



CONFERENCE NOTE

NARC's 51st Annual Conference Provides a Forum for Learning and Networking

Beginning on Sunday, June 4, and running through Wednesday, June 7, 181 delegates, including 51 local elected and appointed officials and 48 regional council executive directors, representing 27 states, came together in Monterey, CA for NARC's 51st Annual Conference to learn and network with fellow elected officials and regional council staff.

2016-2017 NARC President Ron Shaffer, commissioner of Johnson County, KS, opened with words of praise for NARC, NARC leadership, and the California Association of Councils of Government (**CALCOG**), which helped plan the conference. He added, "the setting could not be more perfect, and the conference itself could not have been better planned."

Among the highlights were the elections of Seminole County, FL Commissioner Bob Dallari as president of NARC and Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission Executive Director William Murdock as chair of NARC's Executive Directors Council. See the [press release](#) for the full listing of returning and newly elected leaders.

On Tuesday evening NARC held their Annual Awards Gala Dinner at which individuals and regional councils received awards for leadership and programs while delegates were afforded the opportunity to network with one another. The **winners** were:

- Major Metro Award: Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments for CORIS: Leveraging Data Innovation and P3s in Regional Freight Transportation Planning
- Medium Metro Award: Central Texas Council of Governments for their Veterans Directed Health Care Program
- Rural Award: Southwest Colorado Council of Governments for their Southwest Colorado Broadband Project
- Walter Scheiber Leadership Award: David John Preece, Executive Director/CEO, Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission
- Tom Bradley Leadership Award: Robert Cannon, Supervisor of Clinton Township, MI and Vito Chiesa, Board of Supervisors, Stanislaus County, CA
- John Bosley Award: Rick Tollakson, President and CEO, Hubbell Realty Company
- NARC President's Award: Fred Strong, City Councilman, Paso Robles, CA

The conference was loaded with plenary sessions, breakouts, and committee meetings that covered a wide range of topics, including transportation, the federal budget, aging, alternative fuels, and autonomous vehicles.

Monday's opening session featured local hosts with an overview of California regions from our host, the California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG), and a discussion of planning challenges. In the transportation committee, members reviewed and clarified NARC's transportation policy and engaged in a discussion around autonomous and connected vehicles. Other sessions on Monday included: implementing full-scale emergency training exercises to prepare regions for the possibility of complex coordinated terrorist attacks; the NARC led project to bring alternative fuel vehicles to local communities; addressing the needs of aging populations and

creating a livable framework for all ages; access to healthcare; transportation funding; the innovative use of data by the Maricopa Association of Governments for transportation planning, economic development, job creation, etc.; and an update on the new Scenario Planning Consortium that members may join.

Tuesday continued with a similar breadth of subject matter. Will Lambe from the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta kicked off the morning with a discussion on economic dynamism and community investment in small and mid-sized cities with lessons learned from two regional councils. Other sessions that day included: the impact of emerging technologies that are transforming cities and changing behaviors; a luncheon presentation on civic engagement and civility with the National Institute on Civil Discourse that included a panel discussion led by the League of California Cities and NARC Board members; ending homelessness; responding to disasters; and transportation as an economic driver, particularly in port cities.

A full report on the conference, including session summaries and graphics from the conference is expected to be published in late July. For now, please take a look at [our conference page](#) for presentations.

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

Congress is in session.

Overview

As the August recess approaches, House leaders will push their timeframe for working on a draft fiscal year 2018 budget resolution, perhaps even to July. The budget resolution, which sets limits on spending and revenue for the congressional spending packages, is far beyond its usual deadline of April 15. While a markup this week is unlikely, the decision to delay leaves Republicans with a potentially tough political choice—push action on the budget into an already-crowded July legislative agenda or try to mark up the resolution in the last week of June, pushing a floor vote to July. The delay is largely due to administration efforts to replace the healthcare bill and increase defense spending. NARC is concerned about the proposed budget, which would cut or eliminate many programs key to local economic growth.

Congress Begins National Flood Insurance Program Reauthorization

The National Flood Insurance Program's current authorization expires on September 30, and both chambers are beginning to circulate several pieces of draft legislation to reauthorize the program. **H.R. 1422** would require specific buildings and personal property to be covered by flood insurance; **H.R. 1558** places an emphasis on community accountability for areas repeatedly damaged by floods; and **H.R. 2246** would repeal mandatory flood insurance coverage for commercial properties located in flood hazard areas. House Financial Services Committee plans to continue its markup of bills on Wednesday. Last week the committee approved **H.R. 2868** and **H.R. 2874**.

The National Flood Insurance Program is managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and is designed to reduce the impact of flooding on private and public structures by providing affordable insurance to property owners, and by encouraging communities to adopt and enforce floodplain management regulations. Draft bipartisan legislation in the Senate would extend the program's authorization for a 10-year term until 2027. The proposal would promote financial solvency of the program, which is currently over \$24 billion in debt, by allowing FEMA to pass the risk to private insurance markets. The Senate proposal would invest in mitigation and resiliency and reauthorize the National Flood Mapping Program.

Committee Highlights

The Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet plans a hearing tomorrow on the Universal Service Fund and rural broadband investment.

The House Energy and Commerce Communications and Technology Subcommittee plans a hearing Wednesday on defining and mapping broadband coverage in the nation.

The State of the Nation's Housing 2017

The Joint Center for Housing Studies (JCHS) at Harvard University released its annual assessment

of the housing market, demographic trends, and housing challenges faced by U.S. households. *The State of the Nation's Housing 2017* highlights continued affordability challenges, increased segregation by income, and the concentration of new additions to the rental multifamily supply at the upper end of the market. According to JCHS, 21 million renter households were cost-burdened (paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing) and 11.1 million renter households were severely cost-burdened (paying more than 50 percent of their income on housing) in 2015. Learn more about JCHS' new housing report in [Enterprise's blog post](#).

Housing construction at the beginning of 2017 has also suffered according to new Commerce data, **residential building starts decreased 5.5 percent in May**, marking the third straight month of declines. Construction of single-family properties dropped 3.9 percent, and ground-breaking on multifamily units declined for the fifth straight month. In addition, permits (a proxy for future construction) fell to 4.9 percent, the lowest rate since April 2016.

New HUD Appointee

President Trump reportedly appointed **Lynne Patton to lead HUD's Region II**, which oversees New York and New Jersey. As head of the biggest HUD regional office in the country, Patton will oversee the distribution of funds to federal housing programs and public housing authorities in the region, including the New York City Housing Authority. Patton served as a liaison to President Trump's family during the presidential campaign and previously worked as an event planner.

REGION SPOTLIGHT

Transportation Infrastructure: USDOT Notice of Review of Policy, Guidance, and Regulation

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) recently placed a **Notice in the Federal Register** seeking input from stakeholders regarding current agency regulations that slow the project approval process and that should be removed or revised. This notice is in line with the focus that the president and others in the administration have placed on this issue, and is likely to be a major piece of any infrastructure package later this year.

Comments on this notice are due by July 24. NARC is reaching out to both inform you of this deadline and to ask if you would tell us about what you have identified as barriers. Please send us your input, so that we can use those examples for a potential NARC comment to the docket.

We will begin by holding one-on-one conversations with members, and may expand it later to a broader conversation with the entire membership. **If you have ideas in this area you would like to discuss with us, please send an email ASAP to erich@narc.org** and we'll work together to set up a time with the appropriate members of your staff.

REGIONS LEAD

Visit www.regionslead.org to read up on the latest NARC blogs. We invite members to submit blogs to the site too.

President's FY18 "A New Foundation for American Greatness" Budget Not Great for Local Governments

by Neil Bomberg

On Tuesday, May 23, the president introduced his first ever, full budget proposal: *A New Foundation for American Greatness*. If adopted into law, the budget would impose catastrophic cuts to non-defense discretionary programs (those most targeted to local programs), while dramatically increasing spending for defense-related programs.

FEATURED JOBS

View full list of jobs!

Active Transportation Planner

San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, CA

Deputy Clerk of the Board

Southern California Association of Governments, Los Angeles, CA

Regional Planner III

Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, Dayton, OH

Principal Planner

Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston, TX

Associate Policy Analyst – Transportation and Land Use

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Chicago, IL

Public Information Officer

San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, CA

Transportation Planner – System Performance

Association of Central Oklahoma Governments, Oklahoma City, OK

FUNDING

View full list of grants!

The Department of Commerce Seeks to Provide Early-Stage Funding to Startups

Applications Due: June 23

The U.S. Department of Commerce's **Economic Development Administration** has provided an opportunity for local governments to help innovators and entrepreneurs take their ideas and produce them into tangible products and services. Local governments and nonprofits are encouraged to **submit proposals** for programs that will provide proof-of-concept and commercialization assistance to those that seeking essential early-stage funding to startups. Applicants must provide a matching share from non-federal sources of at least 50% of the total project cost. Under the **RIS Program**, applications are being solicited for two separate competitions. Applicants may submit proposals for one or both of the following RIS Program competitions: (1) 2017 i6 Challenge, and (2) 2017 Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grant.Competition.

EPA Offers Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program Awards for Fiscal Year 2017

Applications Due: July 5

The Environmental Protection Agency's **Office of Transportation and Air Quality** is soliciting proposals for projects aimed at reducing diesel emissions in terms of tons of pollution produced by diesel engines and diesel emissions exposure. Priority for funding will be given to projects that focus more specifically on the following areas:

- The ideal project will target fleets that operate at or service goods movement facilities that are located in areas that have been designated as having poor air quality.
- The ideal project will focus on providing outcomes that benefit the affected communities, will engage the affected communities throughout the process of the project, and will continue to promote efforts to reduce emissions, even after the project ends.

The Department of the Interior Seeks Assistance with Upholding the North American Wetlands Conservation Act

Applications Due: July 14

The Department of the Interior's **Fish and Wildlife Service** has opened the **application** for a matching grants program that will assist in carrying out projects that further support the **North American Wetlands Conservation Act**. The program encourages public-private partnerships that will provide long-term protection, restoration, enhancement, and/or establishment of wetlands and associated habitats. A 1:1 match is required to receive the funding.

EVENTS

View full list of events!

EPA Grants Award Process Webinar

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

EPA's Office of Grants and Debarment is hosting a webinar that will cover: how to find and apply for grant opportunities, EPA's Grants.gov requirement; and preparing a proper budget detail.

There will also be time for Q&A.

EPA Tools and Resources Webinar: Public Health Impact of Wildfire Smoke Emissions:

June 21, 3:00-4:00 PM ET

This webinar highlights updates to the *Wildfire Smoke Guide for Public Health Officials* and the Smoke Sense mobile application. It will also discuss issues related to community vulnerability for health impacts from wildfires.

EPA Nonpotable Water Reuse in Urban Environments

June 21, 2:00-3:30 PM ET

Dr. Matthew Small will provide a regional perspective on collaborative efforts between EPA and the City of San Francisco. The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's Nonpotable Water Program will be discussed, as well as approaches for monitoring water treatment for risk-based pathogen reduction and removal.

NACo Keeping Counties Moving: Innovations in Infrastructure, Goods Movement and Vehicle Technologies

June 21, 2:00-3:15 PM ET

Learn how counties are improving transportation systems by working across megaregions to leverage technological innovations.

CONTACT US

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