

November 29, 2018 [View this email in your browser](#)



CONGRESS BRIEF

The House and Senate are in session.

Pelosi Wins Democratic Nomination, House Speaker Vote to Come

House Democrats voted 203-32 in favor of Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) for Speaker of the House. Though Pelosi clinched the Democratic nomination, a full-House vote remains, which will take place on January 3, 2019. The future speaker of the House will need an absolute majority of all votes cast; barring Republican support, Pelosi can only afford a few votes against her from the Democratic party to win.

Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works Reauthorization Hearing

On Wednesday, the Senate Committee on Environmental and Public Works held the hearing, "Addressing America's Surface Transportation Infrastructure Needs." Testimony was delivered by **Carlos Braceras**, President, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and Executive Director of the Utah Department of Transportation; **Robert Lanham**, Vice President, Associated General Contractors of America; and **James Corless**, Executive Director, Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG).

The hearing focused largely on the poor condition of the nation's infrastructure and funding mechanisms with which to repair it. Senators and panelists discussed extensively the possible switch from gas taxes to miles-traveled fees. SACOG's James Corless pointed out the need for variable pricing given the different burdens rural and urban travelers place on roads. Calling for increased innovation enabling funding formulas, Corless also highlighted partnerships with the tech industry to foster modern transportation programs. Finally, Corless called for reform of the planning process, streamlining requirements without eliminating necessary outcomes, as well as highlighting the need to invest in regional planning capacity which bridges the urban-rural divide.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

USDOT Announces New Starts Funding (Finally)

On Wednesday, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced an additional \$281 million in FY18 funding to five transit projects through the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) program. The transit projects are the Tempe Streetcar in Tempe, AZ; the Purple Line in Los Angeles, CA; the San Diego Mid-coast Corridor Light Rail Project in San Diego, CA; the Orange Line BRT in Minneapolis, MN; and DART Red and Blue line extension in Dallas, TX. According to FTA, the Trump Administration has executed 13 CIG agreements, which undergo a rigorous multi-year process to receive funds.

USDOT Expected to Act 'Soon' on GM's Self-Driving Car

The U.S. Department of Transportation will soon be ready to announce its decision regarding General Motors' petition to operate an autonomous vehicle for commercial use without a standard steering wheel. While GM hopes to use this vehicle for rideshare programs, USDOT has been

holding off on a decision largely based on internal safety procedures. Reportedly, USDOT is exploring how to best develop a process that considers the wide-range of differences between these types of petitions.

EPA Report: Applying TEAM in Regional Sketch Planning

Using the Travel Efficiency Assessment Method (TEAM), the EPA released a new report to evaluate Vehicle Miles Traveled and emissions impacts of travel efficiency strategies. The report highlights four case studies in Puget Sound, WA; Champaign, IL; Lake Charles, LA; and the State of Connecticut. TEAM uses existing data to create estimates for the future based on “Business as Usual” and travel efficiency strategies for comparison.

HHS Physical Activity Guidelines

Following its release of *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, 2nd edition, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) granted attention to community-level interventions that make being active an easy alternative. The CDC emphasized the importance of designing transportation to align with destinations of importance such as schools, stores, homes, and workplaces. Creating safe and seamless connections via public transportation encourages citizens to walk, bike, and use their wheelchairs to get around.

Cuomo to Meet with Trump to Discuss New Train Tunnel

Governor Andrew Cuomo traveled to Washington to meet with President Donald Trump and Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao to emphasize the importance of funding the Gateway Project, a new rail tunnel planned below the Hudson River. Initially approved under the Obama administration, New York and New Jersey agreed to fund half the cost of the project that connects the two states, about \$13 billion. The Trump administration backed out of that deal, arguing that the two wealthy states should fund a greater portion. More recently, officials from both states have expressed concern over the conditions of the existing tunnel and predict failure within the next 10-15 years. The existing tunnel is a critical point for reliable travel through the Northeast Corridor.

REGIONS BRIEF

MORPC's Data Work to Be Guided by Regional Data Agenda

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) recently adopted the Regional Data Agenda, which offers evaluative criteria and guidance on regional issues relating to data. Using five overarching goals, the Regional Data Agenda seeks to promote data policy-making and increase access to open data in Central Ohio. With its adoption, MORPC hopes to establish the region as a leader in data-driven public decision-making.

Waymo to Launch Driverless Car Service, Hires First Chief Safety Officer

Waymo is gearing up to launch a driverless car service as early as December. The rollout is expected to be gradual, originating from cities with participants in Waymo's Early Rider Program and expanding to other areas across the country. Vehicles are expected to have backup drivers in order to foster consumer confidence and take over if needed. The exact cost for this service is unknown but many predict it will remain competitive with Uber and Lyft.

The company also announced it is hiring its first Chief Safety Officer, Debbie Hersman. Formerly, Hersman was the chairman of the U.S. National Safety Transportation Board from 2009 to 2014. She is expected to oversee the company's anticipated driverless car service launch.

Ohio City to Begin the Largest Real-World Test of Connected Cars in the U.S.

DriveOhio, a division within the Ohio Department of Transportation, will connect more than 1,200 privately owned and government operated vehicles to all traffic signals in the town of Marysville, OH by 2019. This will create the largest network of connected vehicle technology in the United States upon which vehicles can communicate with one another and the ODOT Traffic Management Center to report speed, traffic direction, and other relevant roadside data. This project is part of the \$20 million Rt. 33 Smart Mobility Corridor for connected and autonomous vehicles through portions of Ohio.

Brightline forms a Partnership with Virgin and Files to Go Public

Florida's privately-funded rail service Brightline will become Virgin Trains USA in 2019 given

their recent partnership with Virgin Group, owned by Richard Branson. Virgin Group is not new to the transportation sector, running trains in the UK for 21 years. The rail service between Miami, Orlando, and Tampa hopes to leverage Virgin's reputation in hospitality and travel in order to build on their success over the last year. Following the announcement of their partnership, Virgin Trains USA filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission to become a publicly traded company.

JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

Grants Assistant

West Florida Regional Planning Council, Destin, FL

Assistant Planner

Puget Sound Regional Council, Seattle, WA

Transportation Planner

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Pittsburgh, PA

Government Contract Procurement Program Manager

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Pittsburgh, PA

Planner

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

OPPORTUNITIES

[View full list opportunities!](#)

TRB Webinar: Changes in Demographics and Markets for Public Transportation

Wednesday, November 28, 2:00 - 3:30 PM ET

Recording Available Online

TRB hosted a webinar to analyze the ways in which changes in demographics, travel patterns, and markets for public transit impact ridership in the short and long-term. Matt Coogan, Consultant in Transportation, and Nancy McGuckin, Travel Behavior Consultant, define the "hard" and "soft" measures to interpret predicted changes.

USDOT Webinar: Smart Columbus Program's Common Payment System Requirements

Wednesday, November 28, 2018

2:00 p.m. — 3:00 p.m. ET

Recording Available-Online

As a partner in the Smart Cities Challenges, USDOT selected Columbus, OH for their proposal to fully integrate innovative technologies. The goal of the Smart Columbus program is to connect people by creating opportunity for city residents to better access jobs and services while improving the overall safety and efficiency of the city's transportation network. The Common Payment System (CPS) is one of nine Smart Columbus projects. Together with the Multimodal Trip Planning application and the Event Parking Management application, the CPS will be used throughout Columbus and outlying communities that are serviced by shared-use transportation. This webinar will focus on the System Requirements Specification (SyRS) developed by the City of Columbus for the CPS project. The SyRS is intended to communicate the requirements of the CPS to the technical community interested in building and deploying a common payment platform.

MOOC Sustainable Urban Freight: Re-Run Available As Of Dec 4th

The Center of Excellence for Sustainable Urban Freight Systems will provide the open access course to explore the strategies necessary to maximize urban freight transport considering market understanding, vehicle technology, and cooperative ventures. The course highlights the challenges of City Logistics, a field of study which focuses on balancing urbanization with transportation-related impacts to society and the environment.

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.

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](#).

Eno’s 2019 Transit Senior Executive Program

March 4-8, 2019

Apply by December 7, 2018

The Eno Transit Senior Executive Program is a 6-month long leadership development program designed for senior-level managers in the public transit industry. The program is centered around an intensive week-long seminar held in the Washington, DC area. The TSE Program is an intensive and confidential forum on strategic management, leadership, and critical emerging industry issues. Participants will develop their leadership skills and build connections in the transit industry.

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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