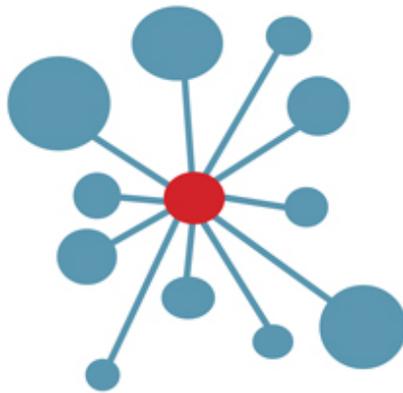




NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS



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**executive directors conference  
september 18 - september 20, 2016  
south bend, in**

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## CONGRESS BRIEF

### **Senators Call for Extending Comment Period for MPO Coordination Proposed Rule**

This week, separate letters from U.S. Senators from Indiana and Illinois and Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey both urged USDOT to extend the comment period on the MPO Coordination NPRM. Both letters to Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx asked for a 60-day extension. The **bipartisan letter** from Indiana and Illinois cited the challenges the proposed rule presents for the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC). The **tristate area letter**, the nation's largest metropolitan area, points to the need for more time to provide more detailed comments. NARC, AMPO, and NADO also requested an extension in July, which was verbally denied. Comments on this rule are due August 26.

## ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

### **USDOT Announces \$7 Million in Funding for Innovative Research to Improve Public Transportation**

The FTA and USDOT announced the \$7 million Safety Research and Demonstration (SRD) program this week. The SRD program provides assistance for transit agencies to pursue cutting-edge technology and innovative approaches to safety. This year the program aims to help transit agencies prevent collisions, enhance safety design elements, and evaluate potential solutions. Applications are due October 14.

### **Railroads Slow to Adopt PTC**

In 2008, Congress gave commuter and freight railroads until the end of 2015 to install positive train control (PTC), the technology that automatically slows a speeding train. In late 2015, Congress extended this deadline until December 2018 due to slow implementation. However, according to a **recent FRA report**, the costly technology is only operating on 9 percent of freight route miles and 22 percent of passenger route miles. This has caused Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx and FRA Administrator Sarah Feinberg to urge railroads to move faster and install this life-saving technology before the deadline.

### **USDOT and EPA Final Rules on Fuel Efficiency in Large Vehicles**

This week, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and USDOT finalized new rules to cut greenhouse gas emission from heavy-duty trucks and other large vehicles. These rules expand standards from 2012, and are estimated to cut 1.1 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions. Trailers, tractors, and heavy-duty pickup trucks and vans are also included in these new regulations.

## REGIONS BRIEF

### **Uber and Lyft Want to Replace Public Buses**

In the latest move to incorporate ride sharing into the transportation network, Uber and Lyft have begun partnering with public transportation agencies and local governments to subsidize rides. In Pinellas Park, Florida the transit agency stopped running two bus lines and started paying a portion of Uber rides instead. Lyft is working on a similar project in Centennial, Colorado to subsidize rides and has also helped transit agencies apply for federal grants that would pay part of a Lyft fare. These partnerships are directed at suburban areas with less density and lower ridership, and could save transit agencies money while serving more people. In addition to the expansion of ride sharing options, Uber is also deploying their **first self-driving fleet** in Pittsburg later this month.

### **Member Request! Regional Transit Plan**

Centralina Council of Governments in Charlotte, NC is currently in the design phase for development of a regional transit plan. They are looking to incorporate aspects of economic development, workforce affordable housing, broadband, and transit oriented development. Please share any models for this design process from your region or research demonstrating the value and benefit of this kind of development with Sarah Reed at [sarah@narc.org](mailto:sarah@narc.org).

## JOBS

*[View full list of jobs!](#)*

### **Community Development Planner/Grant Administrator**

Indian Nations Council of Governments, Tulsa, OK

### **Transportation Modeler/Analyst**

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Philadelphia, PA

### **Notice of Solicitation: IT & Telecommunications Svcs (RFP No. 16-03)**

Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization, Fort Lauderdale, FL

## OPPORTUNITIES

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

### **Improving Large Truck Safety through the Design and Operation of Work Zones**

August 23, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Work zones can create special challenges for drivers of large vehicles, such as commercial motor vehicles, due to space restrictions. Road work must take place within highway rights-of-way and, often, within reduced numbers of lanes. Understanding how work zones can be designed to maintain the efficient movement of large freight transportation vehicles within the restricted right-of-way space and to ensure that DOT and public works staff and highway contractors' employees can safely work within work zones can provide significant benefits for all work zone users.

### **The Use of ITS Data for Transit Planning and Management, and Its Challenges**

August 24, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

The USDOT Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office (ITS JPO) sponsored a project with ITS America, in cooperation with the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), to support a range of activities related to research, development, and dissemination of information on ITS and its application to public transportation modes. As part of these activities, ITS America has developed strategic discussion papers on key topics that might help identify and understand challenges and barriers to ITS deployment as well as suggest recommendations for action. These discussion papers build on the knowledge gained from a range of experts through workshops, listening sessions, and interviews, as supplemented by a review of pertinent literature.

This webinar will focus on the Use of ITS data for transit planning and management, and its challenges.

### **Strategies to Enhance Large Truck Safety in Work Zones**

August 25, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

The webinar will present how various federal agencies, FHWA, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), are trying to increase safety and mobility for large trucks in work zones. Each agency will provide an overview of their program's initiatives to tackle this important issue. Additionally, other stakeholders will highlight their local efforts in Iowa, Alabama, and Vermont to increase safety and mobility.

### **Innovations in Accessible Mobility Grant Opportunity**

Applications Due: August 26

The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center is inviting applications for development of program innovations that increase accessible transportation options for older adults and people with disabilities, and maximize the use of Section 5310 and other federal funding investments. Grants of up to \$50,000 each will be awarded to as many as six communities for a twelve month period. Local and regional private nonprofit or government organizations may apply for this funding opportunity.

### **Ridesharing, Technology and TDM in University Campus Settings**

September 8, 3:00 – 4:30 PM ET

This webinar features lessons from a new FHWA report that examines how university campus transportation departments are using new technologies and supportive policies to advance ridesharing and transportation demand management (TDM) as alternatives to driving alone to campus. It looks at university campuses as "ridesharing and TDM laboratories" where innovations may be first attempted in a relatively more controlled environment, from which elements could potentially be transferred to broader, more complex metropolitan transportation planning contexts. The report features case studies of successful ridesharing and TDM practices at six U.S. universities that have dramatically lowered drive-alone rates. In addition to the case studies, the report summarizes how ridesharing and TDM programs have factored into university transportation programs in the past; identifies and generalizes innovative practices from the case studies; and discusses how those practices may be applied in local, regional, or statewide transportation planning contexts.

### **First-Mile, Last-Mile: Connections to Transit**

September 8, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Walkability and good public transit are natural partners because – together – they provide a reliable, supportive infrastructure for people to live well without a car. This America Walks webinar explores ways for transit advocates and walkable community advocates to work together to create solutions in which the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

### **Tackling US Infrastructure Challenges**

September 8 and 13, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

From the Interstate Highway System to our air transportation network, infrastructure investments have laid the foundation of American economic expansion. But cracks are forming in the foundation, placing the entire U.S. economy at risk. For this webinar, REMI Vice President Billy Leung will discuss the importance of prioritizing projects, addressing the most critical needs in an economically sustainable way. He will rank the viability of improvement strategies using dynamic economic modeling, incorporating economic and travel data from REMI's models to forecast impacts from alternative proposals.

### **Hotel Block Closes Saturday 8/20! NARC's 2016 Executive Directors Conference and Board Retreat**

EDC: September 18-20 – South Bend, IN

Board Retreat: September 20-21 – South Bend, IN

Join NARC and the Michiana Area Council of Governments for the 2016 Executive Directors Conference in South Bend, Indiana. This conference brings executive directors, deputy directors, and senior staff together to network, share best practices, and explore opportunities for strengthening professional capacity and development. *Please plan to arrive on Sunday,*

*September 18. Hotel rooms will not be available on Saturday night at our hotel or any others in the area.*

## **CONTACT US**

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