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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS**

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**eRegions**

## **EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

Colleagues,

Two new member products have been posted to our website: a new green infrastructure tool funded by the U.S. Forest Service and Virginia Tech and a literature review of Livability Practices funded by the Federal Highway Administration. Both products are meant to serve the regional community by pointing out new program and funding opportunities. Click [HERE](#) to access the green infrastructure tool; and [HERE](#) to access the Livability literature review.

We look forward to continued work on tools like these with our members and federal, university and association partners. If you have topic ideas or areas you'd like to

[PROGRAM UPDATE](#) [POLICY UPDATE](#)  
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### **Message from Chair Sean Dey, Executive Directors Council**

I urge all regional councils to continue to support our national association, the *National Association of Regional Councils (NARC)*, which represents the nation's regional councils and metropolitan planning organizations; large and small, metropolitan and rural. As we transition into a new era with a very different political landscape and reduced federal, state and local funding, NARC will be a strong advocate of regional approaches to community problem solving in Washington. The NARC Board of Directors has identified this as a priority. Further, as I have stated earlier, I am working with a group of Executive Directors and NARC Board members to develop a vision for the future of regions; a future vision that is shaped by us (*Project 2020*). This is an open process and if you would like to participate, please email me at [sdey@wmsrdc.org](mailto:sdey@wmsrdc.org).

## **PROGRAM UPDATE**

### **Roadmap to Green Infrastructure in the Federal Agencies Tool**

NARC is excited to announce the release of their new online tool, "A Roadmap to Green Infrastructure in the Federal Agencies." The

explore please let us know.

Best,  
Fred

## **NARCLEADERSHIP**

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

### **Chair Sean Dey,**

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Executive Director, West  
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*eRegions*, [visit our website.](#)

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Roadmap was created as part of NARC's partnership with Virginia Tech on the *Green Infrastructure Assessment* grant, funded by the US Forest Service. Green infrastructure is supported by a variety of federal agencies as a strategy to address an array of environmental and development issues. The Roadmap was created to facilitate regions' understanding of the numerous benefits of green infrastructure and the ways in which it can be funded and implemented in their communities. Click [HERE](#) to view the Roadmap.

**NARC Releases New Report: A Synthesis of Current Livability Practice, Seeking Case Studies:** NARC announced the release of their latest livability resource, *Livability Literature Review: A Synthesis of Current Practice*; this comprehensive report describes how livability is understood, provides examples of livable communities in practice and adds clarity to several concepts. With its partners, NARC conducted an expansive literature review, including more than 180 livability reports and documents to condense the most current tactics and mechanisms in creating livable communities. Click [HERE](#) to access a copy of the report and [HERE](#) to access the Member Release with additional information.

**Check the Health of Your Waterway by Phone!** In honor of 40th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency launched a new app and website to help people find information on the condition of thousands of lakes, rivers and streams across the United States from their smart phone, tablet or desktop computer. Available at <http://www.epa.gov/mywaterway>, the How's My Waterway app and website uses GPS technology, zip code or city name to provide information about the quality of local water bodies.

**New Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Report:** The Center for American Progress released a report, "How to Upgrade and Maintain Our Nation's Wastewater and Drinking Water Infrastructure," detailing the current state of our water infrastructure problems, why projected funding levels are insufficient, and reforms to help address the systems' failures. Click [HERE](#) to access the report.

**GAO Releases Report on Federal Rural Water Infrastructure Requirements:** The Government Accountability Office ([GAO](#))

released a report, “Rural Water Infrastructure – Additional Coordination Can Help Avoid Potentially Duplicative Application Requirements,” detailing that funding for rural water and wastewater infrastructure is fragmented across two federal U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs leading to application overlap and possible duplication. Click [HERE](#) to access the report.

**EPA Requests Nominations for National Drinking Water**

**Advisory Council:** EPA is accepting nominations for four three-year appointments to the National Drinking Water Advisory Council, a 15 member Council established by the Safe Drinking Water Act to provide practical and independent advice, consultation and recommendations to the EPA Administrator on the activities, functions, policies, and regulations. The four new slots will fill terms through December 15, 2015; two representing State and local agencies and two for the general public. Nominations should be submitted on or before November 19, 2012. Click [HERE](#) for more information and details for how to apply.

**DOL Releases Workforce Flexibility Toolkit:** The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) developed and released Workplace Flexibility Toolkit to provide useful valuable information to employees, employers, policymakers, and researchers related to time and place, but also around task, a unique workplace flexibility strategy related. The Toolkit provides case studies, fact and tip sheets, issue briefs, reports, articles, websites, other toolkits, and FAQs. Click [HERE](#) to access it.

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## **POLICY**UPDATE

*The House and Senate are in recess until after the November elections; they are expected to return on November 14.*

**Coalition Releases Report on Integrated Workforce and Community Development:** The National Skills Coalition released the report, “Building Pathways to Employment in America’s Cities Through Integrated Workforce & Community Development,” which is based on efforts in five cities (Baltimore, Chicago, New Orleans, Seattle, and Twin Cities) who are working at the intersection of workforce and community development. The report details findings

and recommendations for ways that federal policy is supporting and could better support efforts to integrate workforce development with community development, particularly in the areas of public housing and transportation development. Click [HERE](#) to access the report.

**Sequestration Update:** NARC has updated its educational sequestration PowerPoint with information on the “fiscal cliff” and association activities. Click [HERE](#) to access the information. Below are links to interesting sequestration articles and information:

- Click [HERE](#) to read suggestions on *Small Business Strategies that Mitigate Sequestration*.
- Click [HERE](#) to read an article on the local elected perspective of sequestration impacts.

**FTA Releases First Funding Apportionments Under MAP-21:** On October 10, 2012, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) released its first [notice of funding apportionments](#) under the new formulas dictated by Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). MAP-21, which went into effect on October 1, made a number of important and valuable changes to FTA's programs, including the establishment of new safety authority, new asset management requirements, new measures to streamline the Capital Investment Program (New Starts and Small Starts) and new distribution formulas which reflect the impact of the 2010 Census. FTA's press release, which includes links to the apportionment tables, can be found [HERE](#).

#### **FHWA Releases Interim Guidance on Transportation**

**Alternatives:** Today, the U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released the [interim guidance](#) for the newly created Transportation Alternatives program, authorized by the new federal surface transportation law, The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). This program provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for the planning, design or construction of boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

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## GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

### **FEMA Announces New Funding Opportunity**

*Application Due: October 26, 2012*

FEMA announced a new funding opportunity – the Community Resilience Innovation Challenge – to build local resilience, through a Whole Community approach. This new opportunity, provided through FEMA and the Rockefeller Foundation, is designed to continue to move community preparedness forward and assist local areas in building and revitalizing community-based partnerships to advance the nation's resilience to disasters. The program will be administered by the Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Foundation who will act as a third-party intermediary to encourage local communities to engage in creative activities that enhance disaster resilience. The highest grant amount is \$35,000, and applications are open to most local, state, and tribal agencies and governments; business entities; associations; organizations and groups. Key assessment areas for the awards will be the approach to community resilience is innovative, collaborative with community stakeholders, sustainable, replicable outcomes, and measurable benefits. Click [HERE](#) for additional information on the Challenge program criteria and application process.

### **NOAA Climate Program Office FY13 Grant Application Information**

*Application Due: November 6, 2012*

Individual programs within CPO will now be accepting letters of intent and project applications. The full announcement of opportunity is available on the [CPO Funding Opportunities](#) page and on the [Grants.Gov website](#).

### **FEMA 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge**

*Application Due: November 16, 2012*

The 2012 Challenge program will support a broad range of activities designed to foster community resilience. Particular focus will be placed on reaching across social sectors, while a specific goal will be increased local dialogue that includes the sharing of information about local risks and the vulnerabilities of and consequences for local residents and their well-being. Activities can range from establishing a way to train neighborhoods to prepare and take care of themselves and others in an emergency situation to co-hosting

initiatives with the private sector to actively involve businesses and organizations to improve preparedness programs, from involving children and youth through educational programs and activities to sponsoring drills for local hazards. For more information, visit the [Challenge webpage](#).

#### **EPA Brownfield Area-wide Planning Grant**

*Application Due: November 30, 2012*

This grant will fund projects to facilitate community involvement and conduct research, training, and technical assistance necessary to develop area-wide plans and implementation strategies to facilitate brownfields assessment, cleanup, and subsequent reuse.

Brownfields area-wide planning grant funding must be directed to specific areas affected by a single large or multiple brownfield sites, such as a neighborhood, downtown district, city block, or local commercial corridor. The grant funding will result in an area-wide plan, including implementation strategies, for the brownfields-affected area. For more information, see the [request for proposals](#).

#### **USDA 2013 Urban and Community Forest Grant**

*Application Due: December 3, 2012*

The 2013 National Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost-Share Grant Program will support urban and community forestry projects on nonfederal public land that have a national or widespread impact and application. The National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council is seeking innovative grants proposals for program development, research, and collaboration to address the following two strategic priority issues: proposals that demonstrate the connection between the personal benefits of urban forests and quality of life within a community through community engagement; and proposals that design an urban forestry recruitment program and retention strategies that support existing urban forestry academic curricula. Urban and community forests demonstrate benefits including urban heat island reduction. All grant funds must be matched at least equally with non-federal source funds. For more information, see the [request for proposals](#).

#### **EPA's 2013 Environmental Justice Small Grants**

*Application Due: January 7, 2013*

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is providing \$1.5 million in environmental justice small grants. The grants enable non-profit organizations to conduct research, provide education and

develop solutions to local health and environmental issues in communities overburdened by harmful pollution. Grants are available for up to \$30,000 each. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

#### **NEA Our Town Grant**

*Application Due: January 14, 2013*

The National Endowment for the Art's (NEA) Our Town grant will provide a limited number of grants, ranging from \$25,000 to \$200,000, for creative placemaking projects that contribute towards the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful and sustainable places with the arts at their core. Our Town will invest in creative and innovative projects in which communities, together with their arts and design organizations and artists, seek to: Improve their quality of life; encourage greater creative activity; foster stronger community identity and a sense of place; and revitalize economic development. Complete Our Town application guidelines are available [HERE](#).

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## **UPCOMINGEVENTS**

#### ***UPEDA Conference on Bi-National Collaboration Meeting***

**October 24-25, 2012, Sault Ste Marie, MI**

Presenters include Roy Norton, Consul General of Canada at Detroit; a panel on alternative energy; Phil Becker, Executive Director of the International Bridge Authority; and other presenters still being confirmed. Click [HERE](#) for registration and [HERE](#) for a copy of the agenda.

#### ***Ask the Utility: Working with Your Local Municipal Utility***

**Thursday, November 1, 2:00-3:00pm ET**

This webinar seeks to educate local government professionals who are interested in learning about how to better collaborate with municipal utilities to develop solar projects in their community. Participants of this webinar will come away with a better understanding of the following issues: how municipal utilities view solar, how to best work with your muni and other utilities, and how to leverage electric utility expertise. Click [HERE](#) to register.

#### ***Green Infrastructure Roadmap Webinar***

**Wednesday, November 7, 3:00-4:00pm ET**

Join NARC for a webinar to discuss NARC's new online tool, "A

Roadmap to Green Infrastructure in the Federal Agencies.” The Roadmap was created to facilitate regions’ understanding of the numerous benefits of green infrastructure and the ways in which it can be funded and implemented in their communities. Click [HERE](#) for more information and to register.

***Transportation Committee: MAP-21; a review of requirements and competitive process examples***

**November 13, 12:00-2:00 pm ET**

As the U.S. Department of Transportation continues to draft and prepare guidance that supports the implementation of the recently enacted federal surface transportation authorization, NARC has scheduled two Transportation Committee webinars to focus on different aspects of the law. This webinar will review the changes to the Transportation Alternatives program as well as share two metropolitan planning organization (MPO) experiences with running competitions under the previously authorized Transportation Enhancement program. Click [HERE](#) to access the draft agenda for this webinar. Click [HERE](#) to register for the webinar.

***Transportation Committee: MAP-21; measuring success: examining the state of practice in performance measurement***

**December 11, 12:00-2:00 pm ET**

As the U.S. Department of Transportation continues to draft and prepare guidance that supports the implementation of the recently enacted federal surface transportation authorization, NARC has scheduled two Transportation Committee webinars to focus on different aspects of the law. This webinar will review efforts by the federal government, state departments of transportation, and regional planning organizations to create performance measurement systems for their planning and programming processes. An agenda is forthcoming. Click [HERE](#) to register for the webinar.

***2013 National Conference of Regions***

**February 10-13, 2013, Washington, DC**

Save the Date for this premier event, focused on all that is happening in Washington, DC. Information about NARC's February event will be available before the end of 2012. Local elected officials, executive directors and staff of regional and metropolitan planning organizations need to be here!

***NARC's 47th Annual Conference and Exhibition***



**June 20-23, 2013, Philadelphia, PA**

Save the Date for 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!

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