



Registration is Open!

The Review Period for NARC's Transportation Policies Ends April 20

Review of NARC's *Transportation Committee Policies and Priorities* document is open! This is your opportunity to propose updates and changes. The **currently approved document** includes suggested changes from conversations that took place at NARC's policy conference in February. Feel free to make your suggested changes directly to the document (by using Track Changes in Microsoft Word) or send changes separately in an email. **The deadline for changes is April 20.** Please send questions or suggestions to erich@narc.org.

CONGRESS BRIEF

Speaker Ryan Won't Seek Reelection

After months of speculation, House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) announced yesterday that he will not seek reelection in the fall and will resign at the end of the current Congress. Ryan has served in the House of Representatives since 1999 and as speaker since 2015 — upon the retirement of former Speaker John Boehner (R-OH). Ryan's retirement will set off a skirmish among Republicans, including Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) and Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-LA), who will seek to take the gavel from Ryan if the Republicans hold the House after the November midterms.

Pushing Back on Spending Cuts

This week several Senate Republicans walked back the idea of a rescissions package to cut previously enacted Omnibus spending, which the administration has hinted it may want to pursue. GOP officials led by House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) said they hope to put something out next month. Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) said the proposal would go nowhere and Senator Richard Shelby (R-AL) said he would want to see details before making a final decision but emphasized that Republicans need to keep their promises. Additionally, Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) said she was "baffled" as to why the administration would do this.

Shelby Approved as Appropriations Panel Chairman

The senior Republican on the Senate Appropriations Committee Richard Shelby (R-AL) will be the committee's next chairman, following Thad Cochran's (R-MS) retirement on April 1. Shelby previously served as chairman of the Senate Banking Committee. Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) will continue to serve as the vice chairman.

CBO: \$1 Trillion Deficit in 2020

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that the U.S. budget deficit will exceed \$1 trillion in FY 2020. In June, CBO estimated that the budget gap would not hit \$1 trillion until 2022. These higher estimates are the result of tax cuts and spending increases over the last six months, and spending will exceed revenues by \$804 billion in FY 2018. The previous report estimated a \$563 billion shortfall for FY2018. The current report also found that the new tax legislation will increase the deficit by almost \$1.9 trillion over the next 11 years. CBO predicts that unemployment will drop to 3.3 percent in 2019 and that real gross domestic product will expand by 3.3 percent in calendar year 2018 before slowing to 1.8 percent in 2020.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

One Federal Decision MOU

A dozen federal agencies signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on Monday to further the administration's goal of 'one federal decision' for environmental permitting. The MOU says that one agency will be responsible for navigating the entire federal environmental review process to create one *Environmental Impact Statement* and sign one *Record of Decision*. Agencies will have a goal of completing the process within two years.

NHTSA Administrator Nominated

Heidi King has been tapped to lead the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) after serving as the deputy administration since September. King formerly was an analyst with the White House Office of Management and Budget and spent two years as chief economist on the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. A nomination hearing has not yet been scheduled.

USDOT Announces \$264 Million in Grants to Improve Bus Infrastructure

USDOT recently announced that 139 projects in 52 states and territories will receive a portion of the \$264 million from FTA's Buses and Bus Facilities Infrastructure Investment Program. The grants will be used to replace, modernize, and purchase buses and related equipment.

FTA's 2018 Comprehensive Review Guide

This FTA *Comprehensive Review Guide* strives to streamline FTA review programs and outlines the minimum compliance requirements for grant recipients. Part of the effort in putting the guide together was to ensure that all requirements relate directly to "specific, citable, written requirements." This will help grantees know exactly how FTA will determine compliance, what is expected during a Triennial or State Management Review, and the reasons behind a deficiency finding.

Identification of High Pedestrian Crash Locations

This FHWA guidebook presents a process to help state and local agencies identify high pedestrian crash locations and includes a literature review, case studies, and other research needed to develop a five-step process.

REGIONS BRIEF

FTA Announces \$30 Million Grant for BRT in Kansas City

The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority has been awarded \$29.89 million to extend their bus rapid transit (BRT) line ten miles south of downtown Kansas City. The Prospect MAX BRT will include 12 buses, 27 stations, and two transit centers and will receive signal priority at intersections. The grant is awarded through the FTA's Capital Investment Grants program.

Governments Increasingly Tax Uber and Lyft for Transit Revenue

New York City is the latest government to tax ride-sharing services to boost their transit budget. Chicago previously added a 15-cent increase to the already existing 52-cent fee for each trip. As pressure increases on these companies, research from the University of California, Davis has

found that ride-sharing adds car trips on city streets and a study by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) in Boston found these trips often replace public transit, walking, and biking. Several other states and large cities are considering taxing ride-sharing services, which is in line with how cities already tax services like landscaping and gym memberships. Washington, DC hopes to raise \$18 million in new revenue from a ride-sharing tax to help fund the aging Metro system.

Drone Buffs May Face New Restrictions

The Commercial Drone Alliance is asking lawmakers to ensure that all drone operators are subject to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations. In 2012 Congress exempted hobbyist drone operators from FAA regulations if they adhered to user group safety rules. The trade group is asking for all operators to abide by FAA regulations in advance of launching their drone delivery programs. FAA is currently drafting legislation that would require small drones to broadcast their identity to help avoid collisions.

CTPP Oversight Board Webinar Recording Posted

In January 2018 the Census Transportation Planning Products (CTPP) Oversight Board officially announced that following the 2012-2016 dataset in 2019, it will discontinue requesting small geography at the Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) and Transportation Analysis District (TAD) levels, adopting the standard Census Block Group for future data tabulations. To support the creation of Block Groups that are useful for transportation planning, the Board recommends that the transportation community review and comment on the current Federal Register's notice on criteria for 2020 Census geography and participate in the 2020 Census Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP). To help the transportation community prepare for this change, the board hosted a webinar on April 3rd. The recording and slides are **available online**.

JOBS

View full list of jobs!

Transportation Planner/Research Analyst II

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Philadelphia, PA

Transportation Planner/Research Analyst II

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Philadelphia, PA

Manager of Contracts and Procurement

San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, CA

Senior Risk Program Analyst

San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, CA

OPPORTUNITIES

View full list of opportunities!

Consortium for Scenario Planning Sessions at APA's NPC 2018

If you are attending the American Planning Association's (APA) **National Planning Conference** (NPC 2018) in New Orleans, consider attending these scenario planning-related and consortium-focused sessions:

Water Decision-Support Tools for Planners – April 21, 1:00-2:15 PM

Addressing Future Unknowns with Scenario Planning – April 22, 10:45 AM-12:00 PM

Becoming a Part of the Consortium for Scenario Planning – April 22, 12:00-12:45 PM

Additionally, the Consortium will host a networking reception on Sunday, April 22 from 7:00-9:00 PM at the **Greater New Orleans Foundation**. **Registration is required.**

Talking Freight: Alternative Fuel and Electric Freight Trucks: What's on the Road Today and What's on the Horizon

April 18, 1:00-2:30 PM ET

The push for and use of alternative fuels, including electric batteries, to replace or supplement petroleum (both gasoline and diesel) across the motor vehicle industry has increased in recent

years, including within the freight transportation industry. Various freight carriers, particularly shorter haul freight carriers, have adopted alternative fuels such as natural gas for many years; the increased use of alternative fuels has been driven by a desire for greater fuel price stability and/or emissions reduction targets. However, some alternative fuels make more operational and economic sense for on-road freight transport than others, and understanding the characteristics of each fuel can provide insights about which fuels work best in various operating environments. This webinar will review the range of alternative fuels and advanced technologies being used in the on-road trucking sector today and provide a glimpse into a future that may include battery-powered electric semi-trucks.

NADTC Safe Pedestrian Crossings at Transit Stops Webinar

April 19, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) and representatives from local government agencies will host a webinar featuring improving safety and accessibility for mid-block crossings that reach transit stops. This webinar supports FHWA's Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian (STEP) program which promotes countermeasures at uncontrolled pedestrian crossings.

Measuring Multimodal Network Connectivity

April 24, 1:00-2:00 PM ET

FHWA recently released the *Guidebook for Measuring Multimodal Network Connectivity* to lay out methods that can be used for supporting transportation planning decisions. This session will feature presentations from FHWA and members of the project team who developed the guide. Panelists will lay out the five-step analysis process included in the Guide and share information about the various methods and measures that can be used to measure multimodal network connectivity.

CONTACT US

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