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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

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eRegions

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EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

What a fantastic event we held in Washington last week. Five major speakers – insight and opportunity in break-out sessions, peer interaction, and congressional and budget updates made the 2011 National Conference of Regions

REGISTER TODAY!

You're invited to join local elected officials, senior staff, planners and programmers from Councils of Government and Metropolitan Planning Organizations around the country at the largest event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education - NARC's 45th Annual Conference and Exhibition. A draft agenda will be available soon. Click [HERE](#) to register or contact Lindsey Riley at lindsey@narc.org or 202.986.1032 x220 for more information.

a success. (Post conference materials will be distributed this week.) Thank you to all who attended and to those who carried the message of regionalism to the Hill.

Building off the momentum of the conference, we will be releasing a Continuing Resolution update and 2012 President's Budget review this week. We know that things are in chaos here as Congress debates the funding of government. We will keep you informed and present you with the latest information so you, locally and regionally, can help make the case for our strong core programs. There is uncertainty of what the Senate will do after the House adopted their funding bill and whether or not there really will be a shutdown of government. We know that there is a great deal in play and there is room in the budget for deeper negotiation including another possible short term extension to allow for more discussion on discretionary spending. The House is in recess this week and in district

PROGRAM UPDATE

EPA Seeks Public Comment on Plan to Review Regulations: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is inviting the public to provide input on a plan that will guide EPA's retrospective reviews of regulations. EPA will solicit public input regarding the design of its plan via the EPA website through March 20, 2011. EPA will also provide opportunities for input through a public meeting in Washington, D.C. on March 14, and listening sessions in other parts of the country. These outreach efforts will allow the public to provide EPA with feedback on specific issues, impacts or programs. More information about these meetings will be announced soon. By late May, EPA will provide the public with its retrospective review plan, as well as the initial list of regulations it plans to review. Click [HERE](#) for more information about EPA's retrospective review website. Click [HERE](#) for a fact sheet on the effort; click [HERE](#) for how to develop comments.

EDA Seeks Public Comments on Regulations: The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is requesting comments from stakeholders to help the agency update its regulations to more effectively partner with communities and organizations to create jobs and economic growth. Details are available in a Federal Register Notice (available [here](#)) and comments can be posted directly on [EDA's website](#) through March 9, 2011. Please share any submitted comments with Jenee Kresge, jenee@NARC.org or 202.986.1032 x215, so that NARC can compile and share comments on behalf of NARC's membership as well.

U.S. Forest Service National Urban and Community Forestry Council Call for Nominations

The U.S. Forest Service's National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council (NUCFAC) is seeking to fill five positions, including those representing county governments. Additional information on the nomination process is available [HERE](#). All application packages must be received by March 29, 2011.

USDA Hosts Webinar Series on the Summer Food Service Program

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) can help to fill the summer meal gap for 22.3 million low-income children at risk of going hungry without school lunches. Join the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to learn more about how faith-based, community and private non-profit organizations can make a difference in the lives of hungry children by serving meals with SFSP. The webinar series will run through March 8, 2011, and has sessions targeted for rural areas and local governments via its "Grasstops Campaign". Click [HERE](#)

– we hope all of you are talking to your members about budget and program priorities.

As always, if you need any assistance from us, please ask.

Best,
Fred

NARCSTAFF

Fred Abousleman

Executive Director

Shannon Baxevanis

Deputy Director

Sylvia Bryant

Office Manager

Naomi Friedman

Project Director

Jenee Kresge

Economic and

Community

Development Manager

Lindsey Riley

Deputy of

Communications

Erika Young

Transportation Director

To access past issues of *eRegions*, **visit our website.**

Make NARC your homepage — **click here to learn how.**

to register for the session most relevant for your organization.

NARC and NLC Held Successful Transportation and Land Use Webinar:

NARC and the National League of Cities (NLC) hosted a successful webinar on February 8th, *Tools for Transportation and Land Use*, which featured four different approaches to integrating the two topics. Click **HERE** for a PDF copy of the presentation and **HERE** for the recording.

NARC Climate Change Adaptation Webpage Launched: This webpage, available by clicking **HERE**, will house all information related to the *Building Community Resiliency* project, an exciting new collaboration between NARC and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NARC will investigate the readiness and needs of local and regional land use planners and decision-makers to plan for and respond to climate change – including extreme weather events or temperature changes, increased flooding or drought, coastal storm surges, sea level rise and urban heat impacts. Contact Naomi Friedman at **naomi@narc.org** or 202-986-1032 x224 for more information.

NARC Solar Energy Webpage Launched: This webpage, available by clicking **HERE**, will house all NARC information related to the *Solar America Communities* project, a new U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) program designed to increase the use and integration of solar energy in communities across the country. NARC, in partnership with the **International City/County Managers Association** (ICMA) and the **American Planning Association** (APA), along with **ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability**, will conduct outreach to regions and local governments, enabling them to replicate successful solar practices and expand local adoption of solar energy. For additional information visit the **Solar America Communities website** or contact Naomi Friedman at **naomi@narc.org** 202-986-1032 x224.

U.S. DOL Launches MyNextMove: The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) launches *MyNextMove* for jobseekers. This new online tool will help young adults, students, first-time workers and those returning to workforce explore careers, learn about training opportunities and find jobs in more than 900 occupations. Visit **http://mynextmove.dol.gov** for more information.

Pathways Update: NARC project staff and members spoke at two national conferences regarding NARC's Green Jobs *Pathways Out of Poverty* project funded by the U.S. DOL. *Pathways* partner Monster Government Solutions and NARC staff spoke at the National Association of Workforce Boards

Conference (NAWBC) on February 6th. The Central Arizona Association of Governments, Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission, East End Community Services and Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission presented on a panel at the National Good Jobs - Green Jobs Conference on February 8th. For copies of the NAWBC presentation, click [HERE](#); and [HERE](#) for the Good Jobs – Green Jobs presentation.

POLICYUPDATE

The Senate is in session. The House is out of session.

FY12 Presidential Budget Request: On Monday, February 14, the President released his fiscal year 2012 budget request. NARC has available an overview and agency specific details. Click [HERE](#) for the overview. Click [HERE](#) for more details on agency specific levels and programs.

House Passes Long-Term Continuing Resolution Bill: On Saturday, February 19, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1, which would fund the government through September 30, 2011. The spending levels under the bill would be based on FY10 levels, less eliminations, reductions and rescissions totaling roughly \$61.5 billion. The measure would provide \$99.6 billion less than President Obama requested for FY11. The current continuing resolution (CR) expires on March 4. Three Republicans voted against the bill— Reps. Flake (AZ), Campbell (CA) and Jones (NC). No Democrats voted in favor. The bill now heads to the Senate. Click [HERE](#) for a list of approved amendments most relevant to NARC members.

Both the House and Senate are working on short-term CR extensions. Rep. Pelosi (D-CA) introduced a short-term CR to extend the current law until March 31. Senate Majority Leader Reid said he will attempt to pass a clean (without any changes) one-month stopgap funding measure at current spending levels when the Senate returns next week to avoid a government shutdown.

NARC will be sending out separate information on the CR with more specifics as it relates to funding changes and program impacts.

REGIONS360⁰

FTA Leaders Visited St. Lucie Intermodal Transit Facility: On February 11th, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Chief Peter Rogoff, FTA Region 4 Transit Administration Dr. Yvette Taylor (Atlanta, GA), over 50 local, regional, and state officials, press and the public, toured the St. Lucie Intermodal Transit Facility Project. The tour was one of the final stops during President Obama's "Build Week", a week-long tour by Administration officials to showcase federally-funded projects around the nation that are smart investments in transportation infrastructure. The Intermodal Transit Facility is a priority project of the St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) and is part of the TPO's Transportation Improvement Program. The 5,400 square-foot bus terminal and transfer station will be a sustainable "green" facility with advancements such as photovoltaic roof panels and a cistern system for reclaimed water. Administrator Rogoff's enthusiasm for the Intermodal Transit Facility was demonstrated by a proclamation for continuing to weave transit investments into the urban fabric of a community and particular praise for the facility's context-sensitive architectural design and environmental advancements. A video of the FTA visit is available through a direct link on the home page of the St. Lucie TPO website at www.stlucietpo.org.

PARTNERUPDATE

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability USA Column: The ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability USA's Executive Director Martin Chavez's column, "The Clean Energy Road to 2035 Paved by the Hard Work of Local Governments," appeared in *The Huffington Post*. Click [HERE](#) to read the column.

NACo's 2011 Rail Conference: April 27-29, 2011. Sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo), NLC and NARC, this conference will focus on the impact of freight and passenger rail on county, city and state governments and their citizens and businesses. Click [HERE](#) to access the tentative agenda and registration information.

NLC Column: NLC released it's latest *Emerging Issues* column, "Intergovernmental System Requires Attention." Click [HERE](#) to read the column.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

U.S. EPA Sustainable Communities Building Blocks Technical Assistance

Deadline for Letter of Interest: February 23, 2011

The U.S. EPA recently announced the availability of technical assistance via the Building Blocks Program, which supports the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. Local governments may apply for one of eight tools to be implemented during a day-long workshop, involving key community partners including metropolitan planning organizations and/or other regional planning organizations. Additional information can be found [HERE](#), and the Request for Letters of Interest is available [HERE](#).

U.S. HUD to Award \$25 Million through New Rural Innovation Fund

Deadline: February 23, 2011

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) [announced](#) that \$25,750,000 will be available for grants made through the Rural Innovation Fund (RIF). RIF replaces HUD's former Rural Housing and Economic Development Program. HUD will award grants on a competitive basis to state housing finance agencies, community development corporations, state community and/or economic development agencies, local rural non-profit organizations, federally recognized Indian tribes and consortia of these eligible groups. Successful grant applications will propose new and innovative solutions to poor housing conditions and concentrated poverty in rural and tribal areas. HUD is particularly interested in proposals that incorporate an "entrepreneurial approach" to addressing these problems. Additional information is available by clicking [HERE](#).

Your Town Regional Planning Workshop Grant Opportunity

Deadline: February 25, 2011

The National Endowment for the Arts issued a request for proposals for *Your Town: The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design* to nonprofits, community organizations and local governments to address critical regional planning issues through design by bringing design professionals to a community for a multi-day workshop. Applicant towns must have a population of less than 50,000 and/or be located in a non-metropolitan county or a metropolitan county on the urban fringe. For more information click [here](#).

Our Town Grant Opportunity

Statement of Interest Deadline: March 1, 2011

The National Endowment for the Arts will offer grants to nonprofit design and cultural organizations in partnership with a local government entity for *Our*

Town, a new grant opportunity designed to contribute toward the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful and economically sustainable places with the arts at their core. Regional councils can work in partnership with a local government to develop a Statement of Interest, required for potential applicants to receive an invitation to apply. For more information click [here](#).

EDA Public Works, Economic Adjustment and Global Climate Change Mitigation Programs Opportunity

Deadline: March 10, 2011

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) generally allocates funds for the Global Climate Change Mitigation Incentive Fund (GCCMIF) to support projects that foster economic competitiveness while enhancing environmental quality. EDA anticipates that these funds will be used to advance the green economy by supporting projects that create jobs and increase private capital investment in initiatives to limit the nation's dependence on fossil fuels, enhance energy efficiency, curb greenhouse gas emissions and protect natural systems. While the amount of funding available through this opportunity is dependent on FY2011 appropriations and is not yet known, EDA allocated \$25 million for the GCCMIF in 2010. The average size of a GCCMIF investment was approximately \$840,000. For more information, including regional contacts, see the synopsis of this funding opportunity on [Grants.gov](#).

FY11 Environmental Workforce Development Grants Available

Deadline: March 18, 2011

The U.S. EPA recently announced the availability of \$4 million to fund approximately 13 awards of up to \$300,000 each. Regional councils are specifically named as eligible applicants for the awards, which will support the delivery of environmental workforce development and job training programs focused on hazardous and solid waste management, assessment and cleanup-associated activities. Additional information is available [HERE](#) or at [www.grants.gov](#).

Environmental Justice Small Grants

Deadline: March 31, 2011

The U.S. EPA is accepting grant applications for \$1.2 million to support projects to research, educate, empower, and enable communities to understand and address local health and environmental issues. Eligible applicants include non-profit community based organizations (e.g. faith groups, environmental justice groups) and tribal governments. Regional Councils may want to partner with such entities. The U.S. EPA will award 40

grants of up to \$25,000 each to support projects that address local environmental issues through partnerships, and four grants of up to \$50,000 each to gather science on the environmental and health impacts of exposure to multiple sources of pollution. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Citizenship and Integration Direct Services Grant Program Deadline

Deadline: April 1, 2011

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Citizenship will provide federal funding to nonprofits or local governments to prepare Lawful Permanent Residents for citizenship. The grants provide up to \$75,000 per year, for a total of \$150,000 per grantee to provide citizenship instruction for the civics and English portions of the naturalization test. Additional information and a full application packet is available [here](#).

EPA Requests Applications for National Award for Smart Growth Achievement

Deadline: April 6, 2011

The U.S. EPA announced that the application period for the 10th annual National Award for Smart Growth Achievement is open. Through this award, EPA recognizes and supports communities that have successfully used smart growth principles to improve communities environmentally, socially and economically. Open to public- and private-sector entities (although all applications must include a public-sector partner), winners will be recognized in December 2011. Awards will be given in the categories of Programs, Policies and Regulations; Smart Growth and Green Building; Civic Places; and Rural Smart Growth. An "Overall Excellence" winner will be chosen from the four categories by the review panels. To view the application and complete entry guidelines, click [HERE](#).

DOL Releases Grant Applications for Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Program

Deadline: April 21, 2011

The U.S. DOL Employment and Training Administration (ETA) announced the release of \$500 million in grant funds for the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program. While applicants must be institutions of higher education eligible for training under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, Regional Councils and Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) have proven to be key partners for similar work undertaken through NARC's *Pathways Out of Poverty* project, also funded by the U.S. DOL ETA. The full grant announcement is available [HERE](#), and a toolkit for potential applicants is available [HERE](#).

UPCOMINGEVENTS

2011 Green Infrastructure Conference

February 23-25, 2011, Shepherdstown, WV: The Conservation Fund and its partners will host speakers from across the country to discuss key elements for success and vital lessons-learned. Featured topics include green infrastructure and public health, social equity, transportation, economic development, climate change and more. For more information please click [here](#).

Financial Markets Boot Camp: An Insider's Perspective on Unique Financials Tools For Local Elected and Senior Government Officials

March 12, 2011, Washington, DC: The Arizona State University School of Public Affairs is hosting the Financial Markets Boot Camp to build the financial governance capacity and economic sophistication of local and state public servants in their interaction with the private market and its stakeholders. The fee for the Boot Camp is \$75 and includes lunch. For details and registration, click [here](#).

24th Annual GIS-T Symposium

March 28-30, 2011, Hershey, PA: For more information on this event, please click [HERE](#).

Hannover Messe 2011: U.S. Trade and Investment Program

April 3-8, 2011, Hannover, Germany: The U.S. EDA, U.S. Commercial Service (USCS), and Invest in America (IIA) have partnered to lead a U.S. Trade & Investment Program to HANNOVER MESSE 2011, the world's largest industrial technology showcase. HANNOVER MESSE 2011 is an excellent opportunity to promote your community as an attractive place to do business. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

2011 National Brownfields Conference

April 3-5, 2011, Philadelphia, PA: A partnership between the U.S. EPA and ICMA has developed the National Brownfields Conference into the premier international forum focused on redeveloping America's brownfield properties and promoting environmental revitalization and economic redevelopment. Registration is free; visit www.brownfields2011.org for more details.

APA's National Planning Conference

April 9-12, 2011, Boston, MA: For more information on this event, please

click [HERE](#).

2011 Rail Conference: Moving Freight and Passengers in the 21st Century

April 27-29, 2011, Naperville, IL: Sponsored by NACo, NLC and NARC, this conference will focus on the impact of freight and passenger rail on county, city, and state governments and their citizens and businesses. It will look at the movement of freight in the urban, suburban and rural communities of the U.S. and discuss who will pay to modernize and expand passenger and freight rail systems. This conference is for you if you have ever asked why the freight industry operates the way it does, had questions about economic growth and the availability and affordability of freight rail, wanted to have commuter rail in your region or wondered about the future of high-speed rail. Participants will get to meet and hear from experts in the field, including representatives of the rail industry, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the shippers who use the system, commuter rail experts, Amtrak and proponents of high-speed rail. The conference will conclude with a half-day discussion on where we go from here; how city, county, regional, and state governments can work together with the freight and passenger industry to influence federal legislation and policy; and both reduce the negative impacts from freight rail movement and improve passenger rail service in America. Click [HERE](#) to access the tentative agenda and registration information.

National Solar Conference

May 17-21, 2011, Raleigh, NC: Save the date. More information will be released as it becomes available.

NARC's 45th Annual Conference and Exhibition

June 13-15, 2011, San Diego, CA: Join us for the the largest national event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education. NARC's annual conference is the premier place to learn how to engage in effective regional collaboration. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

NLC's 19th Annual Leadership Summit

September 15 - 17, 2011, Minneapolis, MN: Join renowned leadership scholars and authors Dan Buettner, Lindsay Strand, John M. Bryson, Barbara C. Crosby, and John Luthy as you engage in a unique, reflective program that will help guide your work and leadership in local government. Insightful learning experiences will provide you the opportunity to reflect, recognize and discover what you can do to enhance your success as a local leader. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

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777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 305
Washington, DC 20002

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