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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

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eRegions

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

As negotiations on the transportation authorization develop and the time for an extension of the program runs out, NARC will be revisiting our strategic points for transportation and other bills over the next few weeks. Unlike other surface transportation authorizations this has been a shorter cycle -- with far more at stake. What's lost in the discussion, and with discussions on all other government spending, is that debating the margins and not the core of the issue means we will fall behind even further in comparison to our international competitors.

[PROGRAM UPDATE](#) [POLICY UPDATE](#)

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[Registration Open.](#)

A draft agenda will be available soon.

Click **[HERE](#)** for registration, hotel and sponsorship information.

PROGRAM UPDATE

NARC Hosted Webinar on Regional Climate Change Adaptation: In an effort to better understand the status of regional approaches to adapting to climate change, NARC is working on a NOAA-funded "Building Community Resiliency" project. The project included administering a survey to regional planning organizations regarding their work on this topic, hosting a workshop at NARC's Annual Conference, as well as developing a white paper of conclusions and recommendations.

This is a clear case of where funding is crucial and where funding for infrastructure will make a long and lasting impact on our Nation's sustainability. The current debate distracts from what's really needed – a well-funded, simple, consistent and a strong local/state/federal program. (Click [HERE](#) to access NARC's policy positions.) This is true for economic development, water, housing and other programs that we were hoping would have their time in Congress this year as well.

Best,
Fred

NARCLEADERSHIP

President Ron

Morrison,

Mayor,

National City, CA

Chair Mark Policinski,

Executive Directors

Council

Executive Director, Ohio-

Kentucky-Indiana

Regional Council of

Governments

NARCSTAFF

Fred Abousleman

Executive Director

Shannon Baxevanis

Deputy Director

Although the full white paper is forthcoming, a concise 4-page executive summary is available [HERE](#). The webinar covered some of the details of the white paper, including a discussion of the survey results by Dr. Allan Wallis from the University of Colorado Denver, and updates from two case studies of regional adaptation projects at Houston-Galveston Area Council and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. A PDF version of the presentations can be found [HERE](#).

NARC Transportation Webinar: NARC will hold its next Transportation Committee webinar on Tuesday, April 10, 2012 from 12:00-2:00pm ET. This webinar will showcase the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Safety's recent [Guidance Memorandum on Promoting the Implementation of Proven Safety Countermeasures](#). This webinar will discuss the nine safety countermeasures highlighted by FHWA, as well as highlight regional examples where these countermeasures are being used. Full agenda is forthcoming. Click [HERE](#) for more information on the FHWA Office of Safety's safety countermeasures program. Click [HERE](#) to register for this FREE webinar.

Census Releases Qualifying Urban Areas Information: Today, the U.S. Census Bureau released their Notice of Qualifying Urban Areas for the 2010 Census. As a result, there are now 486 urbanized areas in the United States and 11 urbanized areas in Puerto Rico, including 36 new urbanized areas since 2000 and the loss of four urbanizes areas. Click [HERE](#) to access the Federal Register notice.

POLICYUPDATE

Farm Bill Update: House leadership has instructed the Agriculture Committee to cut spending on the Farm Bill baseline by \$33.2 billion over the next 10 years, including a cut of \$8.2 billion in 2012 and again in 2013 to avoid the automatic sequestration cuts. The cuts proposed by the Agriculture Committee now are likely to dictate the major funding decisions in the upcoming Farm Bill. The House committee has not provided any indication of a timeline for the Farm Bill, although it is holding series of field hearings to hear how the current bill is working for local farmers and ranchers. Information on the final field hearings scheduled for Arkansas and Kansas can be found [HERE](#). In the Senate, the Agriculture Committee has completed a series of hearings on the Farm Bill, with video and written testimony available [HERE](#). The Senate committee should begin the mark-up of the bill in the next few months,

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and key developments will be shared in future *eRegions*.

REGIONS360

Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from Broward MPO: Deadline 4:00 PM, April 13, 2012; The Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is seeking qualified consultants to conduct a Livability/Congestion Management Planning Study to implement the Premium Transit and Mobility Hub concept of the Broward MPO's 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan. Potential applicants should be able to provide the services as outlined in the RFQ announcement, available by clicking [HERE](#).

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

EPA Green Infrastructure Technical Assistance

Application Due: April 6, 2012

Eligible Entities: Any combination of local government department, office, agency or non-profit. EPA's Green Infrastructure Program has announced the availability of direct assistance from EPA to facilitate the use of green infrastructure to protect water quality. Green infrastructure uses vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage stormwater, and can decrease temperatures in the urban environment by deflecting solar radiation, providing shade, and removing heat from the air through evapotranspiration. Technical assistance will be provided through EPA contract support and can help communities with any level of green infrastructure implementation. The value of the assistance available to each of the 10 to 20 projects selected will be approximately \$50,000 to \$100,000. For more information, visit the [EPA funding notice page](#).

EPA to Provide \$15 Million to Help Small Drinking Water and Wastewater Systems

Applications Due: April 9, 2012

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will provide up to \$15 million in funding for training and technical assistance to small drinking and wastewater systems, defined as systems that serve fewer than 10,000 people, and private well owners. Most of the funding, up to \$14.5 million, will provide training and technical assistance to small public water systems to achieve and maintain compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and to small publicly-owned wastewater systems,

communities served by on-site systems, and private well owners to improve water quality. EPA expects to make available up to \$500,000 to provide training and technical assistance to tribally-owned and operated public water systems. EPA expects to award these cooperative agreements by Summer 2012. For more information about these competitive announcements, click [HERE](#).

EPA Environmental Workforce Development & Job Training Grants

Application Deadline: April 12, 2012

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently released a request for proposals for its FY 2012 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant Application (EWDJT), which provide up to \$200,000 per award to recruit, train and place unemployed or under-employed individuals in full-time, sustainable employment in environmental assessment and cleanup positions. Regional councils, local governments and many others are eligible to apply. Additional details are available [HERE](#).

HUD Choice Neighborhood Grant Applications Available

Deadline: May 1, 2012

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has announced the availability of Choice Neighborhood Planning Grants. The planning grants can be used to create a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy to transform public or assisted housing within a distressed neighborhood. Public Housing Authorities, local governments, tribal entities, nonprofits and for-profits that apply jointly with a public entity may apply. Click [HERE](#) for more information and [HERE](#) for a direct link to the Notice of Funding Availability.

Roadmaps to Health Community Grants

Deadline: May 2, 2012

The Roadmaps to Health Community Grants program will support communities to implement policy or system changes to address one of the social or economic factors that, as defined by the County Health Rankings, most strongly influence health outcomes in their community. Applicants must engage community members in the planning and implementation of projects, and must collaborate with organizations having expertise in improving the health of the public. Applicants must secure 100 percent matching support, including a cash match of at least 50 percent with the balance as in-kind support. Deadline: Brief proposals May 2, 2012. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

USDA Rural Community Development Initiative Grant Opportunity

Application Deadline May 9, 2012

USDA Rural Development will award up to \$8.6 million in grants that help rural businesses create jobs and spur economic development. Local governments, tribes, and public and private non-profit intermediary organizations that provide financial and technical assistance to multiple recipients are eligible to apply for grants that would benefit a recipient located in a low-income rural area. The intermediary must provide matching funds greater than or equal to the award. Proposals should consist of projects that provide technical assistance and capacity building to local organizations to complete housing, economic development and community facilities projects. For more information on the opportunity, see the [March 21 Federal Register](#). To apply, click [HERE](#).

The Rural Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge Grant Opportunity

Application Deadline: May 9, 2012

The Rural Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge is a multi-agency effort that will give out approximately 20 awards to projects that benefit rural communities. Funds awarded can be used to support a range of projects including improving rural communities' ability to undertake or accelerate projects related to housing, community facilities, or economic and community development along with the creation of regional linkages that connect communities with innovation clusters and regional opportunities leading to job creation, expanded markets and economic growth. Nonprofits, higher education institutions, tribes and state and local governments can collaborate to apply for funding. For more information including, a link to register for a prospective applicant webinar on Tuesday, March 20, click [HERE](#). To apply or access the full grant announcement click [HERE](#).

Community Forest and Open Space Program

Application Deadline: May 15, 2012

The Community Forest and Open Space Program has issued a request for applications to provide funding to local governments, Tribal governments, and qualified nonprofit entities to establish community forests that provide continuing and accessible community benefits. Total CFP funding is \$3.15 million and individual grant applications may not exceed \$400,000. For more information, click [HERE](#).

Climate Change and Health: Assessing and Modeling Population

Vulnerability to Climate Change

Application Deadline: May 24, 2012

This Funding Opportunity Announcement is being issued by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) with participation from the following NIH components: FIC, NCI, NCMHD NHLBI, NIA, NIBIB, NICHD, NLM and OBSSR. It encourages research applications to examine the differential risk factors of populations that lead to or are associated with increased vulnerability to exposures, diseases and other adverse health outcomes related to climate change. Applications may involve either applied research studies that address specific hypotheses about risk factors or population characteristics associated with increased vulnerability, or research projects to develop general models or methods for identifying and characterizing population vulnerability to climate change. The ultimate goal of this research program is to help inform climate change adaptation and public health interventions to reduce current and future vulnerability of various populations to the health effects of climate change. Applications are anticipated to involve a multidisciplinary research team, including experts in health sciences and climatology as well as geography, modeling, statistics, demography, and social and behavioral sciences as appropriate. In addition, partnerships with community-based or advocacy organizations, public health officials, urban planners and others are encouraged. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

UPCOMINGEVENTS

REMI Webinar: Modeling the Economic Impacts of Solar PV Development in Massachusetts

March 28, 2012, 2:00 pm ET: Energy policy is a central component of economic competitiveness and economic development, particularly with regard to renewable resources. Levitan & Associates, Inc. (LAI) and Regional Economic Models, Inc. (REMI) will address the implications of installing solar photovoltaics as envisioned under the Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard. Seth Parker and Dr. Diane Rigos of LAI will review expected solar resource development in Massachusetts, capital costs, and impacts in the wholesale power market. Chris Judson and Dr. Mark D'Amato of REMI will review the macroeconomic impacts, focusing on the socio-economic costs and benefits from the perspective of the end user and the state of Massachusetts. The key to this analysis

are the jobs that will be created during the installation process and the cost savings from the solar PV energy generation systems on residential and commercial buildings, compared to the implementation costs of solar PV's in Massachusetts. This presentation will be approximately one hour in length, offered at no charge via the WebEx Internet Conferencing System. Advanced registration is required; please click [HERE](#) to register.

Transportation Summit

March 30, 2012, Toledo, OH: The Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) is hosting the 18th Transportation Summit on Friday, March 30th. Click [HERE](#) for more information and to register.

NARC Transportation Committee Webinar

April 10, 2012, 12:00 pm ET: NARC's next Transportation Committee webinar will showcase the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Safety's recent [Guidance Memorandum on Promoting the Implementation of Proven Safety Countermeasures](#). This webinar will discuss the nine safety countermeasures highlighted by FHWA, as well as highlight regional examples where these countermeasures are being used. Full agenda is forthcoming. Click [HERE](#) for more information on the FHWA Office of Safety's safety countermeasures program. Click [HERE](#) to register for this FREE webinar.

Get the Right Answers from Your Police and Fire Chiefs - Full Day Workshop

April 20, 2012, Lake Forest, IL: Policy decisions involving your police and fire departments could have huge public safety implications, but these departments are the toughest from which to get accurate, measurable information. Join us for a full day ICMA University Workshop, Asking Your Police and Fire Chief the Right Questions to Get the Right Answers, to learn how to understand the needs of your jurisdiction's public safety agencies and employ methods to evaluate their performance; reduce costs and improve services. Click [HERE](#) for details and to register.

46th Annual Conference and Exhibition

June 10-14, 2012, St. Petersburg, FL: Save the Date! Join us for the the largest national event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education. NARC's Annual Conference and Exhibition is the premier place to learn how to engage in effective regional collaboration. Registration and additional information is available on the conference website, available by clicking

[HERE](#).

2012 Executive Directors' Conference

September 24-26, 2012, Boise, ID: Save the Date! Join Executive Directors and senior staff of regional councils and metropolitan planning organizations at this premier regional training event. Registration information and an agenda will be available in mid 2012.

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