



Awards Nominations are Due Tomorrow, May 1st!
See **NARC Awards Nomination Guidelines** for details.

NARC Webinar! Health and the Built Environment

May 2, 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM ET

Increasingly, regional councils are implementing strategies that contribute to the public health of their residents. Among the issues being addressed are affordable housing, equity, water and air quality, smart growth, energy and climate change, food distribution, and so on. The three regions participating in this webinar -- the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, and Eastgate Regional Council of Governments -- have been working to mitigate the impact of the built environment on public health. Join our presenters as we explore the work they are doing and how their work is increasing the overall public health of their regions.

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

Both the House and Senate will return on Monday, May 7.

House Passes Long-Term FAA Reauthorization Bill

In an overwhelming vote of 393 to 13, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (H.R. 4)* last Friday. The bill reauthorizes the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) through FY 2023, authorizes investments in American airports, and strengthens passenger protections and system safety. The legislation also contains 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. The bill will now go to the Senate for consideration. The current expiration date is September 30.

Senate Democrats to Set Up Net Neutrality Showdown

Democrats are preparing to force a floor vote next month to restore net neutrality rules, which the Federal Communication Commission repealed last December. Senate Democrats are expected to take the procedural step on May 9 to compel the vote in the upper chamber, which could make the official vote the following week. Senate Democrats have already secured 50 votes – enough to force a vote through the *Congressional Review Act*, but one vote shy of passage. Even if the vote passes the Senate, it will face much more difficulty in the House and from the president.

Senate Health Panel Approves Opioid Bill

Last Tuesday, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee unanimously passed the *Opioid Crisis Response Act of 2018 (S. 2680)*, sending it to the Senate floor. The bill includes more than 40 proposals from 38 senators, including provisions to make it easier to prescribe smaller packs of opioids for limited durations and to spur the development of nonaddictive painkillers. Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) said, “I wish we could have a single blockbuster idea that an agency here could deal with and solve the problem: What we can do is take a number of steps to create an environment so that everyone ...can succeed in fighting the crisis community by community.” Meanwhile, the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee will vote on more than 60 opioid bills starting on Wednesday, with hopes of sending legislation to the House floor by Memorial Day.

Secretary Purdue Testifies on the Current State of Rural America

Last week Agriculture Secretary Sonny Purdue testified in front of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry on the current state of rural America and how the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has assisted rural communities in the last year. Farm and food imports were \$140.5 billion – the third-highest on record. USDA eliminated 22 existing regulations for every new one it created to reduce regulatory burden. The department made significant rural infrastructure investments, helping rebuild roads, improve water and wastewater systems, and expand telecommunications. Also, USDA provided more than \$5.4 million in infant formula/baby food and 13 million pounds of food to rural areas in response to seasonal hurricanes. The USDA Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity identified five areas it will pursue this year to improve the lives of 46 million rural Americans: e-connectivity, quality of life, rural workforce, technology, and economic development.

EPA Issues Supplemental Notice on WOTUS

Earlier this month, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced a supplemental notice to clarify efforts to withdraw the *Clean Water Act’s* Water of the United States (WOTUS) rule. The **original proposal** – submitted in July 2017 – initially caused confusion about the process the agencies would use to formally withdraw the rule. The new supplemental notice has already been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget for an interagency review. After the review, the new proposal will be published in the Federal Register, giving the public 30 days to comment. This process is expected to delay the rewriting of the current WOTUS definition, which was originally expected to be released by June 2018.

OTHER NEWS

Changing the Way to Manage Crises

Steve Goldman, a crisis management expert, says that many school districts and smaller cities remain unprepared for emergencies, from cyber attacks to earthquakes, because they are not well-coordinated with county and state governments. Goldman provides several recommendations on how local governments can be more prepared, including:

- Encouraging companies and first responders to work more closely with government partners;
- Monitoring information from the intelligence community on cybercrimes, training employees to avoid phishing tactics, and being wary of hackers attempting to disrupt infrastructure like power grids;
- Continuing to gear comprehensive emergency management plans toward natural disasters, which are increasing in frequency and intensity; and
- Spending grants on emergency kits for the elderly ahead of disasters.

REGION SPOTLIGHT

TJCOG's Economic Development District Designation

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) recently designated Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG) in Durham, North Carolina as an Economic Development District (EDD). In its EDD role, TJCOG will help lead locally-based, regionally-driven economic development planning and strategies, leveraging the work already underway by the private, public, and nonprofit sectors. They will also be responsible for the implementation of the region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*, a strategic blueprint that increases communication and coordination between regional stakeholders. TJCOG Board of Delegates Chair and Town of Rolesville Mayor Pro Tempore Ronnie Currin said, "We already are a vibrant growing community and this designation will be essential to our continued growth."

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!](#)

Executive Director

Lake-Sumter County Metropolitan Planning Organization, Leesburg, FL

RFP: Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan Update 2018

Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, Dayton, OH

Graphic Design & Communications Coordinator

Michiana Area Council of Governments, South Bend, IN

Transportation Engineer

Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission, Steubenville, OH

Grant Administration Specialist

Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, Salem, OR

FUNDING

[View full list of grants!](#)

EPA Announces Availability of Funding to Reduce Emissions from Diesel Engines Nationwide

Applications Due: June 12

EPA anticipates awarding approximately \$40 million in competitive grant funding for the *Diesel Emissions Reductions Act's* (DERA) Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program. The program is soliciting proposals nationwide for projects that achieve significant reductions in diesel emissions

in terms of tons of pollution produced and exposure, particularly from fleets operating in areas designated by the administrator as poor air quality areas. Eligible uses of funding include school buses, class 5-class 8 heavy-duty highway vehicles, and locomotive engines. EPA will host identical informational webinar sessions on **May 1** and **May 3**.

USDA Rural Community Development Initiative

Applications Due: June 25

Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) grants are awarded to help nonprofit housing and community development organizations; low-income rural communities; and federally recognized tribes supporting housing, community facilities, and community and economic development projects in rural areas. Grant awards range from \$50,000 to \$250,000. Awardees will be required to provide matching funds in an amount at least equal to their RCDI grant. Grants may be used for, but are not limited to:

- Training sub-grantees to conduct:
 - Home-ownership education
 - Minority business entrepreneur education
- Providing technical assistance to sub-grantees on:
 - Strategic plan development
 - Accessing alternative funding sources
 - Board training
 - Developing successful childcare facilities
 - Creating training tools, such as videos, workbooks, and reference guides
 - Effective fundraising techniques

EVENTS

View full list of events!

Kick-Off: National Municipal Network for Community Conversations

May 2, 12:30-1:15 PM ET

Join the National League of Cities (NLC) and municipalities across the country for REAL's kick-off to the National Municipal Network for Community Conversations on Race Relations, Justice, and Equity. The national network will be an opportunity to gain a comprehensive understanding of how cities can take on new efforts to sustain community conversations as a strategy to advance racial equity and racial healing, strengthen existing work, and address barriers and challenges.

Solutions to America's \$300 Billion Infrastructure Problem

May 2, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

Aging water infrastructure is one of the biggest issues facing American communities today. As municipalities struggle to maintain outdated public water and sewer lines, residents' private lines are increasingly at risk of failure. This NLC webinar will explore the current condition of systems across the U.S. and how cities like Birmingham, Alabama are using innovative partnerships to improve the reliability and quality of their system.

NARC Webinar! Health and the Built Environment

May 2, 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM ET

Increasingly, regional councils are implementing strategies that contribute to the public health of their residents. Among the issues being addressed are affordable housing, equity, water and air quality, smart growth, energy and climate change, food distribution, and so on. The three regions participating in this webinar -- the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, and Eastgate Regional Council of Governments -- have been working to mitigate the impact of the built environment on public health. Join our presenters as we explore the work they are doing and how their work is increasing the overall public health of their regions.

Eno Webinar on Congestion Pricing in NYC and Beyond

May 3, 4:00-4:30 PM ET

Several cities around the world charge fees for driving in high traffic areas during the busiest times of the day. But while "congestion pricing" systems have worked elsewhere, no American city has attempted it. New York has come the closest and while there was optimism that the city would put a such a charge in place, last month the state scuttled the idea. Transportation experts and

advocates across the country are now wondering what's next? Join the Eno Center of Transportation to learn more about congestion pricing, where the program stands in New York, and what similar initiatives in other cities around the country could mean for the future of transportation.

CONTACT US

Copyright © 2018 National Association of Regional Councils, All rights reserved.

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)