



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

House & Senate are not in session this week; both will return on April 13th

Senate Approves 2016 Budget Resolution

On Friday, the Senate adopted its Budget Resolution (**S. Con. Res. 11**) in a 52-46 vote. The approval of the measure came after a “vote-a-rama” that included floor consideration of 49 amendments (35 approved). The House approved their measure (**H. Con. Res. 27**) on March 25th. Now, both chambers will appoint conferees to develop a joint resolution for consideration by the April 15 deadline. The Budget Resolution, which is non-binding, sets top-line spending targets for appropriations committees.

The POWER Initiative

On Friday, Senior Administration officials and Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear announced the launch of Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER). The initiative, led by the Economic Development Administration (EDA), is a multi-agency effort to assist communities affected by changes in the coal industry and power sector. This year POWER will award \$28 to \$38 million in grants, funded primarily by EDA and the U.S. Department of Labor, to partnerships based in affected communities to develop comprehensive strategies to meet future economic goals through coordinated economic and workforce development activities. These activities aim to diversify economies, create jobs, and provide a range of workforce services and skills training.

[The GROW AMERICA Act 2.0](#)

The Administration today released an updated version of its reauthorization proposal – the *Generating Renewal, Opportunity, and Work with Accelerated Mobility, Efficiency, and Rebuilding of Infrastructure and Communities throughout America Act* or the GROW AMERICA Act. This bill would provide \$478 billion for a six-year reauthorization, paid for with the Administration’s proposal to collect taxes on corporate earnings that are currently parked overseas. Many of the policy changes from last year’s proposal are related to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, including new provision regarding vehicle recalls and tire defects. The bill would also create a Very Small Starts program as part of the FTA’s Capital Investment Program, to provide project funding for rural areas and smaller urban areas. Please check the NARC website tomorrow for an updated version of our GROW AMERICA analysis.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

MORPC's Insight2050 Initiative

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) in Columbus, Ohio recently completed the first phase of insight2050, an initiative to help Central Ohio communities proactively plan for development and population growth over the next 30+ years. Phase one is an analysis of the impact of future land use policies on specific factors that influence the region's quality of life. With collaboration from public and private partners, MORPC helps to develop objective analytics that can assist local decision makers in evaluating and preparing for Central Ohio's future. The initial report – driven by a public steering committee – highlights four scenarios for regional development. The next phase will emphasize outreach and peer learning, as well as take a closer look at local case studies of successful development. The creation of a first-of-its-kind, map-based infill and redevelopment directory for the region will also be part of the initiative. The Scenario Results Report and Summary is available at www.getinsight2050.org.

Centralina COG's Brownfields-Greyfields Toolkit

CONNECT Our Future is Centralina COG's (Charlotte, North Carolina) framework for guiding and investing in their region's growth, a process in which residents, cities, counties, businesses, educators, non-profits, and other organizations work cooperatively over time, laying the foundation to strengthen job growth and the economy, improve quality of life, and control the cost of government in their communities. This toolkit is presented in two parts, highlighting both **financial tools** and **methods of economic analysis** that can be deployed for reuse of brownfield and greyfield sites (former commercial or retail sites) that Centralina was able to develop through the support of their Sustainable Communities Initiative grant.

OTHER NEWS

Expanding Opportunities in America's Urban Areas

Concentrated poverty remains highest in America's largest cities, where almost one in four low-income residents live in distressed neighborhoods. In a **new report**, the Center for American Progress (CAP) outlines five key policy strategies that can address some of the challenges facing urban areas. They include: establishing comprehensive place-based strategies; ensuring access to quality housing and transportation; supporting workers by eliminating barriers to employment; spurring economic development in distressed neighborhoods; and empowering state and local leaders. As part of this report's launch, CAP and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees hosted an **event last week** featuring former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton as a speaker and HUD Secretary Julián Castro as a panelist.

FEATURED JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

Director of Finance & Administration

Centralina Council of Governments, Charlotte, NC

Deputy Executive Director

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Chicago, IL

Executive Director

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Chicago, IL

FUNDING

[View full list of grants!](#)

The Farm to School Grant Program

Letter of Intent Deadline: April 30

Proposal Deadline: May 20

The Farm to School Grant Program funds planning, implementation, support service, and training efforts. It also allows community partners such as local agencies and non-profit organizations to participate in bringing local products to school cafeterias.

Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Programs

Application Deadline: May 14

The 2014 Farm Bill reauthorized the Farmers Market Promotion Program to help create market opportunities and facilitate connections within local and regional food systems. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's **Agricultural Marketing Service** will host a teleconference on March 31st to introduce potential applicants to the FMPP, the LFPP, and the Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program.

EVENTS

[View full list of events!](#)

EESI Briefing and Live Webcast: How Can the Federal Government Help Prepare Local Communities for Natural Disasters?

April 1, 2:00 - 3:00 PM ET

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) invites you to examine the recommendations of the White House State, Local and Tribal Leaders **Task Force** on Climate Preparedness and Resilience. The bipartisan Task Force of 26 governors, mayors, tribal leaders, and other officials spent a year compiling recommendations on how the federal government could help local communities be more resilient to climate change impacts. From an initial 500 ideas, the Task Force produced a **report** of 35 concrete recommendations for tools, training, funding and services the Federal Government can provide to help the nation's communities increase their resilience.

NARC WEBINAR: The Park Squeeze: Balancing the Demand for Parks vs. Pavement

April 7, 2:00 PM ET

Regions across the country often battle with conflicting land use interests. In the San Francisco Bay Area, despite the region's strong commitment to parks, only a handful of infill parks have been created in the past 10 years due to conflicting issues ranging from the price of land to the desire for automobile parking. During this webinar Peter Harnik, director of the **Center for City Park Excellence** at The Trust for Public Land, will discuss the findings of a recent article in **Landscape Architecture Magazine**, as well as the reasons some regions have succeeded. He will then lead a lively, interactive conversation with listeners from other regions.

Building the Bridge: Solutions to the Infrastructure Crisis Webcast

April 14, 8:30 AM - 2:00 PM ET

The Century Foundation is hosting this FREE one day conference and webcast to discuss new sources of revenue and better ways to structure infrastructure investments, as well as exchange ideas about which projects deserve priority. Listen to the nation's best and most provocative experts provide solutions to the infrastructure crisis.

2015 TIGER Summit

April 16, 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM ET

The U.S. Department of Transportation will be hosting a summit at their headquarters featuring the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant program. TIGER is a competitive program that awards funding to transportation projects of national, regional or metropolitan significance, and ensures that taxpayers get the highest value for their dollar investments. This summit offers technical assistance to current and prospective grantees, and includes discussions of best practices and lessons learned from past grantee projects.

Taking Action at the Local Level Webinar Series: Part 1

The Fine Art of Messaging

April 13, 1:00 PM ET

Based on research commissioned by the Every Body Walk! Collaborative, this webinar will help you understand which messages about walking and walkability work, and which ones don't. Karen Saverino and colleagues at Metropolitan Group will present the results of surveys, key informant interviews, and focus groups conducted across the country, that will help us effectively frame the issue of walkable communities. Your "call to action" will be to build these messages into your next communications initiative.

Taking Action at the Local Level Webinar Series: Part 2

Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper – and Healthier

April 23, 1:00 PM ET

Transforming the built environment to improve health outcomes can take years, if not decades. This webinar will focus on short term, low cost, yet high impact strategies for improving streets, public spaces, and buildings across the country that can lead to longer term change. Kate Rube and her team at Project for Public Spaces will present health-promoting 'Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper' approaches, including active recreation amenities, street redesigns that prioritize pedestrians, and farmers' market stands. After the webinar, participants will be ready to create great public places that attract people and provide many ways to get healthy.

Taking Action at the Local Level Webinar Series: Part 3

The Mayors' Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets

May, Day & Time TBD

Earlier this year, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx challenged mayors across the country to take a leadership role in addressing pedestrian and bicycle safety. A former mayor himself, Secretary Foxx understands that effective action to reverse the current trend of rising pedestrian injuries and deaths can only be achieved through a partnership between the federal and local governments. This webinar will feature three of the mayors who have responded to the Challenge and task you to get involved in your mayor's initiative or to get your mayor involved.

CONTACT US