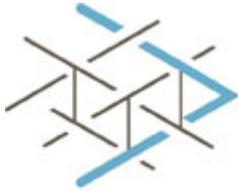


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

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eRegions

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EXECUTIVEBRIEF

Colleagues,

Uncertainty over the budget still looms, however many lawmakers are now willing to explore the option of smaller cuts over a period of time to keep the government up and running. If you been tracking the materials we've been posting and

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.

sending, you can see that the end game is still not clear. What seems to be unfolding is a series of short term extensions each with cuts that both parties can agree to.

On a last note, legislators are now looking at 2012 and dissecting the President's budget. We now have two fronts we are working on with you and will keep you informed on core program funding. We do need your assistance, however in making the case for programs.

Over the next couple of months, we will be unveiling our website, which will include easier navigation and more robust search capabilities. As we get closer to the launch date, we'll let you know. Thank you for your patience as we transition between sites.

Best,
Fred

NARCSTAFF

Fred Abousleman

Executive Director

Shannon Baxevanis

Deputy Director

PROGRAMUPDATE

NTIA Launches National Broadband Map: The U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) launched a searchable nationwide map of broadband access. Click [here](#) for more details on the release or access the map directly at www.broadbandmap.gov.

FHWA and FTA Will Release Guidebook on Congestion Management: The U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and U.S. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will soon release an updated guidebook on the Congestion Management Process (CMP). *Congestion Management Process: A Guidebook* will provide practitioners with an understanding of the elements of a CMP and include practical examples of how to implement a successful process based on lessons learned from MPOs across the country. The document highlights the role of the CMP in addressing multiple objectives, including livability, accessibility, and multimodal connectivity. Companion pieces include a series of case studies focusing on several MPOs, as well as a special report on visualization techniques used in the CMP. A webinar highlighting the new resource materials will be held on March 23, 2011 from 1:00-2:30 PM ET. Register for the webinar by clicking [HERE](#). For more information, contact Egan Smith, FHWA Office of Planning at egan.smith@dot.gov or Michael Grant, ICF International at mgrant@icfi.com.

DOE Releases New Solar Power Guide: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) recently released a revised second edition of [Solar Powering Your Community: A Guide for Local Governments](#), a comprehensive resource for communities looking to accelerate their adoption of solar energy technologies and capture these benefits. The guide is intended to help communities better understand the steps necessary to permit, inspect, and interconnect solar installations and how to streamline those processes, which can deliver significant cost savings. It also offers guidance for communities on how to develop a plan for expanding their solar energy use and examines ways for local governments to tailor their approach to implementing solar projects based on their community context. Visit NARC's [new webpage](#) on Solar Energy to learn more.

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

Sylvia Bryant

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Naomi Friedman

Project Director

Jenee Kresge

Economic and
Community
Development Manager

Lindsey Riley

Deputy of
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Erika Young

Transportation Director

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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** to register for the session most relevant for your organization.

POLICYUPDATE

The House and Senate are in session.

NARC Creates Federal Budget Webpage: Last week, NARC introduced a new page to its website to track, report and offer resources on the federal budget. This page, which will be updated regularly, includes summaries of legislation, talking points, letters, and PowerPoint presentations for member use. Click [HERE](#) to access the page. Contact Shannon Baxevanis, shannon@narc.org, with any questions.

House GOP Offers 2-Week Stopgap Spending Measure: House Republicans introduced a bill to keep the government funded through March 18 while negotiations can be finalized on the larger continuing resolution (CR) bill; the current CR expires on March 4. This interim effort cuts nearly \$4 billion. This short-term CR includes \$1.2 billion in cuts from eight programs proposed in President Obama's FY12 budget request, including \$650 million in highway funds, \$250 million from the Striving Readers education program, \$88 million from the Smaller Learning Communities, \$75 million from Election assistance grants, \$66 million from LEAP student grants, \$30 million from the Smithsonian Institution legacy fund, and \$29 million in Broadband direct loan subsidy, as well as eliminates \$2.7 billion in FY10 earmarks. Click [HERE](#) to access a full list of the proposed cuts. Click [HERE](#) to access a copy of the bill language. The House will take up this bill tomorrow, March 1.

Senate Democrats are working on a 30-day stopgap bill as well as a broader seven-month measure that includes many of the same kinds of cuts that the House GOP is including in its two-week proposal.

NARC Sends Letter to Senate Leadership on Continuing Resolution: Last week, NARC sent a letter to Senate leadership detailing priorities to consider in drafting and debating a stopgap funding measure to keep through the remainder of FY11. Click [HERE](#) to access the letter.

NARC Sends Letter to Congress on Surface Transportation Extension: Last week, NARC sent a letter to House and Senate leadership on the importance of separately extending surface transportation programs and funding throughout the rest of FY11. Click [HERE](#) to access the letter. This week the House will likely take up HR 662, the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2011, which would extend through September 30, 2011, the surface transportation programs originally authorized by SAFETEA-LU. This bill passed favorably out of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee and now needs full House action.

Transportation Policy Field Hearings Highlight Regional Voices:

- For two weeks in February 2011, the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee held listening sessions and field hearings in various locations throughout the country in advance of the Committee's efforts to reauthorize the multi-year federal surface transportation authorization. The Committee sought input on how to consolidate and improve the performance of programs; cut government red tape and streamline the project delivery process; increase private sector investment in our infrastructure; identify creative financing alternatives; and, other ideas for writing the legislation. Click [HERE](#) for additional information on these hearings.
- At the Columbus, OH hearing, NARC Executive Directors Council First Vice Chair Mark Policinski, executive director of the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Council of Governments (OKI) testified, focusing much of his verbal testimony on alternative financing methods. Policinski specifically highlighted Regional Infrastructure Improvement Zones (RIIZs), an economic development tool which would provide federal tax deductions for companies that invest in approved and planned for infrastructure. He said that initiating this change in federal tax code could help provide the local match needed to bring projects forward. NARC and OKI have been working on this legislative effort for over two years and have garnered national, state and local support. Click [HERE](#) to read Mr. Policinski's full testimony; click [HERE](#) to access a RIIZs one-pager. Contact Shannon Baxevanis, Shannon@narc.org, or Mark Policinski, mpolicinski@oki.org, to lend your support or to learn more about RIIZs.

Regional Innovation Conference Call Hosted by White House on Tuesday, March 1st: Key members of the Administration will discuss what the proposed FY2012 Budget holds for regional innovation efforts, with a focus on programs designed to accelerate and amplify job creation efforts across the country. RSVP by emailing opersvp@who.eop.gov, and join the call on Tuesday, March 1, 2011 at 5pm ET.

PARTNERUPDATE

ARC's Livable Centers Initiative Awards to 14 Communities: Through its award-winning Livable Centers Initiative (LCI), the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is awarding 14 local governments a total of \$678,000 in

grants. These grants will help to either create new quality growth plans in specific locations or to fund the implementation of a previously-awarded LCI study to enhance the livability of these areas. With this latest round of awards, ARC has assisted 109 communities with more than \$142 million in planning and implementation grants to create more livable communities. For more information on ARC's LCI program, visit www.atlantaregional.com/lci.

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.

Call for Applications for Leadership Academy on Economic Competitiveness: *Applications Due: Friday, March 4, 2011*

The National League of Cities' Center for Research and Innovation invites city and regional teams (local elected officials, staff and key stakeholders) to apply to attend the Leadership Academy for Economic Competitiveness in Seattle, WA, April 19-21, 2011. The Academy will be co-hosted by the Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle, and feature an opportunity to engage with foreign businesses seeking job-creating investment opportunities in the U.S. and interact with a delegation of 90 Chinese leaders, including mayors and business executives. Further details on the event and the application process can be found [here](#).

March is National Ethics Awareness Month: Raise the Visibility of Ethics at Your Workplace: One way of helping protect the integrity of your organization is to keep ethics in the forefront with your employees. In the public sector, we need to understand that while something might be legal, it doesn't mean it's ethical. In these challenging times, everyone could use a refresher to help build skills and learn practical strategies for making ethical choices. ICMA offers workshops such topics as "[Ethics at Work!](#)" "[Ethical Survivor](#)" "[Promoting an Ethical Culture](#)", "[The Leader's Role in Building an Ethical Culture](#)" and "[Elected Officials and the Public Trust](#)" are available for staff, leadership, elected officials, boards and commissions. For information about local government ethics workshops and technical assistance services, contact Martha Perego at the ICMA Ethics Center at 202.962-3521 or visit icma.org/ethics for information on general ethics topics.

ICMA Mid Career Managers Institute: The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) is offering a Mid Career Managers Institute,

(MCM) a focused development program for those who identify themselves as mid career professionals at four of its Regional Summit locations. This half-day Institute will provide: broader understanding of your responsibilities as leaders; perspective on some of the critical leadership and management issues facing mid-career managers; and understanding and awareness of concepts and techniques relevant to local government management. Just \$50 to attend. It's not "just lunch"! You are invited to participate in the Thursday morning Young Professionals Leadership Institute session with Bob O'Neill, ICMA's executive director and the ICMA-RC work-life balance session as our guest. Come design your future by co-creating a program built by mid career managers for mid career managers and connect with other Mid Career Managers in your region. Full details are located at http://icma.org/en/Page/100243/Mid_Career_Management_Institute.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

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.

Green Jobs Innovation Fund Grant

Deadline: March 29, 2011

The U.S. DOL announced a competition to award five to eight grants of \$5-8 million each to support green industry job training programs. Eligible applicants will include national and statewide organizations with local affiliates that have existing career training programs and will benefit a minimum of six communities per grant. Additional information can be found [HERE](#).

Career Pathways Innovation Fund Grants Program

Deadline: March 31, 2011

The U.S. DOL recently announced the availability of up to \$122 million in grant funds to be awarded under the Career Pathways Innovation Fund (CPIF) Solicitation for Grant Applications, with at least \$65 million reserved for projects focused on the health care sector. Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs), individual community and technical colleges, community college districts, and state community college systems are eligible to apply. DOL intends to fund approximately 40 to 50 grants ranging from \$1 million to \$5 million. Additional information is available [HERE](#).

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](#).

USDA RUS Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program

Deadline: April 25, 2011

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utility Service (RUS) recently announced the FY2011 Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) call for applications. DLT supports corporations or partnerships, state or local units of government, consortia and Tribes to provide telecommunications technologies that enhance learning and healthcare opportunities for rural populations through loans, grants or loan/grant combinations. Additional information on the funding opportunity is available [HERE](#).

UPCOMINGEVENTS

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](#).

FHWA and FTA Webinar on New Guidebook on Congestion Management

March 23, 2011, Webinar, 1:00-2:30 pm ET: FHWA and FTA will soon release an updated guidebook on the Congestion Management Process (CMP). *Congestion Management Process: A Guidebook* will provide practitioners with an understanding of the elements of a CMP and include practical examples of how to implement a successful process based on lessons learned from MPOs across the country. The document highlights the role of the CMP in addressing multiple objectives, including livability, accessibility, and multimodal connectivity. Companion pieces include a series of case studies focusing on several MPOs, as well as a special report on visualization techniques used in the CMP. A webinar highlighting the new resource materials will be held; register for the webinar by clicking [HERE](#). For more information, contact Egan Smith, FHWA Office of Planning at egan.smith@dot.gov or Michael Grant, ICF International at mgrant@icfi.com.

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.
HURRY - Online registration closes on March 18.

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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