NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS

52ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION

JUNE 3-6, 2018 | **ORLANDO, FLORIDA** | *Conference Co-Hosted by MetroPlan Orlando*

Draft Agenda Now Available!

Reminder! **2018 NARC AWARDS Nomination Deadline is May 1**
NARC is accepting nominations for its 2018 Achievement and Leadership Awards, which will be presented at the Awards Gala Dinner during the **52nd Annual Conference and Exhibition, June 3-6, in Orlando, Florida**. Conference attendance is encouraged. The awards provide an excellent opportunity for winners to promote their successes to a larger audience, as well as share best practices with their partners and peers. See **NARC Awards Nomination Guidelines** for details.

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON
Congress is in session.

Farm Bill Advances from House Agriculture Committee
Last Wednesday the House Agriculture Committee passed the *Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018* out of committee in a party-line vote. The strictly partisan vote resulted from many factors, including the bill's proposed changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the feeling from Democrats that they were left out of the bill drafting process. The Farm Bill is expected to face similar partisan pressure when it reaches the House floor, which could be as early as the week of May 7. Meanwhile, the Senate Agriculture Committee is expected to release their own Farm Bill next month. The Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts has indicated that the **Senate's Farm Bill draft will not include the House's SNAP provisions** since they will be much more difficult to pass in the upper chamber. Concerns remain about the partisanship surrounding the Farm Bill and whether that will affect the passage of the legislation before it expires on September 30.

Last week, **NARC signed onto a letter** with the Campaign for Renewed Rural Development (CRRD) – a coalition of national policy advocacy organizations representing a broad spectrum

of interests focused on rural issues – to highlight to the House Agriculture Committee the need for a robust Rural Development Title that provides critical investments to underserved communities and enhances rural America's competitiveness in a global marketplace.

Upcoming Brownfields Tax Legislation
Representatives Elizabeth Esty and Peter King joined forces to introduce the *Brownfields Redevelopment Tax Incentive Reauthorization Act of 2018*, as referenced in their **"Dear Colleague" letter**. If passed, the legislation would save a brownfields tax incentive that expired in January 2012. According to the letter, the bill would "reauthorize a tax incentive program that would allow developers to fully deduct the costs of environmental cleanups of brownfields in the year the costs were incurred." The reauthorization is expected to encourage private sector investment to take on brownfields cleanup and redevelopment projects. NARC, the National League of Cities (NLC), the National Association of Counties (NACo), and the U.S. Conference of Mayors recently produced a **letter urging Congress to pass the bill**.

Sens. Alexander, Murray Introduce Bipartisan Legislation to Address "Urgent Opioid Crisis"
Senators Lamar Alexander and Patty Murray recently introduced a bipartisan bill to address the urgent opioid crisis in America. The *Opioid Response Act of 2018* (**S. 2680**) is composed of forty proposals, mostly from members of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, & Pensions, that came from seven bipartisan hearings and feedback received from the public. The bill's proposals include: improving data sharing among states so doctors and pharmacies know if a patient has a history of opioid abuse, making grants available that support state and local workforce boards and communities affected by the opioid crisis, and providing grants for states and localities to collect data and implement key prevention strategies. To learn more, read **this summary of the legislation**. The committee expects to **mark up the bill tomorrow morning**.

Lawmakers Push for Program to Improve Urban Flood Hazard Maps
Under the newly proposed bipartisan and bicameral *Flood Mapping Modernization and Homeowner Empowerment Pilot Program Act of 2018*, cities would gain access to a new grant initiative aimed at improving how the nation assesses and manages flood risk. If implemented, three cities with populations over 50,000 would be selected to participate in the FEMA pilot program every year to help develop better methods for mapping urban flood hazards. It would authorize $1.2 million for FY 2019 and a total of $4.3 million for FY 2020-2022 that could flow to state and local governments. FEMA will use information learned from this pilot program to create best practices and improve their flood risk mapping program.

FAA Authorization Headed for House Floor Vote This Week
On Wednesday, the House is expected to vote on the *Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act of 2018* (**H.R. 4**), which would reauthorize FAA through FY 2023. The bill includes provisions related to disaster relief mitigation, including adding resiliency to the allowable uses of FEMA hazard mitigation funding and allowing grants for infrastructure and economic development to be used for disaster mitigation. Other than removing a provision that would remove the air traffic control system from the government, the bill remains largely unchanged from last year's version. Although the bill has broad support, House members are expected to propose dozens of amendments. Chairman John Thune of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee said that he hoped the Senate would act on its own bill after the House passes their version, with the former chamber's bill authorizing FAA through 2021 and omitting the disaster provisions. Current FAA authority expires September 30.

FEMA Releases Affordability Framework for NFIP
Last week, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) released *An Affordability Framework for the National Flood Insurance Program* (NFIP), a data-driven analysis of current and potential flood insurance policyholders' incomes by flood risk and home ownership status. The analysis suggested that both policyholders and non-policyholders with the lowest median incomes lived in the highest hazard areas. NFIP Director Roy Wright said, "This report moves beyond anecdotes. For the first time, a conversation about affordability and flood insurance is supported by deep data being brought to bear with the release of this framework... In some situations, those living in high-risk areas for flooding face a decision between purchasing flood insurance and maintaining basic household necessities." The study also offers several options for

developing an affordability program for public flood insurance and provides models of the costs for each option.

New CDC Physical Activity and Health Branch Community Strategies Website
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Physical Activity and Health Branch created a new website for Community Strategies. The website offers many resources to help state and local health departments, public health professionals, and community organizations build more activity-friendly communities. Some resources include: a listing of **real-world examples** from communities of various sizes who have implement projects of various scopes and costs, an **implementation resources guide** broken into six distinct steps, a **visual guide** to concrete community changes, and a package of resources related to zoning and land use codes.

MEMBERSHIP REQUESTS
Best Practices for Evaluating Planning Proposals
The Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization is creating a program to fund planning studies on behalf of their partner governments. They are seeking input on best practices for evaluating of proposals. Has your organization developed or implemented proposals for evaluating planning through solely objective means? What best practices have you implemented to select planning study proposals that yielded implementable projects? Please send your responses to **anna@narc.org**.

How Has Federal Investment in Workforce and Education Programs Impacted Your Region?
NARC is looking for workforce and education programming success stories from our member regions that we can share during our discussions on the Hill. If you have data and/or personal stories that you can share from your region that could support any or all of the following topics, please send them to **maci.morin@narc.org**:

- Negative impact of cuts due to insufficient federal investment;
- Return on Investment for program(s) despite cuts in funding; and/or
- Systemic partnerships available because of the *Workforce Investment Opportunity Act* (WIOA) infrastructure that have led to improved training and employment outcomes, and better met the need of employers in the state.

FEATURED JOBS
View full list of jobs!

Grant Administration Specialist
Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, Salem, OR

Transportation Planner – Goods Movement
San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, CA

Transportation Planner
East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission, Anniston, AL

FUNDING
View full list of grants!

FY 2018 Disaster Supplemental Notice of Funding Opportunity
Applications Accepted on a Rolling Basis Until All Funds Are Obligated
The Economic Development Administration (EDA) is awarding $587 million in grants to eligible entities to address economic challenges in disaster-impacted areas. These grants will support disaster recovery activities in areas receiving a major disaster designation as a result of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria; wildfires; or other 2017 natural disasters. EDA disaster grants will be made by regional offices under the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program, which can support a wide range of construction and non-construction activities. Through this program, EDA can support disaster recovery planning strategies as well as the implementation of disaster recovery projects. Projects, among other things, must have a nexus to applicable disaster recovery and

resilience efforts and be consistent with at least one of the **DOC Disaster Recovery Investment Priorities**.

USDOT Launches BUILD Transportation Program and Announces $1.5 Billion NOFO
Applications Due: July 19
The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced $1.5 billion in discretionary grant funding through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grants program. BUILD Transportation grants replace the pre-existing Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program. FY 2018 BUILD Transportation grants are for investments in surface transportation infrastructure and will be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. BUILD funding can support roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports, or intermodal transportation. Projects for BUILD will be evaluated based on merit criteria that include safety, economic competitiveness, quality of life, environmental protection, state of good repair, innovation, partnership, and additional non-federal revenue for future transportation infrastructure investments. USDOT intends to award a greater share of the grant funding to projects located in rural areas (as opposed to urban areas) that align well with the selection criteria.

EVENTS
View full list of events!

Getting Ready for Rain! Integrating Green Infrastructure and Nature-Based Solutions into State and Local Hazard Mitigation Plans
April 25, 1:00-2:30 PM ET
Communities that can align local Hazard Mitigation Plans and resources to fund efforts such as green infrastructure can reduce the impacts of flooding, protect and improve water quality, and reduce the impacts of stormwater while increasing resiliency to severe storm events. During this Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) webinar, the speakers will present an overview of the Federal Hazard Mitigation requirements; explain the opportunities, benefits, and incentives for incorporating green infrastructure into hazard mitigation plans; and showcase nature-based solutions.

NARC Webinar! Regional Food Planning Initiatives Help Shape Healthy Communities and Economies
April 26, 3:00-4:00 PM ET
Regional councils have a natural advantage for leading food planning initiatives. Join this webinar to learn about this advantage, the number of regional councils already taking on food-related initiatives, and the kinds of projects they are implementing. Our speakers will highlight opportunities and common challenges for regional councils in the local food space. Three regional councils will share information about their projects and how their efforts will help their organizations' economic and community development and food equity goals.

Developing Your Congressional Scorecard
May 3, 2:00-3:00 PM ET
What are your advocacy grades? Which politicians are most and least likely to support your cause? How does your organization use historical data and voting records to determine where your champions and detractors stand? And what do you do once you have identified those key members of Congress? Learn the strategies for and benefits of creating a comprehensive congressional scorecard for your organization's issues — before the all-important mid-terms.

Sustainability Assessments – Maximizing Operational and Community Benefits for Municipalities
May 9, 1:00-2:15 PM ET
Conducting a sustainability assessment enables municipal leaders to more strategically advance community initiatives, improve internal operations, foster sustainable community development, and realize lower costs using benchmarking, goal setting, community engagement, and implementation tools. During this webinar, join Jim Price of Sustainable Pittsburgh for a deep dive into the resources and tools available through sustainability self-assessments and professional consultations. Participants will be better equipped to evaluate benefits and

opportunities found in each, and to select an approach that meets their specific needs and priorities.

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