



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS



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**2017 executive directors conference
october 22 - october 24
san antonio, tx**

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CONGRESS BRIEF

Current State of Appropriations

Last Thursday before the U.S. House of Representatives left town, they passed a “minibus” spending package that approved funding for the legislative branch (\$3.58 billion), military construction and veterans’ affairs (\$88.8 billion), energy and water programs (\$37.56 billion), and defense (\$658.1 billion). All the House appropriations bills have passed through the House Appropriations Committee. The House is expected to consider the eight remaining appropriations bills on the floor once they return in early September.

With so much focus on healthcare reform, the Senate is behind schedule on appropriations. The Senate has only passed half of their bills through the Senate Appropriations Committee, which means they have six more bills to markup and approve. None of the bills have been considered on the Senate floor yet.

Once the August recess is over, pressure will be on the House and Senate to get these bills enacted into law on time. All twelve appropriations bills must be consolidated between the two chambers and signed by the president by September 30. If they fail to do so, they will have two options: agree to a continuing budget resolution to fund the federal government at funding levels set by the previous fiscal year, or face a federal government shutdown.

FAA Reauthorization

The House left Washington last Friday without bringing the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) bill to the floor. Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) was disappointed in the delay but said he still feels like they are in a good position to pass it. On Tuesday Senator John Thune (R-SD) said that the upper chamber won’t consider its FAA bill on the floor until lawmakers come back from recess, and that the Senate will either pass legislation to reauthorize the agency for four years or approve a shorter-term extension. FAA expires at the end of September and the Senate proposal, which does not contain the controversial air traffic spinoff plan, has also yet to hit the floor. This leaves little time for reconciliation and for developing the final bill, indicating the likelihood of extension in each chamber.

House Dems Seek USDOT Appointee Investigation

Three House Democratic leaders are seeking an investigation into whether USDOT officials violated lobbying laws by promoting T&I Chairman Shuster's proposal (**H.R. 2997**) to take air traffic control operations from the FAA. Representatives Pete DeFazio (D-OR), ranking Democrat on the House T&I Committee; Nita Lowey (D-NY), ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee; and David Price (D-NC), ranking member of the transportation appropriations subcommittee formally asked USDOT Inspector General to investigate whether political USDOT appointees "violated federal law, including the *Anti-Lobbying Act*."

Local Governments Preparing for Congressional Action on Tax Reform

After recess, Republican leaders in Congress will focus on tax reform. This has brought into question whether the new proposal will preserve the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds and the state and local tax (SALT) deduction. The National League of Cities (NLC) sent a **letter** to the Senate Finance Committee stressing the importance of tax-exempt municipal bonds and allowing local governments to set their own tax policy. A **report** prepared by the Government Finance Officers Association highlights the negative impact of eliminating SALT deductions. To help local leaders prepare for conversations with their federal representatives this summer, the National Association of Counties (NACo) released a **one-pager** and **municipal bonds toolkit** to jumpstart their advocacy efforts.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

FHWA Sued Over Vehicle Emissions

Clean Air Carolina, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the U.S. Public Interest Research Group filed a federal lawsuit on Monday against FHWA. According to the **lawsuit document**, they are challenging the agency's decision to suspend a greenhouse gas regulation that would require states and MPOs to measure and set targets for carbon dioxide emissions from vehicles on national highways. The agency has defended its action to suspend the regulation, saying federal law allows them to review the regulation without public notice or comment. The plaintiffs are seeking to invalidate the suspension through the court system so the agency will have to start enforcing the regulation immediately.

REGIONS BRIEF

How Connected Vehicle Pilot Deployment Sites Are Transforming Transportation

USDOT's connected vehicle pilot locations have just released new videos and launched websites highlighting their vehicle deployments. New York City, Wyoming, and Tampa, Florida are leading the way in advancing wireless communications technologies in vehicles and on roads. The websites provide information on each area's unique transportation challenges, plans for connected vehicle deployment, deployment partnerships, and promotional materials.

SANDAG's Bayshore Bikeway

The Bayshore Bikeway is **San Diego Magazine's trail of the month!** See why this regional gem is a great place to GO by BIKE. The **Bayshore Bikeway** is a regional corridor that will eventually extend 24 miles around San Diego Bay, providing a vital and scenic connection to major bayfront employers, as well as tourist and recreational destinations. Approximately 15 miles of bike paths have been built to date. The rest of the bikeway consists of on-street sections designated as either bike lanes or bike routes. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is developing additional improvements based on the **Bayshore Bikeway Plan**, which was adopted by SANDAG in 2006 to identify opportunities to improve the bikeway primarily along the east side of the San Diego Bay. The objective is to develop a continuous Class 1 bike path that would allow bike riders to ride all the way around San Diego Bay on a dedicated path away from city streets.

Brookings Report Reveals Challenges and Opportunities in Modernizing Government's Approach to Land Use and Transportation Data

With so many new types of data – like cellphones, GPS trackers, and other navigation devices that offer real-time demand-side data – data is better than it has ever been. Public agencies now have the opportunity to institute data-related reforms that will help them deliver more equitable, sustainable, and efficient communities. However, integrating all this data into how we actually plan and build communities will not be easy. This **Brookings report** uses a mix of primary research and expert interviews to catalog emerging data sets related to transportation and land

use, and assesses the ease by which they can be integrated into how public agencies manage the built environment.

JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

RFP: Regional Corridor Analysis

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Columbus, OH

Senior Planner

Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, Cleveland, OH

Planner III

Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, Cleveland, OH

Accountant III

Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, Cleveland, OH

Associate Accountant

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Chicago, IL

Deputy Director, Metropolitan Transportation Planning

Metro, Portland, OR

Economic Development Officer

Durham County, Durham, NC

OPPORTUNITIES

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

RSVP Today! NARC Conference Call on Appropriations

August 9, 3:00-3:45 PM ET

Call Details: +1 (872) 240-3212 / Access Code: 295-830-653

Always complicated, and always impactful, this year's appropriations process is shaping up to be one of the most complicated and impactful in years. The threats to reduce or eliminate funding for many programs important to regional councils -- including funding for CDBG, TIGER Grants, WIOA programs, Administration on Aging, water infrastructure, and other environmental programs, to name just a few -- are real.

Join NARC, NLC, and NACo for a conference call designed to bring you the most up-to-date information on the status of federal appropriations. Our goal is to inform you and provide effective strategies for letting your representatives and senators know how you feel about potential cuts. *Please RSVP to Neil Bomberg at neil@narc.org, so he can provide you with handouts prior to the call!*

Exploring the Link Between Green Infrastructure and Air Quality

August 9, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

While green infrastructure can help communities manage stormwater, using vegetated systems like green roofs and tree boxes can also help improve air quality and reduce urban heat island effects. These practices shade building surfaces, deflect radiation from the sun, and release moisture into the atmosphere. Additionally, natural features such as urban forests and vegetative barriers planted near roads, in parking lots, and around city centers, assist in reducing particulate pollution and ground-level ozone, improving air quality and reducing cases of respiratory illness and other health impacts related to air pollution. In this EPA webcast, speakers will discuss innovative research into the multiple benefits of green infrastructure, specifically projects involving vegetative plantings near roads and green roofs to improve air quality.

Benefit-Cost Methodologies for Evaluating Multimodal Freight Corridor Investments

September 7, 2:00 – 3:30 PM ET

This webinar will discuss how to conduct benefit-cost analyses of proposed infrastructure

investments on multimodal, multi-jurisdictional freight corridors. Presenters will illustrate how the guidebook may help decision makers and other stakeholders at local, state, regional, and national levels. They will also provide an overview of the guidebook and how to use it.

11th UTC Spotlight Conference: Rebuilding and Retrofitting the Transportation Infrastructure

September 26-27, Washington, DC

This conference will bring together thought leaders in government, industry, and academia to discuss key advances needed to rebuild and retrofit transportation infrastructure to address current deficiencies and emerging needs. It will focus on rebuilding and retrofitting transportation infrastructure for all modes, including:

- Maintaining and extending the useful life of the nation's legacy transportation infrastructure, such as bridges, ports, railways and roads
- Building and rebuilding the nation's infrastructure to provide safe and efficient transportation options for all users
- Deploying innovative technology and design approaches that will allow the nation to maximize use of its old and new transportation assets

CONTACT US

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