



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS

## CONGRESS BRIEF

*House & Senate are not in session this week; both will return on April 13*

### **Stand Up for Transportation Day**

Today marks *Stand Up for Transportation Day*, an opportunity for groups from across the nation to hold events that highlight the need for Congress to pass a long-term, fully funded transportation reauthorization bill. In Philadelphia, Acting FTA Administrator Therese McMillan, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA), and others joined an event highlighting the importance of transportation.

### **Roadshow Highlights Need for Strong Infrastructure**

For Chairman Shuster, today's *Stand Up for Transportation Day* event came on the heels of a two-day roadshow across Pennsylvania to gather feedback on the current state of infrastructure and generate discussion about the federal-state partnerships necessary to improve transportation project delivery and maximize investments. Shuster was joined by fellow members of Congress, state officials, state transportation secretaries, and business leaders.

## ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

### **FHWA Request: User Testing and Review for PlanWorks Site**

FHWA is requesting assistance in reviewing and testing their new PlanWorks website, in preparation for public release. They ask that you provide comments and feedback to Gary Jensen, [gary.jensen@dot.gov](mailto:gary.jensen@dot.gov), by April 17. A **webinar** will be provided for a virtual demonstration of the new changes and features on April 13, at 12:30 PM ET.

## REGIONS BRIEF

### **SEMOG Discusses GROW AMERICA Act**

Following a visit from U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, who was pitching the need for a long-term solution to the Highway Trust Fund solvency, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMOG) commented on the Administration's proposed *GROW AMERICA Act*. The six-year transportation reauthorization would offer a funding increase for Michigan's highway and transit systems by nearly \$300 million. See **NARC's analysis** of the bill; USDOT also released a series of state-by-state **fact sheets**.

### **Ohio Cities Stress Maintenance Over Expansion**

The Northeast Ohio region lost seven percent of its population since the 1970's, putting fiscal pressure on its major cities including Cleveland, Akron and Youngstown, and their suburbs. As

populations continue to decline, so does available funding for road maintenance, forcing them to borrow millions of dollars. MPOs from Akron and Cleveland agree that the state should change its transportation policy framework to reflect a “fix it first” program rather than continuing to expand the road network.

### **Why a Regional View of Infrastructure is Crucial**

According to Governing Institute research, some of the biggest challenges to reaching regional goals are funding, lack of leadership or vision, and community resistance to change. The Governing Institute applauds a recent report by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, *2015 State of the Region: Infrastructure Report*, for addressing these challenges. The report is an inventory of how infrastructure was implemented, who owns it, and what can be done to improve it. The report focuses on five critical infrastructure sectors, calculates gaps in funding over the next fifteen years, and recommends the implementation of a regional infrastructure exchange group to study, prioritize, and find alternative funding for regional projects.

## **JOBS**

*[View full list of jobs!](#)*

### **Senior Contracts and Procurement Analyst/Engineer**

San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, CA

### **Chief Economist**

San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, CA

### **Environmental Planner Engineer**

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, Detroit, MI

### **Municipal Shared Services Manager**

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Waterbury, CT

### **Principal Traffic Engineer**

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Waterbury, CT

### **Regional Environmental Planner**

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Waterbury, CT

### **Senior Transportation Planner II**

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Waterbury, CT

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

*[View full list of grants and events!](#)*

### **FHWA Planning & Environment Research Implementation**

April 13, 12:30 PM ET

FHWA will provide a webinar for a virtual demonstration of the new changes and features of their PlanWorks website.

### **International Climate Resilience: Denmark, Norway, and More**

April 14, 10:00 – 11:30 AM ET

The Danish Road Directorate will explain the "Blue Spot" risk assessment method for strategizing climate change mitigation, while the Norwegian Public Roads Administration will discuss their integration of climate resilience considerations into manuals and practices. FHWA and USDOT's Volpe Center will review international practices on climate adaptation for transportation in six other countries (Australia, New Zealand, Netherlands, Korea, United Kingdom, and Canada).

### **Transportation Planning Information Exchange: Planning Emphasis Areas**

April 14, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

The FHWA Office of Planning and FTA Office of Planning and Environment will sponsor this recorded webinar to discuss the release of the Planning Emphasis Areas (PEAs) for FY 2016. Speakers and presenters from FHWA, FTA, and various MPOs and transit agencies will provide perspective on how PEAs have been incorporated and how they have changed this year.

### **Talking Freight Seminar: Measuring the Lifecycle Impacts of Freight Transportation Emissions**

April 15, 1:00 – 3:00 PM ET

As a continuation of USDOT's Talking Freight seminar series, this webinar will help organizations recognize the costs and benefits of transportation projects from an air quality perspective, by examining the life cycle impacts of gas and particulate emissions from freight transportation.

### **Highway Drama: The Federal Trust Fund and Evaluating Alternatives**

April 21, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

April 23, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Regional Economic Models, Inc. (REMI) is hosting this webinar to discuss potential economic and fiscal impacts of long-term financial solutions to the federal Highway Trust Fund, and will offer ways to analyze the economic effects of transportation spending to prioritize solutions.

### **Protecting Pedestrians and Bicyclists, One Safer Truck at a Time**

April 23, 12:00 – 12:30 PM ET

In this brief talk, Dr. Alex Epstein of the Volpe Transportation Center will highlight crash avoidance and mitigation technologies related to the trucking-pedestrian interface, particularly side underride guards. Volpe is helping partner cities deploy these technologies to address pedestrian and bicycle safety as the presence of freight grows on urban roadways.

### **FHWA's Climate Resilience Pilots**

April 23, 2:00 – 4:00 PM ET [Registration link not available yet.](#)

Over the course of 2013 and 2014, FHWA partnered with various state DOTs, MPOs, and Federal Land Management Agencies to conduct 19 **climate resilience pilots** that assessed transportation infrastructure for climate change and extreme weather vulnerability. Representatives from Arizona DOT, Capitol Area MPO in Austin, TX, and North Central Texas COG in Dallas-Fort Worth will share the results of their climate change resilience projects and comment on lessons learned for adaptation. A representative from USDOT Volpe Center will present the results of the Central New Mexico Scenario Planning Pilot project.

### **Using FAF Data for Freight Planning**

April 29, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

FHWA's Office of Freight Management and Operations will host this webinar to discuss case studies on how Freight Analysis Framework data has been used to support freight planning on the regional and state levels. Speakers will be representatives from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Illinois DOT, and Parsons Brinckerhoff.

### **ATTRI Stakeholder Engagement: User Needs Assessment**

April 30, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM ET

USDOT will host this free interactive public meeting to gather input on user needs for the Accessible Transportation Technologies Research Initiative (ATTRI). The workshop will include breakout discussions to address the travel needs of people with disabilities, older adults, and veterans. To RSVP, email Ms. Jodi Rizek at [rizekjm@battelle.org](mailto:rizekjm@battelle.org).

**CONTACT US**