



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS



## CONGRESS BRIEF

*Congress is in session.*

### **Senate Encourages House on FAA Reauthorization**

Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee Chairman John Thune (R-SD) and Ranking Member Bill Nelson (D-FL) sent a joint letter to leaders of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee last week urging them to move either the Senate FAA bill or a similar measure as soon as possible. With the July 15 expiration date looming, Representative Bill Shuster (R-PA) is still advocating for the privatizing of air traffic control. The letter states that the Senate is far from reaching a consensus on this issue and that the Senate bill or a similar measure is the only opportunity to reauthorize the FAA this year.

## ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

### **Final Planning Rule Released**

Last week, just before the long holiday weekend, FHWA and FTA jointly released the long-awaited **regulations governing statewide and metropolitan planning**. This finalizes a proposed rule first released in June 2014 and incorporates changes to the planning process contained in both the MAP-21 and FAST Act reauthorizations.

NARC is still reading through the final rule, but one area of interest is how the final rule handles the regulation from MAP-21 regarding transit representation on TMA boards. The original interpretation of the MAP-21 provision by FTA/FHWA was, in NARC's view and the view of others, overly broad. At our urging, Congress included a provision in the FAST Act that was intended to slightly narrow that interpretation. The language from the FAST Act, which now appears in section 450.310 of the new regulations (**Federal Register, page 34148**), maintains the requirement that a designated transit representative must be on the board of every MPO that serves a population greater than one million; but Congress specified that the representative can be determined by the MPO according to their bylaws or enabling statute and that the designated representative can also serve as a local elected official. We anticipate this solves many of the complaints members had about this provision, but we'd like to hear whether you agree.

There is much more to this rule and we will provide further detail soon. See below for details on how to register for an agency webinar on the final rule. If you have any questions, please contact Erich Zimmermann at [erich@narc.org](mailto:erich@narc.org).

### **NARC Comments on FHWA Agency Information Collection Activities**

NARC submitted **comments** this week on the National Transportation Performance Management (TPM) Implementation Review Survey to FHWA. NARC encouraged that the survey be as short and direct as possible, distributed after all the performance rules are finalized, and that steps are taken to ensure a full distribution of responses from MPOs of all sizes.

### **2015 American Community Survey Release Schedule Announced**

The U.S. Census Bureau has announced it will release the 2015 one-year American Community Survey (ACS) census data on September 15 and the 2011-2015 five-year estimates on December 8. Census will release supplemental materials on July 21 with the 2014 ACS 1-Year Supplemental Estimates and 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Replicate Estimates. The supplemental estimates will consist of 58 detailed tables and will be released on American FactFinder (AFF) and the application program interface (API). The replicate estimates will consist of the original estimate and the 80 replicate estimates for 107 tables and will be released on the FTP site with links available on AFF.

## **REGIONS BRIEF**

### **FHWA Climate Resilience Pilot Program: NCTCOG**

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) recently participated in the FHWA Climate Resilience Pilot Program and conducted a study to examine how future climate change and extreme weather will affect existing and planned transportation infrastructure. NCTCOG focused on how the urban heat island effect, extreme heat, flooding, and drought will affect the region. The final report is now available and the findings will be used in planning and monitoring to prepare the region's transportation systems for the future.

### **SANDAG Wins Award for Planning Excellence**

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) recently won the Implementation Award for planning excellence from the San Diego chapter of the American Planning Association. SANDAG's **TransNet Smart Growth Incentive and Active Transportation** grant programs have supported more than 100 biking, walking, and transit-oriented development infrastructure projects in local communities. The programs have provided more than \$50 million towards these efforts over the last ten years.

## **JOBS**

***View full list of jobs!***

### **AirCheck Texas Inspector**

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

### **Senior Air Quality Planner**

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

### **Regional Economist**

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

### **Operations Manager**

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

### **Accounting Intern**

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

### **Finance Intern**

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

### **Contract Specialist**

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

### **AirCheck Texas Assistant**

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

### **Services Coordination Mentor**

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

### **Executive Director**

Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, Santa Barbara, CA

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

***View full list of grants and events!***

### **Performance Measurement and Evaluation Support Plan Webinars from the CV Pilot Sites**

June 6, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET – ICF/WYDOT

June 6, 3:30 – 4:30 PM ET – NYCDOT

June 7, 12:00 – 1:00 PM ET – Tampa (THEA)

The USDOT Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office (ITS JPO) Connected Vehicle (CV) Pilot Deployment Program seeks to combine connected vehicle and mobile device technologies in innovative and cost-effective ways. Ultimately, this program will improve traveler mobility and system productivity while reducing environmental impacts and enhancing safety. USDOT has selected three pilot sites, where teams are in the process of conducting Phase 1 Concept Development activities leading to later phases (Phase 2 Design/Build/Test and Phase 3 Operations). The three selected pilot sites are ICF/WYDOT, New York City DOT, and Tampa (THEA). During the Concept Development Phase, three public webinars from each pilot site are being held to provide all interested parties a sense of the key issues addressed in each deployment, the conceptual approach, and expected deployment impacts.

### **NARC Webinar! Census Business Builder Demo**

June 9, 12:30 – 1:30 PM ET

*The Census Business Builder: Regional Analyst Edition* is a new suite of economic and demographic data tools that allow for quick analysis of a region's economy and demographic profile. The tool allows users to build a region by aggregating counties in an easy to use map interface. Over 80 Census demographic and economic data variables are available, and the results can be viewed in the map or in report form. *The Census Business Builder: Small Business Edition* tool allows small business entrepreneurs to research information for opening a first business or expanding existing ones, and allows users to pick from over 50 business types and view economic and demographic data that can help them select the right location for their business. Join this NARC and Census Bureau webinar to learn how to access and use these great tools.

### **Planning Final Rule Webinar**

June 14, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

This webinar will review the changes in the final rule on regulations governing statewide and metropolitan planning released last week by FHWA and FTA.

### **FHWA & FTA 2017 Transportation Planning Excellence Awards**

Nominations Due: July 1

The Transportation Planning Excellence Awards Program is a biennial awards program developed by FHWA and FTA. The program provides a unique opportunity to recognize and celebrate the outstanding transportation planning practices performed by planners and decision makers in communities across the country. Award winners will be recognized by receiving a commemorative plaque and participating in an awards ceremony. Anyone may nominate an individual or organization that used federal FHWA/FTA funding to develop a plan, project, or planning process that demonstrates excellence in planning within the last three years.

## **CONTACT US**

*Copyright © 2016 National Association of Regional Councils, All rights reserved.*