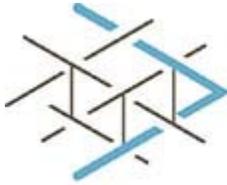


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

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eRegions

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

As we discussed many times over the past two years, the Sequester will have a long and slow effect on programs and the economy including forcing many long standing and successful programs to vie for continued funding outside of the appropriations process. Case in point – FAA furloughs. Yes, it was highly political, but it was the first (along with a meat inspector exemption) of several sequester fixes being proposed for a specific federal activity. The DoD is next in line on a proposed set of fixes to base realignments and contractor and civilian

[PROGRAM UPDATE](#) [POLICY UPDATE](#)

[MEMBER ASSISTANCE REQUEST](#)

[GRANT OPPORTUNITIES](#) [UPCOMING EVENTS](#)



[2013 Election Information](#)

[General Achievement and Leadership Awards Information](#)

2013 National Award Nominations Due May 17th: NARC is accepting nominations for its 2013 Achievement and Leadership Awards. Three Achievement and five Leadership Awards will be presented during the 47th Annual Conference and Exhibition, June 23 - 26, 2013, in Philadelphia, PA. Click [HERE](#) for additional details.

Message from Sean Dey, Chair, Executive Directors Council

I want to inform you of a new NARC Project titled **Flexible Federalism**. By way of background, during the NARC National Conference of Regions in Washington (February 2013), the NARC Board of Directors and the Executive Directors Council was invited to the White House for a meeting with the White House Director of Intergovernmental Affairs. Some of you attended the meeting at which a number of high level

furloughs. The next sequester takes effect in October and at that point all available flexibility at the federal level to back fill programs will have been exhausted. While FAA and DoD get fixed (which is a positive) WIA, AAA, EPA and others do not. We look to continue pressure on Congress to address the effect of sequester on the whole rather than the parts.

NARC has made a technology transition to the Cloud. After calculating potential cost savings in the long run and the reduced need for IT maintenance and infrastructure, we have moved most of our services to cloud based systems. Our e-mail is hosted, we have full file sharing and back-up capability, and remote security and access controls. We will no longer run internal servers. I'd be happy to share our experience in this transition to anyone interested.

For those of you who have not been to Philadelphia please register for our Annual Conference. Our conference hotel is in the heart of the old city –

federal officials (HUD, DOT and CEQ) spoke to us about Federal priorities and how best regions could work with the Administration to make us and Federal programs more effective - we had a good dialogue. One of the key results of the meeting was a request that NARC identify how federal programs, which are intended to benefit local communities, can be made to work better together and be more flexible in their implementation (hence the title Flexible Federalism).

The issues to be reviewed, and the recommendations that are to be developed from the review, generally break out into three areas. One, coordination and flexibility of the time horizons and time lines of planning and implementation cycles (for example, Long Range Transportation Plans, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) development). Two, the flexibility and need to work within and across the geographic boundaries of program areas (for example, EDA and MPO boundaries). Three, the need for regulatory authority and program authority to make programs more effective amongst themselves (for example, grant making, federal application processes, and consolidated planning efforts). The three areas combined seem to feed the larger discussion of flexibility.

A committee is working on this initiative with NARC staff. If you have an interest in this project, or wish to make comments or suggestions, please contact me at sdey@wmsrdc.org or Fred.

Hope to see you at the NARC Annual Conference in Philadelphia June 23-26.

PROGRAMUPDATE

Solar Education & Outreach: As part of the U.S. Department of Energy's [SunShot Solar Outreach Partnership](#) (SolarOPs), NARC is seeking information on regional planning organization's knowledge of solar energy. NARC is developing a toolkit aimed to assist regional councils and their stakeholders to better understand solar photovoltaics (PV). **Please take 5 minutes to complete this brief survey to help NARC develop the solar toolkit. Please click [HERE](#) to access the survey.**

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

easy access to the Liberty Bell and many of the landmarks of the founding of our Nation. Along with the history we continue to confirm excellent speakers and sessions. Support NARC and our hosts – DVRPC by registering today!

Best,
Fred

Technology tip of the week: [Forbes: Small Business and the Cloud](#)

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Executive Director

Shannon Baxevanis

Deputy Director

Autumn Campbell

Director of Community
Programs

Mia Colson

Program Analyst

Valerie Hermanson

projects. For information and to register, click [HERE](#). Workshops are scheduled for:

- May 20 - Dallas, TX: North Central Texas Council of Governments
- May 23 - Blacksburg, VA
- June 10 - Oklahoma City, OK: Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

Article on America's Rural-Urban Divide: *Governing Magazine*

posted an article that details how the rural-urban divide in America is growing, greatly fueled by the greying of rural America, as well as losing population to urban centers. The National Association of Counties' Executive Director Matt Chase was quoted throughout the article on the benefits of rural America, stating, "When you look at the economic output of these counties, they're actually growing," and that roadband and access to airports are top priorities for rural counties. Regionalism is identified as the key in bridging this divide and offering prosperity and opportunity for both urban and rural America. NARC, representing both rural and urban regions, continues to highlight this with our partners, industry groups, businesses, Congress and the Administration. We welcome any ideas, suggestions or information you have in how you are helping bridge the divide. Click [HERE](#) to access the article.

Department of Commerce: President Obama Nominates Penny

Pritzker to head Commerce Department: Last week the President nominated a close economic advisory and long-time supporter to lead the Commerce Department. Business woman and entrepreneur Penny Pritzker has served on the administration's Economic Recovery Advisory Board and is on the board of the Hyatt Hotels Corporation. She has also steered fundraising strategies for Obama election efforts and leads the public/private collaborative, Skills for America's Future, which is a partnership among the private sector, community colleges and federal workforce efforts.

Department of Agriculture: USDA announces new rules for

broadband investment: Last week the US Department of Agriculture announced new rules aimed at better aligning Community Connect broadband grants to rural communities where they are needed the most. The changes are intended to simplify and provide technical improvements to the application process, allow more flexibility in identifying matching funds, and allow USDA to better identify and

Communications

Associate

Lindsey Riley

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Erika Young

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priorities communities where investments are most needed. Full rules are available **here.**

POLICYUPDATE

Congress is in session.

Appropriations Update: The appropriations process is underway in the House absent a FY14 budget resolution agreement between the two chambers of Congress. House appropriators are said to be writing the bills this month with the expectation of getting some of them to the House floor in June. The House will use its passed FY14 budget resolution for top line numbers. Visit NARC's **Federal Budget webpage** for more information.

NARC signed letter to committee leadership requesting increase to THUD 302b allocations: Last week, NARC signed onto a letter to House and Senate Appropriations Committee Leadership requesting that 302b allocations – the amount subcommittees are allocated for programs under their jurisdictions – be increased for Transportation and Housing and Urban Development programs. Since 2010, the allocations have been cut by nearly \$18 billion, or 24 percent. The letter asked committee leadership to increase THUD subcommittee levels to highest level possible in 2014.

MEMBERASSISTANCEREQUEST

HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative Grantees project evaluation and implementation information needed: NARC is asking for member input on Sustainable Communities Initiative program evaluation strategies and performance indicators as well as and local implementation and post-grant follow-up efforts are underway. The NARC team is seeking to compile information on grantee activities and best practices to share. Additionally, there will be a working group session for grantees at NARC's Annual Conference in Philadelphia in June. Please send information you have to Autumn Campbell at **autumn@narc.org.**

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.

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.

Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from Broward MPO:

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (Broward MPO) is requesting responses from qualified firms to conduct climate change vulnerability analysis that will yield mitigation strategies to incorporate into the region's transportation decision-making processes. The deadline is 5:00 pm, May 16, 2013. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Sustainable Communities

Deadline: May 22, 2013

The third round of funding under the Local Sustainability Matching Fund is available, which seeks to catalyze partnerships between local governments and place-based foundations to advance community sustainability initiatives. Seven sustainability priorities have been identified: climate adaptation/resilience, neighborhood sustainability, sustainable urban food systems, sustainability performance measurement, sustainable economic development, mobilizing resident/business sustainability actions, and recycling/waste prevention. The Fund will provide investments between \$25,000 and \$75,000, with a 1:1 match required by one or more local foundations. More information is available [here](#).

Department of Housing and Urban Development's Choice Neighborhoods Program

Deadline: May 28, 2013

Funding is available through the Choice Neighborhoods program to support planning efforts to develop comprehensive neighborhood

revitalization plans targeting severely distressed neighborhoods and surrounding communities. Plans must focus on achieving housing, social equity and economic investment objectives. More information is available [here](#).

HUD's FY 2013 Sustainable Communities Research Grant Program

Application Deadline: May 29, 2013

The program is offering a total of \$500,000 for cutting edge research in affordable housing development and preservation; transportation and infrastructure planning; and "green" energy-efficient practices.

Applications for grants in the amount of \$75,000 to \$125. For more information, see [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](#).

Healthy Foods Financing Initiative – Community and Economic Development Program

Deadline: July 2, 2013

Office of Community Services (OCS) seeks to fund projects that will implement innovative strategies to eliminate food deserts and achieve sustainable employment and business opportunities for recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and other low-income individuals whose income level does not exceed 125 percent of the Federal poverty level. Applicants must be a qualified Community Development Corporation (CDC). More information is available [here](#).

U.S. DOT TIGER Grants

Applications Due: June 3, 2013.

The U.S. Department of Transportation announced the availability of \$473.8 million in funds to be awarded for National Infrastructure

Investments (TIGER Funds). These funds will be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant impact on the Nation, a metropolitan area, or a region. Click [HERE](#) to access the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for more information about project eligibilities, application requirements and other important information.

Department of Health and Human Services – Community and Economic Development Program

Deadline: July 3, 2013

The Community and Economic Development (CED) program will provide approximately \$16.3 million in grants (\$800,000 maximum per project) to Community Development Corporations (CDCs) for projects designed to address the economic needs of low-income individuals and families through the creation of employment and business opportunities. The CED program seeks to fund projects that address the personal and community barriers that must be overcome to help low-income individuals become self-sufficient. More information is available [here](#).

USDA’s Intermediary Relending Program

Deadline: June 28, 2013

The USDA announced funding available to non-profit and public agencies serving as intermediaries to provide support to rural businesses and community development groups. Funding is available through the USDA’s Intermediary Relending Program that provides loans to economic development organizations, which in-turn support rural businesses that might not otherwise be able to secure financing. More information about the program is available [HERE](#) and the Federal Register notice is available [HERE](#).

2014 National Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grant Program

Application Deadline: July 15, 2013

Proposals are now being accepted for this annual program. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

UPCOMINGEVENTS

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.

Dallas Regional Solar Workshop

May 20, 2013, 8:30-12:30 pm

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 Dallas 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](#).

iCERT Executive Forum in conjunction with CTIA Annual Conference and Exposition in Las Vegas, NV

May 20, 2013, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

An intimate forum where leaders in the field of emergency response technologies will hear from subject matter experts on the latest technological and policy-related developments, while engaging in meaningful dialogue on key concepts for the future of emergency calling and communications. To register, click [HERE](#).

ICMA Webinar: Building Urban Adaptation to Climate Change

June 4, 2013 11:00 am ET

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Institute for Sustainable Communities will host the first of two CityLinks webinars, "[**Addressing Key Risks and Engaging the Community in the Development of Urban Infrastructure for Climate Adaptation-U.S. Case Studies**](#)." This session will explore how cities around the world are fostering locally-driven support and innovation to adapt to climate change. Hear from Susanne Torrientes, ICMA member and Assistant City Manager in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, talk about their lessons learned from Super Storm Sandy and how they are adapting their infrastructure to withstand the increasing intensity of storms and

hurricanes. To register for this free webinar, click [HERE](#).

ICMA Webinar: How to Plan an Effective Council Meeting

June 6, 2013 1:00-2:30 pm ET

Planning a council meeting is an art. Navigating conflict, maintaining decorum, and getting the job done for the public requires focus and discipline. Join ICMA's Kevin Duggan and Mike Conduff in a practical webinar to help you plan and run council meetings that give your governing body and citizens the forum to make good decisions in an open, fair, and constructive environment. To register, click [HERE](#).

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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