

May 2, 2016 [View this email in your browser](#)



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

eREGIONS



EXECUTIVE NOTE

Dear NARC Members,

With eight weeks before we convene in Salt Lake City to kick-off NARC's 50th Anniversary Celebration beginning on June 26th, I want to invite you to join us and the Wasatch Front Regional Council to celebrate 50 years of collaboration and partnerships for stronger communities. From the first Annual Conference of Regional Councils bringing together multi-jurisdictional sub-state organizations of local governments to today's diverse regional organizations, NARC members have brought together community members to make their regions better places to live and work. Help us celebrate this milestone and look ahead to the next 50 years!

NARC staff have spent the past few months traveling near and far to visit with members in New Jersey, Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois and Oregon/Washington in addition to our grant supported workshops and events in Alabama, Michigan, Arizona, and Maine. Have a state or regional conference coming up that would benefit from NARC's national perspective? Let us know as we plan our travel calendar!

We have visited Capitol Hill in support of the Older Americans Act, reauthorization of federal brownfields legislation, funding of key federal programs supporting local governments and implementation of the FAST Act. We've met at the Department of Transportation, Economic Development Administration, US Forest Service, Department of Energy, Centers for Disease Control and Environmental Protection Agency. We've met with the AMPO Board members at their recent meeting in DC, attended a meeting of the American Public Transportation Association with Grace Gallucci speaking on behalf of NARC, spoken at the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and written an article for the Virginia Municipal League monthly magazine on what the FAST Act means for regions.

We are very focused on the April 22 FHWA notice of **proposed rulemaking** regarding performance of the National Highway System, Freight Movement on the Interstate System, and the CMAQ program. This is the third of three rules from FHWA establishing national measures of performance, and is by far the most extensive and far-reaching of the three. This rule will have implications for MPOs and for the planning process in general. NARC would like to consult a group of members for their reactions to this rule, to help us understand its impacts. Your feedback is crucial as we develop our response to the rule and prepare comments to the docket. If you are interested in participating, please contact **Erich Zimmermann**.

These issues and more will take center stage for discussion when we meet in Salt Lake City. Did you see the draft agenda that we released this morning? Check your inbox or view it **HERE**. In the meantime, we want to hear from you on your key issues and concerns. Be sure to sign up for **NARConnect** to communicate and collaborate with NARC and your colleagues.

See you soon!

Leslie

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

House and Senate are in recess.

Overview

House Republicans have completed work on a FY 2017 budget that would cut \$30 billion in spending although it is unclear whether there are sufficient votes for it to pass. If the House is not able to pass the resolution, the House can consider individual appropriations bills after May 15.

Proposal to Help Distressed Areas

A bipartisan coalition led by Rep. Pat Tiberi, R-OH, and Sen. Tim Scott, R-SC, is promoting a new effort to create opportunity zones in economically-distressed communities. The proposal would defer taxes on capital gains to allow reinvestment of funds in areas, chosen by governors, with high poverty rates or low median family incomes. Investors would be allowed to roll over capital gains into new investments in qualified opportunity zones. The proposal has bipartisan support but no action has been set.

Senate Panel Approves \$11 billion Water Resources Bill

Last week, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved a new Water Resources Development Act to authorize 27 new Army Corps of Engineers projects and provide funds to update drinking water system emergencies including Flint, Michigan. The **Water Resources Development Act** would authorize \$5 billion for Corps navigation, flood control, port dredging, environmental restoration and other projects. The drinking water and wastewater provision included in the bill is the Senate agreement to assist Flint with lead in their drinking water that was added to a Senate energy bill which stalled in the Senate. The House Transportation Committee Chairman has not taken up a water resources bill yet.

OTHER NEWS

BroadbandUSA Releases Toolkit for Community Broadband Planning

Last week, BroadbandUSA published the *Planning a Community Broadband Roadmap* toolkit for local governments. The resource will help public officials, planners, and citizen groups develop a successful broadband project and offers a six-step approach for creating a community broadband roadmap, designed to work with projects of all sizes. The toolkit contains best practices identified by Broadband Technology Opportunities Program grantees as well as case studies on how different states, counties, tribes, and towns have implemented them.

MEMBER REQUESTS

Please email your responses to anna@narc.org.

SWCCOG: The Southwest Colorado Council of Governments (SWCCOG) was approached by a small regional non-profit focused on weatherization and sustainability to come under the SWCCOG umbrella. The SWCCOG Board is interested but hesitant to move forward too quickly, as they are wary of the challenges of incorporating a non-profit into the COG. We are looking for other regional organizations that have attempted or completed something similar.

Anonymous: A joint COG/MPO in a major metropolitan region seeks feedback. Their region's major city has threatened to pull out of the COG, though by federal law would be required to continue participating in the MPO. The dues paid by the city in question are joint COG/MPO dues, with no separation by function. The COG in question would like to know:

1. Have other organizations faced a similar threat or situation in their region?
2. If you are a COG that also has an MPO, do your members pay separate dues for each?

This would seem to be a unique and possible unprecedented situation, so any perspective other members could offer would be greatly appreciated.

FUNDING

[View full list of grants!](#)

FEATURED JOBS

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Water Infrastructure / Watershed Planner

Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, Toledo, OH

Assistant Director of Purchasing

Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Los Angeles, CA

Executive Director

Florida Transportation Commission, Tallahassee, FL

EVENTS

[View full list of events!](#)

NARC Webinar! Partnering for Strong Economies: Regional Councils & Walkable Communities

May 5, 2:00 PM ET

Join NARC and America Walks for a webinar on how federal transportation funding is allocated through regional councils and how to access it for projects that promote walkable communities, including complete streets, safety efforts, and place-making. Attendees will explore two unique perspectives as we hear from a regional planner and an advocate who has worked to use the resources available from their regional council. Q&A to follow.

CONTACT US

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