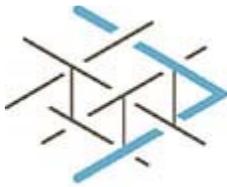


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XIV, No. 5, February 3, 2014

eRegions

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

We have confirmed new speakers for your National Conference of Regions next week. We anticipate a full house and plenty of discussion.

I look forward to seeing you all there!

Best,
Fred

NARC LEADERSHIP

President

Hon. Penny Gross
Supervisor,
Fairfax County, VA

Chair Jim Hassinger,
Executive Directors

PROGRAM UPDATE POLICY UPDATE REGIONS 360 GRANT OPPORTUNITIES UPCOMING EVENTS

A graphic for the 2014 National Conference of Regions. It features a 3D arrangement of blue and red cubes, with a green globe on top of one of the blue cubes. To the right of the cubes, the text reads "2014 NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REGIONS" in blue, "FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014 WASHINGTON, DC" in blue, and "REGISTER TODAY!" in red. At the bottom left is the NARC logo with the tagline "Building Regional Communities".

2014 NATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF REGIONS

FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014
WASHINGTON, DC

REGISTER TODAY!

NARC
Building Regional Communities

Got Budget Questions? In advance of the upcoming National Conference of Regions (NCR), NARC requests sending any questions and comments you or your organization might have on federal budget issues. We will use these throughout the conference to stimulate discussion and determine solutions with our expert speakers and peers. Please send questions to Anna Rosenbaum at anna@narc.org.

Please Note: NARC will not be issuing *eRegions* next week during NCR, but will resume the following week.

PROGRAM UPDATE

NARC Meets with Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx: NARC President, the Hon. Penelope A. Gross, and NARC staff met this week with U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary Anthony Foxx. The meeting was an excellent opportunity to relay NARC's

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transportation reauthorization priorities. Sec. Foxx was receptive to NARC's message, and reiterated his own belief in the importance of a regional focus to improve the economic well-being of all Americans, with transportation as the crux. He highlighted his desire to work across jurisdictions and federal agencies to help make the best transportation system possible for the nation and his ongoing work with the U.S. Housing and Urban Development. Sec. Foxx also expressed interest in working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture more closely.

Sec. Foxx framed his discussion by asking how we set our transportation system on a path appropriate for the 21st century, and specifically how we can improve the capacity and ability of Councils of Governments (COGs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to be at the center of this ongoing transition.

One more specific issue that was discussed centered on bicycle and pedestrian travel, especially as it relates to safety and planning. In addition, Sec. Foxx's staff emphasized the need for close coordination between NARC and U.S. DOT, as rulemakings start rolling out regarding performance measurement and management.

Sec. Foxx also asked a number of provocative questions which will inform the conversation we have at the Transportation Committee meeting at next month's National Conference of Regions.

- Is our transportation system setting us up for the 21st century?
- How do we leverage local leaders to give a stronger voice to transportation?
- How do we ensure local communities are equipped to handle increased efforts?
- How do we increase MPO capacity?
- How do we better link the work of COGs and MPOs?
- How do we connect MPOs into broader economic issues?

If you won't be joining us in Washington for the NCR, please tell us your thoughts on these issues at erich@narc.org.

EPA Releases Climate Assessment Update to National Stormwater Calculator: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released phase II of the National Stormwater Calculator and Climate Assessment Tool package. The calculator is a desktop application that estimates the annual amount of stormwater runoff from a specific location. The

updated calculator includes future climate vulnerability scenarios. For more information, click [HERE](#).

Report Examines Funding Opportunities for Urban Heat Reduction:

The Georgetown Climate Center recently published a [report](#) titled, *Federal Funding Compendium for Urban Heat Adaptation*, outlining federal programs with potential to pay for state and local adaptation to the challenges presented by urban heat islands. The report highlights funding available from 44 federal programs that could be used to help local governments explore solutions and adaptation strategies to this growing problem.

POLICYUPDATE

Congress is in session.

Debt Ceiling Deadline Nears: This Friday the current debt ceiling limit expires. Congress is working to determine a compromise for raising the borrowing authority. It is unlikely that there will be a default, but it is uncertain if members will try to attach policy riders to the increase. The White House has called for a clean extension of the limit. If necessary, the U.S. Department of the Treasury has said it will take measures to push the debt ceiling deadline to the end of February.

Farm Bill Clears House Hurdle: Last week, U.S. House of Representatives members voted to approve a five-year Farm Bill Reauthorization proposal by a vote of 251 to 166. The one thousand page, nearly \$1 trillion compromise package includes an estimated \$17 billion in savings over ten years. In addition to major policy changes, the final conference bill addresses many NARC member priorities including \$228 million for Rural Development programs; \$63 million for the Value-Added Producer Grant Program; \$15 million for the Rural Microenterprise Assistance Program; and \$150 million for the Water and Waste Water Program. The bill also supports regional initiatives by prioritizing applications and reserving up to ten percent of funds for projects that are part of regional, multi-jurisdictional plans. This Regional Authority is a change from current law, and supports efforts to promote long-term community and economic growth strategies. The conference package also continues and expands important investments in energy efficiency, job growth and creation, broadband infrastructure and rural housing. NARC and other members of the Rural Development community sent a [letter](#) supporting reauthorization to members of the

House. The Senate is expected to follow suit in a series of votes today and tomorrow. We encourage members to contact your Senators and ask for their support of this critical legislation. More resources are available from NARC [HERE](#).

Members Call for Hearings to Address Highway Trust Fund: Based on current spending and revenue trends, the U.S. DOT estimates that the highway account of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) will run out of cash before the end of this fiscal year, earlier than previous projections. Democrats on the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee have written Chairman Dave Camp (R-MI) requesting a hearing on the HTF and ways to fund it. The letter, signed by all 16 minority members of the committee, expresses concern regarding the consequences of an insufficient balance in the HTF to both transportation infrastructure and the economy as a whole. The letter is [HERE](#).

REGIONS360

MORPC Releases Report Examining Changing Housing Market in Central Ohio: A recent report released by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) and research partners, studies market trends, emerging housing preferences, and opportunities for redevelopment to meet future needs of residents and businesses in Central Ohio. The [report](#), titled *Columbus Ohio: Metropolitan Area Trends, Preferences and Opportunities 2010 to 2030 and to 2040*, found that Columbus' housing market demand is shifting toward smart-growth development and moving away from traditional suburban sprawl, largely due to changing demographics. Additionally, the report argues that the Columbus market is an accurate demographic microcosm of America in forecasting how these changing demographics will influence the regional economic landscape.

CRCOG: Assessing the Role and Format of Effective Sustainability Metrics: In an article, [*Measuring and Acting on Sustainability: Where Are We Now and What's Next?*](#), published at CityMinded.org, Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) Executive Director Lyle Wray outlines the question of developing effective metrics to measure sustainability initiatives. Wray argues that important components in creating an effective sustainable investment assessment system include: building a relevant framework for metrics; identifying both common and location-specific metrics; and pairing quantitative and qualitative indicators.

New York receives \$886 Million for Ongoing Hurricane Sandy Recovery Efforts: U.S. DOT Secretary Anthony Foxx and Federal Transit Administrator Peter Rogoff awarded approximately \$886 million to help the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) continue rebuilding and replacing transportation equipment and facilities damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Sandy, which triggered the worst transit disaster in U.S. history. "The funds we are providing today will go a long way to help the MTA continue clearing debris from tunnels, rebuilding stations, and replacing electrical systems damaged by flooding, giving transit riders a transit system that is stronger than ever before," said Secretary Foxx.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

New! Green Project Reserve Funding Available through CWSRF: In fiscal year (FY) 2014, Congress and the President provided \$1.45 billion to capitalize the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program, and mandated that no less than ten percent of these funds be dedicated to the Green Project Reserve, approximately \$145 million nationwide. The state agencies that administer CWSRF programs have developed different methods to disperse funds, but these projects are aimed at projects that address green infrastructure, water or energy efficiency improvements, or environmentally innovative activities. More information is available [HERE](#).

Health Impact Project

Funding Announced in February

The Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, is planning to launch a call for proposals for funding in February 2014. Grants will support health impact assessment (HIA) demonstration projects as well as development of HIA programs to integrate health in decision-making. More information on this opportunity is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Housing

Deadline: February 3

Funding is available for FY 2013 and FY 2014 Continuum of Care Program Competition (CoC) to promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; to provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, States, and local governments to quickly re-house the homeless while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by

homelessness; to promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by the homeless; and to optimize self-sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness. Full text of the notice of funding availability (NOFA) is available [HERE](#).

National Science Foundation - Cyber-Enabled Sustainability Science and Engineering

Deadline: February 4

The Cyber-Enabled Sustainability Science and Engineering (CyberSEES) program aims to advance interdisciplinary research in which the science and engineering of sustainability are enabled by new advances in computing, and where computational innovation is grounded in the context of sustainability problems. Read more [HERE](#).

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Deadline: February 5

The Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program seeks to develop nation-wide-community stewardship of local natural resources, preserving resources for future generations and enhancing habitat for local wildlife. Projects seek to address water quality issues in priority watersheds, such as erosion due to unstable streambanks, pollution from stormwater runoff, and degraded shorelines caused by development. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Deadline: February 18

The Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) Cooperative Agreement Program provides funding for eligible applicants for projects that address local environmental and public health issues within an affected community. The CPS Program is designed to help communities understand and address exposure to multiple environmental harms and risks. More information about this opportunity is available [HERE](#).

Energy for Sustainability

Deadline: February 20

This program supports fundamental research and education that will enable innovative processes for the sustainable production of electricity and transportation fuels. Processes for sustainable energy production must be environmentally benign, reduce greenhouse gas production, and utilize renewable resources. Current interest areas in sustainable energy technologies are: Biomass Conversion, Biofuels & Bioenergy,

Photovoltaic Solar Energy, Wind Energy, and Advanced Batteries for Transportation. Learn more about this program [HERE](#).

USDA – Value-Added Producer Grant Program

Deadline: February 24

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced \$10.5 million in carry-over funding from 2013 to help U.S. agricultural producers enter into value-added activities. Awards may be made for either economic planning or working capital activities related to the processing and/or marketing of valued- added agricultural products. More information is available [HERE](#).

Regional Centers of Excellence

Application Due: February 28

NARC, with support from the U.S. Forest Service, is seeking applications for the distribution of grants to regional organizations promoting the use of green infrastructure. Click [HERE](#) for details.

New! EPA – Regional Pollution Prevention Program Offices

Deadline: March 11

Funding is available for Source Reduction Assistance Grants for projects that reduce or eliminate pollution at the source. Funded projects will reduce greenhouse gases; reduce hazardous materials; increase resource conservation; promote efficient business practices; and support pollution prevention integration. EPA anticipates having more than \$1 million in funding available in 2014. More information is available [HERE](#).

DOE - SunShot Incubator 9 Program

Deadline: Final applications due March 13; Concept Papers were due January 13

As part of a new \$19 million investment in solar energy, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced funding available under the SunShot Incubator 9 program. This program will focus on early-stage support for small companies, encouraging private-sector investment and seeking app and web developers from both inside and outside of the energy industry to zero in on reducing soft costs of solar adoption. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration

*Deadlines: March 14 for funding cycle 3 of FY 2014;
June 13 for funding cycle 4 of FY 2014*

EDA is soliciting applications from applicants in rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. EDA provides competitive, merit-based investments that support economic development, foster job creation, and attract private investment in economically distressed areas of the United States. The full announcement is available [HERE](#).

National Science Foundation - Environmental Sustainability

Deadline: March 20

The Environmental Sustainability program supports engineering research that seeks to balance society's need to provide ecological protection and maintain stable economic conditions. Research in Environmental Sustainability typically considers long time horizons and may incorporate contributions from the social sciences and ethics. There are four principal general research areas which are supported: Industrial Ecology, Green Engineering, Ecological Engineering, Earth Systems Engineering. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

Climate Solutions University Accepting Applications

Application Deadline: Rolling

The Model Forest Policy Program is offering a special funding opportunity for qualifying U.S. urban and rural communities working together addressing ecosystem services. Urban decision makers need to plan for climate impacts that result from land changes beyond their jurisdictional boundaries. To find out more about the Climate Solutions University, click [HERE](#).

UPCOMINGEVENTS

NARC's 2014 National Conference of Regions

February 9-11, Washington, DC

The National Conference of Regions is the forum that NARC uses to determine key policy issues and a legislative agenda on topics of relevance and importance to executive directors and local elected officials representing regional organizations and boards. Registration,

hotel information and a draft agenda are available on the conference website [HERE](#).

New! WEBINAR: 2013 Solar Industry Jobs Census Results

February 11, 2:30-4:00 PM EST

Join the Solar Foundation for a briefing on the *National Solar Jobs Census 2013*, which found record growth in the U.S. solar industry. The webinar will discuss the survey's results, policy-related findings, demographic makeup of the solar industry, and the progress of DOE's SunShot Initiative. Click [HERE](#) to register.

New! WEBINAR: Smart Roofs: Portfolio-Based Roof Asset and Energy Management

February 12, 2014, 1:00-2:00 PM EST

EPA's Green Power Partnership (GPP) will host a webinar addressing how roof management can have a big impact on energy consumption and carbon footprint. This webinar will demonstrate, through a case study of Washington, DC, how to turn roofs from a liability into a sustainable asset. More information and registration is available [HERE](#).

WEBINAR: Solar Maps as Tools for Advancing Solar Energy

February 13, 3:00-4:00 PM EST

Hosted by Clean Energy States Alliance, this webinar will highlight cutting-edge map-based tools developed in the District of Columbia, New York, and Ohio – and focus primarily on maps that show the potential suitability of installing solar on particular buildings within a community. These maps serve as good models for other states and communities. More information and registration is available [HERE](#).

New Partners for Smart Growth Conference: “Are Your Building and Land Use Codes Ready for the Changing Climate?”

February 13-15, Denver, CO

The New Partners for Smart Growth Conference fosters discussion on building safe, healthy, equitable and prosperous communities. The conference will feature a session that explores code changes that communities can make to better prepare themselves for climate change in addition to providing other benefits. Register [HERE](#).

New! WEBINAR: DOE Tribal Renewable Energy Series - Strategic Energy Planning

February 26, 2014, 1:00-2:30 PM EST

Attendees will learn about developing a strategic energy plan, identifying

key aspects of successful energy planning, and using available information and resources. More information and registration is available [HERE](#).

NARC's 48th Annual Conference and Exhibition

June 6-11, Louisville, KY

The Annual Conference and Exhibition is the largest national event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education. Held annually in June, NARC's Annual Conference is the premier place to learn how to engage in effective regional collaboration. Additional information will be available in early 2014.

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