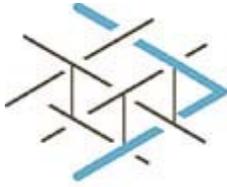


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XIII, No. 19, May 20, 2013

eRegions

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

We launched two web based resources for you to help track and stay on top of [Workforce Investment Act](#) and [Farm Bill Reauthorization](#) efforts. In each you will find our work, that of our partners, legislative and pending action. We are also releasing our study of [Regional Economic Competitiveness](#) funded by the Minneapolis based McKnight Foundation and for use by the Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities. In it, we look at comparable regions across a spectrum of activities including social equity planning, role of the

[PROGRAM UPDATE](#) [POLICY UPDATE](#)
[MEMBER ASSISTANCE REQUEST](#)
[GRANT OPPORTUNITIES](#) [UPCOMING EVENTS](#)



2013 NARC Membership Meeting and Election Information: The 2013 NARC Membership Meeting and Elections are scheduled for Wednesday, June 26th at 12:15 pm ET during the 47th Annual Conference and Exhibition, in Philadelphia, PA. Click [HERE](#) for additional details.

Hotel reservation deadline is Thursday, May 23rd! After this date, the conference hotel rate cannot be guaranteed.

Agenda Updates: Click [HERE](#) to access the updated agenda.

Digital Access: Driving Economic Opportunity: Presenters will address the role of regional planning organizations in evaluating the state of digital access in their communities, identifying the complex logistical and societal barriers to broadband adoption, and fostering

Council of Governments and collaboration strategies.

Crossing the Digital Divide, Regional Health Assessments, Performance Measurements, Rail, Greening the Gray, Public Safety and other regional development tools are featured at our 47th Annual Conference in Philadelphia – sign up now!

Best,
Fred

NARCLEADERSHIP

President

Hon. David F. Shafer,
Clerk/Treasurer,
Town of Munster, IN

Chair Sean Dey,

Executive Directors
Council
Executive Director, West
Michigan Shoreline
Regional Development
Commission

NARCSTAFF

[Fred Abousleman](#)

Executive Director

[Shannon Baxevanis](#)

Deputy Director

[Autumn Campbell](#)

Director of Community
Programs

increased digital literacy across underserved communities using traditional and alternative strategies.

- *Tom Koutsky*, Chief Policy Counsel, Connected Nation
- *John Horrigan, PhD*, Vice President, and Director of Media and Technology Institute, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

Discussion Session: Freight and Your Regions Economic

Prosperity: This session will connect goods movement and freight planning with economic development activities and review the role that freight plays in creation of economically prosperous regions.

- *Hon. Greg Pettis*, Southern California Association of Governments
- *William Goetz*, Resident Vice President for New York City-New Jersey-Philadelphia, CSX Transportation, Inc.
- *Warren Henry*, Vice President of Transportation, Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments

PROGRAMUPDATE

NARC Releases Economic Competitiveness Planning Report: In partnership with the McKnight Foundation, the Metropolitan Council (Minneapolis, MN) and MZ Strategies, LLC, NARC released *Planning for Regional Competitiveness: For Regional Economic Partners in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan Area*. Thirty peer regions were surveyed providing a status assessment of current regional economic competitiveness and equity planning efforts nationwide. The report also conducts a deeper analysis of three case study regions and proposes five recommendations to regional stakeholders in planning for economic competitiveness. A copy of the report is available [HERE](#); a copy of the executive summary is available [HERE](#).

NARC Hosts Webinar with EDA to Discuss Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership:

Last week, senior staff from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) joined NARC members for a webinar to discuss funding available for regional planning activities through the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) program. The IMCP program is an

Mia Colson

Program Analyst

Valerie Hermanson

Communications

Associate

Lindsey Riley

Deputy of

Communications

Erika Young

Transportation Director

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administration-wide initiative that aims to accelerate the resurgence of manufacturing and help cultivate an environment for businesses to create well-paying manufacturing jobs in regions across the country. Through an interagency collaborative, the EDA, Department of Agriculture, Small Business Administration and Environmental Protection Agency are awarding initial funding for regional implementation-ready strategic planning efforts to enhance investment in the manufacturing sector and increase international trade and exports. More information about the opportunity and details about the webinar are available [HERE](#).

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

- May 23 - Blacksburg, VA
- June 10 - Oklahoma City, OK: Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

Free Integrated Planning Webinar: The Water Environment Federation (WEF) is hosting a webinar on Integrated Planning (IP) on June 26th from 1:00 - 2:30 pm ET. The webinar will feature an in-depth presentation on the City of Baltimore's proposed Integrated Plan (IP), which responds to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) IP framework that provides cities flexibility in meeting clean water requirements in a sequenced manner that supports both affordability and environmental results. Click [HERE](#) to register and for more information.

President Obama Proposes to Streamline Project Review Process, Benefits Infrastructure: Last Friday, President Obama signed a [Presidential Memorandum](#) that will integrate best management practices throughout the regulations, policies and procedures of various

federal departments and agencies. This builds on a government-wide [Executive Order](#), signed in March, 2012, to improve the efficiency of federal review and permitting of infrastructure projects. Click [HERE](#) to for more information from the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and Director Sylvia Burwell, of the President's Office of Management and Budget.

POLICYUPDATE

Congress is in session.

Appropriations Update: On Tuesday the House Appropriations Committee is planning to approve the 302(b) allocations, the discretionary spending amounts for the 12 appropriations bills. The proposed House total is \$967 billion, which takes into account domestic funding cuts from both the spending caps and sequester. Domestic programs separate from homeland security and defense would be cut by nearly \$72 billion, or 17 percent, from current levels. Last week the House Appropriations Homeland Security Subcommittee advanced the FY14 Homeland Security spending bill, which would provide \$38.9 billion, a \$981 million increase over current funding; this bill rejected the President's National Preparedness Grant Program, which would consolidate FEMA State and Local grants. The Senate is still focused on agency hearings on the President's FY14 budget, as well as sequester impacts. Senate Appropriations Chairman Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) said that she aims to move the FY14 spending bills through the committee before August recess. Next week, she plans to meet with subcommittee chairmen to discuss 302(b) allocations with a full committee vote in June.

Senate Passes WRDA: Last week the Senate passed the Water Resources Development Act of 2013 (WRDA) (S. 601) by a vote of 83-14. The bill, which provides for large Army Corps projects, includes a five year, \$250 million water infrastructure financing (WIFIA) pilot program that will provide loans and loan guarantees for water and wastewater infrastructure projects costing \$20 million or more, or \$5 million or more for projects in rural communities (defined as under 25,000 residents). WIFIA projects also require "Made in America" materials. WRDA now goes to the House.

Farm Bill Passes Both Committees; Full Senate Consideration

Today: Both Chambers have committed to a long-term reauthorization of the Farm Bill in the near term. The Senate is poised to move on its

proposal Monday and House leadership has committed to a floor vote this summer. The House bill (HR 1947) authorizes \$940 billion and the Senate measure (S 954) authorizes \$955 billion over the next 10 years. Should the measures make it to conference, there will be major challenges reconciling funding cuts to nutrition programs, which account for the bulk of the funding differences. During mark-up in both chambers, important amendments were adopted to support rural programs, but the Senate measure provides more robust support for these initiatives. As the bills move through Congress, NARC will continue to work with industry partners to promote member priorities. More information about Farm Bill reauthorization efforts is available [HERE](#).

MEMBER ASSISTANCE REQUEST

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.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Homeland Security Grant Funding

Click [HERE](#) to access a *Governing Magazine* article that details U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) grant funding and related issues, including association positions on the Obama Administration's grant consolidation proposal.

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](#).

Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership

Deadline: June 13, 2013

The Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) program is an administration-wide initiative that aims to accelerate the resurgence of manufacturing and help cultivate an environment for businesses to create well-paying manufacturing jobs in regions across the country. Through an interagency collaborative, the EDA, Department of Agriculture, Small Business Administration and Environmental Protection Agency are awarding initial funding for regional implementation-ready strategic planning efforts to enhance investment in the manufacturing sector and increase international trade and exports. More information about the opportunity and details about the NARC webinar about this funding opportunity (held May 17, 2013) are available [HERE](#).

United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) Program

Deadline: June 28, 2013

The USDA is accepting applications for grants to provide technical assistance to help rural businesses grow. This opportunity is also a part of the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership initiative. Grants are available to support projects that will help small rural businesses gain access to strategic planning, capacity building and mentoring services that otherwise may not be available. Applications are also being accepted through this opportunity as part of the IMCP program to promote the manufacturing sector. A USDA press release about the opportunity is available [HERE](#) and a link to the Federal Register notice is available [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

ICMA Webinar: Cybersecurity for Local Government

May 30, 1:0-2:30 p.m. ET

Cybersecurity is not just a federal or private sector issue. It is a whole community issue that requires partnerships, vigilance, and proactive efforts on every level of government. Does your municipality have adequate security measures in place? Join ICMA's Center for Public Safety Management and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in this webinar to help local government managers protect their organizations and safeguard their citizens' records. Click [HERE](#) to register.

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](#).

Solar Roadmap: Your Path to Regional Prosperity Webinar

June 6, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

The Solar Roadmap is a platform for local governments and regional planning organizations to implement best practices to reduce soft costs for solar energy. Join NARC and Optony to learn how the Solar Roadmap can help your region determine realistic solar opportunities and best practices to transform your economy through solar development. To register, click [HERE](#).

EPA Webinar: Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Training Academy

June 11, 3:00-4:00 pm ET

EPA delivers technical assistance through [Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities](#). As part of this effort, they have developed 12 workshop tools that address common challenges faced by communities working to create more sustainable neighborhoods, cities, and regions. The next step is to create a training program for staff from public agencies and nonprofit organizations that provide technical assistance to communities. The training program will help these staff understand the Building Blocks tools and incorporate them into their technical assistance. During this listening session, we will gather input from key stakeholders on how best to design the training program and request feedback on specific questions such as: Who is the best target audience for this kind of training?; Should it be a one-day training, two-day training, or some other format?; Should training sessions be coordinated with major national conferences or held as separate events? No pre-registration is required. Dial into the conference call at 1-866-299-3188, participant code 2025662950. Click on [HERE](#). Log in as a guest.

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.

ICMA Webinar: Human Trafficking is a Local Issue

June 26, 1:00-2:30 pm ET

An estimated 100,000 children are at risk of commercial sexual exploitation. The alarming trend is reaching small-town America as

gangs are luring children from local schools in the United States into trafficking situations. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security warns that many gangs are profiting greatly from human trafficking. Join ICMA's Center for Public Safety Management and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in a webinar to discuss the warning signs and the resources available to local governments to combat this epidemic. Click [HERE](#) to register for this webinar.

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