



Would you Like a Seat at the TRB Table? The Transportation Research Board's (TRB's) Annual Meeting – which attracts more than 12,000 transportation professionals to DC each year – is a premier event on the transportation calendar. Want to help shape the planning focus of TRB by joining the Metropolitan Planning, Policy, and Process Committee? With significant turnover this year, the Chairman is looking for new faces to bring energy and fresh ideas to the table. If you are interested, please contact Erich (erich@narc.org or 202.618.5697) to discuss the opportunity further.

ADMINISTRATIVE BRIEF

State of the Union: President Barack Obama delivered his State of the Union speech on Tuesday, devoting only a small portion of the speech to transportation and infrastructure. He called for passage of a long-term transportation reauthorization to create what he termed “21st century infrastructure,” including “modern ports, stronger bridges, faster trains, and the fastest internet.” Later in the speech, he acknowledged the lack of agreement on how to pay for increased infrastructure investment. He reiterated his support for a repatriation of overseas corporate earnings as the best way to grow the Highway Trust Fund. “Let's close loopholes so we stop rewarding companies that keep profits abroad, and reward those that invest in America. Let's use those savings to rebuild our infrastructure and make it more attractive for companies to bring jobs home.” This approach has some support in Congress, but it is far from clear whether there is enough support to carry such a proposal to final passage. It is almost certain that it could not be done in time to prevent another short-term extension of the law, which expires on May 31.

Increasing Investment in U.S. Roads, Ports, and Drinking Water Systems through Innovative Financing: The Administration released an extensive fact sheet outlining new steps it is taking through its *Build America Investment Initiative*. New steps consist of a new Water Finance Center at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; *Rural Opportunity Investment Initiative* at the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and new infrastructure tax proposals to encourage public-private partnerships (P3s), including the creation of a new kind of municipal bond, Qualified Public Infrastructure Bonds (QPIBs). QPIBs are similar to Private Activity Bonds (PABs), but can be used on a wide range of infrastructure projects in addition to roads, tunnels, and bridges. Click [HERE](#) for more from the White House on these and other initiatives announced by President Obama last week.

Foxx Announces New Initiative to Challenge Mayors and Local Elected Officials: Today, Secretary Foxx launched a new initiative, *Mayors' Challenge for Safer People and Safer Streets*, as part of the *Safer People, Safer Streets* initiative launched last September. This new initiative includes an invitation to the Mayors' Summit for Safer People, Safer Streets and a challenge to significantly improve pedestrian and bicycle transportation safety over the next year. The Mayors' Challenge will showcase effective local actions to improve safety, empower local leaders to take action, and promote partnerships to advance pedestrian and bicycle safety. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Performance Based Planning: The Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program (TPCB) recently released a new peer report, *Performance-based Planning and Programming in the Context of MAP-21*, which highlights key recommendations and noteworthy practices identified at a peer exchange workshop held last March. This workshop helped agencies prepare for key MAP-21 requirements and resulted in a framework for future discussions between the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) and MPOs concerning performance reporting, as well as the development of action plans for implementing performance-based planning requirements in the New York metropolitan area. Click [HERE](#) to view the report.

LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

Inhofe and Boxer Pledge Unity on Transportation: Earlier this week, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW) Chairman Jim Inhofe (R-OK) and Ranking Member Barbara Boxer (D-CA) promised to work together to complete a five-year transportation bill. They also announced the first EPW hearing of the year on reauthorization, scheduled for January 28, which will feature U.S. DOT Secretary Anthony Foxx and several governors.

Paul and Boxer Team Up on Transportation Funding: Senators Rand Paul (R-KY) and Barbara Boxer (D-CA) are close to introducing a bi-partisan transportation funding bill that would use tax revenue on overseas corporate profits to fund the Highway Trust Fund. More as this story develops.

GAO Report on Transportation Performance Measures in MAP-21: On Friday, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) published the results of a review on the implementation of the MAP-21 surface transportation performance measures. Click [HERE](#) for the final report, entitled *Surface Transportation: DOT Is Progressing toward a Performance-Based Approach, but States and Grantees Report Potential Implementation Challenges*.

REGIONAL BRIEF

Driverless and Connected Vehicles: If the issue of driverless or autonomous vehicles is of interest to you, Governing magazine recently published an overview of issues that will impact states and localities as these technologies become more integrated into the nation's automobile fleet. Click [HERE](#) for the story. In addition, U.S. DOT recently released a video about what connected vehicles mean for system users. Click [HERE](#) for the video.

Seattle Transit Project Receives Federal TIFIA Loan: Secretary Foxx recently announced a \$1.33 billion federal loan to the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority for construction of the East Link Light Rail Extension Project, a 14.5 mile piece of a 50-mile system in the region. This loan is provided through the *Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act* (TIFIA) program. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

OPPORTUNITY BRIEF

Click [HERE](#) to view the list of grants and events still open!

SURVEY: Incorporating Transportation Operations with Planning

Responses due: January 23

Just a friendly reminder to take the fifth survey put out by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) Subcommittee on Planning's Snapshot of Planning Practices, Incorporating Transportation Operations with Planning. Click [HERE](#) if you haven't already filled out this important survey.

WEBINAR: Introduction to TREDIS

January 28, 1:00 – 2:00PM ET

Transportation Economic Development Impact System (TREDIS) is a suite of tools that assesses economic impacts, benefits, and costs of transportation policies, plans, and projects from alternative perspectives. Learn about TREDIS, its capabilities, and watch a demonstration of this easy to use analysis system. Click [HERE](#) to register.

WEBINAR: Engaging Stakeholders in Sustainable Urban Freight Initiatives: An International Perspective

February 4, 11:00AM – 12:00PM ET

The Peer-to-Peer Exchange Program is designed to share global best practice cases and real world examples of sustainable urban freight systems. This program is open to anyone with a professional or a personal interest in freight transportation issues. Professional Development Hours can be provided. Click [HERE](#) to register.

NARC CONFERENCE: NARC's 2015 National Conference of Regions

February 8-10 – Washington, DC

Registration is open for the National Conference of Regions. This conference is a forum for locally-elected officials and their Regional Councils to explore federal policy issues, and discuss NARC's legislative priorities for the 114th Congress. Click [HERE](#) for the draft agenda and conference webpage.

GRANT: SHRP2 Implementation Assistance Program Funding Available

Applications due: February 13

As part of the second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2), AASHTO and the Federal Highway Administration recently announced that the application process for the fifth round of the SHRP2 Implementation Assistance Program (IAP) is now open. MPOs, local governments, and tribal agencies are able to apply for implementation assistance. Click [HERE](#) for more information about what projects can be funded and how to apply. If you would like additional information or have questions about the Planning Process Bundle, contact Spencer Stevens at (202) 366-0149 or via email at GoSHRP2@dot.gov.

WEBINAR: Creating Smart Paths for Connected Cities

February 26, 10:30AM – 12:00PM ET

This webinar is intended to inform participants about the new Connected Cities Research Program, a project of U.S. DOT's Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office (ITS JPO). The webinar follows the release of the ITS JPO white paper, [The Smart/Connected City and Its Implications for Connected Transportation](#), which provides a foundation for the discussion. Click [HERE](#) to register.

CONFERENCE: Transportation Research Board's Aviation System Planning Symposium

May 17-19 – Charleston, SC

This year's theme is Developing the 21st Century Aviation System. Examine recent trends and developments affecting aviation system planning and discuss future policy, funding, and research needs to strengthen the aviation system planning process. Attendees will have the opportunity to exchange ideas and information toward addressing critical systems pertaining to our nation's aviation system. Click [HERE](#) for details.