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## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

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# eRegions

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### PROGRAM UPDATE POLICY UPDATE

#### REGIONS 360

### GRANT OPPORTUNITIES UPCOMING EVENTS

## EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce all of you to NARC's new Deputy Executive Director, Leslie Wollack, who started today!

Ms. Wollack joins NARC from the National League of Cities (NLC), where she was the Program Director for Infrastructure and Sustainability for the last eight years. While at NLC, Ms. Wollack has handled disaster management and planning, telecommunications and technology, energy, immigration, transportation, and livability issues. Prior to her service at NLC, Ms. Wollack supervised policy & external affairs for the Office of Management and Budget's *Geospatial One Stop E-Government Project*, managed several National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) grants; and worked on legislative and policy issues for the American Public Works Association and the County of San Diego.

At NARC, Ms. Wollack will be working closely with me to provide strategic leadership and comprehensive membership services,

**Skylar Hurwitz**

Program Assistant

**Taylor Markwith**

Program Coordinator

**Anna Rosenbaum**

Public Affairs Manager

**Erich W. Zimmermann**

Director of Transportation  
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liaise with the Board of Directors and Executive Director's Council, and help manage the Association. Additionally, she will oversee the Economic Development and Homeland Security policy portfolios.

Please join me in welcoming Ms. Wollack ([leslie@narc.org](mailto:leslie@narc.org)) to the team!

Thanks,  
Joanna

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## PROGRAMUPDATE

**Veterans in Solar Energy:** As the number of unemployed veterans grows, our government searches for new and innovative ways to put military personnel back to work in civilian life. The solar industry provides a perfect opportunity for veterans to use the technical expertise they acquired through years of military service and training. Read more about this topic in NARC's latest SolarOPs blog post, [HERE](#).

**SunShot Solar Outreach Partnership Workshops:** Over the past few weeks, NARC has been on the road hosting regional solar workshops in [Des Moines, IA](#) and [Dover, DE](#). These workshops provided actionable information on how regions can integrate solar energy into their existing priorities. To find out how to host a solar workshop in your region, email Mia Colson ([mia@narc.org](mailto:mia@narc.org)).

**Projects of National and Regional Significance Survey Reopened:** The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced that it is reopening a survey to compile a list of projects eligible under the *Projects of National and Regional Significance* program. MAP-21 authorized \$500 million per year for the program, though funds have not been appropriated. The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) is required to compile a comprehensive list of eligible projects for Congress, and make funding recommendations. The survey was initially released in June, but FHWA said that "many regions of the country provided limited or no participation." As a result, regions and other entities can now provide input to U.S. DOT through November 17. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

### **New U.S. Cluster Mapping Tool to Improve Economic**

**Development:** Last week, Professor Michael Porter launched the new U.S. Cluster Mapping tool as part of a two-day conference called *Mapping the Midwest's Future*. The U.S. Cluster Mapping tool provides over 50 million open data records on industry clusters and regional business environments to promote economic growth and U.S. competitiveness. The tool allows for new regional perspectives on economies and the competitive industry landscape at national, state, and local levels. It can also offer insights into new and emerging clusters in different regions. The project is led by Professor Michael Porter through Harvard Business School's Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness in partnership with the U.S. Department of Commerce and U.S. Economic Development Administration. Click [HERE](#) for more information and materials.

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## **POLICYUPDATE**

### **NARC Submits Comments on Proposed Metropolitan**

**Planning Rule:** Last week, NARC submitted final comments to the docket on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Planning; Metropolitan Planning. This proposed rule – issued jointly by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) – is extremely important for the nation's metropolitan planning organizations, as it spells out their role and responsibilities for implementing the performance-based planning and programming regulations included by Congress in the most recent transportation authorization bill, MAP-21. Additionally, NARC and AMPO submitted a set of jointly prepared comments. Click [HERE](#) for the comments and release.

### **Full Review of FAA Contingency Plans and Security**

**Protocols:** In a speech at an Air Traffic Control Association conference in Maryland, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Administrator Michael P. Huerta announced that the agency is conducting a 30-day review of contingency plans and security protocols for its major facilities, after a criminal action by a contractor knocked out communications equipment at an FAA high-altitude air traffic facility in Aurora, IL. Click [HERE](#) for the full text of the speech.

**Earmark Ban Blamed:** In a recent interview with *Chicago Daily Herald* newspaper, Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) stated his belief that the elimination of earmarks is one of the main reasons Congress has been unable to pass a federal transportation bill. He also hopes that increasing the gas tax will not be necessary. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

**Transportation Bill is “Doable:”** Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) recently stated that he believes he can work with President Obama to pass a long-term transportation reauthorization bill. The Speaker said that he intends to find “common ground” after the November elections. Click [HERE](#) for details.

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## REGIONS360

**Los Angeles Regional Connector Groundbreaking:**

Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx recently attended the Los Angeles Regional Connector groundbreaking. This light rail transit segment connects three existing transit lines in downtown Los Angeles under their \$1.7 million *Ladders of Opportunity* grant. Click [HERE](#) for the news release.

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## GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Click [HERE](#) to view the list of grants still open!

**GRANT: USDA Announces \$31M to Encourage Healthy Eating in SNAP**

*Application Deadline: December 15*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced \$31 million for projects that increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables by participants in the *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program* (SNAP). To be considered for funding through the *Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program* (FINI), health agencies, non-profit organizations, farmers' markets, and other eligible applicants must design projects that have the support of the state's SNAP agency, use effective technologies, and include an evaluation component. The grants are authorized by the Farm Bill that provided \$100 million over five years for FINI projects. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

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## UPCOMINGEVENTS

Click [HERE](#) to view the list of events still open!

### **SUMMIT SERIES: FHWA EDC-3 Regional Summits - *Efficiency Through Technology and Collaboration***

*Multiple Dates & Sessions: October 7 – December 10*

Every Day Counts (EDC) is a state-based model to identify and rapidly deploy proven, but underutilized innovations to shorten the project delivery process, enhance roadway safety, reduce congestion, and improve environmental sustainability. The seven Regional Summits scheduled this fall will set the stage for deployment of 11 innovations through the third 2-year cycle of EDC (EDC-3) in 2015 and 2016. The objective of the Regional Summits is to facilitate dialogue, encourage creative thinking, and celebrate a shared vision for new opportunities. These Summits provide the transportation professionals the opportunity to learn about the 11 innovations promoted through EDC-3, exchange ideas with their agency and industry counterparts in neighboring States, and provide feedback to FHWA on the support and resources needed to adopt the innovations in their own States. Click [HERE](#) to see the line up and to register.

### **WEBINAR: Better Governance through Cloud-Based Collaboration**

*October 9, 1:00 PM ET*

Join this webinar hosted by the National League of Cities and OpenGov.com to hear directly from elected officials and senior executives from the cities of Mountain View and Palo Alto who implemented management reporting and business intelligence software to dramatically reduce time reporting and communicating financial data; leverage data to improve decision-making and internal efficiencies; and build trust and engagement with residents. Click [HERE](#) to register.

### **WEBINAR: Insights into District Energy**

*October 21, 10:00 AM PT / 1:00 PM ET*

Local governments and their communities that inhabit dense locations can take advantage of district energy systems as a way to increase energy efficiency and reliability while reducing maintenance costs and capital costs. District energy technology provides a group of buildings the opportunity to heat and cool air

or water from a central heating and cooling plant. Because district energy systems are a collective group of buildings, they often have the flexibility to use a variety of fuel sources in larger, more economical volumes reducing the impact of supply and price variations. District energy can be used along with combined heat and power (CHP) which reuses thermal energy left over from generating electricity. This webinar. This webinar will share best practices and project insights from district energy systems in varying stages of implementation. Click [HERE](#) to register.

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