



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS

## CONGRESS BRIEF

### Senate Passes WRDA

The Senate voted 95-3 today to pass the *Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)* after ending debate yesterday. Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) is hopeful that the House version will get to the floor next week. The \$10.6 billion bill would approve more than two dozen new U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood protection and water projects as well as federal funding to address lead pipes in Flint, Michigan. NARC supports the Senate bill and has joined a large coalition urging House and Senate members to pass the legislation before they adjourn.

### Committee Votes on Airport Security Study for Cuba

On Tuesday, the House Homeland Security Committee approved a bill requiring TSA to conduct a study assessing Cuba's airport security protocols. The measure would have required a halt of flights to and from Cuba until the administration conducted the study, but an amendment stripped out that provision. Supporters of the bill want to know more about the canine program, security personnel hiring and training process, and the advanced security screening equipment available in the Cuban airports.

## ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

### Grants for Innovative Ways to Connect People to Healthcare Via Transit

This week, FTA announced the selection of 19 projects to receive \$7.3 million for the Rides to Wellness Demonstration and Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants. The selected projects will address the problem of how low income, older adults, and people with disabilities get to the doctor without a vehicle. The grants are a part of the Rides to Wellness initiative that emphasizes public transit as a way to access healthcare. Some of the awardees include the **Atlanta Regional Commission** and the **San Diego Association of Governments**.

### Strategic Agenda for Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation

The *Strategic Agenda for Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation* will inform FHWA pedestrian and bicycle activities for the next three to five years. It is organized around the four goals of networks, safety, equity, and trips that include actions relating to capacity building, policy, data, and research. This agenda replaces the *1994 National Bicycling and Walking Study*.

### USDOT Celebrates Cincinnati Streetcar Grand Opening

FTA Acting Administrator Carolyn Flowers joined Cincinnati Mayor John Cranley last week to celebrate the opening of the 3.6 mile long Cincinnati Bell Connector streetcar line. The streetcar is part of the city's efforts to revitalize downtown and improve access to jobs, the riverfront, and expand transportation options. The project was funded by a \$16 million TIGER grant along with other DOT funds.

### GAO Study: Linking Funding to Conditions May Help Demonstrate Impact of Federal Investment

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently completed a study on the funding and management of bridges and the effects of the 2012 legislative changes that consolidated the bridge-funding program into other highway programs. The report examines trends from the past ten years

on the condition, funding, and ways states fund and manage their programs. GAO found that overall bridge conditions have improved between 2006 and 2015 and that federal funds have remained relatively stable within the same time period. In addition, during interviews, officials reported little change in the way they have funded and managed bridges since the 2012 changes. Their report recommends DOT help FHWA to develop measures on the link between federal funding and the desired outcomes and report the results to Congress.

## REGIONS BRIEF

### **SANDAG to Extend Trolley Service**

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) has received a \$1.04 billion federal grant from FTA to extend their existing Blue Line Trolley. The 11-mile Mid-Coast Trolley extension will connect downtown San Diego to University City – where the University of California, San Diego is located – providing an effective public transit route to accommodate future growth and reduce roadway congestion. Models indicate that the extension will attract 20,000 new transit riders a day from nine new stops. Construction is set to begin this fall.

### **Every Body Walk! Collaborative Social Justice Toolkit**

This *Social Justice Toolkit* aims to help organizations and individuals within the walking movement foster equity, fairness, and justice within communities. The toolkit will provide tools, resources, case studies, and guides on how to communicate and promote equity through the walking movement.

## JOBS

*View full list of jobs!*

### **Senior Principal Planner – Center for Livable Communities/Mobility Services Division**

Atlanta Regional Commission, Atlanta, GA

### **Lead Manager**

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

### **Planner**

Eastgate Regional Council of Governments, Youngstown, OH

### **Senior Planner – Regional & Subregional Planning**

North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Newark, NJ

### **Watershed Planner**

Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, Toledo, OH

### **Finance Director**

Sacramento Area Council of Governments, Sacramento, CA

## OPPORTUNITIES

*View full list of grants and events!*

### **From Transit to Access: Rethinking How Cities Connect Their Residents to Opportunity**

September 23, 12:00 – 12:45 PM ET

Join Ben Hecht, president and CEO of Living Cities, for his talk on the need for a *New Urban Practice* – a fundamentally different way of solving problems and riding trends of change that can move the needle on poverty and economic opportunity in cities.

### **Walking and Walkability in Rural Communities**

October 13, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Different environments or types of communities offer different opportunities and challenges for promoting walking and walkability. One of the most common questions at America Walks is about resources available for walking in rural communities. Learn about some of the challenges that come with working in rural environments and a selection of resources that provide unique

opportunities to promote walking and walkability in rural communities in this webinar. Hear from WalkBoston as they talk about their work in promoting walking and walkability across the state of Massachusetts followed by examining two resources available to help you do the same in your community!

### **NCHRP Snapshot Survey: Resiliency Planning**

Survey Closes October 30

The AASHTO Standing Committee on Planning (SCOP), through the NHCRP 8-36 program, invites your participation in a brief survey covering current and future planning activities at state DOTs, MPOs, and regional organizations. The insights and responses you provide will be used to develop a quarterly series of "snapshot" publications. These snapshots highlight current practices, address trending topics, provide best practice examples, and act as a resource for planners, executives, legislators, and others interested in planning practices. The survey explores the topics of Risk, Resiliency, and Redundancy in long range planning. Please distribute the survey to the person(s) within your agency who may best respond to this topic.

### **USDOT Connected Vehicle PlugFest**

November 15-18, Novi, Michigan

The PlugFest provides a venue for vendor-to-vendor connected vehicle device testing as needed to develop certification services for multi-vendor connected vehicle networks. Three certification service providers (Danlaw, OmniAir, and 7Layers) will be on site to demonstrate certification testing products developed through the USDOT Certification Testing Program. There will also be a session online on general interest topics.

## **CONTACT US**

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