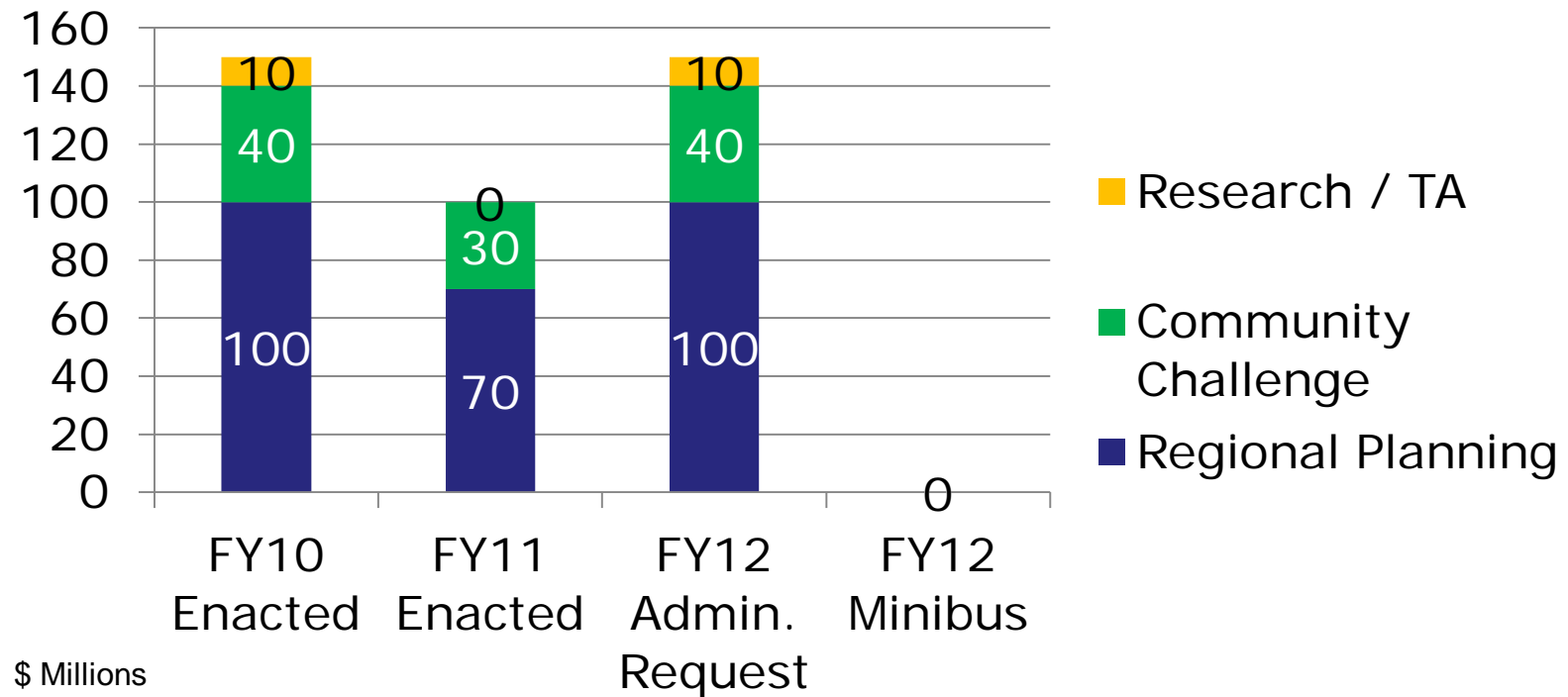


## CDBG Funding





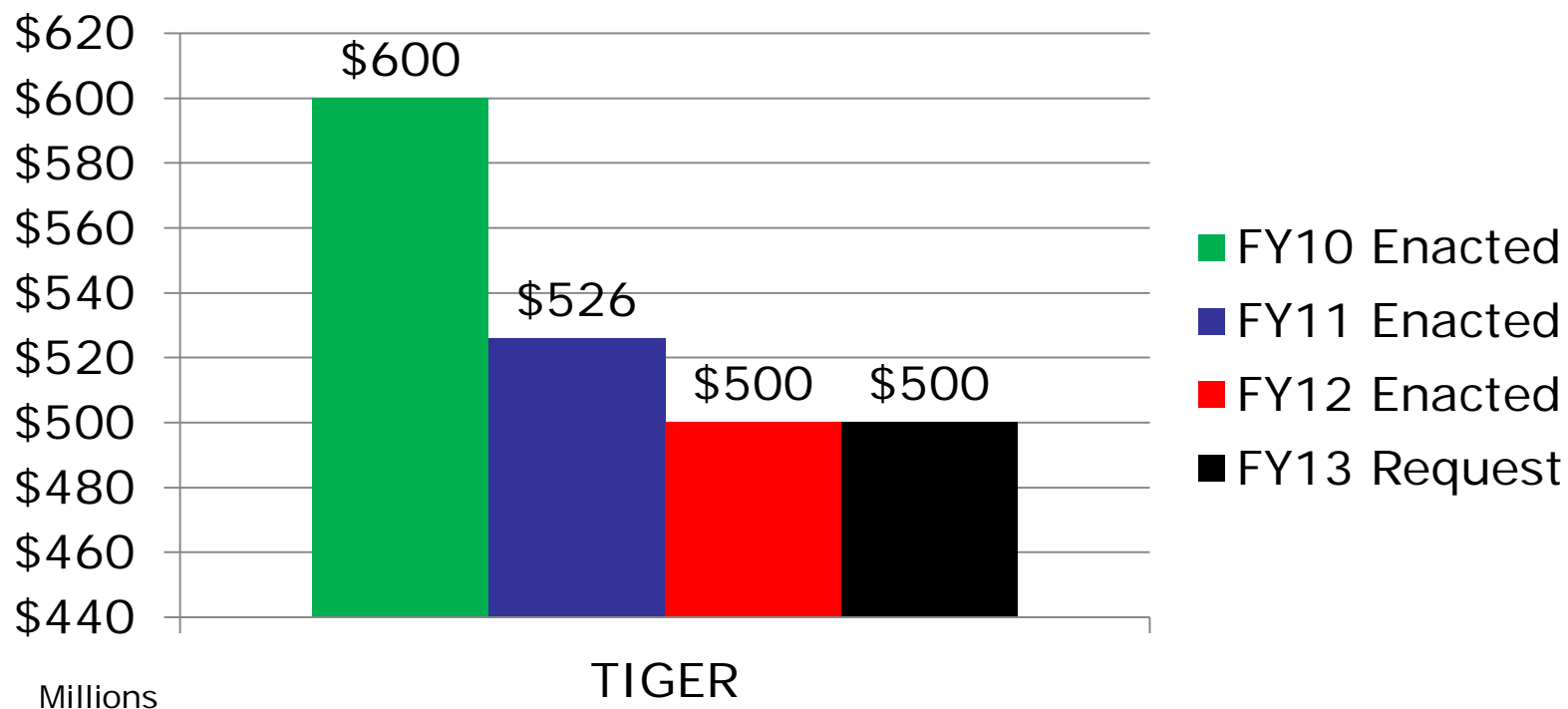
# HUD: Partnership for Sustainable Communities



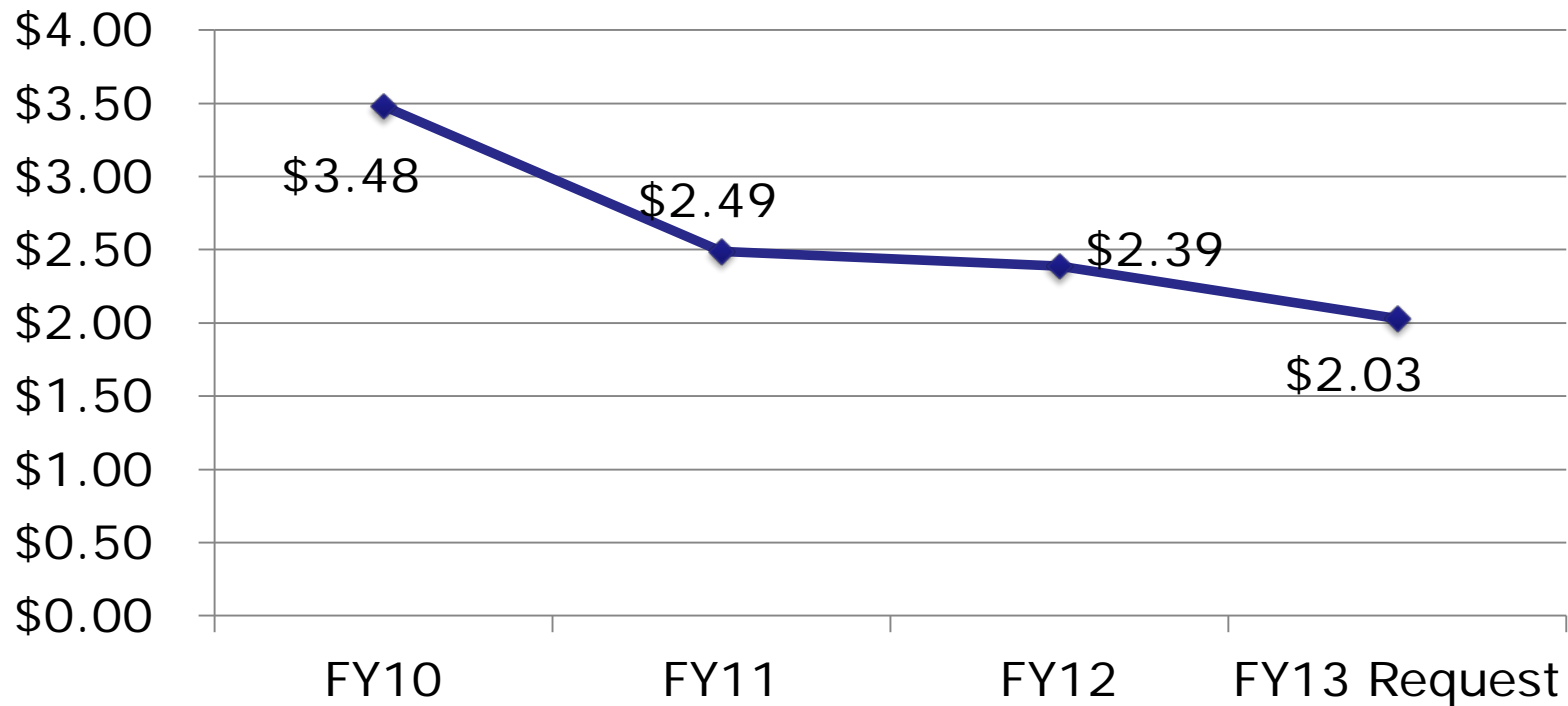
# DOT: TIGER/National Infrastructure Investments

Of note:

- FY10 included a \$35 million set aside for planning grants
- TIGER was created by ARRA with \$1.5 billion available in the first round



# EPA: Water Infrastructure Funding (Combined)



\$ in billions

# Questions – Comments - Discussion

For more information ...

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Blog

[blogs.planning.org/policy](https://blogs.planning.org/policy)