



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS



NARC's 49th Annual Conference & Exhibition

June 7-10, 2015

Hosted by  Triangle J Council of Governments



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Confirmed transportation speakers include Acting Administrator Therese McMillan, representatives from FHWA, along with panels on Street Design and Safety.

CONGRESS BRIEF

Congress is in session.

Letter Urges Long-term Highway Bill

Representatives John Delaney (D-MD) and Richard Hanna (R-NY) sent a letter to House Ways and Means Chairman Paul Ryan (R-WI), Ranking Member Sander Levin (D-MI), House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA), and Ranking Member Peter DeFazio (D-OR). The letter urged consideration of the **Infrastructure 2.0 Act**, among other bipartisan proposals for a long-term funding bill. Representatives Delaney and Hanna reiterated that short-term extensions of transportation funding hurt the economy by creating funding uncertainty in an industry that requires long-term planning and financial stability.

WOTUS and FEMA

The House T&I Committee approved the bipartisan **Regulatory Integrity Protection Act** (H.R. 1732) this week to stop the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers' proposal to broaden the federal government's regulatory power over waterways and adjacent lands. The Act requires the Administration to withdraw the *Waters of the United States* (WOTUS) rule, and agencies to re-write the proposal in consultation with state and local governments and stakeholders to consider the economic and legal impacts of WOTUS. The T&I Committee, in a unanimous bipartisan vote, also approved the **FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act** (H.R. 1471), which directs and authorizes the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to assess changing disaster costs, work to reduce future loss of life and property, and improve the efficiency of federal emergency management by modernizing response systems.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

Policy Guidance on FTA's Capital Investment Grant Program

FTA invites public comment on **interim policy guidance** for the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program. This guidance provides a deeper level of detail on CIG's methods for applying rating criteria; evaluating New Start, Small Start, and Core Capacity Improvement projects; and proceeding through the process required by law. Comment period closes May 8.

Extended Comment Period for Local Hire Rule

USDOT's Office of the Secretary extended the review period to May 6 for the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that proposes to amend USDOT's implementation of the Government-wide Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. This amendment would allow Federal Award recipients to give hiring preference to local candidates, in cases where it is not otherwise prohibited by federal statute.

REGIONS BRIEF

Utah Increases Gas Tax

Utah state legislature passed a new transportation infrastructure funding bill (HB362), increasing Utah's state gas tax from a 24.5 cents per gallon to a 12-percent tax (which equates to a 5 cents per gallon increase and accounts for future inflation) and adds an optional local 0.25-percent sales tax for county transportation. The **Wasatch Front Regional Council** analyzed the new legislation.

MWCOG GHG Reduction Working Group

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) created a Multi-Sector Working Group early this year to identify strategies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the region's energy, land-use, transportation, and built environment sectors. The group released a draft list of strategies spanning the full spectrum of implementation difficulty, and plans to analyze each strategy to prioritize those with the greatest potential impact toward the region's long-term emissions goals. Among strategies identified by the Working Group's sub-groups were strategies dealing with transportation, like reducing congestion and promoting alternative transportation modes. The Working Group is accepting **comments and reviews on its draft list** of strategies until April 22.

Locals Can't Go It On Their Own

The Brookings Institution released an analysis of state and local government capacity to fund surface transportation projects in the face of uncertain federal financing. It concludes that there is a significant gap between local action and investment, and similar federal involvement in maintaining and improving American infrastructure. Brookings suggests that federal policy lower state and local borrowing costs through tools like TIFIA loans and tax-exempt bonds, and legislators follow the lead of their state and local officials in considering where to invest federal funds.

OPPORTUNITIES

View full list of grants and events!

Surface Transportation Reauthorization: Building on the Successes of MAP-21 to Deliver Safe, Efficient and Effective Public Transportation Services and Projects

April 21, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM ET

The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs will conduct this open session, available to the public via live webcast, with FTA Acting Administrator Therese McMillan as witness.

Integrating Safety into Project Development Process

April 21, 3:00 – 4:30 PM ET

The Institute of Transportation Engineers will review its soon-to-be-released report, *Integration of Safety in the Project Development Process and Beyond: A Context Sensitive Approach*. The report provides a base of knowledge, tools, and methods for integrating safety quantitatively into project developments. The webinar also includes best practices and an explanation of the role of engineering judgement in safety considerations.

Innovative Regional Mobility: A Review of Best Practices and Future Trends

April 22, 3:00 – 4:00 PM ET

Transportation for America (T4America) will host this webinar, along with a panel of experts from the Broward MPO, Wasatch Front Regional Council, and UC-Berkeley, to discuss best practices and transit and mobility solutions for adapting to changes in consumer and community demands. T4America's *The Innovative MPO* report provides in-depth case studies of innovative solutions created and adopted by MPOs across the country.

Vehicle Applications and Wireless Interoperability

April 22, 2:00 PM ET

Senior staff from Intelligent Transportation Society of America (ITS America) will discuss how heterogeneous mobile broadband networks can enable interoperability between vehicles and road infrastructure. See their report, *Vehicle Applications and Wireless Interoperability*, for more information.

Decision Support Systems for Integrated Corridor Management

April 23, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

The Integrated Corridor Management (ICM) approach to managing multiple overlapping transportation networks along urban corridors aims to optimize existing infrastructure. Given the vast scope of traffic situations and interconnected operation strategies, a decision support system (DSS) is needed to assist in predicting these traffic situations and selecting viable response strategies. Co-hosted by USDOT and ITS America, this webinar will discuss lessons learned from USDOT-funded ICM pilots in Dallas and San Diego, and a study on public-private demand for DSS.

2015 TIGER Webinar Series

April 23, 1:00 – 3:00 PM ET: **Preparing a Benefit Cost Analysis**

April 28, 1:00 – 3:00 PM ET: **How to Compete for TIGER Discretionary Grants**

For the 2015 TIGER round, USDOT is offering a series of special topic webinars that delve into various aspects of the TIGER application process. These webinars are a great resource for anyone considering applying to TIGER this year.

Securing Transportation Systems

April 28, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

FHWA and the National Operations Center of Excellence, will discuss concerns related to securing three types of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies and best practices that mitigate system vulnerability.

Analyzing Alternative Vehicle-to-Infrastructure Messaging Variants: Trajectory Conversion Algorithm Version 2.3 Software

April 29, 12:00 – 12:30 PM ET

Developed through USDOT's Data Capture and Management Program, the Trajectory Conversion Algorithm (TCA) software is designed to simulate the generation, capture, and transmission of vehicle-based data to communicate with respective infrastructure under a range of configurable messaging strategies. This USDOT webinar will provide an overview of the new features of the

TCA Version 2.3 software, which is the third of at least four releases of the research tool.

FREIGHT NPMRDS Quarterly Technical Assistance

May 5, 1:00 – 3:00 PM ET

FHWA's Office of Freight Management and Operations will provide an overview and demonstrate data applications for the **National Performance Measures Research Data Set** (NPMRDS), which is a probe data set that FHWA has made available to states and MPOs for passenger and freight analysis.

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