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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XII, No. 26, July 9, 2012

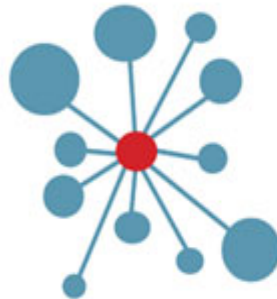
eRegions

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

With the Presidents signing of the Surface Transportation bill Friday, we have some stability in funding and authority for the next few years. The promise of \$105 billion in funding will help maintain and build projects. Important for regions around the country, was a renewed commitment to maintaining our historic partnership with federal and state government.

As we move closer to November, Congress will come to a standstill as it pauses for the election. I hope we can get a few more important things done before, such as



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**executive directors' conference
september 23-25, 2012
boise, id**

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**[PROGRAMUPDATE](#) [POLICYUPDATE](#)
[PARTNERUPDATE](#) [REGIONS360](#)
[GRANTOPPORTUNITIES](#) [UPCOMINGEVENTS](#)**

PROGRAMUPDATE

Last Chance to Register: NARC's Transportation Webinar: NARC's next Transportation Committee webinar is scheduled for Tuesday, July 10, 2012 from 12:00-2:00pm ET. NARC and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will discuss their recently released report on transit in nonmetropolitan regions. While the agenda is yet to be released, you can Click [HERE](#) to register early and [HERE](#) for more information.

Register Now for NARC's Solar Energy Webinar! Join us this Thursday, July 12th, from 3:00-4:00 pm ET to learn how to reduce up-front costs of solar installations through collaborative procurement. To register, click [HERE](#). For questions about the webinar, please email Mia

passing a Farm bill and preparing our members for sequestration. Until then – thank you for your hard work.

Best,
Fred

NARCLEADERSHIP

President David F. Shafer,
Clerk/Treasurer,
Town of Munster, IN
Chair Sean Dey,
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Michigan Shoreline
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Lindsey Riley
Deputy of
Communications
Erika Young
Transportation Director

To access past issues of *eRegions*, **visit our website.**

Colson at mia@NARC.org.

Obama Signs Executive Order on Emergency Government

Communications: Last week, President Obama signed an executive order (EO) that laid out an approach to developing policies for maintaining government communication during national emergencies. The committee will be responsible for planning communications under all hazards and developing a long-term strategic vision with funding requirements. Click [HERE](#) to access the EO.

NGA Hosts Meeting and Releases Information on Broadband:

To help states with the implementation of the nationwide broadband network dedicated to public safety communications, the National Governors Association (NGA) hosted a forum to educate and assist states in broadband implementation. Supporting additional opportunities for state leadership on broadband build out and governance. NGA also released *Steps to Prepare for Public Safety Broadband* and an accompanying white paper, which outlines the essential steps states can take now to prepare for implementation. Click [HERE](#) to access the report and white paper.

White House Hosts Forum on Sustainable Communities: The event, which promoted discussion how sustainability strategies make regional economies more competitive, celebrated three years of the Federal Partnerships for Sustainable Communities. Over the past three years the Partnership has provided over \$3.7 billion in assistance to over 700 communities in all 50 states, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico.

Census Bureau Launches Series of Historical Infographics: The U.S. Census Bureau recently unveiled a new series of infographics and interactive features on its website. Entitled “How Do We Know?” the webpage provides information on a wide range of topics, including the history of the Census Bureau and how its data collection methods have changed over the years. Click [HERE](#) to access more information.

EPA Seeks Public Comment on Proposals for Promoting Public

Participation in Permitting: To implement Administrator Lisa P. Jackson’s priority on environmental justice, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is issuing a federal register notice for public comment regarding “Proposed Regional Actions to Promote Public Participation in the Permitting Process” and “Draft Best Practices for Permit Applicants Seeking EPA-Issued Permits: Ways to Engage the

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Communities at the Fence-Line.” You can view and comment on the *Federal Register* notice [HERE](#) (Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2012-0452). The comment period closes August 27, 2012.

Join the National Conversation on the Future of Our Communities:

What's your vision for the future of your community? Join the Smart Growth Network (SGN) in the first national conversation about how neighborhoods and regions could be planned, designed, or developed to meet the needs of current and future generations. Your ideas will help the members of the Smart Growth Network form strategies to help communities grow in ways that strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and improve the quality of life. Select submissions will be posted [HERE](#) and shared widely among smart growth organizations. Submissions may also be featured at the National Partners for Smart Growth Conference in Kansas City, MO, Feb. 7-9, 2013.

EPA's Clean Water Act 40th Anniversary Video Project: Tell Us Why

“Water is Worth It” to You: As a part of EPA's Clean Water Act (CWA) 40th Anniversary celebration, the Agency is hosting a video project asking Americans everywhere to send in a 15-second video clip explaining the important role that water plays in their lives. EPA will feature selected video clips on its website and "Water Is Worth It" Facebook page as part of its anniversary celebration. Each video should include the phrase "Water is worth it..." but the rest is up to you! To register, click [HERE](#); entries must be received by September 14, 2012.

New EPA Air Quality Planning Resources for State, Tribal and Local

Air Agencies: EPA has released a new Roadmap to help state, tribal, and local air agencies include emission reductions from energy efficiency and renewable energy in State and Tribal Implementation Plans (SIPs/TIPs) to improve air quality. The Roadmap focuses on emissions benefits from energy efficiency/renewable energy policies and programs in the electric power sector. It reflects input received from a number of stakeholders, including state and local energy and air quality agencies. For more information, please visit the [Roadmap website](#).

POLICYUPDATE

The House and Senate are in session.

Senators Discussing Sequestration Impact with Defense

Companies: A bipartisan group of Senators are requesting 15 defense companies detail the anticipated impact of the pending sequestration on their companies. Click [HERE](#) to access the letter.

FY13 Appropriations Update: Congress continues to work on the FY13 appropriations bills. The House has passed six of the 12 spending bills and the Senate has not taken any bills to the floor. Very little legislative time remains to clear most of the bills before the November elections. It is anticipated that the closing out the process will take place some time in December. In order to maintain government funding, Congress will need to begin examining continuing resolution (CR) options before the October 1 start of the new fiscal year.

House Agriculture Committee Releases Farm Bill Draft: On July 5 the House Agriculture Committee released a draft of the House's 2012 Farm Bill, entitled the Federal Agricultural Reform and Risk Management Act (FAARM). The House's bill makes \$35 million in program cuts over ten years, compared with the \$23.6 billion in cuts proposed by the [farm bill passed by the Senate](#). The bill also proposes a 66% cut in mandatory rural development funding and a 50% reduction in authorization levels for rural development programs. Click [HERE](#) to read the committee draft of the House's 2012 Farm Bill.

PARTNERUPDATE

Submit Ideas for the National Brownfields Conference: The National Brownfields Conference, co-sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency and the International City/County Management Association, is the largest conference in the nation that focuses on environmental revitalization and economic redevelopment. Among the topics that will be included in the program are community engagement, environmental cleanup, sustainable solutions, environmental justice and green technology. Session Ideas can be submitted by the public [HERE](#) until August 3, 2012. Brownfields 2013 will take place on May 15-17 2013 in Atlanta, GA. For more information please contact Grant Sparks at gsparks@icma.org or 202-962-3657.

REGIONS360

Launch of NEOSCC Conditions and Trends Platform: The Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Consortium (NEOSCC) recently launched their Conditions and Trends Platform page, which condenses policy plans, planning initiatives, and other resources into easily-searchable and comprehensive information on a variety of challenges facing the area and the resources available to Northeast Ohio. The platform, completed with a HUD Sustainable Communities Grant to NEOSCC, can be found [HERE](#).

Broward MPO to Release RFQ for Public Education and Engagement Campaign: The RFQ is expected to be released in late September/early October. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge: Advanced Manufacturing

Extended Application Deadline: July 11, 2012

Several agencies from the Department of Commerce and Department of Labor have announced a multi-agency effort to fund advanced manufacturing activities that drive high potential industry clusters. The Advanced Manufacturing Jobs Accelerator allows applicants to submit a single multi-year project narrative to multiple agencies which will in turn fund various aspects of the project. Up to 12 awards are anticipated, with each award receiving funding from one or more participating agencies. Access the Federal Funding Opportunity [HERE](#) or click [HERE](#) for more resources and information.

Economic Development Administration's i6 Challenge

Deadline: July 20, 2012

The U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, in conjunction with the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, is holding the third round of the i6 Challenge. Teams must submit proposals to establish or expand Proof of Concept Centers: institutions like the Deshpande Center for Technological Innovation at the Massachusetts Institute for Technology that provide seed grants for innovators and entrepreneurs. Six winning teams will be awarded up to \$1 million each. Click [HERE](#) for more information and see Upcoming Events for related webinars.

Strong Cities, Strong Communities (SC2) Visioning Challenge

Deadline: July 23, 2012

The EDA will select six cities, one from each of its regions, to award up to \$1 million to conduct their own regional two-phase competitions to encourage innovation in regional development. In the first phase experts in engineering, transportation, economic development or other fields will submit economic development proposals for the area. Those who submit the highest-rated proposals will receive a cash prize and then, in the second phase, go on to compete for a larger prize by creating a more comprehensive development plan. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

ACL: Improving Coordinated Transportation Systems for People with Disabilities and Older Adults

Application Deadline: August 14, 2012

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) and the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) have announced a funding opportunity for a five-year project that will identify successful methods and models that facilitate the needs of people with disabilities and the elderly in transportation systems nationwide and empower them to participate in the system's designs to better fit their needs. Any national organization with a demonstrated ability to improve coordinated transportation systems for people with disabilities and the elderly is encouraged to apply. Applicants will be required to submit a Project Narrative, Work Plan, and Budget Narrative. Only one award will be available through this grant. Click [HERE](#) for the grant announcement or click [HERE](#) for more information.

UPCOMINGEVENTS

NARC's Transportation Webinar

July 10, 2012, 12:00-2:00pm ET

NARC's next Transportation Committee webinar is scheduled; NARC and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will discuss their recently released report on transit in nonmetropolitan regions. While the agenda is yet to be released, you can Click [HERE](#) to register early and HERE for more information.

NLC and FHWA Webinar on TIFIA

July 11, 2012, 1:30-3:30 pm ET

The National League of Cities (NLC) and Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Office of Innovative Program Delivery is pleased to host a webinar on the Transportation Infrastructure Finance

and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program. This webinar will help city, county and public transportation leader's gain an understanding of innovative financing techniques used to construct large infrastructure projects. This webinar will provide an executive overview of TIFIA Federal Credit Assistance program, whose objective is to leverage Federal transportation funding to attract private investment to the U.S. surface transportation sector. After successfully completing this webinar participants will understand the benefits of federal credit assistance and the intricacies of securing this funding to build needed infrastructure. There is no cost to participate in this webinar and it is open to everyone who is interested. You must register in advance, click [HERE](#), to reserve your connection for this webinar. For more information, contact Thay Bishop of the Innovative Program Delivery Office at 404-562-3695 or thay.bishop@dot.gov.

***NARC's Regional Collaborative Procurement for Solar PV Webinar
July 12, 2012, 3:00-4:00pm ET***

NARC is hosting a webinar on regional collaborative procurement. This webinar will discuss how through collaborative procurement, communities can reduce the up-front costs of solar installations by working together as a group to evaluate project sites, procure solar systems and negotiate contracts, thus yielding much lower transaction costs for each individual partner. Learn about the techniques used to establish a successful collaborative procurement process and how it can be replicated in your region. Speakers include Tyler Espinoza, Project Manager, Optony Inc.; Blaine Collison, Director, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Green Power Partnership; and Jeff King, Principal Environmental Planner, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Click [HERE](#) to register. For questions about the webinar, please email Mia Colson at Mia@NARC.org.

i6 Challenge Conference Call

July 12, 2012, 1:00-2:00 pm ET

The U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration's Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship will hold a conference call for potential applicants for the i6 Challenge to discuss the application and to address any questions. The Challenge will award up to six \$1 million grants to teams across the country for the creation or expansion of regional innovation centers designed to create jobs and promote economic development. Participants should RSVP to i6@eda.gov. Click [HERE](#) for more information (including the number and passcode for the conference call).

REMI Webinar: The New Mexico Renewable Portfolio Standard

July 16, 2012, 2:00pm ET

REMI, a NARC Corporate partner is proud to welcome [Dr. James Peach](#), Regents Professor at New Mexico State University (NMSU), to present a study on the renewable portfolio standard (RPS) in New Mexico (conducted jointly with REMI economists Zilin Cui and Scott Nystrom). The majority of states have an RPS which requires a certain target of renewable power generation by utilities. New Mexico requires 20% of electricity to come from wind, solar, geo-thermal or bio-fuels sources by 2020. This analysis, using REMI PI+, simulates the influence of the economic costs and benefits from the policy to produce results such as job impacts, growth, real personal income and other major factors. Click [HERE](#) for more information or to register for this free webinar.

Addressing Soft Costs and Barriers to Solar in Your Community Workshop

July 18, 2012, 8:30am-12:30pm EDT, Pittsburgh, PA

This interactive workshop, presented by [the SunShot Solar Outreach Partnership](#), will provide actionable information on overcoming local-level barriers to solar, addressing soft costs, and implementing a successful local solar program. Areas of focus will include: 1) revising zoning codes and ordinances to allow for solar; 2) streamlining permitting processes to facilitate solar installations; 3) financing solar projects; and 4) installing solar on municipal and other community facilities. Case study examples will highlight successful practices and lessons learned from communities that have undertaken solar projects in these focus areas. To register, [click HERE](#).

Green Infrastructure and Transportation Planning to Improve Environmental Outcomes Webinar

July 24, 2012, 1:30pm-3:00pm ET

This Eco-Logical webinar, hosted by the National Highway Institute, will provide best practices for how transportation projects can be used to improve green infrastructure networks and connectivity as well as how established green infrastructure can help to streamline the transportation planning process. The webinar is scheduled to include presentations and discussion about the following topics: Chicago Wilderness's Green Infrastructure Vision; Land-of-Sky Regional Council's Green Infrastructure Framework; and Maryland's Watershed Resources Registry. Please visit the [National Highway Institute's website](#) to

register.

13th National Tools of the Trade Conference

September 12 - 14, 2012, Big Sky, MT

Join transportation professionals from around the country to network, share ideas, and learn about the latest developments and opportunities for transportation planning in small and medium sized communities. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

2012 Ohio Conference on Freight

September 13-14, 2012, Sandusky, OH

The Ohio Conference on Freight will take place Thursday and Friday, September 13-14 at the Kalahari Convention Center in Sandusky, Ohio. The conference will feature discussions on topics such as highway, rail, infrastructure planning, aviation, energy, maritime, policy, and economics. The 2012 conference will focus on building professional capacity in all aspects of freight transport, strengthening relationships between public and private sectors, and examining state and federal policies that support freight related economic development. To register or receive more information, click [HERE](#).

2012 Executive Directors' Conference

September 24-26, 2012, Boise, ID

Save the Date! Join Executive Directors and senior staff of regional councils and metropolitan planning organizations at this premier regional training event. Registration information and an agenda will be available in mid 2012.

EcoSummit - Ecological Sustainability: Restoring the Planet's Ecosystem Services

September 20-October 5, 2012, Columbus, OH

The 4th International Ecosummit will be held this year in Columbus, Ohio between September 30 and October 5. The Summit will feature Pulitzer Prize winners among other distinguished guests, and it will be the first conference ever linking the Ecological Society of America, The International Association for Ecology and the Society for Ecological Restoration International. Among the topics covered will be ecological restoration, ecological engineering, global change, wetland management, corporate involvement, and sustainable economies. EcoSummit will also host a film festival, which is accepting submissions of short films until August 1st. For more information on the film festival, click [HERE](#), and for more information on EcoSummit click [HERE](#).

ICMA 2012 Annual Conference

October 7-10, 2012, Phoenix, AZ

ICMA's 2012 Annual Conference, October 7-10, Phoenix/Maricopa County, Arizona, will convene thousands of local government managers and their staffs from around the world. Over three days, members and guests will learn about key local government management issues and leading practices, exchange ideas, and network. Visit the ICMA Conference online at icma.org/conference2012.

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