



## NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

*Congress is in session.*

### **Infrastructure Week and Workforce Development**

Last week NARC and its partner organizations, including the National League of Cities, National Skills Coalition, and Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce, met with congressional staff about the importance of addressing local and regional workforce needs in any infrastructure package Congress develops.

The message to congressional staff from city elected officials and organization staff emphasized that resources for states and localities to plan, design, build, and maintain their infrastructure also require a skilled workforce. Without a trained and highly skilled workforce to accomplish these tasks, local governments will not be able to meet the nation's infrastructure goals.

Among the city elected officials who met with congressional staff were Gary, Indiana Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson and City Commissioner Gil Zimmer of Tallahassee, Florida. In addition to NARC staff, the delegation also included staff from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Conversations with majority and minority staff from the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) and House Education and the Workforce committees focused on how to effectively connect infrastructure development initiatives with workforce development programs, including those supported by the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* and those tied to credentialed apprenticeship and community college job training programs.

While some congressional staff expressed concern over the ability to fund additional training programs in a time of fiscal austerity, most agreed that a successful infrastructure program will need skilled workers. To ensure a skilled workforce, states and localities need to create effective job training programs where workers can obtain the skills they need, and employers can obtain

the workers they need, to do the work.

NARC specifically focused on the role that regions could play – as training providers or economic development partners, etc. – to develop and implement infrastructure programs that benefit their residents and business communities by providing jobs, economic growth, and an enhanced quality of life for everyone.

### **NARC on the Hill**

NARC has been busy visiting Capitol Hill the last couple of weeks, meeting with staff from the following offices/committees:

- Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, Majority Staff
- Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, Minority Staff
- House Committee on Education and the Workforce, Majority Staff
- House Committee on Education and the Workforce, Minority Staff
- Senator Durbin
- Senator Shaheen
- Senator Baldwin
- Senator Rubio
- Senator Blunt
- Senator Alexander
- Senator Reed
- Senator Kennedy
- Representative Diaz-Balart
- Representative Graves
- Representative Aguilar
- Representative Frelinghuysen

### **Senate Releases Markup Schedule for Appropriations Bills**

Last week, the Senate Appropriations Committee announced their markup schedule for their fiscal year (FY) 2019 appropriations bills, which have yet to be released. The schedule starts this week:

- Week of May 21-25, 2018
  - Energy and Water Development
  - Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food and Drug Administration
- Week of June 4-8, 2018
  - Transportation and Housing and Urban Development
  - Military Construction and Veterans Affairs
- Week of June 11-15, 2018
  - Interior and Environment
  - Commerce, Justice, and Science
  - Legislative Branch
- Week of June 18-22, 2018
  - State and Foreign Operations
  - Homeland Security
  - Financial Services and General Government
- Week of June 25-29
  - Defense
  - Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education

### **House Fails to Pass Farm Bill**

With a vote of 213 to 198 on Friday, the House failed to pass its version of the Farm Bill. This came as a blow to Republican leadership, who had been negotiating with the House Freedom Caucus until the last minute to vote in favor of the sweeping legislation. The 30 Republicans that ultimately voted against the bill did so to demand a vote on a conservative immigration bill before the Farm Bill is considered. While the Farm Bill could be reconsidered on the floor within the next two days, there is no indication that the vote count will change. Meanwhile, Senate Agriculture Committee leadership may announce a timeline for marking up their version of the Farm Bill this week.

### **What the House WRDA Bill Leaves Out**

On Friday, the House released its draft version of the 2018 *Water Resources Development*

**Act** (WRDA). Unlike the Senate version, the House bill does not extend a federal lending program for water and sewer projects and leaves out language reworking how wastewater utilities go about meeting the *Clean Water Act's* federal standards. The House bill does not include language to reauthorize the *Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act* (WIFIA) program, which the Senate version extends through 2021. Only the Senate version includes language for an “**integrated planning**” framework, providing flexibility to local governments to stagger wastewater and sewer upgrades so they can afford these projects while meeting federal compliance requirements as quickly as possible.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee plans to **markup their draft bill on Wednesday morning**. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee also plans to consider their version tomorrow, and debate is continuing on whether they should include an amendment to expand the WIFIA financing program so that is more accessible to smaller communities.

### **House Advances 57 Total Bills to Combat the Opioid Crisis, Clearing Path to Floor Vote**

Last week, the House Energy and Commerce Committee held a markup and advanced 32 bills to help combat the opioid crisis, bringing the total number of related bills passed by committee to 57. Fifty-three of those bills were passed by voice vote. Chairman Greg Walden's said, “We have a unique opportunity to save lives, and we can't lose sight of the real-world impact of our actions throughout this process... We owe it to the families of the more than 115 Americans who die from opioids every single day to come together and advance legislation that can help stem this tide.” Read his official **statement** for further elaboration.

## **OTHER NEWS**

### **GIA Releases New Rural Mobility & Technology Guide**

Transportation and mobility options for seniors used are much more limited in rural communities. However, with the introduction of newer technologies – such as telehealth, ride-hailing, and autonomous vehicles – the rural landscape is changing and empowering millions of rural seniors to age in place. Grantmakers in Aging (GIA) recently introduced ***Mobility & Aging in Rural America: The Role for Innovation*** to explore possibilities of how collaboration between a variety of stakeholders can improve mobility and quality of life for seniors in rural communities.

### **Pew Charitable Trusts Flood-Prepared Communities Resources**

For Infrastructure Week, The Pew Charitable Trusts released a **video** featuring four mayors representing a bipartisan group of more than 250 elected officials that signed Pew's ***Flood-Ready Infrastructure Statement of Principles***. This document calls upon Congress to support infrastructure decisions that will: improve resiliency requirements for buildings and infrastructure systems built before and after flood-related catastrophes, enhance the use of natural defenses in planning and preparedness, and reduce unsustainable development in high-risk areas. Pew also released a **series of blogs** that highlight mayoral efforts to become flood ready as well as **research and analyses** to illustrate the need to prioritize flood-ready infrastructure.

## **REGION SPOTLIGHT**

### **Decrease in Homelessness Recorded in Metropolitan Washington in 2018**

According to a **recent report** by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG), the metropolitan Washington area has seen a six percent decrease in its homeless population over the past year. MWCOG's report says the positive downward trend is a testament to the region's work to provide shelter and wrap around services to homeless individuals and families. They recognize that the region still has a lot of work to do – and have called upon jurisdictions to "continue efforts to reach out, assess, and house unsheltered homeless persons, increase its permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing and other permanent housing inventory, and provide training opportunities to low-skilled and low-wage workers to 'create ladders of opportunity' to higher-paying jobs.”

## **FEATURED JOBS**

***View full list of jobs!***

### **Assistant or Associate Regional Planner**

San Joaquin Council of Governments, Stockton, CA

### **Director of Economic and Community Development**

Greater Nashville Regional Council, Nashville, TN

### **Active Transportation Planner**

Michiana Area Council of Governments, South Bend, IN

### **Active Transportation Planner**

Wasatch Front Regional Council, Salt Lake City, UT

### **Transportation Planner I or II**

Maricopa Association of Governments, Phoenix, AZ

## **FUNDING**

***View full list of grants!***

### **FTA Solicitation of Project Proposals for the Low-No Program**

Applications Due: June 18

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announces the availability of \$84.45 million of FY 2018 funds for its Low or No Emission (Low-No) Program. The main purpose of the Low-No Program is to support the transition of the nation's transit fleet to the lowest polluting and most energy efficient transit vehicles. The Low-No Program provides funding to state and local governmental authorities for the purchase or lease of zero-emission and low-emission transit buses, including acquisition, construction, and leasing of required supporting facilities.

### **Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grants**

Applications Due: July 2

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will make grants to public bodies and private nonprofit corporations to provide associations technical assistance and training with respect to essential community facilities programs. The technical assistance and/or training will assist communities, Indian Tribes, and nonprofit corporations to identify and plan for community facility needs that exist in their area. Once those needs have been identified, the grantee can assist in identifying public and private resources to finance those identified community facility needs. Examples of how funds may be used are:

- Assist communities in identifying and planning for community facility needs;
- Identify resources to finance community facility needs from public and private sources;
- Prepare reports and surveys necessary to request financial assistance to develop community facilities;
- Prepare applications for USDA financial assistance; or
- Improve the management, including financial management, related to the operation of community facilities.

### **Innovations in Nutrition Programs and Services**

Applications Due: July 17

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) just released a **new funding opportunity** for the aging services network that supports the testing and documentation of innovative and promising practices for enhancing the quality, effectiveness, and proven outcomes of nutrition services programs. Innovations may include a nutrition effort combined with addressing a local or national need, such as reducing falls; improving chronic conditions; improving oral health; increasing social connections; reaching *Older Americans Act* target populations; decreasing anxiety, depression, emotional disturbances, or suicide; improving overall physical and mental health symptoms; and increasing activity involvement. Approaches must have the potential for broad implementation throughout the network and demonstrated value.

ACL plans to award four cooperative agreements to domestic public or private non-profit entities for a 24-month project period. Applicants may request a total maximum of \$250,000 for each of the two 12-month budget periods. An **informational call for interested applicants** will be held June 12 at 2:00 PM ET.

## EVENTS

*View full list of events!*

### **NARC Webinar! Fleets for the Future Webinar: Best Practices for EV Charging Infrastructure**

May 31, 12:30-1:30 PM ET

Fleets for the Future (F4F) is a national team of regional councils, Clean Cities coalitions, and industry experts tasked with coordinating regional and national procurement initiatives to consolidate bulk orders of alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) and infrastructure. Join the F4F team to learn the basics of electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE), how to use telematics for infrastructure planning, and best practices in education and technology. To learn more about incorporating electric vehicles into your fleet, see our team's **most recent webinar recording** and **best practice guide**.

### **Tools and Approaches to Address Homelessness**

June 7, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

In 2017, California was home to a staggering 49 percent of the nation's homeless population. Across the state, local officials and staff are grappling with solutions to address this complex, multifaceted problem. This webinar will highlight examples of how cities, counties, and special districts have implemented best practices and approaches to address homelessness. Learn about a new tool, developed by the Joint Homelessness Task Force of the League and CA State Association of Counties, to help local governments tackle this issue as well as lessons learned.

### **Resiliency Planning Tools**

June 13, 1:00-2:00 PM ET

Many online tools are available to local decisionmakers to understand the future impacts of climate change. This webinar will briefly illustrate the key points of several tools and take participants through a live demonstration. Communities may use these tools as a starting point to plan for future scenarios. Mapping outputs can be incorporated into conversations with the public and planning documents and for identifying areas for future development based on projected climate impacts. Participants in the webinar are eligible for .75 AICP CM credits.

### **engAGED: Increasing Social Engagement for Older Adults**

June 20, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

Steve Thaxton, executive director of the National Resource Center for Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes, will host a discussion of what lifelong learning entails, best practices for engaging older adults, and how lifelong learning contributes to health and wellness. Thaxton will also share inspiring stories, tips, and resources to help the Aging Network increase the social engagement of older adults. This webinar is a part of a five-part webinar series focused on increasing the engagement of older adults to promote health and wellness.

## CONTACT US

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