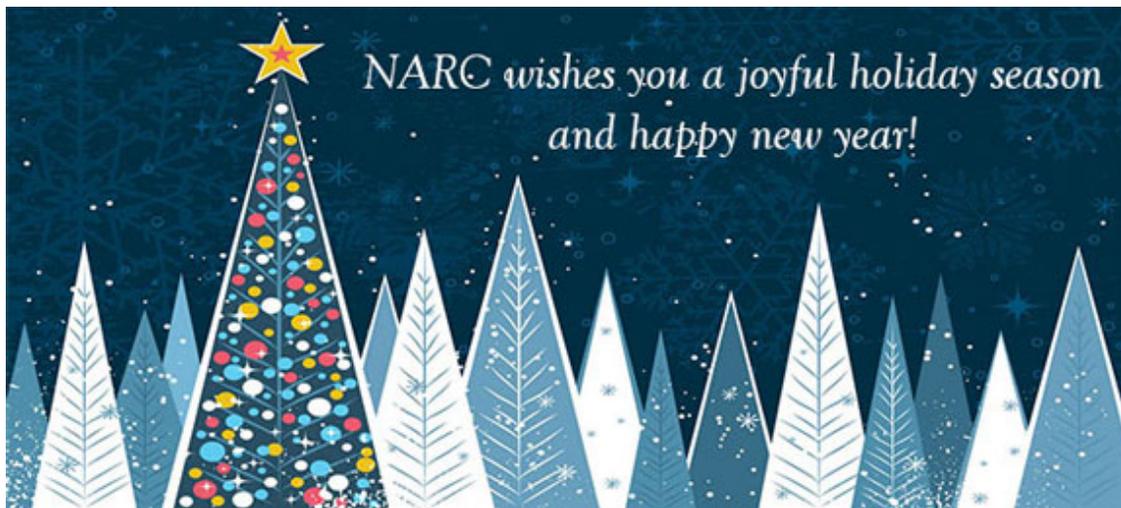




NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS



MEMBER REQUEST

MPOAC Request: Transportation Asset Management Plan Guidance

The Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC), the Florida statewide MPO association, seeks examples and ideas from NARC member MPOs on Transportation Asset Management (TAM) Plan guidance. MPOAC is particularly interested in your MPO's plans, and any conversations you have had or guidance you have received from your Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regional representative on addressing the TAM plan requirement in the Transportation Performance Measures.

Have you heard from FTA on this issue or made your own plans on how to address this part of the Transportation Performance Measures? Do you have any documents you would be willing to share with other MPOs on how to address the requirement?

Please send responses and questions to Erich Zimmermann, erich@narc.org.

CONGRESS BRIEF

Tax Bill Heads to President's Desk

A tax reform bill is headed to the president's desk, but will not receive his signature until early January to avoid mandatory spending cuts from the **PAYGO law**. Waiting until January pushes the spending cuts that the bill triggers to 2019, including a \$25 billion cut to Medicare among other federal programs.

While some transportation-related provisions were preserved in the final bill, the loss of advanced refunding could be very costly for local infrastructure programs. The tax-exempt status of Private Activity Bonds (PABs) was preserved, though rumors are already spreading that this issue could be raised again during the infrastructure debate next year. Despite some early confusion in media reports, **commuter benefits** were also largely preserved. The key change is that employers who provide parking or transit benefits will no longer be able to write them off. The Association for

Commuter Transportation (ACT) does not expect major impacts from this change because most benefits are provided as a pre-tax program and employers will continue to receive payroll tax benefits. ACT also sees that many employers who subsidize these benefits do so to retain their workforce and not to receive a tax write-off.

Other changes are likely to have more significant impacts. The bill eliminates advance refunding bonds, which allow cities and others to refinance existing debt to capture lower interest rates. This will not directly impact borrowing for projects, but it will prevent cities from saving funds for additional infrastructure projects. Additionally, the cap on local property and income tax deductions could put additional pressure on tax rates or make future increases more difficult to achieve. This could have negative consequences on the ability of cities to fund future infrastructure projects.

Freight Movement: Assessing Where We Are Now and Where We Need to Go

Yesterday Mark Policinski, CEO of the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana (OKI) Regional Council of Governments, testified in front of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure. Policinski represented OKI and the Coalition of America's Gateways and Trade Corridors, which consists of over 60 public and private organizations committed to increasing federal investment in freight infrastructure. His testimony laid out five recommendations for strategic investment that included developing a national strategy, providing dedicated funding, and partnering with the private sector. The CEO for the American Trucking Associations and representatives from the Maryland Port Administration and Waterways Council, Inc. were also on the panel.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

Resilience and Durability to Extreme Weather Pilot Program

FHWA seeks to partner with state DOTs, MPOs, Federal Lands Management Agencies (FLMAs), and Tribes to fund five to eight pilots that address three different areas related to deploying resilience solutions. The areas to address are deploying a resilience solution and monitoring performance, integrating resilience and durability into agency practices, and using available tools and resources to assess the vulnerability of transportation systems. Each project would last two years and range from \$10,000 to \$250,000. There will be an **informational webinar** on January 4 at 2:00 PM ET. Letters of interest are due February 9.

At Least Three Killed in Amtrak Derailment

An Amtrak train derailed and fell onto Interstate 5 near Takoma, WA on Monday during its inaugural trip on a new route from Seattle to Portland. At least three people have died as a result, and many others remain in the hospital with injuries. The National Transportation Safety Board announced Monday that they had found the event data recorder, which showed the train was traveling 50 mph over the speed limit when it derailed. NTSB will investigate the crash and interview the crew before determining the official cause.

REGIONS BRIEF

Building Regional Resilience Tool

The University of Missouri's Institute of Public Policy at the Harry S Truman School of Public Affairs developed an online resiliency tool for regional planners, community leaders, government officials, and researchers alike. The Building Regional Resilience toolkit provides communities with the ability to prepare resilience plans for natural and manmade threats. They developed research-based indexes that measure regional vulnerability and resilience in each county of the U.S. Each county was mapped on the index according to resiliency and vulnerability relative averages in four categories: social, economic, infrastructure, and environmental.

MVRPC Receives "SAFETYS" Award from Ohio DOT

The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) recently accepted a "SAFETYS" award and \$3,000 grant from the Ohio DOT for their "Street Smart" pedestrian safety campaign. Launched in 2016, "Street Smart" has presented posters, digital billboard ads, newspaper ads, bus exterior ads, social media posts, and a **webpage** with safety tips for pedestrians and drivers. Powerful images of men, women, and children with black tire marks across their faces reminded drivers and pedestrians alike that "passengers don't come with airbags" and to wear bright, reflective clothing at night. MVRPC Executive Director Brian O. Martin said, "the images

represent people in your life such as your neighbor, family member, or friend. We want to remind everyone to watch out for pedestrians and that pedestrians should stay alert, establish eye contact with drivers, and walk defensively.”

ARC Releases TIP Update

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is currently accepting comments on their latest Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which allocates \$293 million in new federal transportation dollars through 2023 for projects across the region. The TIP provides several expansions to transit options as well as expanding the regional multi-use train network.

JOBS

View full list of jobs!

Safe Communities Coalition Assistant

Lane Council of Governments, Eugene, OR

Executive Director

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, Alhambra, CA

Transportation Director

Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Colorado Springs, CO

Transportation Performance Measures Planner

Pima Association of Governments, Tucson, AZ

RFP for an ITS Architecture Comprehensive Update

Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, Cleveland, OH

A promotional poster for the National Conference of Regions. On the left is a stylized illustration of the U.S. Capitol building. On the right, the text reads: "NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REGIONS", "FEBRUARY 11-14, 2018", "WASHINGTON, D.C.", and "Registration is Open!" in a blue script font.

**NATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF REGIONS**

FEBRUARY 11-14, 2018
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Registration is Open!

OPPORTUNITIES

View full list of grants and events!

Advancing Health Equity Webinar Series Part 3: Fostering Community Partnerships to Advance Health Equity

January 9, 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

This **four-part webinar series** is built around the strategic practices outlined in the recently released *Health Equity Guide* by Human Impact Partners. Each webinar focuses on a **set of strategic practices** that health departments can take to pursue a wall-to-wall transformation of how they work internally, with communities, and alongside other government agencies. This webinar will discuss: Why fostering community partnerships is key to advancing health equity, how Kansas City shares power and space with community organizers to change policy, and resources to help your health department foster community partnerships to advance health equity.

Impacts of New Mobility Services on the Use of Other Travel Modes in California

January 17, 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

Emerging transportation services, such as carsharing and ride-hailing services, are quickly changing how people travel. This webinar will highlight new research from Dr. Giovanni Circella exploring the factors affecting the adoption of these new services, how frequently these services are used, and the effect these services have on the use of other travel modes, including public transportation and driving alone. Insights presented in this webinar come from an ambitious data collection effort funded by California DOT on the travel trends and lifestyle preferences of millennials and members of Generation X in California and their relationships with residential location, technology adoption, car ownership, travel behavior, and future aspirations to purchase a vehicle.

Performance Based Planning and Programming Webinar

January 25, 1:00 – 3:30 PM ET

FHWA and FTA speakers will provide an overview of the Performance Based Planning and Programming Requirements, along with implementation timelines. Peer Presenters will share how they are coordinating and collaborating with key partners such as state DOTs, MPOs, and transit operators on Performance Based Planning and Programming. The goal of the webinar is to share the latest information and best practices to ensure consistency nationwide when implementing these requirements.

CONTACT US

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