



**MEMBER REQUEST: Salary Survey**

Tippecanoe County Area Planning Commission in Indiana requests the following salary information (numbers or ranges are fine) for the following positions:

- MPO Director
- MPO Deputy Director
- GIS Specialist
- Entry-level Planning Staff

Please also include the total population that your organizations serves in your response, and send this information to [anna@narc.org](mailto:anna@narc.org) by December 12.

**LEGISLATIVE BRIEF**

**House Passes Fuel Tax Increase!** Yes, you read that correctly. It just wasn't *that* fuel tax, and the money won't be going into the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). As part of the pay-for package, the *Achieving a Better Life Experience Act* (ABLE; H.R. 647) would increase the diesel fuel tax that barge operators currently pay by 45 percent, from 20 to 29 cents. This makes for an odd offset, given that the funds will be put into the Inland Waterway Trust Fund and spent on dam, lock, and dredging projects on lakes and rivers. The ABLE bill is expected to be coupled with the tax extenders bill and sent to the U.S. Senate, so there is a good chance this provision becomes law.

**Tax Plan Disappoints Transit Advocates:** A House-passed package of tax extender provisions (H.R. 5771) boosts the transit tax benefit to match the parking benefit, but only until the end of the 2014 calendar year. Drivers can deduct \$250 a month tax-free to pay for parking, but the maximum transit deduction is \$130 (though there was some parity reached as a result of the stimulus bill in 2008). Transit advocates are pressing to make the modal parity permanent. Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) said he wanted to look at establishing permanent parity between transportation modes "early next year." Read the bill text and more [HERE](#).

**Bipartisan Agreement on Coast Guard Authorization:** The Republican and Democratic leaders of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee recently announced that they have reached a bipartisan agreement that authorizes the U.S. Coast Guard. Negotiations between the House and Senate on the final rule began after the House approved the legislation reauthorizing the Coast Guard on April 1, 2014. Following the authorization, Bill Shuster (R-PA), Jay Rockefeller (D-WV), Nick J. Rahall, II (D-WV), and John Thune (R-SD) released a statement that said "this bipartisan, bicameral measure helps ensure that the Service has the necessary tools to carry out its important missions, and also recognizes how essential a healthy maritime transportation sector is to our economy, our competitiveness, and our national security." The *Howard Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2014* is named in honor of retiring Congressman Howard Coble, a long-serving member of the House Transportation Committee and the only current Member of Congress to serve in the Coast Guard.

**Diaz-Balart New Chairman of T-HUD Appropriations Subcommittee:** Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL) was recently announced as the new chairman of the House Appropriations Transportation-Housing and Urban Development (T-HUD) Subcommittee. Diaz-Balart had not previously served on this subcommittee. Several members of the T-HUD Subcommittee are retiring, including Tom Latham (R-IA), Frank R. Wolf (R-VA), and Ed Pastor (D-AZ). Democrats will appoint new ranking members early next year.

**States and Local Governments Filling the Federal Transportation Funding Gap:** After the 2014 elections, states and local governments across the country are either beefing up transportation trust funds or protecting them from other top priorities. Voters approved 63 of 94 state and local transportation initiatives on the ballot, which provides almost \$15 billion for transportation projects. Polls show that voters overwhelmingly support spending on infrastructure projects. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

## ADMINISTRATIVE BRIEF

**Obama Pessimistic About Highway Bill:** During a discussion with business executives earlier this week, President Barack Obama expressed a lack of confidence that Congress will pass a long-term transportation bill next year, given the absence of agreement on how to pay for it. Obama has proposed the use of a one-time infusion to the HTF from a tax overhaul bill. This approach is similar to a House Ways and Means Committee proposal from Chair Dave Camp (R-MI), but there is no indication that it has legs in Congress. Obama was also pessimistic about the gas tax as the long-term solution for funding the HTF.

**FHWA Right-of-Way and Real Estate Proposal:** The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding the acquisition, management, and disposal of real property for transportation programs and projects receiving funds under U.S. Code title 23. Section 1302 of MAP-21 grants flexibility to grantees regarding such acquisitions. FHWA is proposing to update the real estate regulations to reflect the agency's experience with the Federal-aid highway program. The FHWA welcomes comments on the proposal from interested parties. Click [HERE](#) for details.

## REGIONAL BRIEF

**New Orleans Appoints City's First Chief Resilience Officer:** New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu appointed the city's first chief resilience officer as part of a global effort called 100 Resilient Cities, an initiative that helps communities prepare for social and economic stresses that threaten urban areas. New Orleans Redevelopment Authority Executive Director Jeff Hebert will serve in this new capacity. Hebert will be tasked with developing a "roadmap to resilience" by bringing together a coalition of people throughout all levels of government and segments of the city. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

**Testing Potential MAP-21 System Performance Measures for Two Corridors:** The New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority and the New Jersey Department of Transportation released a pilot study that offers an overview of the challenges of implementing upcoming federal mandates for measuring the performance of state highway systems. This study tested the types of system performance measures anticipated to emerge from federal rulemaking for MAP-21. Researchers used data to examine delay and reliability formulas for two different highway corridors in New Jersey: 1-78 and NJ Route 18. The pilot study offers insights on how different performance measure formulations can affect their interpretation, and how it can change transportation investment decision making. Click [HERE](#) for the report.

**NACo Report: Counties Drive Economic Growth with Transportation and Infrastructure Innovations:** The National Association of Counties (NACo) released a new report describing how six counties in the United States are investing in transportation and infrastructure projects to drive economic growth. NACo finds that Counties invest over \$100 billion yearly to build and maintain public infrastructure, and are responsible for building and maintaining 45% of public roads and nearly 40% of bridges, and are involved in the operations of 30% of public airports. Click [HERE](#) for the report.

## **OPPORTUNITY BRIEF**

Click [HERE](#) to view the list of grants and events still open!

### **WEBINAR: *The Innovative MPO* Book Launch**

*December 10, 2014 1:00PM- 2:00PM ET*

Join Transportation for America for the launch of *The Innovative MPO*, a guidebook to help MPO staff, board members, and advisors find innovative ways to achieve community goals. The Guidebook is designed to offer a range of ideas in planning, programming, technical analysis, and community partnership. Click [HERE](#) to register

### **Reminder! NARC WEBINAR: Introduction to the National Center for Mobility Management**

*December 11, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET*

NARC will join NLC and American Public Transportation Association to co-host a webinar on the work of the National Center for Mobility Management. The National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM) promotes customer-centered mobility strategies to advance good health, economic vitality, self-sufficiency, and community. This webinar will provide an overview of the NCMM's capacity-building resources available to communities and share tips on how to tap into the Center's expertise on transportation coordination, health care and job access strategies, funding and financing, and more. Click [HERE](#) to register.

### **CONFERENCE: NARC's 2015 National Conference of Regions**

*February 8-10, 2015 - Washington, DC*

Registration is open for the National Conference of Regions. This conference is a forum for locally-elected officials and their Regional Councils to explore federal policy issues, and discuss NARC's legislative priorities for the 114th Congress. Click [HERE](#) for the conference webpage.