



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS

EXECUTIVE NOTE

Dear NARC Members,

FTA Acting Administrator **Therese McMillan** is the latest confirmed keynote speaker for NARC's 49th Annual Conference, June 7-10 in Raleigh, NC! She joins **Dr. James H. Johnson Jr.**, the William R. Kenan Jr. Distinguished Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship at the University of North Carolina, who will explore demographic change in America and what that means for regions, and **Dr. James Svava**, who specializes in local government politics, management, ethics, innovation, and sustainability, and will provide a keynote on leadership tools and strategies. These are just a few of the distinguished speakers who will join us in Raleigh this June.

Register now to secure your early bird discount! We look forward to seeing you there.

Thanks,
Joanna



NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

Congress is back in session

In Brief

This week, House Appropriations' subcommittees begin their consideration of fiscal 2016 spending bills, with markups scheduled for Military Construction-VA and Energy-Water. The House will also provide floor consideration to six bills from the Financial Services Committee including a measure on capital access for small community banks (**HR 299**) and one on expanded lending in rural communities (**HR 1259**). Additionally, the House is scheduled to consider the *State and Local Sales Tax Deduction Fairness Act* (**HR 622**), which allows taxpayers to deduct state and local sales taxes in lieu of state and local income taxes. The measure expired along with other tax extenders at the end of 2014. Meanwhile, the Senate will markup the *Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015* (**S 615**) beginning Tuesday.

Renewable Fuel Standard Timeline Released

On Friday, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed a **settlement** regarding deadlines under the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) program. The RFS program, which was created under the *Energy Policy Act of 2005*, requires manufactures to blend biofuels with gasoline. The proposal establishes deadlines to finalize both the 2014 and 2015 RFS requirements. Under the proposal, EPA will **propose** RFS volume requirements by June 1, for 2015; and by November 30, EPA will **finalize** volume requirements for 2014 and 2015 and resolve a pending waiver petition for 2014.

OTHER NEWS

Balancing the Demand for Parks vs. Pavement Webinar Video

Last week, NARC held a webinar with Peter Harnik, Director of The Trust for Public Land's **Center for City Park Excellence**, to discuss the findings of his article in **Landscape Architecture Magazine**. The article examines the struggle for public park creation in a number of San Francisco Bay Area communities due to conflicting land use interests. During the webinar, Harnik explains that the high cost of land and lack of political consensus have been major barriers to park creation in the region. He focuses on the efforts of several urban communities to overcome these challenges and incorporate parks into their ongoing development activities.

The Golden Girls Network Helps Seniors Age in Place

A national electronic database is linking up seniors who want the ability to "age in place" but don't want to live alone. The Golden Girls Network — named for the popular 1980s sitcom about four women sharing a house in Miami — helps seniors find housemates to save in costs while also benefiting their health, according to founder Bonnie Moore. "One of the major issues as people grow older is loneliness, especially if you end up single for whatever reason," she said. "There are more and more single older people, so the idea of living alone just does not appeal to people. If you do live alone, you become depressed more easily."

Charting the Country's Changing Demographics

The **Sunbelt states** are leading a demographic shift in the U.S., in which the nation is expected to have no single majority racial or ethnic group by 2040. Most of the 266 counties that already had a non-white majority by 2013 are in the Sun Belt. Between 2000 and 2013, non-Hispanic whites lost majority status in 78 counties, mostly in the Sun Belt or along the coasts. The Pew Research Center's **analysis** of Census data also found that 19 of the 25 most-populous counties now have non-white majorities.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

SANDAG Preserves 50 Acres of Prime Coastal Habitat in Encinitas and Carlsbad

On April 7, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) announced the acquisition of 50.5 acres of prime coastal habitat that was previously slated for a 19-unit housing development. In partnership with Caltrans, SANDAG completed the \$6 million open space acquisition under its **TransNet Environmental Mitigation Program**. TransNet is the region's voter-approved half-cent sales tax for transportation administered by SANDAG. The purchase was designed to offset potential future environmental damage from projects meant to improve Interstate 5, nearby rail

lines, and mass transit.

Meyers & Associates Selects Former NARC President John Thompson to Open Houston Office

Meyers & Associates, a prominent governmental relations and business consulting firm based in Washington, DC, last Wednesday announced its engagement of Judge John Thompson to open its new office in Houston, Texas, effective immediately. Thompson recently stepped down after serving his sixth consecutive term as County Judge in Polk County, TX. He began his professional career as a pharmacist in the 1970s, and became involved in economic and transportation issues through what would become a lifetime of public service at the city, county, and state levels, including several state board appointments. In his new role, he'll advise the firm's clients on economic development and transportation issues.

DETCOG's Economic Report Featured on ABC 9 KTRE

Walter Diggles, Executive Director of the Deep East Council of Governments (DETCOG), recently spoke out about recent changes in the East Texas economy. The region's economic report released in January was disheartening. Now, just four months later, the whole region has seen an upswing in sales tax allocations. Diggles goes on to explain setbacks from General Electric layoffs, but hopes that retraining programs will help his region's workforce.

FEATURED JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

Municipal Shared Services Manager

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Waterbury, CT

Principal Traffic Engineer

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Waterbury, CT

Regional Environmental Planner

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Waterbury, CT

Senior Transportation Planner II

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Waterbury, CT

FUNDING

[View full list of grants!](#)

OSHA Announces \$3.5M in Funding Under the Susan Harwood Training Grant Program

Applications Due: June 2

The **U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration** is accepting 2015 applications for targeted-topic training grants and capacity-building training grants under the **Susan Harwood Training Grant Program**. The grants fund the creation of in-person, hands-on training and educational programs and the development of materials for workers and employers in small businesses; industries with high injury, illness and fatality rates; and vulnerable workers who are underserved, have limited English proficiency or are temporary workers. The grants will fund training and education for workers and employers to help them identify and prevent workplace safety and health hazards.

EVENTS

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