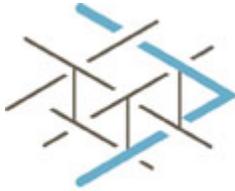


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## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XI, No. 28, August 8, 2011

# eRegions

### **NARCLEADERSHIP**

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Council

Executive Director,

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Regional Council of

Governments

### **EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

Colleagues,

In what has become that latest chapter of our continuing fiscal drama Standard & Poor's (S&P) downgraded America's credit rating from AAA to AA+. But to what real effect? The Treasury Department will auction \$72 billion in

[PROGRAMUPDATE](#) [POLICYUPDATE](#) [REGION360](#)

[PARTNER UPDATE](#) [GRANTOPPORTUNITIES](#)

[UPCOMINGEVENTS](#)



*converge ■ learn ■ share*

**executive directors' conference  
september 18-21, 2011  
jacksonville, fl**

**REGISTER TODAY!**

**Draft Agenda Is Now Available.** Join the Northeast Florida Regional Council and NARC for the 2011 Executive Directors' Conference in Jacksonville, FL. Executive Directors and senior staff are invited to meet with experts, network with your colleagues and share best practices in management, programs, finance, budget, governance and other issues of importance to you. For more information, to access the agenda or to register for the event, click [HERE](#).

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## **PROGRAMUPDATE**

**Deadline to Comment on Strong Cities, Strong Communities Pilot**

longer term debt this week. "If the demand for those securities remains high and investors accept low interest rates close to those currently in effect, it would be a sign that the S&P downgrade is having a limited effect. If demand is down, and interest rates rise, that would suggest that investors are taking the downgrade seriously," according to CQ. Long term effects (if negative) will bump up interest rates, stall lending and borrowing, and slow any expected bump in economic recovery. If the response is tempered investors will continue to buy our securities with low(er) interest rates. China, which issued a statement that "America should live within its means," has not slowed its securities purchases. Click [HERE](#) to see what interest rates look like by bond rating.

With the release of our Executive Directors' Conference draft agenda and great topics like *Working Across Boundaries*, *Creating Regional Equity Plans*,

### **Challenge Funding Tomorrow**

*Deadline for Comments: August 9, 2011*

The Administration has requested public comments on the structure of the **[Strong Cities, Strong Communities](#)** (SC2) Pilot Challenge, which will offer \$6 million funding via the Economic Development Administration's Economic Adjustment Assistance program for six cities to develop and implement comprehensive economic development strategic plans on land-use, infrastructure and economic and social resources. The full Federal Register entry requesting comments is available [HERE](#). This is an opportunity for individual members, as well as NARC, to submit comments. Please continue to send [Jenee Kresge](#) any recommendations for general comments NARC can submit on behalf of its membership.

### **NARC Conference Call: Streamlining the Federal Transportation**

**Process:** The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) recently conducted a webinar (July, 2011) in which they reviewed their ideas for how best to streamline the current federal transportation schema through administrative, regulatory and ultimately, legislative changes. This conference call, hosted by NARC, seeks to test themes that arose not only in that webinar, but also address streamlining ideas not raised in that session. The goal of this call is to develop reactions to current ideas, and create granular information to share with U.S. DOT in their efforts to create a more streamlined process for developing and implementing transportation projects. Click [HERE](#) to access the call agenda and dial-in information.

**HUD Releases NOFA for Communities Regional Planning Grants:** The U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Donovan announced the availability of \$95 million to support sustainable local initiatives through the FY 2011 Regional Planning and Community Challenge Planning Grant Programs from HUD's Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities. Awarded competitively, both programs work to expand housing choices, improve connections between employment centers and homes, and reduce barriers to achieving affordable, economically vital and sustainable communities. Click [HERE](#) to access the press release and [HERE](#) for additional information about the program. The deadline to submit proposals is August 25, 2011. Upcoming webinar opportunities to learn more, include:

- Community Challenge NOFA Webcast: Thursday, August 11, 3:30-4:30pm ET
- Regional Planning NOFA Webcast: Friday, August 12, 1:00-2:00pm

and *Managing in Difficult Economic Times*, we hope to see you Jacksonville, FL with your peers for two days of discussion, learning and exchange.

Best,  
Fred

### **NARCSTAFF**

**Fred Abousleman**

Executive Director

**Shannon Baxevanis**

Deputy Director

**Sylvia Bryant**

Office Manager

**Mia Colson**

Program Analyst

**Kristin Heery**

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**Lindsey Riley**

Deputy of  
Communications

**Erika Young**

Transportation Director

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ET

Please check [www.hud.gov/sustainability](http://www.hud.gov/sustainability) one hour before the webcast for a link to access the webcast.

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## **POLICYUPDATE**

**FAA Short Term Extensions Signed:** The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will now operate until September 16, 2011 under a short term extension signed by the President last week. FAA employees, contractors and projects will resume work. The Essential Air Service provision (one of two provisions that stalled discussions) has seemingly been fixed as well. U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary LaHood can grant waivers to small airports that fall outside current provisions (those at least 90 miles away from a medium- or large-hub airport and disqualify those with average per-passenger subsidies that are \$1,000 or more).

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## **PARTNERUPDATE**

**NLC Column:** The National League of Cities (NLC) released its latest *Emerging Issues* column, "Weigh the Anchors, but Join Them Up." Click **HERE** to read the column.

**APA's Regional Newsletter:** The American Planning Association has published its Summer 2011 newsletter from its Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division. Click **HERE** to access the newsletter.

**September 18 - 21, 2011, Milwaukee, WI:** Join ICMA for this informative, innovative, and engaging 4-day professional development conference from September 18-21 in Milwaukee, where the spectacular Lake Michigan shoreline serves as an ideal setting for ICMA's 97th Annual Conference: *Fresh Ideas and Fresh Water*. When you're facing layoffs, hiring freezes, budget cuts, and less revenue, you need the tools, tips, information, and resources offered by a high-quality, professional development opportunity. That is why ICMA's 97th Annual Conference, the world's foremost event for local government managers and administrators, could be the most important professional development opportunity you participate in this year! Beginning June 1, you can reserve a hotel room and register online for **ICMA's 2011 Annual Conference**. Visit

<http://icma.org/conference2011> for details and registration info and view the preliminary program [HERE](#).

#### **Solar America Communities Events at ICMA's Annual Conference**

- **[Solar Workshop](#)** – Sunday, September 18, 8:30-12:30 – Learn important concepts related to local solar installations, including technologies, costs, and barriers.
- **[Solar Powering Your Community Session](#)** – Monday, September 19, 9:45-11:00 – Attend this panel session to hear how local governments can address the challenges of implementing solar.
- **[Milwaukee Shines Solar Tour](#)** – FREE! Monday, September 19, 12:30-1:30 or Tuesday, September 20, 4:00-5:00 – Visit Milwaukee Public Library's solar installations and green roof.

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## **REGIONS360**

**COMPASS Seeking Services to Provide Economic Benefit(s) Tools:** The Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) is seeking consulting services to provide an economic benefits tool(s) to evaluate a broad range of infrastructure investments as part of an update to the regional long-range transportation plan, *Communities in Motion 2035*. This update process is currently underway and will conclude the summer of 2014. COMPASS is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Ada and Canyon Counties, Idaho. To download a copy of the Request for Qualifications/Proposals please [click HERE](#). **Proposals must be received by COMPASS before 1:00 pm MT Friday, September 9, 2011.**

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## **GRANT OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **NEA Grants for Arts Program**

*Deadline: August 11, 2011*

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is accepting applications for the *Art Works* project category in its Grants for Arts Program. Grants of up to \$100,000 will be awarded to states and local governments and non-profit organizations for community-based projects seeking to achieve one or several of the following activities: creating art, engaging the public in art, learning in the arts, and strengthening of communities through the arts. A

one to one non-federal match is required. Click [HERE](#) to access more information.

### **DOT Announces Interim Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for TIGER Grants**

*Preliminary Application Deadline: August 22, 2011*

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) announced the availability to issue \$527 million for TIGER grants, a competitive grant program, which funds innovative transportation projects that address job creation and making a significant impact on the nation, a region or a metropolitan area.

Preliminary applications are due from August 22 through October 3, with final applications due between October 4 and October 31. DOT will host a half-day seminar and Webcast from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Monday, July 18, to provide guidance for applicants. Click [HERE](#) for more information on the notice and upcoming information on the grants.

### **HUD Releases NOFA for Communities Regional Planning Grants:**

*Deadline: August 25, 2011*

The U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Donovan announced the availability of \$95 million to support sustainable local initiatives through the FY 2011 Regional Planning and Community Challenge Planning Grant Programs from HUD's Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities. Awarded competitively, both programs work to expand housing choices, improve connections between employment centers and homes, and reduce barriers to achieving affordable, economically vital and sustainable communities. Click [HERE](#) to access the press release and [HERE](#) for additional information about the program.

### **DOE's Rooftop Solar Challenge - \$12.5M Available**

*Deadline: August 31, 2011*

As part of the [SunShot Initiative](#) and the [Solar America Communities Initiative](#), DOE has announced a funding opportunity for a [Rooftop Solar Challenge](#), with the goal of achieving measureable improvements in market conditions for rooftop photovoltaics across the United States. The emphasis of the Rooftop Solar Challenge is to streamline and standardize permitting and interconnection processes. DOE anticipates awarding up to \$12.5M to up to 25 awardees. Regional teams of local governments are encouraged to apply. For more information about the webinars, and a link to the full NOFA, visit <http://www.eere.energy.gov/solarchallenge/>.

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# UPCOMINGEVENTS

## ***HUD Conference Call on HOME Program***

**August 10, 2011, 1:30-2:30pm:** Join the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and stakeholders on a conference call this Wednesday for an update on HUD's **HOME Program**. HOME is the largest Federal block grant to State and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households. Each year it allocates approximately \$2 billion among the States and hundreds of localities nationwide. Participant Toll-Free Dial-In Number: 800-260-0718; Conference ID Number: 212864

## ***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 more information.

## ***2011 Executive Directors' Conference***

**September 18 - 21, 2011, Jacksonville, FL:** Join Executive Directors and senior staff of regional councils and metropolitan planning organizations at this premier regional training event. Registration information and a draft agenda will be available soon.

## ***2011 Ohio Freight Conference***

**September 20-21, 2011, Toledo, OH:** SAVE THE DATE! This is the fifth year for the conference that brings together transportation professionals to focus on the movement of goods through Ohio and the Great Lakes region. It is a unique opportunity for dialog and exchange of information between all modes: rail, ground, pipeline, air and sea. For more information or to register, click **HERE**.

## ***ICMA Annual Conference***

**September 18 - 21, 2011, Milwaukee, WI:** Join ICMA for this informative, innovative, and engaging 4-day professional development conference from September 18-21 in Milwaukee, where the spectacular Lake Michigan shoreline serves as an ideal setting for ICMA's 97th Annual Conference:

*Fresh Ideas and Fresh Water.* When you're facing layoffs, hiring freezes, budget cuts, and less revenue, you need the tools, tips, information, and resources offered by a high-quality, professional development opportunity. That is why ICMA's 97th Annual Conference, the world's foremost event for local government managers and administrators, could be the most important professional development opportunity you participate in this year! Beginning June 1, you can reserve a hotel room and register online for [ICMA's 2011 Annual Conference](#). Visit <http://icma.org/conference2011> for details and registration info and view the preliminary program [HERE](#).

***Innovative Solutions for Solar Financing Webinar***

**September 27, 2011, 2:00pm ET:** Join the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) for a [Solar America Communities Program](#) webinar on solar financing. Learn from Sonoma County, California and the Joint Venture Silicon Valley Network as they detail their efforts to overcome major barriers to adopting solar technologies in their region. Speakers will include Sam Ruark, Sonoma County Energy Watch Program Manager, Rachel Solomon Massaro, Associate Director of Climate Initiatives with Joint Venture Silicon Valley Network and Ben Foster, VP of Operations for Optony, Inc. Advanced registration is required; please click [HERE](#) to register.

***2011 Water Resources Summit***

**October 25, 2011, College Park, MD:** Join the Horinko Group for the Second Annual Water Resources Summit, hosted on the campus of the University of Maryland. The topic of this year's summit is *Sustaining Our Nation's Water Resources: Answering the Call for Stewardship*. The summit will focus on three areas: Water Governance, Water Advocacy, and the Business of Water and will feature speakers from the public, advocacy and the business sector. Topics include the recent efforts to integrate water resource planning and management and the incremental advantages of adaptive management and system thinking; what organizations are doing to promote social learning and better inform citizens of the importance of water conservation; and new water conservation strategies that tackle infrastructure and compliance challenges. To view the full agenda and register, please click [HERE](#).

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