

December 13, 2018 [View this email in your browser](#)



Registration for NARC's 2019 National Conference of Regions is now open! NARC's 2019 National Conference of Regions is Sunday, February 10 - Wednesday, February 13, 2019 at the Washington Court Hotel. **Register for the conference today** to take advantage of the early-bird rates, which are available now through January 4, 2019. **Hotel reservations* can be made now.** Our **draft agenda** is also available for view.

*Please note that there is a maximum of 3 reservations that can be made in any single name.

The conference will open with a mobile workshop at 1pm on Sunday, followed by an informal gathering at 5pm for anyone interested in joining the Annual Conference planning committee and the Opening Reception (onsite at the hotel) at 6pm. The Executive Directors Council will meet on Monday afternoon and the Board will meet on Tuesday afternoon, concluding by 5pm. The Board dinner will be Monday evening and details will be shared with the Board members as they are confirmed. The conference will conclude following our Wednesday morning session, expected to be held on the Hill once again. Exact times may change, but these can be used for planning/travel purposes.

CONGRESS BRIEF

The House and Senate are in session.

Schumer: Climate, Labor Provisions Key to an Infrastructure Deal

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer addressed the need for implementing strategies to transition the US to a clean-energy economy and mitigate impacts from climate change as key provisions in an infrastructure package next year. Specifically, spurring federal investment in battery storage research, electric-vehicle tax credits, and energy efficient homes. Schumer also stated that the bill should include labor-related provisions such as wage, project labor agreements, and "Buy America" standards. Incoming Chair of the House Infrastructure Committee Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) said this week the House has an ambitious goal of passing a \$500 billion infrastructure package by late May.

Higher Gas Tax Needed to Restore Interstate Highways, Report Says

A new **report**, commissioned by Congress and conducted by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, concluded that the US needs to invest as much as \$70 billion to update the nation's Interstate Highway System over the next two decades. Challenges associated with aging roads, increasing traffic levels, and emerging technologies, as well as demands for coverage and safety, demand increased investment. Key recommendations of the report include short-term increases to the federal fuel tax and long-term adjustments to account for inflation and vehicle fuel economy. To address the deteriorating conditions of roads and their increase in use, the report recommended Congress employ new federal and state funding mechanisms, such as tolls or per-mile charges on Interstate Highway System users.

Graves on Board with VMT Pilot Push

Rep. Sam Graves (R-MO), the next Ranking Member on the House Transportation Committee,

discussed his position on key issues including vehicle miles traveled (VMT) charges and raising the gas tax. Last week, incoming Chairman DeFazio (D-OR) proposed a national pilot regarding vehicle miles traveled charges in lieu of gas taxes, implemented as a formula and adjusted for congestion in fairness to urban and rural road users. Graves is on board with this plan, emphasizing the importance of congestion pricing. They diverge on their positions regarding the gas tax, which Graves would prefer not to raise.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

BUILD Grants Announcement

Secretary Elaine Chao delivered **comments** on Tuesday in Washington, DC to announce the recipients of the \$1.5 billion in BUILD Transportation Grants. This discretionary funding will be awarded to 91 projects in 49 states and the District of Columbia meant to support road, rail, transit, and port infrastructure. Notably, Secretary Chao highlighted the emphasis and reinvestment in rural communities across the United States; 68 percent of grants were awarded to rural applicants. A handful of projects are also set to contribute to America's energy independence and border security.

Bloomberg Government conducted an analysis of the BUILD grant recipients and found Republican-represented districts were awarded three times more funding than Democrat-held districts. Additionally, roads, bridges, and other infrastructure projects were more likely to receive funding compared to transit-related initiatives. The Gateway Bridge Project, which impacts commuters between New York and New Jersey, was notably overlooked for this round of funding. Democrat-held districts awarded grants are represented by members on the transportation and appropriations, or similarly influential, committees.

NARC Submits Comments on Two Automated Vehicle Dockets

In response to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) request for public comment in October 2018, NARC partnered with the National Association of Counties and American Bicyclists on **comments related to a possible pilot program for automated vehicle testing**. NARC established its "safety first" position that highlights the need to explore the opportunities and risks associated with automated vehicles. New technologies will need to adapt to complement and enhance existing systems and infrastructure while increasing safety.

NARC also submitted comments to an earlier U.S. DOT request on the administration's "**Preparing for the Future of Transportation: Automated Vehicles 3.0 (AV 3.0)**." This is the latest evolution of a document outlining the department's approach to the testing and deployment of automated vehicles.

REGIONS BRIEF

MVRPC's Executive Director, Brian O. Martin, AICP, Elected Vice President of the Rotary Club of Dayton

Executive Director of the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC), Brian O. Martin, AICP, was recently elected Vice President to the Rotary Club of Dayton. A long-time member, Martin currently serves on the Rotary's Board of Directors while leading community outreach efforts through various engagement and youth programming. Beginning July 2019, Martin will take on his role within rotary leadership as Vice President.

NARC Signs Letter to the House Municipal Finance Caucus

Various associations representing state and local elected and appointed officials congratulated Rep. Steve Stivers (R-OH) on his recent appointment to the House Municipal Finance Caucus. The letter stresses the vital role of tax-exempt municipal bonds in increasing infrastructure investment.

CDC Will Conduct A First-Of-Its-Kind Study of Scooter Injuries in Austin

The nation's first scooter safety study will take place in Austin, Texas. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) will partner with Austin Public Health and Austin Department of Transportation to consider the health risks posed by dockless scooters. The study will focus on a 60-day period during which there were 68 scooter related injuries reported. The findings will help shape best safety practices and impact the Austin City Council's amendments to the city's rules for scooter deployment and operations.

JOBS

View full list of jobs!

Geographic Information System (GIS) Analyst

Posted: 12/12/2018

Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Colorado Springs, CO

Senior Transportation Planner

Posted: 12/12/2018

Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Colorado Springs, CO

Innovation and Technology Lead

Posted: 12/12/2018

Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Colorado Springs, CO

Program Coordinator II

Posted: 12/10/2018

West Florida Regional Planning Council, Destin, FL

Planner I

Posted: 12/10/2018

West Florida Regional Planning Council, Destin, FL

OPPORTUNITIES

View full list opportunities!

5th Annual Walkability Action Institute RFA

Applications Due: December 14

The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) will be hosting their 5th Annual Walkability Action Institute on April 22-25, 2019 in Decatur, GA. NACDD has opened their request for applications (RFA) to offer eight interdisciplinary regional teams a chance to compete for travel assistance to attend the action institute. The course combines traditional learning methods with robust activities and outdoor learning. The teams must have a minimum of public health, planning, transportation, and elected official representation. Start forming your teams now!

TMIP Webinar – Introducing the Exploratory Modeling and Analysis Tool (TMIP-EMAT)

December 18, 2:00 PM ET

Hosted by the FHWA Office of Planning, this webinar will describe the concepts and overall framework behind the development of the Travel Model Improvement Program Exploratory Modeling and Analysis Tool (TMIP-EMAT). This tool will enable a more comprehensive and exploratory approach to planning the uncertainty around the potential impacts of emerging technologies, new mobility services, and changing travel patterns. The goal is to integrate this tool with existing travel forecasting models to facilitate the application of these models in an exploratory, rather than predictive, manner.

Introducing the Exploratory Modeling and Analysis Tool

December 18, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Emerging connected and autonomous vehicle technology, new mobility services, and changing travel patterns will potentially have significant impacts on future surface transportation operations and travel demand. The dimensions and depth of uncertainty around the potential impacts due to changing travel behavior and emerging technologies call for a more comprehensive and exploratory approach to planning future mobility. This webinar will describe the concepts and overall framework behind the development of the Travel Model Improvement Program Exploratory Modeling and Analysis Tool (TMIP-EMAT), a utility to be integrated with existing travel forecasting models to facilitate the application of these models in an exploratory, rather than predictive, manner. Illustrative examples from the proof of concept deployment of TMIP-EMAT using the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council regional travel demand model will be presented.

Using Freight Data in the Proper Geographic Contexts: Challenges and Opportunities

December 19, 1:00-2:00 PM ET

Hosted by the FHWA's Freight Management and Operations Division, this webinar will discuss how different transportation entities are examining freight transportation using geography as the research goal and are trying to make freight data "fit into" the study area. Presenters will provide an overview of their state DOT's efforts to understand freight flows, projects, and traffic volumes.

2019 TRB Annual Meeting Resiliency Tabletop

January 13, 2019, Washington, DC, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM ET

This exercise will assemble fifteen multi-disciplinary teams at the Annual Transportation Research Board (TRB) meeting in Washington, DC. Each team will have representatives in each of the following groups: economics and commerce, infrastructure, emergency management, government transportation entities (all levels), and government non-transportation entities. During the 4-hour exercise, each team will collectively complete a workbook to stimulate a recovery from a freight disruption that affects local communities, regional economies, and national supply chains.

Opportunity for U.S. EPA Technical Assistance: Travel Efficiency Emissions Assessment and Planning

Application Deadline: January 11, 2019

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ) is seeking to partner with state, tribal, regional, or local transportation and air quality agencies interested in assessing transportation sector emissions and exploring how they could be reduced through travel efficiency strategies. EPA will select agencies based on the letters of interest received by January 11, 2019 and may consider other factors (e.g., geographic diversity) as well as those described above.

Transportation Planning Excellence Awards

Nominations Due: February 1, 2019

The biennial Transportation Planning Excellence Awards (TPEA) sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) is now accepting nominations. The TPEA Program recognizes outstanding initiatives across the country to develop, plan, and implement innovative transportation planning practices. Nominations must fall within five specific categories. For more information please visit their website.

CONTACT US

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