

November 15, 2018 [View this email in your browser](#)



CONGRESS BRIEF

The House and Senate are in session.

Last week's election, which saw the House of Representatives flip to Democratic control and the Senate remain in Republican control, will have significant impacts on federal transportation and infrastructure policy in the upcoming Congress. Two overarching questions that frame what might (or might not) happen in the coming year are: will we see a greater sense of bipartisanship now that the government is more divided between the parties? And how do Democratic promises to provide additional oversight of the administration impact the changes that something big gets done, on infrastructure or otherwise?

Democrats need to get something done with their new House majority and the President desires a bipartisan win heading into his reelection campaign. The big issue is whether this will lead to a large investment package on infrastructure. Other issues that are likely to be at the fore include automated vehicle legislation and a focus on how to fund transportation in the next reauthorization and beyond.

Expected Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) spoke to an infrastructure bill in her victory speech, stating that one of her themes is "build, build, build." Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) has said he is onboard as well.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will soon be led by Peter DeFazio (D-OR), who currently serves as the committee's ranking member. And though four-fifths of the committee won reelection, the losses were consequential for senior Republicans. Reps. Jeff Denham (R-CA), who was expected to vie for ranking member, John Duncan (R-TN), Frank Lobiondo (R-NJ), Lou Barletta (R-PA), and Mark Sanford (R-SC) all either retired, ran for another office, or lost on election night. With Rob Woodall's (R-GA) race yet undecided, Republicans will lose either six or seven of their sixteen most senior members and ten or eleven members overall. Democrats have lost two members.

DeFazio supports increasing and indexing fuel taxes, having introduced a bill to that effect (A Penny for Progress), and has expressed support for a switch to a mileage-based user fee (Oregon is a leader in the testing of this potential new funding source). DeFazio has also been an outspoken critic of the General Service Administration and President Trump's influence on a decision regarding the placement of a new FBI headquarters. Expected oversight hearings on this issue, and DeFazio's support for the release of Trump's tax returns, could by themselves prove to derail any efforts at a large infrastructure agreement.

If you are interested in learning more about some of the election-day impacts on infrastructure issues and Congressional leadership, please see the recorded version of a webinar NARC conducted just yesterday, which will be available soon on our [YouTube videos page](#).

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

California Counters Trump's Car Emissions Rollback With a New Plan

California responded this past Tuesday to the Trump administration's proposed cap of fuel economy requirements. Though details of the plan have not been released, White House and California officials announced the achievement of a nationwide standard. In late summer, the EPA and National Highway Safety Administration halted the Obama-era mandate to incrementally increase requirements. Beginning in 2020 the cap would stall at 37 miles per gallon. Additionally, the agencies proposed curtailing California's authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions and mandate electric vehicles sales. The auto industry responded to this with concern over potential lawsuits and the bifurcation of the industry given different standards at the state and federal level.

EPA Acting Administrator Wheeler Launches Cleaner Trucks Initiative

This week, the EPA launched the Cleaner Trucks Initiative in an effort to decrease nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions from heavy-duty truck engines. Senior staff and White House officials, as well as representatives from the labor and trucking industries, joined acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler to roll out the initiative. Though the EPA reduced NOx emission by 40% in the last ten years, reports indicated freight would account for a third of NOx emissions by 2025. Nitrous oxide negatively impacts ozone and particulate matter standards in surrounding areas. The EPA will release the proposed rule in early 2020.

REGIONS BRIEF

NYC's Grand Central Terminal Will Be Sold for \$35 Million to the MTA

New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority will purchase Grand Central Station following the end of a 280-year lease through the holding company, Midtown Trackage Ventures. This creates a single opportunity for the agency to outright purchase the landmark, otherwise entering into another 270-year plus lease contract. The \$35 million price tag includes the Metro North Railroad Harlem Line and the Hudson Line.

JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

Transportation Engineer/Planner

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Philadelphia, PA

RFP: Performance Audit Services

Association of Central Oklahoma Governments, Oklahoma City, OK

Project Manager

Broward MPO, Fort Lauderdale, FL

Planner/Research Analyst

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Philadelphia, PA

Transportation Travel Demand Modeler

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Pittsburgh, PA

OPPORTUNITIES

[View full list opportunities!](#)

EDC-5 Regional Summits

The objectives of the Every Day Counts (EDC) Regional Summits are to: facilitate dialogue, encourage creative thinking, and celebrate a shared vision for new opportunities. These Summits are an integral component of the EDC model, bringing together transportation leaders and front-line professionals responsible for the development and delivery of highway projects. The Summits provide transportation professionals the opportunity to learn about the 10 innovations promoted through EDC-5, exchange ideas with their state, local, and industry counterparts, and provide feedback to FHWA on the support and resources needed to adopt the innovations. The final Summit will be held in **Orlando, FL**.

FTA Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans Webinar Series Guidance on Using SSPPs to Develop an PTASPs, December 5, 2:00 PM ET

Following publication of two important new safety rules, FTA is hosting a **new webinar series** to provide technical assistance to transit agencies on the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Final Rule. The PTASP Final Rule requires certain rail and bus operators to develop safety plans to better manage their safety risk using Safety Management Systems. FTA's phase two webinar series runs from October 2018 through December 2018.

Scenarios for Adoption of Autonomous Vehicle Technologies in Freight

November 16, 3:00 – 4:00 PM ET

Innovation adoption research has largely ignored organization adoption, and little work has been done to understand or predict the adoption of innovations by freight organizations. This National Institute for Transportation and Communities (NITC) session will present a dis-aggregate market penetration model for freight transportation organizations adopting connected/automated vehicle (CAV) technology and demonstrate an application using a case study area in Memphis, TN. The webinar will also highlight future organizational adoption research for CAVs.

Leading with Health: Complete Streets and Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

November 27, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Complete Streets policies and bicycle and pedestrian plans are two key tools used by cities and counties to support community visions and goals for health, and health stakeholders have a crucial role to play in advancing strong policies and plans in their communities. In this webinar, you'll hear from a county health department that developed pedestrian plans for unincorporated communities, a health coalition that led a Complete Streets policy effort, and about other ways to bring a health focus to local walking and bicycling initiatives.

Active Transportation for Healthy Communities

November 29, 2:00 PM ET

Activity-friendly and walkable communities are designed in ways that make physical activity easier and more accessible for everyone. America Walks has seen the dedication, passion, and innovation in communities across the US as they work to improve transportation systems to become more active, healthy, and safe with activity-friendly connections to important places in the area that attract people, provide social interaction, and allow for participation in multiple activities. In alignment with the Center for Disease Control's Connecting Routes + Destinations materials, this webinar will highlight work being done by three communities of various sizes to create more activity-friendly connections for all.

National Coalition on Truck Parking Annual Meeting Web Conference

December 6, 1:30 – 4:00 PM ET

Continuing its multi-year focus on truck parking safety, USDOT will be hosting a web conference for the National Coalition on Truck Parking ("Coalition") to discuss truck parking initiatives. The agenda will include an overview of products developed in 2018; updates from states, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and core partners on truck parking initiatives; and discussion of future Coalition activities.

The meeting will feature presentations by leaders of the working groups. Launched in 2017, the working groups brought together stakeholders from across the nation to create strategies for various truck parking improvement initiatives related to: parking capacity; technology and data; funding, finance, and regulations; and, coordination with regional/local governments. Information on the working groups, meeting minutes, and products are available [here](#).

Introduction to Transportation Conformity

December 11 – 13, Cleveland, OH

The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) is teaming up with the National Transit Institute (NTI) to host an *Introduction to Transportation Conformity* course at their office in Cleveland on December 11 – 13. This three-day course will present basic information about conformity requirements and the relationship of the transportation and air quality planning process to help prepare staff of federal, state, and local agencies to participate in interagency consultation and work effectively in resolving conformity issues. There is no cost to attend for public agencies, but advanced registration is required.

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!

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.

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.

5th Annual Walkability Action Institute RFA Going Live Soon

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CONTACT US

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