



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS

## REMINDER!

### **Pavement and Bridge Condition Performance Measures Comments Due Friday**

NARC developed an **analysis of the NPRM** that outlines the purpose of the NPRM, highlights MPO-relevant sections, and outlines pressing questions concerning the NPRM to assist members in preparing their comments. **Submit comments** electronically.

### **NARC Infrastructure Week Events**

Next week is Infrastructure Week here in Washington. NARC is participating in several events. More details on each event can be found in the Opportunities section below.

- **Linking Communities Together Through Innovative Regional Transportation Planning** (in-person event)
- **Economic Competitiveness: Transit's High-Value in the Knowledge Economy** (live webcast)
- **Innovative Approaches to Infrastructure Funding** (live webinar)

## CONGRESS BRIEF

### **Congress Inching Toward Extension**

Only eight legislative days remain until Congress takes an extended Memorial Day break, leaving limited time to extend the nation's expiring transportation program. Prospects for a "free extension" through July remain in play, as money for the program will not run out until August. Some House members, however, want an extension that lasts through the end of the calendar year to give lawmakers time to write and pass a new, long-term bill. This idea gained currency this week when Senate Finance Committee Chair Orrin Hatch (R-UT) indicated that he is looking for the \$11 billion necessary to keep the program operating through the end of the year. Hatch also indicated that an extension may not happen until June. Some Senate Democrats voice opposition to this approach. Democratic Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) earlier this week threatened to hold up work on a free trade bill until a highway bill extension is in place.

### **Wyden-Hoeven Infrastructure-Bond Plan**

Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Senator John Hoeven (R-ND) introduced the *Move America Act of 2015* (**S 1186**) as a plan to facilitate private investment in public infrastructure by using private-activity debt for transportation projects. While companies use private-activity bonds to borrow in the municipal market, there is a debt limit of \$15 billion for states and localities to issue on behalf of companies responsible for constructing and operating transportation infrastructure. The Move America bill would amend that limit to authorize up to \$180 billion in tax-exempt bonds over ten years. Similarly, Representative Todd Young (R-IN) is formulating legislation that would double the cap on bond issuance from \$15 to \$30 billion. The bill would also provide up to \$45 billion in infrastructure tax credits to match private-equity investment, which would give states the leeway to either sell the credits for capital or allocate the

credits to private infrastructure project sponsors. According to Senator Hoeven's staff, the Move America measure would cost \$10-\$15 billion over ten years.

## ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

### TMIP Annual Report

The Travel Model Improvement Program (TMIP) was established by FHWA to help transportation planning and operation agencies provide better information in making transportation planning and operation decisions by providing a variety of services and products in the fields of analysis, modeling, and simulation. FHWA's Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty outlines these services as major initiatives and programs in their latest *TMIP Annual Report* and requests feedback on the usefulness of these initiatives, which include a webinar series, a travel analysis toolbox, and a peer review program.

## REGIONS BRIEF

### Paper Connects Station Walkability and Bike Share Success

A report released by the National Association of City Transportation Officials, *Walkable Station Spacing is Key to Successful, Equitable Bike Share*, makes the connection between station density, service quality, and equity. It also provides a data-driven analysis for system operators looking to expand the reach and utility of their bike share systems. Based on ridership data from U.S. bike share systems, the analysis concludes that bike share usage increases exponentially with station density, ideally twenty-eight stations per square mile. In order to increase ridership, the station network must be located conveniently within range of how far people are willing to walk.

## JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

### Planner

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Wausau, WI

### Senior and Disability Services Director

Oregon Cascades West, Albany, OR

### Associate Planner – Market Analysis Specialist

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Chicago, IL

### Transportation Engineer/Planner

Belomar Regional Council, Wheeling, WV

## OPPORTUNITIES

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

### Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool

May 12, 2:00 – 3:30 PM ET

May 28, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

June 3, 3:30 – 5:00 PM ET

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will provide three webinars to overview and demonstrate their new EJSCREEN tool, which is designed to highlight places in the U.S. that may have higher environmental burdens and vulnerable populations. The tool offers powerful data and mapping capabilities that display environmental and demographic information at a high geographic resolution across the entire country.

### NARC Infrastructure Week Event! Linking Communities Together Through Innovative Regional Transportation Planning

May 12, 5:30 PM ET

The American Planning Association will provide an overview of the innovative practices MPOs have adopted in how they work with communities to create long-range plans and how they work

with local jurisdictions to implement land use, transportation, and development decisions that support regional outcomes. Mariia Zimmerman of MZ Strategies, LLC, will speak to emerging best practices found in research conducted through her company and highlighted in *The Innovative MPO* report published by Transportation for America. NARC's own Transportation Director Erich Zimmermann will focus on how MPOs and regional planners are innovating to provide better value to the communities they serve.

### **NARC Infrastructure Week Event! Economic Competitiveness: Transit's High-Value in the Knowledge Economy**

May 13, 12:15 – 1:30 PM ET

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute and the American Public Transportation Association will host this luncheon briefing to discuss how transit investments affect American global economic competitiveness. Speakers Linda Watson, President and CEO of Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and Joanna Turner, NARC Executive Director, will call on their experience to answer key questions such as "What role does transit play in the location choices of high-value technology firms, and why?" and "Does transit help these firms attract the workforce they want?" The briefing will be available on **live webcast**.

### **NARC Infrastructure Week Event! Innovative Approaches to Infrastructure Funding**

May 15, 2:00 – 3:15 PM ET

With federal transportation funding in jeopardy, regions and localities are exploring new options to address their infrastructure challenges. In collaboration with the Center for Transportation Excellence and the National League of Cities, NARC will host this webinar to highlight innovative and replicable approaches that regional and city leaders have taken to fund infrastructure projects. Speakers will explore ballot measure successes, user fee models, and VMT pilots, among other approaches best practices, and lessons learned.

### **Accessible Transportation Technology Research Initiative (ATTRI) Applications Workshop**

May 18-19, 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM ET

USDOT will inform and engage stakeholders on the progress of its Accessible Transportation Technologies Research Initiative (ATTRI), which conducts research to improve the mobility of travelers with disabilities through the use of intelligent transportation systems. This workshop will identify technology solutions to address the travel needs of people with disabilities, older adults, and veterans, and will utilize participant feedback to identify specific technology applications for further development through the ATTRI program.

### **Bridging the Gap between Freight, Infrastructure Protection and Traffic Incident Management**

May 28, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

FHWA and the Transportation Incident Management (TIM) Network will sponsor this webinar to examine the multi-agency traffic incident management practices being conducted in the Philadelphia area, and discuss how TIM stakeholders are working to engage freight transportation stakeholders in that region. Presenters will also share information about the New Jersey State Police's unique, federally funded Incident Management Unit and the important role it has played in dramatically reducing incident clearance times in the state.

### **Advancing a Sustainable Highway System**

May 28, 2:00 PM ET – Access and Affordability

June 25, 2:00 PM ET – Linking Asset Management and Planning

July 29, 2:00 PM ET – Sustainable Pavements

The Sustainable Transport and Climate Change Team within FHWA's Office of Natural Environment will present a series of webinars based on the ***Advancing a Sustainable Highway System: Highlights of FHWA Sustainability Activities*** report produced by the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center last year. The report illustrates how sustainability is incorporated into a wide variety of FHWA programs, projects, policies, processes, and partnerships. Each webinar will focus on a particular section of the report and will feature specific

FHWA activities that advance sustainability.

### **Fundamentals of Transportation Data, Part 2: Data Analysis and Usability**

June 9, 2:00 – 3:30 PM ET

The FHWA's Office of Transportation Performance Management will host the fifth of its six *Let's Talk Performance* webinar series to discuss transportation performance management implementation activities. Presentations from Ian Kidner, GIMS Systems Administrator for Ohio DOT's Office of Technical Services, and Chad Allen, Director of the Asset Management & Performance Bureau for the Vermont Agency of Transportation – Highway Division, will highlight their organization's efforts to improve the usability of their data sets while improving analytical workflows.

### **NARC's 49th Annual Conference and Exhibition**

June 7-10, Raleigh, NC

Join the conversation on the latest in regional government at NARC's Annual Conference and Exhibition, hosted by the Triangle J Council of Governments. Events begin Sunday afternoon with two optional mobile workshops exploring Raleigh. Sessions will highlight innovations in transportation, digital technology, street design, the impact of changing demographics, economic development tools for regions, collaborating to reduce waste, economic transformation in the region, workforce, green infrastructure, and water resources.

## **CONTACT US**

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