



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS



CONGRESS BRIEF

FAA Reauthorization and Transportation Appropriations Delays

After the Senate passed their version of the FAA Reauthorization last week, attention now turns to the House. Action will resume after the House returns from next week's recess. House T&I Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) focused on winning his primary election, leaving action until after next week's recess.

On the appropriations side, the Senate was ready to take up the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) bill this week but was delayed due to controversial amendments during debate on the Energy and Water funding bill. With a recess next week, this puts the Transportation Appropriations bill on hold.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

FTA Best Practices Procurement Manual Update Initiative

FTA is revising its *Best Practices Procurement Manual* (BPPM), which provides assistance to grant recipients conducting FTA-funded procurements. The BPPM was written almost two decades ago and this revision will dramatically change the manual. FTA created an online dialogue to help identify challenges associated with FTA-funded procurements. The goal is to provide an outlet to

FTA grantees, third party contractors, and other representatives from the transit industry to share common concerns with FTA's *Third Party Contracting Guidance* and current BPPM. Responses are requested by May 20.

FHWA System Performance NPRM

Last week, FHWA released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (**NPRM**) proposing national performance measures regarding performance of the National Highway System, Freight Movement on the Interstate System, and the CMAQ program. This is the third of three rules from FHWA establishing national measures of performance, and is by far the most extensive and far-reaching of the three. This rule will have implications for MPOs and for the planning process in general. [NARC would like to consult a group of members for their reactions to this rule, to help us understand its impacts.](#) Your feedback is crucial as we develop our response to the rule and prepare comments to the docket. If you are interested in participating, please contact Erich Zimmermann (erich@narc.org).

REGIONS BRIEF

FTA Celebrates Opening of Denver's "Train to the Plane" Commuter Rail Line

A new commuter rail line connecting the Denver International Airport to downtown has opened. The University of Colorado A Line project is part of a major \$7 billion transit expansion plan in the region that includes enhanced bus service and commuter and light rail. This rail line project is one of the first to be built by a public-private partnership (P3) with a private team providing funds that allowed Denver Regional Transportation District to minimize public costs for construction. The P3 project also includes the Gold Line commuter rail line, a commuter rail maintenance facility, and electric-multi-unit vehicles.

Bike Share Station Siting Guide

The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) released a guide on placing bike sharing stations. The guide highlights best practices and examples to help cities plan a successful bike sharing system.

Statewide and Megaregion Survey

Responses Requested by April 30th

Email responses to DonnellyR@pbworld.com and rolf.moeckel@tum.de.

Two researchers from Parsons Brinckerhoff and the Technical University of Munich are working on a National Cooperative Highway Research Program synthesis of statewide and megaregion modeling. They are interested in hearing about over-arching or emerging issues that might affect how statewide and megaregion models will or should evolve. They would especially be interested in hearing about issues that transcend state boundaries, but that individual states might not yet see. With that context in mind, please consider the following three questions:

1. What are the most important analytical issues that you've recently used statewide models to evaluate? How suitable were the tools and data for the task? Did you encounter any particular issues or challenges?
2. What emerging trends or issues have decision-makers asked you for help evaluating, but for which your model was not up to the task for? In the same vein, what new questions do you expect to be hit within the near future?
3. What data, methodological, and institutional barriers are holding statewide modeling back?

JOBS

View full list of jobs!

Water Infrastructure / Watershed Planner

Posted: 4/28/2016

Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, Toledo, OH

OPPORTUNITIES

View full list of grants and events!

NARC Awards! Application Period Closes Tomorrow

Deadline extended to April 29

NARC is accepting nominations for its 2016 Achievement and Leadership Awards, which will be presented at the Awards Gala Dinner during the 50th Annual Conference and Exhibition, June 26-29, in Salt Lake City, Utah. The awards provide an excellent opportunity for winners to promote their successes to a larger audience, as well as share best practices with their partners and peers. See **nomination guidelines** for details.

Low or No Emission Vehicle Deployment Program

May 3, 1:00-3:00 PM ET

FTA will host a webinar on the new Low and No-Emission Component Assessment Program to provide an overview of key program information and gather input on the types of low and zero emission transit bus component assessments that would prove useful to transit agencies. This webinar session is intended for transit agency personnel; however, all interested parties are welcome.

NARC Webinar! Partnering for Strong Economies: Regional Councils & Walkable Communities

May 5, 2:00 PM ET

Join NARC and America Walks for a webinar on how federal transportation funding is allocated through regional councils and how to access it for projects that promote walkable communities, including complete streets, safety efforts, and place-making. Attendees will explore two unique perspectives as we hear from a regional planner and an advocate who has worked to use the resources available from their regional council. Q&A to follow.

Adapting to Climate Change Using Intelligent Transportation Systems

May 10, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

Within the national framework for addressing climate change, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) is an important strategy for meeting the growing need for climate resiliency and adaptation. ITS uses a variety of sensors to monitor the highway network such as traffic volume and speed detectors, cameras, pavement, and weather monitoring systems. New sensor technology and applications are being developed to help identify vulnerable regions and transportation routes that are subject to flooding, fog, smoke from wildfires or other harmful pollutants, high winds, ice, damaged pavement, and bridge weight restrictions. This approach will not only require new sensing capability from the field, but also a means of identifying alternate routes and/or alternate transportation modes. The speakers will touch on all of these components in order to illustrate new approaches to building transportation resiliency and adapting to climate change.

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