



NARCLEADERSHIP

President Stephen Cassano,
Selectman,
Town of Manchester, CT
Chair Anthony Reams,
Executive Directors Council
President, Toledo Metropolitan
Area Council of Governments

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

I spent most of this week on the road visiting our members in Northeast Ohio—the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, where I attended the Northwest Ohio Regional Economic Development Association's Annual Lunch with Senator Voinovich; the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, where I presented to the Ohio Association of Regional Councils and continued the planning for our upcoming Annual Conference and Exhibition; and the Stark County Regional Planning Commission, where I presented at their Annual Dinner. I want to thank all our members from Ohio for hosting me and for the opportunity to discuss current and future opportunities and challenges.

Shannon Menard, our Policy Manager, also spoke to the American Society of Civil Engineers' Policy Committee this week about Regional Infrastructure Improvement Zones (RIIZs). Additional information is available under the NARC Policy update below.

Progress has been made and additional session information will be available next week for our upcoming [44th Annual Conference and Exhibition](#)

NARC 44th Annual Conference and Exhibition
Cleveland, OH
June 15-17, 2010



HURRY—Early Bird Registration Ends Wednesday, March 31st!

The **National Association of Regional Councils** and the **Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency** will host the 44th Annual Conference and Exhibition. *We are working with the conference hotel to release additional rooms as soon as possible. If you are having difficulty reserving hotel rooms, please contact Lindsey Riley at lindsey@narc.org or 202.986.1032 x220.*

AICP Credits—Up to 12 credits available

We are currently applying for CM credits. Stay tuned for more information.

Board of Director Election Information

Executive Directors Council election information will be available in the next week.

Draft Conference Agenda

Updated March 18, 2010

NARC 2010 NARC Achievement and Leadership Award Information:

The deadline to submit a nomination is April 15, 2010!

Click [HERE](#) to access the conference website and registration information.

NARC PROGRAM

NARC Submits Comments Regarding NAAQS: This week, NARC submitted comments with the National Association of Counties (NACo) to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the proposed changes to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for Ozone. The EPA has proposed to lower the standard further from the .075 level set in 2008, as well as change the way the secondary standard is formulated. NARC is requesting, due to economic circumstances, EPA postpone further changes to the NAAQS Ozone standard to the maximum amount of time allowable under the Clean Air Act, and maintain an identical primary and secondary standard. You can find NARC's NAAQS Ozone fact sheet [HERE](#) and the NARC-NACo joint letter [HERE](#).

NARC Safety Subcommittee Webinar Scheduled: NARC's Transportation Safety Subcommittee is hosting the Transportation Committee's next monthly webinar on Tuesday, April 13, 2010 from 12:00pm-2:00pm EDT on "Promoting Livability through Better Safety Planning." This webinar will address strategies that MPOs and COGs can use to better incorporate safety into their transportation plans. Register for this exciting event by clicking [HERE](#).

our upcoming [44th Annual Conference and Exhibition](#).

Register today—early bird registration ends next week!

Best,
Fred

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To access past issues of *eRegions*, [visit our website](#).

Make NARC your homepage — [click here to learn how](#).

Register for this exciting event by clicking [HERE](#).

NARC Learning Series Webinar Scheduled: NARC will host a webinar on Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) web applications on Thursday, April 29, 2010 at 1:00pm EDT. The webinar will feature speakers from the Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District's GIS department who will explain how to translate your regional and local GIS data into user-friendly web applications and why doing this is important for your regional council. Stay tuned for more details and an available registration link!

EPA Outlines New Vision for Clean, Safe Drinking Water: EPA announced it is developing a broad new set of strategies to strengthen public health protection from contaminants in drinking water. The aim is to find solutions that meet the health and economic needs of communities across the country more effectively than the current approach. The new vision is meant to streamline decision-making and expand protection under existing law and promote cost-effective new technologies to meet the needs of rural, urban and other water-stressed communities. The outlined vision seeks to use existing authorities to achieve greater protection more quickly and cost-effectively. Specifically, this is organized around four key principles:

1. Address contaminants as a group rather than one at a time to achieve cost-effective drinking water protection.
2. Foster development of new drinking water treatment technologies to address contaminant issues.
3. Use the authority of multiple statutes to help protect drinking water.
4. Partner with states to share more complete data from public water systems monitoring.

Click [HERE](#) for more information on EPA's strategy.

Send EPA Recommendations on Protecting America's Waters: EPA is seeking feedback on how to better protect and improve the health of our waters. Visit EPA's [Web discussion forum](#) to submit your recommendations on how the nation can better manage water quality issues — from planning, scientific tools, low impact development, to green infrastructure, resource allocation and beyond — to control water pollution.

EPA Releases Updated Report on Redevelopment in Urban Neighborhoods: EPA released an updated report, *Residential Construction Trends in America's Metropolitan Regions*, which shows a continuing shift in development and redevelopment in urban neighborhoods in the United States, despite a slow a real estate market. The original report, issued in 2009, examined building trends in the 50 largest metropolitan areas from 1990 to 2007. The update incorporates data for 2008, which included several months of national economic downturn. Click [HERE](#) for more information on the report.

Federal Agencies to Develop Climate Models with Local and Regional Focus: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) is launching a five-year, \$250 million program to produce computer models that can predict climate changes on regional and local scales in an effort to increase community and ecosystem resilience to climate change. The program, called "EaSM," will have each agency will focus on different aspects of climate change – NSF on models to produce regional and decadal climate projections that take into account the influence of living systems, and how they will adapt and respond to climate change; USDA on how climate change will affect farming practices; and, DOE on the role aerosols and clouds play in the climate system.

EPA Proposes to Add Sources to Greenhouse Gas Reporting System/Requirements: EPA is proposing to include additional emissions sources in its first-ever national mandatory greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting system. The data is intended to provide a better understanding of where GHGs are coming from and help EPA develop policies and programs to reduce emissions. EPA finalized the first-ever mandatory greenhouse gas reporting requirement in October of 2009. That rule required 31 industry sectors to track and report their emissions. EPA has now added the oil and natural gas sector, industries that emit fluorinated gases, and from facilities that inject and store carbon dioxide (CO₂) underground for the purposes of geologic sequestration or enhanced oil and gas recovery to that rule.

Newly covered sources would begin collecting emissions data on January 1, 2011 with the first annual reports submitted to EPA on March 31, 2012. These proposals will be open for public comment for 60 days after publication in the Federal Register. The agency will also hold public hearings on these proposals on April 19, 2010 in Arlington, Va. and April 20, 2010 in

EPA on March 31, 2012. These proposals will be open for public comment for 60 days after publication in the Federal Register. The agency will also hold public hearings on these proposals on April 19, 2010 in Arlington, Va. and April 20, 2010 in Washington, DC. Click [HERE](#) for information on these proposals and the hearings.

Send BLS Your Thoughts on a Green Jobs Definition: The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is requesting public comments on its proposed definition of green jobs. This definition, which includes seven green economic activity categories and four categories for green jobs and services, will be used to measure green jobs activity in the economy. The definition and information on how to provide commentary to BLS can be found by clicking [HERE](#). Comments are due by April 30, 2010.

NARCPOLICY

NARC Discusses RIIzs with ASCE Policy Committee: Shannon Menard, NARC Policy Manager, spoke to the American Society of Civil Engineers' (ASCE) Policy Committee about [Regional Infrastructure Improvement Zones \(RIIzs\)](#) as an important tool for infrastructure financing. NARC continues to work on RIIzs in both chambers of Congress, as well as with members and association partners to raise awareness and support of this innovative public-private partnership concept. If you are interested in sending a support letter to your Members of Congress, please click [HERE](#) for a draft letter. A draft support resolution is also available by clicking [HERE](#). For more information, please contact Shannon Menard at Shannon@NARC.org or 202.986.1032 x217.

House to Focus on Budget After Spring Recess: The U.S. House of Representatives intends to focus its attention to the fiscal year 2011 budget and appropriations bills upon return from recess; recess is from March 29 through April 9. House Majority Leader Hoyer (D-MD) said the focus in April and May would be on the budget and appropriations. The House Spring schedule may also include financial regulations and climate/energy bills.

House Passes Tax Incentives Package: On Wednesday, the House passed HR 4849, the Small Business and Infrastructure Jobs Tax Act of 2010, a \$16.8 billion package of tax incentives for state and local governments and small businesses. This was moved as an additional effort to address high unemployment and improve infrastructure. The legislation would provide an estimated \$13.2 billion for bond programs used largely by state and local governments for infrastructure development, including an extension of the Build America Bonds (BABs) program through June 2013. BABs are a financial mechanism to provide support to state and local governments through federal tax exemptions for interest on municipal bonds. The bill also includes \$3.6 billion in tax credits to small businesses. It would also appropriate \$2.5 billion for, and extend for one year, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families emergency contingency fund created by the 2009 economic stimulus law.

House Passes Funding Bill for Disaster Relief and Summer Jobs Programs: The House passed HR 4899, the Disaster Relief and Summer Jobs Act of 2010, a supplemental funding bill that would provide \$5.1 billion to replenish FEMA's disaster relief accounts and \$660 million to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and Small Business Administration (SBA) for summer jobs programs for teenagers and young adults.

Surface Transportation Authorization: The U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee, as well as other Committees of jurisdiction, continue to hold surface transportation authorization hearings to assist in Senate preparation of their surface transportation authorization bill. The Senate EPW Committee held a hearing this week entitled "*Opportunities to Improve Energy Security and the Environment through Transportation Policy.*" This hearing featured both U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and U.S. EPA to discuss ways in which the transportation sector can be better aligned with the Administration's climate change and air quality goals. More information on that hearing can be found [HERE](#).

FAA Authorization: This week, the House and Senate have been working on two separate actions addressing the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) authorization. The first is an extension of the current program, and the second is the reauthorization of the FAA program. A lot of movement and debate has been happening to include a redistribution of Title V funds in H.R. 4853 for surface transportation programs in the FAA Authorization extension.

Late Thursday night, the House agreed to the Senate's version of the FAA Authorization *extension*, allowing the program to operate through 4/30/10 (1 month as opposed to the 3 months in prior authorization extension language) in exchange for the removal of Chairman Oberstar's surface transportation program funding redistribution language. This version of the FAA Authorization extension passed both the House and Senate on Thursday, March 25, 2010.

Separately, the FAA Authorization Act passed both chambers, combining two separate pieces of legislation—the FAA Authorization and an aviation safety bill. The House passage of this consolidated legislation sets the FAA Authorization up for a conference between the two chambers. One main point of disagreement is a provision in the Senate passed legislation that rescinds all prior transportation earmarks that are not 90 percent obligated within nine fiscal years after award. Congressional action on this legislation is anticipated after Spring recess (March 29-April 9).

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Climate Bill Activity Continues in the Senate: In addition to the House passed HR 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, and the Senate's S 1733, the Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act, Senators Kerry (D-MA), Graham (R-SC) and Lieberman (I-CT) are working on a new climate change proposal that would rebate to consumers half the revenue from selling pollution allowances. The plan looks to limit and put a price on U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, while applying different sets of regulations to different polluting sectors. No formal legislative language has been released, but the Senators are holding targeted meetings and briefings with key Senate members to discuss the legislation and start building a coalition of bipartisan support. The Senate trio intends to unveil a final bill during the third week of April, possibly April 22, Earth Day. The bill will then go to the Congressional Budget Office and EPA for review, which will take about six weeks.

Meanwhile, a separate bipartisan climate bill has been introduced by Senators Cantwell (D-WA) and Collins (R-ME). Their bill, S 2877, the Carbon Limits and Energy for America's Renewal (CLEAR) Act, would use a cap-and-dividend model where emissions would be capped and polluters would have to buy government emissions allowances (only allowing buying and selling from each other). Revenue would be directly rebated into taxpayers' bank accounts. Click [HERE](#) for more information on the CLEAR Act.

House Chairman to Draft Legislation on Broadband First-Responder Network: Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Waxman (D-CA) is in the process of drafting legislation to create a nationwide broadband communications network for first-responders that would fit into the recently announced Federal Communications Commission's national broadband plan, which currently calls for implementing a public safety communications network to ensure interoperability functions. Click [HERE](#) for Waxman's statement on the issue. Click [HERE](#) for a Committee memo on the FCC's National Broadband Plan. Visit the [FCC's website](#) dedicated to all aspects of the Plan and broadband in general.

Support Livable Communities: Both the House (HR 4690) and Senate (S1619) have bills supporting the regional role in building livable communities with their local governments. The legislation seeks to reinvigorate regional comprehensive planning and implementation for regions of all sizes and make ups. We urge all regional planning organizations and their boards of local elected officials to send letters of support to your Congressional delegation urging their endorsement by showcasing the on-the-ground benefits of this legislation for your region. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the bills. Click [HERE](#) to access a letter for your region to personalize. For more information or assistance with an endorsement, please contact Shannon Menard at shannon@NARC.org or 202.986.1032, x217.

PARTNERUPDATES

The APCO Institute Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Program. Comprehensive. Customized. Cost-Effective: The public expects 9-1-1 telecommunicators to be prepared for the unexpected. **Are yours?** Give your staff the essential tool for effective response to critical situations—The [APCO Institute Emergency Medical Dispatch Program](#). With in person and online training opportunities, your personnel will be certified to present the EMD course within your agency and begin using customized EMD Guidecards and/or APCO's customized software program. Click [HERE](#) to learn more. at: For questions, contact: APCO Institute at institute@apco911.org or call (888) 272-6911.



GRANTOPPORTUNITIES

DOL Announces Funding Opportunities

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced the availability of the following funding opportunities:

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Grants – Deadline: April 12, 2010: DOL announced the availability of approximately \$67 million (\$53 million for Comprehensive Services and \$14 million for Supplemental Youth Services) in grant funds authorized by Section 166 of WIA to serve the employment and training needs of Indian and Native American adults and youth through competitive two-year grant awards with Indian tribes, tribal organizations, Alaska Native entities, and Indian-controlled organizations serving Indians or Native Hawaiian organizations. Click [HERE](#) for the full grant announcement.

Community-Based Job Training Grants – Deadline: April 29, 2010: DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA), announced the availability of approximately \$125 million in grant funds for Community-Based Job Training Grants (CBJTGs). These grants will be awarded through a competitive process to support workforce training for high-growth/high-demand industries through the national system of community, technical, and tribal colleges. It is anticipated that awards will range generally from \$1 million to \$3 million. ETA expects to allot up to \$50 million of the total designated funds to organizations that have never received a grant through a CBJTG SGA. Click [HERE](#) for the full grant announcement.

ARRA Trade Adjustment Assistance Grants – Deadline: April 14, 2010: DOL announced the availability of \$1.2 million of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding for Trade Adjustment Assistance, Technical Assistance, and

ARRA Trade Adjustment Assistance Grants – Deadline: April 14, 2010: DOL announced the availability of \$1.2 million of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding for Trade Adjustment Assistance Technical Assistance and Outreach Partnership Grants to provide training or technical assistance and outreach to dislocated workers impacted by foreign trade. Competitive grants will fund one to three proposed projects that are required to be developed and implemented through strategic partnerships. Click [HERE](#) for the full grant announcement.

NACo now accepting applications for coastal county initiative grants: Deadline: March 29, 2010. The Coastal Counties Restoration Initiative (CCRI) program, a partnership between the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will be accepting applications for the 2010 round of funding. CCRI will provide between \$50,000-\$100,000 to improve stream, river, estuarine and other important marine habitats, and remove barriers such as dams and culverts for fish migration and passage. For more information, please click [HERE](#).

EPA Accepting Applications for National Award for Smart Growth Achievement and for Smart Growth Implementation Assistance: Deadline: April 5, 2010: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is now accepting applications for the 2010 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement. This competition is open to public- and private-sector entities that have successfully used smart growth principles to improve communities environmentally, socially and economically. For more information about the award program and how to apply, click [HERE](#).

EPA Accepting Letters of Interest for the 2010 Round of the Smart Growth Implementation Assistance Program. Deadline: April 9, 2010. EPA, with the assistance of HUD and DOT, is offering direct technical assistance from national experts to communities, tribes, regions, and states that want to incorporate smart growth techniques in their development. EPA is also interested in identifying and documenting innovative solutions to complex problems faced by communities as they seek to incorporate smart growth practices. Letters of interest are due by 3:00 pm April 9, 2010. EPA expects to select up to 4 applicants for assistance this year. For more information about the 2010 application process, click [HERE](#).

EDA Announces Available Grant Funding: Deadline: April 20, 2010. EDA's Community Trade Adjustment Assistance (Community TAA) Program, which was created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), is aimed at helping to create and retain jobs by providing project grants to communities that have experienced, or are threatened by, job loss resulting from international trade impacts. A total of \$37 million is available for grants to support a wide range of technical, planning, and infrastructure projects to help communities adapt to pressing trade impact issues and diversify their economies. Click [HERE](#) for more information on the program.

USDA Seeks Project Proposals to Improve Water Quality in Mississippi River Basin: Deadline: May 1, 2010. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is seeking project proposals that will improve water quality and the overall health of the Mississippi River in 41 eligible watersheds in 12 states. The [Request for Proposals](#) (RFP) for the [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#), through which up to \$75 million will be available for partnership projects, was published in the [March 2 Federal Register](#). The RFP explains the procedures for potential partners to sign agreements with USDA for projects that meet with the initiative's objectives. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service will administer this initiative, first announced on September 24, 2009. Forty-one eligible watersheds or focus areas in the following 12 states—Arkansas, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee and Wisconsin—were selected to participate in this initiative. Smaller watersheds within the initial 41 will be selected for approved partnership projects based on their potential for managing nitrogen and phosphorus—nutrients associated with impaired water quality in the Mississippi River Basin—while maintaining agricultural productivity and benefiting wildlife. Individual producers can only participate in this initiative in approved partnership projects. USDA will use a competitive process to distribute up to \$75 million using two conservation programs in fiscal year 2010, the initiative's first year. Up to \$50 million will come from the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative ([CCPI](#)) and an additional \$25 million from the Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program ([WREP](#)). USDA expects to provide about \$320 million in financial assistance over four years for voluntary conservation projects in these watersheds.

Energy Efficient Building Systems Regional Innovation Cluster Initiative: Deadline: May 6, 2010. The Obama Administration today announced a multi-agency initiative to spur regional economic growth while making buildings more energy efficient. Seven federal agencies issued a combined Funding Opportunity Announcement of up to \$129.7 million over five years to create a regional research center that will develop new building efficiency technologies and work with local partners to implement the technologies in area buildings. Additional details and a link to the announcement are available by clicking [HERE](#).

UPCOMINGEVENTS

March 29 and March 30, Washington, DC, 9:00am-12:00pm and 1:00-4:00pm: ICMA will host a *Ethics at Work* workshop. Based on the core values of public service, these three hour sessions are designed for local government managers and supervisors, and will provide the strategies and tools needed to foster an ethical organization. The workshop will provide skills to introduce and put to work ethics principles within your organization. Begin the work to establish an ethical culture today by

supervisors, and will provide the strategies and tools needed to foster an ethical organization. The workshop will provide skills to introduce and put to work ethics principles within your organization. Begin the work to establish an ethical culture today by registering online, [HERE](#).

March 31, Webcast, 2:00-4:00pm ET: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will host a webcast: *Using Smart Growth Strategies to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, to provide an introduction to federal programs and resources related to smart growth. It will discuss how smart growth strategies can help communities use energy more efficiently; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and provide other environmental, economic, and social benefits. Two communities will showcase how they successfully developed and implemented programs that integrate smart growth policies into community design. To register for this webcast click [HERE](#).

April 7, Webinar, 3:00-4:00pm ET: C2ER will host a free webinar on a web-based statistical research tool provided by Data-Planet™. This tool can provide Economic Development professionals with up-to-date federal government and commercial statistical data to compare, analyze trends, and create your output in charts, graphs and maps. Click [HERE](#) to access the webinar.

April 8, Webconference, 1:00-2:30pm ET: The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) will host a webconference titled *Let's Talk: Getting Citizens Involved in Tough Budget Choices*. This webconference will discuss how you can successfully involve citizens in making budget decisions, especially on really tough choices on service delivery. Discover how Washoe County, Nevada, launched two citizen-involved processes around budgeting—one to establish criteria that were used to prioritize services, and one to establish budget policies. Additional details are available [HERE](#) and registration information is available by clicking [HERE](#).

April 13, Webinar, 12:00-2:00pm ET: NARC's Safety Subcommittee is hosting the Transportation Committee's next monthly webinar on "Promoting Livability through Better Safety Planning". This webinar will address strategies that metropolitan planning organizations and councils of governments can use to better incorporate safety into their transportation plans. Speakers are to be announced; register for this exciting event by clicking [HERE](#).

April 15, Webcast, 2:00-3:00pm ET: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will host a webcast: *K-12 Benchmarking 101*. This webcast will teach attendees the basics of benchmarking K-12 buildings using EPA's Portfolio Manager tool. Portfolio Manager can help measure and track energy and water use across an entire portfolio of buildings. Buildings can earn an energy performance rating compared with peer facilities across the country, and top-performing buildings are eligible for national recognition. Click [HERE](#) to register.

April 28-29, Pittsburgh, PA: The Development District of Appalachia and the National Association of Development Organizations will host the 2010 DDAA GIS Conference. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

April 29, 2010, 1pm EDT – Save the Date: NARC has just scheduled a *Learning Series* webinar on Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) web applications on Thursday, April 29, 2010 at 1pm EDT. The webinar will feature speakers from the Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District's GIS department who will explain how to translate your regional and local GIS data into user-friendly web applications and why doing this is important for your regional council. Stay tuned – more details and a registration link will be coming soon!

May 26-27, Washington, DC: The Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors will hold their 2010 Annual Meeting. Registration is free and open to non-members, but you must RSVP to Adrienne Gildea at agildea@blakey-agnew.com.

June 15-17, Cleveland, OH: Early-bird registration ends on March 31st! NARC and the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency will host the 44th Annual Conference and Exhibition. Full conference details will be available on the conference website, available by clicking [HERE](#).

BUILDING REGIONAL COMMUNITIES – LARGE, SMALL, URBAN AND RURAL – THROUGH ADVOCACY, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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