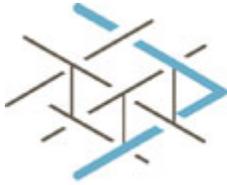


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XIII, No. 12, April 1, 2013

eRegions

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

President Obama proposed three new infrastructure improvement initiatives last week during a trip to Miami. According to President Obama, "... (we'll) set up an independent fund that will attract private investment to build projects.. we're [going to] fund more projects at less cost by establishing and new infrastructure initiative called *American Fast Forward Bonds*...we'll strengthen a loan program that in recent years has helped governors and mayors leverage four times the money Washington put into it." Unfortunately, the

**[PROGRAM UPDATE](#) [POLICY UPDATE](#)
[MEMBER ASSISTANCE REQUEST](#)
[GRANT OPPORTUNITIES](#) [UPCOMING EVENTS](#)**



PROGRAM UPDATE

Regional Economic Competitiveness Assessments

Webinar: Regions, now more than ever, are facing strong economic headwinds from the nation's capital, internal demography and technological innovation. To compete in the 21st century, regions must be intimately aware of their economic trajectories and their relation to other regions. By assessing internal industrial clustering patterns, demographic shifts, labor market dynamics, and other economic indicators, regions will be better equipped to plan for a robust future. Join NARC, REMI and the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham to see how the Commission is leveraging REMI to gain better insight into its region's current and future economic position in the nation. Click [HERE](#) to register for the webinar on Tuesday, April 2, 3:00-

President did not specify where the money to jumpstart these new \$21 billion initiatives will come from. Any commitment to our infrastructure is a positive for the economy.

In Britain, where economic growth is as slow as in the U.S., the *Economist* reported that infrastructure development can help speed up recovery - "...railways and roads, bridges and broadband give growth a bigger boost per pound from the public purse than other sorts of spending. Yet, this is where cuts have been deepest. Between 2009-10 and 2011-12 public-sector net investment plunged from £48.5 billion to £28 billion. Projects do not need to be big: small, unglamorous improvements to roads, railway signals and the like can be started quickly. Investment could comfortably be doubled to £56 billion." Click [HERE](#) to access the full article.

Funding for infrastructure in the U.S. has been on the decline and our world ranking of competitiveness related to infrastructure declined

4:00 pm ET.

Regional Solar Workshops Scheduled: Join us for a free interactive workshop on how to bolster solar energy in your region. The workshops focus on energy planning to facilitate solar installations; state and local incentives for solar energy; and, innovative financing options for solar projects. For information and to register, click [HERE](#). Workshops are scheduled for:

- April 9 - Houston, TX: Houston-Galveston Area Council
- April 30 - Memphis, TN: Memphis Bioworks Foundation
- May 20 - Dallas, TX: North Central Texas Council of Governments

NARC's MAP-21 Implementation Meeting: NARC is hosting its final regional roundtable in Worcester, MA - April 19, 2013, to examine and discuss the implementation of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) from the perspective of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and regional councils of government (COGs). Click [HERE](#) to register or [HERE](#) for additional information and to access the agenda.

EDA New Online Tool Promotes Business & Job Growth in Waterfront Communities: The U.S. Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration (EDA) has released a [Sustainable Working Waterfront Toolkit](#), an online suite of resources to help coastal communities throughout the United States develop policies that support business and job growth.

USDA Launches 2013 "StrikeForce" Initiative: This week the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced its 2013 Strike Force Initiative aimed at promoting rural economic growth and development. USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack identified the ten states selected for StrikeForce investments, which target poverty-stricken areas in rural America. StrikeForce activities are available [HERE](#).

POLICYUPDATE

Congress is out on Easter recess and will return April 8.

again this year; this means we as a nation need to prioritize funding infrastructure projects and improvements across the country.

Best.
Fred

NARC LEADERSHIP

President

Hon. David F. Shafer,
Clerk/Treasurer,
Town of Munster, IN

Chair Sean Dey,

Executive Directors
Council
Executive Director, West
Michigan Shoreline
Regional Development
Commission

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Director of Community
Programs

Mia Colson

Program Analyst

Valerie Hermanson

Communications

Associate

Lindsey Riley

Deputy of
Communications

MEMBER ASSISTANCE REQUEST

Workforce Activities: As the House and Senate consider Workforce Investment Act Reauthorization efforts, NARC will be focusing on workforce development as an important piece of promoting regional economic competitiveness. We would like your input on what workforce development means in your region and how you are leading or partnering on these efforts. Please contact Autumn Campbell at autumn@narc.org or 202-986-1032 x225 with input or information you have regarding your workforce activities and priorities.

Organizational Chart: The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments is requesting a copy of your staff organizational chart. Please send it to both Lindsey Riley (lindsey@narc.org) and Chuck Bean (cbean@mwco.org).

Solar Activities: As part of NARC's [SunShot Solar Outreach Partnership](#) (SolarOPs) project, NARC is looking for examples of regional councils who have done work in the field of **solar energy**. This can include working with one of your local governments or partners on their solar projects, or including solar energy within other regional sustainability or energy planning efforts. NARC is open to any feedback you can provide. Please contact Mia Colson directly at mia@narc.org with any response.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

NOAA Climate Program Office Funding

Application Deadline: April 8, 2013

The NOAA Climate Program Office's Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments (RISA) program supports research teams that conduct innovative, interdisciplinary, user-inspired, and regionally relevant research that informs resource management and public policy. For more information, click [HERE](#).

EPA FY13 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant

Application Deadline: April 9, 2013

EPA FY13 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grants provide funding to recruit, train, and place, unemployed and severely under-employed, residents with the skills and certifications needed to secure full-time employment in land remediation and the

Erika Young

Transportation Director

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environmental field at large, including wastewater management, brownfields assessment and cleanup, Superfund cleanup, solid waste management, recycling, emergency response, renewable energy installation, weatherization, chemical safety, and underground storage tank removal, among others. The guidelines are available **HERE.**

EPA's Smart Growth Achievement Funding

Application Deadline: April 12, 2013

The application period for the 12th annual National Award for Smart Growth Achievement is now open to public- and private-sector entities that have successfully used smart growth principles to improve communities environmentally, socially, and economically. For more information, click **HERE.**

Health Resources & Services Administration: Rural Health Information Technology (HIT) Workforce Program

Application Deadline: April 15

The Rural HIT program supports formal rural health networks that focus on activities relating to the recruitment, education, training, and retention of HIT specialists and improve existing HIT training materials to develop formal training programs. These formal training programs will result in the development of a cadre of HIT workers that can help rural hospitals and clinics implement and maintain systems, such as electronic health records (EHR), telehealth, home monitoring and mobile health technology, and meet EHR meaningful use standards. For more information, please see **HERE.**

USDA Farm to School Grant Program

Application Due: April 24, 2013

The purpose of the USDA Farm to School Grant Program is to assist implementation of programs that improve access to local foods in eligible schools. The program's grants help eligible schools foster sustainability by connecting with local agricultural producers and help improve the health and wellbeing of their students. For more information, click **HERE.**

National Institute on Food and Agriculture

Application Deadline: April 29

The Women and Minorities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Fields Program (WAMS) program supports research and extension projects that have robust collaborations to increase the participation of women and underrepresented minorities from rural areas in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields that are

relevant to USDA priorities including: promoting a safe, sufficient, and nutritious national and international food supply; fostering sustainable agricultural policies that provide small business opportunities and encourage conservation strategies; building a modern workplace with a modern workforce; supporting 21st century rural communities. More information about this opportunity is available [HERE](#).

EDA Make it in America Challenge

Deadline: May 31, 2013

As announced by the Administration in 2012, the Make it in America Challenge competition, funded by a collaboration among EDA and other agencies, will partner with state, regional, and local economies to provide infrastructure, strategic planning, capacity building, technical assistance, and workforce skills training necessary to make American communities attractive for business investment. To be eligible for an award, projects must encourage in-sourcing, either through on-shoring of productive activity by U.S. firms, fostering increased foreign direct investment, or incentivizing U.S. companies to keep their businesses and jobs here at home, as well as train local workers to meet the needs of those businesses. For more information go [HERE](#).

UPCOMINGEVENTS

ICMA Webinar: Priority Based Budgeting

April 3, 1:00-2:30 pm ET

Is your “new” budget simply a revised version of your “old” budget? Are your strategies for allocating resources or for implementing cost-cutting measures in line with the priorities of the community and its elected officials? Explore the answers to these questions and more with Jon Johnson, Chris Fabian, and Kathie Novak, in a web conference that will discuss *Priority Based Budgeting*, the latest leading practice to emerge from ICMA’s Center for Management Strategies. To register, click [HERE](#).

Houston Regional Solar Workshop

April 9, 2013, 8:30-12:30pm

Come join us for a **free** interactive workshop on how to bolster solar energy in the southeast Texas region. The workshop will focus on energy planning to facilitate solar installations; state and local incentives for solar energy; innovative financing options for solar projects and more! For more information and to register, click [HERE](#).

NARC's MAP-21 Implementation Roundtable

April 19, 2013, Worcester, MA

Click [HERE](#) to register for the roundtable or [HERE](#) for additional information.

Memphis Regional Solar Workshop

April 30, 2013, 8:30-12:30pm

Come join us for a free interactive workshop on how to bolster solar energy in the mid-south region. The workshop will focus on an overview of solar technology and why it is viable for the Memphis region; revising zoning codes and ordinances to allow for solar; streamlining permitting processes; and innovative financing options for solar projects. For more information and to register, click [HERE](#).

REMI 2013 Training Conference

May 8-10, 2013, Washington, DC

The conference will offer group presentations on the models and methodologies, as well as workshops and one-on-one technical support sessions from REMI economists; it is a unique opportunity for in-depth, focused analysis, connecting with peers involved in economic impact analysis, and experiencing the sights and sounds of the capital in spring. There is no charge to attend, though registration is required. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

Brownfields Renewal: Bringing Stakeholders Together

May 15-17, 2012, Atlanta, GA

The National Brownfields Conference is the largest event in the nation that focuses on environmental revitalization and economic redevelopment. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

NARC's 47th Annual Conference and Exhibition

June 20-23, 2013, Philadelphia, PA

NARC's annual conference will focus on best practice and programming for regional and metropolitan planning organizations nationwide. Executive Directors and Staff of regional organizations should plan on attending! Click [HERE](#) for registration and additional information.

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