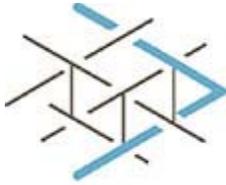


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

February 6, 2014

Transportation Thursdays

NARC LEADERSHIP

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[OPPORTUNITY BRIEF](#)

[ADMINISTRATIVE BRIEF](#) [LEGISLATIVE BRIEF](#)

[REGIONAL BRIEF](#)

A graphic for the 2014 National Conference of Regions. It features a 3D arrangement of blue and red cubes, with a green globe on top of one of the blue cubes. To the right of the cubes, the text reads "2014 NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REGIONS" in blue, "FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014 WASHINGTON, DC" in blue, and "REGISTER TODAY!" in red. At the bottom left, there is a small NARC logo with the tagline "Building Regional Communities".

2014 NATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF REGIONS

FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014
WASHINGTON, DC

REGISTER TODAY!

NARC
Building Regional Communities

OPPORTUNITY BRIEF

New! SURVEY: Brenda Bustillos: Doctoral student, The University of Arizona: Brenda is recruiting transportation professionals with experience in the transportation planning and modeling community who are willing to complete a short online survey that takes approximately 20 minutes. The collected data from this survey will support her dissertation research at the University of Arizona. The goal of the survey is to provide information to better understand this community by getting to know individual's social networks. If you have any questions or need clarity, contact Brenda at bibustil@email.arizona.edu. Click [HERE](#) to take the survey and view more information.

GRANT: Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Funding Opportunity

Governments

Michael Parks

Chair, Transportation
Committee
Assistant Executive
Director, Brazos Valley
Council of Governments

NARCSTAFF

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Erich W. Zimmermann

Director of
Transportation Programs

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More Information will be coming this month

The *Health Impact Project* is planning to launch a call for funding proposals this month. Grants will support HIA demonstration projects and the development of HIA programs integrating health in decision-making. HIA help to identify and address likely benefits and risks of a decision made in a field outside of the health sector. Eligible organizations include nonprofits, state, local and tribal agencies, and educational institutions. Click **[HERE](#)** for additional information and **[HERE](#)** for details concerning the application process.

New! WEBINAR: The National Transit Institute: Millennials and Public Transportation

February 11, 2:00 PM EST

This is intended to provide an overview of the Transportation Cooperative Research Program Web-Only Document 61. It will provide an overview of the results of the survey to better understand Millennials' lifestyle and mobility decision-making processes, and make recommendations for how transit providers can increase ridership by providing amenities to better serve this demographic. Register **[HERE](#)**.

New! WEBINAR: Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program

February 12, 2:00 PM, EST

The Forest Service's Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) program encourages collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes and has helped catalyze larger restoration efforts surrounding National Forests. The first speaker will give an overview of the CFLR program, and two CFLR case studies will be shared from different regions of the U.S. Click **[HERE](#)** to register and **[HERE](#)** for additional information.

WEBINAR: Measuring the Pedestrian Streetscape

February 13, 3:00 PM EST

Walking is the number one physical activity choice for most people, and, increasingly, an important aspect of our transportation system. Yet much of our built environment does not support safe, routine and enjoyable walking. This webinar will introduce participants to the *Microscale Audit for Pedestrian Streetscape* tool that can help communities assess the activity-friendliness of streets, sidewalks, and crossings. Click **[HERE](#)** to register.

GRANT: Projects to Improve Air Quality at Ports 2013 Diesel

Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) Funding Opportunity

Deadline: *February 13, 2014*

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ) is soliciting proposals that achieve significant reductions in diesel emissions in terms of tons of pollution produced by diesel engines and diesel emissions exposure, from fleets operating at marine and inland water ports. Eligible diesel emission reduction solutions include verified emission control technologies such as exhaust controls and engine upgrades, verified idle reduction technologies, certified engine repowers, and/or certified vehicle or equipment replacement. Additional information can be found [HERE](#).

GRANT: Round 3 of the Implementation Assistance Program SHRP2

Deadline: *February 14, 2014*

The Federal Highway Administration recently released the recipients of [Round 2 grants](#) and announced the schedule for rounds 3 and 4. These grants are intended to help transportation agencies deploy new products developed under the second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2). For additional information or questions, contact Carin Michel, FHWA SHRP2 Implementation Manager at goSHRP2@dot.gov or 410-962-2530. Click [HERE](#) to read the release about the upcoming rounds.

New! WEBINAR: Building a Sustainable Workforce in the Public Transportation Industry

February 19, 2:00 PM EST

The Transportation Cooperative Research Program Report 162 provides a guidebook that addresses contemporary issues in workforce development including recruitment, retention, training, professional capacity building, and public transportation image management. Click [HERE](#) to register for this overview.

New! WEBINAR: Dynamic Truck Routing for Mobility and Productivity

February 19, 2:00 PM EST

Trucking industry stakeholders are invited to hear industry experts discuss how using dynamic truck routing applications can improve fleet efficiency and mobility. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) is developing a system that would combine many data sources into one easily accessible site. The "Freight Advanced Traveler Information System" is a freight-specific information collection and dissemination system that will include data related to road construction, traffic

congestion, predicted travel times, truck stop information, and route restrictions. Click [HERE](#) to register.

WEBINAR: Bicycle Safety Education

February 20, 2:00 PM EST

Join the Safe Routes to School National Partnership as we talk about the important components of bicycle safety curricula and help attendees think through decisions about their programs. Next, there will be a chat with Safe Routes to School Education experts on various types of bicycle safety that can be taught in the classroom. Plus, tips and tricks for programmatic success. Click [HERE](#) to register.

New! WEBINAR: America Walks: Using Crosswalk Laws as a Framework for Pedestrian Safety

February 25, 2:00 PM EST

When someone gets hurt or the police are urged to "do something," it is the traffic law that governs what can be done. Pedestrian law advocate and lawyer Ray Thomas (Portland, OR) will present an overview of the nation's crosswalk laws. Ray's presentation will give attendees a better understanding of the legal framework that supports each pedestrian's rights. Click [HERE](#) to register.

CONFERENCE: Freight in the Southeast

March 3-6, 2014; Tampa, FL

The Institute for Trade and Transportation Studies, a regionally-focused organization that works on trade and transportation issues in the southeast, is holding its annual trade conference and might be of interest to the area's metropolitan planning organizations and other transportation planners. On the first night, there will be a working dinner with discussion on "Integrating local and statewide freight planning efforts." For more information, click [HERE](#) or contact Bruce Lambert at bruce@ittsresearch.org.

GRANT: U.S. DOT Announces Availability of \$24.9 Million to Put More Zero-Emission Buses into Service Across America

Deadline: *March 10, 2014*

The U.S. DOT's Federal Transit Administration announced the availability of \$24.9 million through its brand new Low or No Emission Vehicle Deployment Program that will put a new generation of advanced, non-polluting transit buses on the road in communities nationwide. The funds are intended to encourage more widespread adoption of reliable

“green energy” buses into transit fleets. Click [HERE](#) for the announcement, and [HERE](#) for related information.

ADMINISTRATIVE BRIEF

Congressional Budget Office Delivers Grim Assessment of

Highway Trust Fund: The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) this week released its yearly outlook on the nation’s economy. One piece that is particularly interesting for transportation contacts is the assessment of the nation’s Highway Trust Fund (HTF), which collects the fuel taxes that fund the majority of the surface transportation program. CBO recently began hinting the HTF was in trouble and that the highway account may not make it until the end of the fiscal year (which also happens to coincide with the expiration of the current transportation authorization bill). The CBO release this week confirmed that fear. Though it shows a year-end balance in the highway account of \$1 billion at the end of the current fiscal year, the U.S. DOT requires at least \$4 billion on hand to ensure it can repay current debts, leaving the account technically in default. The cumulative shortfall over ten years (through 2024) is \$172 billion, which represents the difference between expected fuel tax revenues and current spending. To put it another way, just to keep spending levels flat for the next decade, Congress needs to come up with an additional \$17.2 billion each and every year. Given that Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) has already taken a gas tax increase off the table for this next authorization (see related story below), it will be interesting to see where the relevant committees come up with the money to keep the program solvent, to say nothing of growing the program to meet future (and current) needs. See the CBO chart [HERE](#).

Vehicle to Vehicle Technology Moving Forward: Officials from U.S. DOT and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration announced they will move connected vehicle technology forward in an effort to greatly improve safety and save lives on the nation’s roadway. The system allows vehicles to communicate potential risks to drivers and avoid rear-end, lane change, and intersection crashes. Scott F. Belcher, President and CEO of the Intelligent Transportation Society of America, called it “a safety leap exceeding even seat belts and air bags.” U.S. DOT is currently conducting a safety pilot program in Michigan, the largest ever of its kind, to test 3,000 vehicles equipped with connected vehicle technology. The purpose is to test the interoperability of the technology from various vehicle manufacturers and suppliers to ensure

they are able to work together once on the road.

President's Budget Delayed: According to reports, the Obama Administration plans to roll out its fiscal year (FY) 2015 budget in two segments. During the first week of March, the top-line budget numbers (funding level each department and agency will receive) will be released; the following week, the more detailed justification numbers will be revealed. This doesn't have any particular impact, except that the late release shrinks the window for Congress to pass its appropriations bills under any kind of regular order. On the flip side, this release will be a month earlier than the President's release of the FY2014 budget, which didn't happen until early April last year (President's budget is technically due the first Monday in February).

LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

New Bill Would Make Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects Eligible for Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA)

Loans: The New Opportunities for Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Financing Act (HR 3978), introduced by Albio Sires (D-NJ) and co-sponsored by Andre Carson (D-IN), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), and Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), would allow communities to access low-cost loans to build bicycling and walking networks. This means a city could get a loan now and build a network of sidewalks, bike lanes and paths to improve safety and increase physical activity—and repay the loan over many years. The bill would set aside 1 percent of TIFIA's \$1 billion and earmark that money for biking and walking. For these projects, TIFIA's minimum project cost would be lowered to \$2 million.

Shuster. Mendez. LaHood. Rendell. Oh my! This week, NARC staff attended a transportation discussion hosted by Bloomberg Government titled "America on the Move: Investing in U.S. Infrastructure." The speakers included House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA); Action Deputy Secretary at U.S. DOT Victor Mendez; former U.S. DOT Secretary Ray LaHood; and former Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell. Perhaps the most informative was Chairman Shuster, who all but took a gas tax increase off the table as a pay-for in the next surface transportation authorization. He further insinuated that the House Ways and Means Committee, which is responsible for coming up with any bill's pay-fors, has some ideas that will provide solvency to the Highway Trust Fund for a decade and allow for a longer-term authorization the next time around. Former Sec.

LaHood – no longer bound by his administration position – was more blunt in his assessment that there was no way a transportation bill will pass before the 2014 mid-term election. Former Gov. Rendell was equally blunt in his criticism of current lawmakers as “wusses” for failing to pass a long-term, well-funded bill passed to increase the nation’s level of transportation investments.

Help Us Help You: NARC is currently conducting meetings with congressional staff on both sides of the Capitol, focusing on transportation-related committees at the moment. If you have something notable to discuss or push with your congressional member, please send it to Erich Zimmermann, erich@narc.org.

REGIONAL BRIEF

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Wins EPA Award:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced that the *GO TO 2040* comprehensive regional plan is the 2013 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement winner in the category of policies, programs, and plans. *GO TO 2040* is a policy-based regional plan and metropolitan Chicago's first comprehensive plan since 1909 and aims to help the region's municipalities and counties cope with common challenges and build a sustainable, prosperous future. It envisions a region where residents have more housing and transportation options, parks, and open space; jobs closer to home; cleaner air and water, and a better quality of life. *GO TO 2040* is featured in an EPA video [HERE](#) and booklet [HERE](#).

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