



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS



## 2017 NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REGIONS

FEBRUARY 12-15  
WASHINGTON, DC

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### CONGRESS BRIEF

#### **Continuing Resolution Could Extend to May**

Due to the busy Senate schedule expected in January, Republicans in both the House and Senate have said that a new continuing resolution (CR) could run until the end of April. Many, including Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn (R-TX), have expressed concerns that this would require passage of an additional CR until the end of fiscal year 2017 in September. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee, criticized the decision on the floor, citing the discontent of the Defense Department and others. The text of the CR is expected to be released next week despite conflicting opinions on timing. There are several outstanding issues, including funding for Flint, MI and victims of severe flooding, that some are still hoping to address in the CR.

#### **House Democrats Leadership Chosen**

House Democrats voted yesterday on their leadership team, reelecting Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) as Minority Leader. Pelosi defeated Tim Ryan (D-OH), 134-63, representing the closest margin for Pelosi since she took the position. While the result was expected, many were hoping for a fresh start after the disappointing showing for Democrats in the 2016 election. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) will remain as Democratic Whip and Joe Crowley (D-NY) will serve as Democratic Caucus Chairman. In the House Budget Committee, John Yarmuth (D-KY) will take over for Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) who won election to the Senate.

### ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

#### **Trump Selects Elaine Chao as Next U.S. DOT Secretary**

This week, President-elect Donald Trump announced that he is nominating Elaine Chao to serve as the next Secretary of Transportation. Chao has extensive executive experience, having served as Secretary of Labor for the entirety of the George W. Bush Administration and Deputy Secretary of Transportation under the George H.W. Bush Administration. Chao also has an extensive maritime

background, having served as Deputy Administrator of the Maritime Administration and Chair of the Federal Maritime Commission under President Ronald Reagan. Most recently, Chao worked with the Hudson Institute and Heritage Foundation, in addition to serving on the board of directors for a number of nonprofit and corporate institutions. Chao is married to current Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY).

This choice has been praised from lawmakers on both sides of the aisle and she will likely be a key player in the new administration's large infrastructure package. She has previously supported the use of tax incentives, public private partnerships, and other private funding incentives, which are expected to be a centerpiece of Trump's infrastructure policy. Several groups off the Hill have also praised this pick, such as the American Trucking Association. House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) held a meet and greet with Chao yesterday but expressed that they did not go into policy discussions for the new administration.

### **DOT Seeks Proposals for Automated Vehicle Technology “Proving Grounds”**

The new Automation Proving Ground Pilot Program will designate facilities as qualified proving grounds for the safe testing, demonstration, and deployment of automated vehicle technology. The program is intended to focus on and foster the safe deployment of automated vehicles. USDOT is requesting applications from entities to become a Community of Practice to develop and share best practices around testing and demonstration. Eligible entities include test tracks or testing facilities, race tracks, cities/urban cores, highway corridors, and campuses (corporate or academic). *Applications are due December 15.*

### **Zero Emission Research Opportunity**

FHWA is seeking applications from nonprofit organizations to apply for funding to conduct research, demonstrations, testing, and evaluation of zero emission and related technology for public transportation applications. The Zero Emission Research Opportunity (ZERO) will use a cooperative research model to assemble project teams comprised of transit agencies, vendors, suppliers, and others. Nonprofit, state, and local government entities and providers of public transit are eligible to be a part of a consortium. *Applications are due February 21, 2017.*

## **REGIONS BRIEF**

### **Sidewalk Labs Spinoff Could Be Coming to Your City**

Sidewalk Labs CEO Dan Doctoroff has announced the expansion of their themed labs focused on citizen engagement, internet connectivity, transportation, and access to public space. The first four to be named are the Build Lab, Care Lab, Manage Lab, and Model Lab. They are respectively focused on affordable housing, health challenges for low-income residents, using data to improve efficiency, and making transportation more affordable and sustainable. Many more labs and locations of the labs have yet to be named, but will be up and running within six months to a year with more to follow. The company hopes that these labs will spin-off into separate companies and partner up with organizations similar to ones they are currently working with like USDOT and Transportation for America.

### **A Regional Models of Cooperation Peer Exchange Summary Report**

On May 25, 2016 the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), FHWA, and the Ohio DOT held a peer exchange to share best practices on incorporating performance-based planning into transportation planning. This report looks at the workshop overview, summary, key themes and strategies, and lessons learned.

## **JOBS**

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

### **JLUS GIS Specialist**

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

### **JLUS Project Manager**

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

### **JLUS Project Coordinator**

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

## **Principal Planner – Water Resources**

Triangle J Council of Governments, Durham, NC

## **Transportation Planner**

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Philadelphia, PA

# **OPPORTUNITIES**

*View full list of grants and events!*

### **NARC Election Webinar! 2016 Election Outcomes and Impact**

December 5, 3:30 – 4:30 PM ET

As things continue to come into focus after the recent historic election, there is much to be learned about how things will play out over the next two months and the next four years. During this webinar, NARC will provide an in-depth analysis of the 2016 election results and examine what regions can expect in the near future. The webinar will focus on the post-election lame-duck period and potential policy changes during the first 100 days of the new administration on issues such as infrastructure and economic development. In addition, NARC staff will briefly discuss key leadership and congressional committee changes, President-elect Trump's cabinet choices, the presidential transition, and House and Senate election outcomes. Please join NARC for this webinar to unpack the 2016 election results and discuss what they mean for regions and local governments.

### **House Roundtable on the Impact of Autonomous Vehicle Technology on America's Transportation Systems**

December 6, 10:00 AM

Highways and Transit Subcommittee Chairman Sam Graves (R-MO) will lead a Subcommittee roundtable policy discussion next week to discuss the impact of autonomous vehicle technology on the Nation's surface transportation systems. The purpose of the roundtable is to educate Members on the rapid development of autonomous vehicles and how this technology could shape the future of America's surface transportation systems. The roundtable will explore these effects in context of the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act*, which took a technology-neutral approach to promote competition and innovation in autonomous transportation technology, while establishing grant programs to speed their development.

### **Greening Freight Operations Across North America**

December 12, Long Beach, CA and via webcast

Join the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) on December 12 in Long Beach, CA for a public forum on Greening Freight Operations across North America. Building on the momentum of the Leaders' Statement on a North American Climate, Clean Energy, and Environment Partnership, this JPAC forum will look at how to facilitate continental trade and economic growth while lowering freight-related GHG emissions over the long-term.

### **TMIP Webinar: Lessons Learned from Backcasting and Forecasting Exercises**

December 14, 2:30 – 4:30 PM ET

A basic part of travel demand model validation is running the model for a "base year" and comparing the outputs to observed data such as traffic counts, travel times and speeds, transit ridership, and other measures of travel demand. FHWA recently completed a project to provide information for agencies performing this part of the validation process, sometimes known as dynamic validation. The models for two U.S. metropolitan areas, Baltimore and Cincinnati, were chosen as case studies for this work, and the agencies responsible for these models, the Baltimore Metropolitan Council and the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments, provided the model files and data. For each region, each of the current and previous model versions were run for the base year for that model, and for the base year of the other model. Join this webinar to hear about lessons learned and recommendations for modeling practitioners.

### **Call for Papers on Integrated Land Use/Transport Modeling**

Abstract Due: December 15

Full Papers Due: February 28, 2017

A new call for papers has been released by The Journal of Transport and Land Use (JTLU) for a special section on Integrated Land Use/Transport Modeling. Topics of interest include (but are not limited to): The need for more efficient integrated models that are capable of running many scenarios within a few days or even hours; the need for more detailed integrated models that are able to answer more complex policy questions (which may become a counter-point to the first bullet point); frameworks for multi-scale models that integrate across different spatial and temporal resolutions as well as policy domains; the value of integrating models other than land use and transport, such as pedestrian models, Dynamic Traffic Assignments, health models, environmental impact models, etc. Please send an abstract of your paper idea to the editor of this special section, Rolf Moeckel ([rolf.moeckel@tum.de](mailto:rolf.moeckel@tum.de)) by December 15. Full papers are due on February 28, 2017.

### **How MPOs use CMAQ Funding for Alternative Fuel Vehicle and Infrastructure Projects**

January 18, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

There are many types of projects eligible for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program funding. Hear from two MPOs about using CMAQ funding for alternative fuel vehicle projects. Jim Stack from Genesee Transportation Council will describe partnering with a Clean Cities coalition to support the deployment of nearly 150 propane, compressed natural gas (CNG), and electric drive vehicles. Jeff Sheffield from North Florida Transportation Planning Organization will talk about hosting the North Florida Clean Fuels Coalition and the importance of alternative fuel vehicles in their region. By using CMAQ funding, they have installed electric vehicle charging stations, helped convert a county fleet to CNG, and purchased CNG conversion kits for sanitation trucks.

### **Registration Open! 2017 National Conference of Regions**

*February 12-15 – Washington Court Hotel, 525 New Jersey Ave NW Washington, DC*

The National Conference of Regions is NARC's forum to determine key policy issues and a legislative agenda for the year ahead, targeting topics central to our members' missions and their local elected officials' focus. Additional information will be available soon. Capitol Hill Day is the final day of the conference, February 15, 2017.

## **CONTACT US**

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