



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS

CONGRESS BRIEF

MAP-21 Extension Update

With a dwindling number of legislative days until the nation's transportation program expires, Congress is headed toward extending the program before the end of the month. Both the House and Senate intend to recess on May 22 and won't return until June, leaving little time to hammer out an agreement. The House Ways and Means Committee and Senate Finance Committee remain dedicated to finding the \$10-11 billion necessary to extend the program through the end of 2015, with little progress reported in locating the necessary offsets. The backup (though with the report of many Democrats) remains the "free" program extension through the end of July. No offsets would be necessary because the program's funding does not run down until early August. Republican lawmakers remain split on their preferred option.

MAP-21 Reauthorization Update

Despite the necessity of a short-term extension to keep the program operating, work continues at the Committee level on a long-term transportation reauthorization. The Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee **announced earlier this week** that it will hold a mark-up of the policy provisions of a new bill by the end of the summer. In a conference call with NARC and others last week, EPW staff indicated that they plan to hold a markup on their proposal, to help keep the bill and its policies at the forefront of the Congressional policy agenda. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee leadership have not announced a markup date.

Committee Approves 2016 THUD Bill

The House Appropriations Committee approved the **FY 2016 Transportation-Housing and Urban Development (THUD) bill** by a 30-21 party line vote this week. The bill contains \$55.3 billion in funding, an increase of \$1.5 billion from last year. The bill would cut Amtrak, funding for the D.C. Metro train system, and the popular TIGER program.

Foxx and Comstock Protest WMATA Budget Cut

Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx and Representative Barbara Comstock (R-VA) rode the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority's (WMATA) new Silver Line last Friday to protest the reduction in federal funding to WMATA. Comstock argued that the annual budget of \$150 million that WMATA has received since 2009 funds the phase-in of 500 new trains, increased safety measures, and improved system operability and reliability. In the end, WMATA funds came in at \$100 million - still below last year's level, but a tick up from the proposed level.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

McMillan Letter to the Transit Industry

FTA Acting Administrator Therese McMillan sent a letter to transit industry colleagues reiterating the importance of long-term surface transportation funding legislation. McMillan cited the Administration's *GROW AMERICA* proposal as a viable solution to the soon-expiring MAP-21 extension.

White House Releases Guide as Part of Build America Investment Initiative

The Administration's Build America Investment Initiative aims to help local and state governments, communities, and private entities finance and design infrastructure for smart growth. The *Federal Resource Guide for Infrastructure Planning and Design*, released at a White House roundtable discussion with the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, is a community resource that incorporates programs and opportunities from eight federal agencies to inform stakeholders in their infrastructure planning activities. The guide encourages investment in predevelopment activities that take place early in the project cycle because those activities have considerable influence on which projects will move forward, how and where they will be funded and built, and who will benefit from the final product. The guide also outlines principles for outcome-driven predevelopment to maximize investments.

REGIONS BRIEF

Seattle Proposes Transit Passes Instead of Parking Spots for Residents

The Seattle Departments of Planning and Development (DPD) and Transportation jointly presented to the City Council **a report** of staff recommendations for addressing residential parking issues in light of new urban development. According to planning officials, construction of parking costs between \$20,000 and \$50,000 per space; a Portland, Oregon study found that the cost of residential parking can add up to \$500 per month in rent. The cultural emphasis on providing enough parking for each driver has created a "lose-lose" financial situation for both housing developers and residents, according to DPD. The DPD plan would replace costly parking with expanded transit and alternative mobility options throughout the city, such as requiring developers to offer transit passes or bikeshare memberships to tenants instead of building more parking spaces.

JOBS

View full list of jobs!

Community Development Planner III

Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments, Kelso, WA

Program Manager – Growth Management

Puget Sound Regional Council, Seattle, WA

Regional Planner

San Joaquin Council of Governments, Stockton, CA

OPPORTUNITIES

View full list of grants and events!

Building the Bike Culture You Want

May 16, 3:00 – 4:00 PM ET

In a presentation organized by BikeArlington, Modacity's Melissa and Chris Bruntlett will tell the inspiring story of how Vancouver bike culture rapidly shifted for the better, and will share ideas and lessons that can be taken back to viewers' communities.

TMIP/FMIP Merger

May 18, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

This FHWA webinar will provide information on the Travel Model Improvement Program (TMIP) and Freight Model Improvement Program (FMIP) merger, and will seek input into TMIP/FMIP components and functionality as it relates to the interests and needs of the transportation community.

Website and Social Media Strategies and Analytics

May 20, 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

The International Bridge, Tunnel, and Turnpike Association will provide actionable advice from marketing experts on how to build a website that engages your audience and how to use analytics to improve website performance.

Talking Freight: Improving Freight System Performance in Metropolitan Areas

May 20, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

FHWA's Office of Freight Management and Operations will discuss different approaches to improving freight movements in urban areas, focusing on the findings of *NCFRP Report 33: Improving Freight System Performance in Metropolitan Areas*. Speakers from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and CDM Smith will specifically discuss approaches related to vehicle and traffic demand, supply chain and non-transportation, infrastructure management, and stakeholder engagement.

EPA: EJSCREEN Presentation and Demonstration

May 28, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

EJSCREEN is the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) environmental justice tool for highlighting places with higher environmental burdens and vulnerable populations. The tool offers a variety of powerful data and mapping capabilities that enable users to access environmental and demographic information at high geographic resolution, across the entire country. Each of the three sneak peeks will consist of an overview and demo of the tool, followed by Q&A.

Transportation and the Economy Speaker Series: Rosabeth Moss Kanter

June 9, 12:00 – 1:00 PM ET

Hosted by the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, Harvard Business School Professor, Chair, and Director of the Harvard University Advanced Leadership Initiative Rosabeth Moss Kanter will present an overview of her recent publication, *MOVE: Putting America's Infrastructure Back in the Lead*. Kanter's book discusses efforts across the country to reduce dependence on the gas tax, and examines a new vision for American mobility where local leaders act almost autonomously in shaping transportation-related initiatives.

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