



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS

Now Accepting Applications:
NARC
Achievement & Leadership Awards
NARC is excited to announce that submissions for the 2016 NARC Awards are now open.

CONGRESS BRIEF

FAA Reauthorization Update

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) and Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX) released an **extension** for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) programs today. This extension pushes the March 31 reauthorization expiration date to July 15, giving lawmakers more time to produce a final bill.

Yesterday, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation announced their **Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016**. The bill only funds programs through the end of FY2017 and does not include the controversial privatization of the air traffic control system provision that the House bill introduced. This short authorization is intended to give lawmakers time to address the air traffic control issue, airport passenger facility charges, and other pressing issues. The Senate bill includes a multitude of consumer protections from airlines, such as automatic fee refunds for lost luggage, better communication for flight cancellations, and seat choice fees. It also furthers drone regulations and calls for a study to inform legislation on drone privacy. The committee will mark up the bill on March 16.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

USDOT Announces Reprogramming of \$2B in Earmarks

USDOT announced this week that \$2 billion in old, unspent earmarks can be used by states for new projects. USDOT released guidance about how this reprogramming will occur, along with a list of frequently asked questions and lists of earmarks that are eligible for reprogramming. This move was spurred by a provision in last year's omnibus appropriation bill.

You are encouraged to look at the lists of projects for your state to ensure an active project is not included for reprogramming, and let USDOT know if there are projects that should be eligible for reprogramming that are not listed. If a local government in your region previously received an earmark that is scheduled for reprogramming, they should work directly with your State DOT to ensure they have a say as to what project the funds are committed.

Republican Presidential Candidate Marco Rubio

For the next several weeks, NARC will highlight the 2016 presidential candidates' transportation and infrastructure positions.

Senator Marco Rubio's (R-FL) campaign website briefly outlines his stance on transportation. In the 273 words he spends on the subject, the Rubio plan reflects his stated support for devolution of the federal transportation program. His state-centered approach (and apparent dislike of transit or any other modes) is reflected in the title of his plan, *Letting States Pave the Way*. Rubio's plan would give states control of highways, remove barriers to public-private partnerships, and remove the strings attached to federal funding. He doesn't support an increase of the federal fuel tax either. According to his plan, "the federal gas tax feeds Washington's overspending." With this in mind, Rubio would reduce the federal gas tax rate by 80 percent and veto any gas tax increase. He also proposes the elimination of the Mass Transit Account in the Highway Trust Fund and the repeal of the ***Davis-Bacon Act***, which requires paying the local prevailing wages to workers on federally-funded construction projects. He is currently a member of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and voted against the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act* in December.

USDOT Launches National Transit Map Initiative

USDOT is asking transit agencies to voluntarily allow them to collect data from their websites to create a **National Transit Map**. This map will display important information such as stops, routes, and schedules for all participating transit agencies and will be used to identify gaps in access to public transportation. The first version of the National Transit Map will be released this summer.

REGIONS BRIEF

Bicycling and Walking in the United States Benchmarking Report

The Alliance for Biking and Walking released their 2016 benchmarking report that examines biking and walking across the U.S. The report takes an in-depth look at biking and walking statistics from the fifty most populous cities, eighteen additional cities, and each state. Topping **the large city list** are Boston and Washington, D.C., each with 16.7 percent of commuters biking or walking to work. The report also considers how to make the case for investing in biking and walking and provides demographic information about who is using these modes.

In Preparation for Driverless Cars, States Start Upgrading Roads

Many states and cities are asking how to prepare for the cars of the future. Several states and localities are already beginning to upgrade their roads and infrastructure by improving pavement marking, upgrading traffic lights to broadcast information to connected vehicles, and developing apps to notify drivers about traffic and road conditions.

How Lyft and Uber Can Improve Transit Agency Budgets

Many transit agencies struggle to fund demand response (DR) services that provide for people with limited mobility. These services are becoming increasingly more expensive and experts are weighing the options of using ride-sharing services for DR. By contracting out this service there is a potential for helping transit agencies save money and meet increasing demand. However, there are several issues to solve before using Uber and Lyft, such as the availability and use of smartphones and the effects of moving from unionized staff to independent contractors.

JOBS

View full list of jobs!

Administrative Assistant- Alamo Local Authority

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

OPPORTUNITIES

View full list of grants and events!

Optimize Transit Operations, Infrastructure and Capital Investment with Urban Engines

March 16, 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

This webinar for transit planners, data analysts, and modelers will explain how Urban Engines improves urban mobility — making it easier for people to get where they're going by using information from the billions of trips that people and vehicles make each day. It will provide a demo of the Urban Engines platform (that includes mapping, visualization, reporting and analytics), which was specifically developed to provide actionable insights from the increasing amounts of data generated every day.

Transportation and Health Tool: Demonstrating Health Impacts of Transportation Decisions

March 22, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

The Transportation and Health Tool gives practitioners a way to examine the health impacts of transportation systems. Released in the fall of 2015 by USDOT and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the tool uses 14 transportation and health indicators to measure how the transportation environment affects health. The tool also proposes strategies, interventions, and policies to improve health outcomes. Join this webinar to learn about how the tool was developed, what information is in the tool, how to apply the information you can learn from the tool, and the value of the tool.

CONTACT US

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