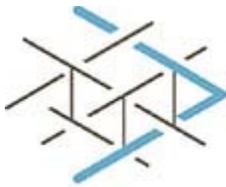


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XIV, No. 1, January 6, 2014

eRegions

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PROGRAM UPDATE **POLICY UPDATE**
REGIONS 360 **MEMBER REQUESTS**
GRANT OPPORTUNITIES **UPCOMING EVENTS**

2014 NATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF REGIONS

FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014
WASHINGTON, DC

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 **NARC**
Building Regional Communities

Dear NARC Members and Friends:

On behalf of the NARC Board of Directors, Happy New Year! NARC accomplished many things in 2013, and I anticipate that 2014 will be even better. During the past year, we developed and advocated for comprehensive policy positions in transportation, workforce, energy, older Americans, funding and finance. In the coming year, NARC will help communities establish robust solar and urban forestry programs, while continuing to represent member councils on important issues at the federal level. NARC is ably served by an enthusiastic and trusted staff, with new additions to help move our program agendas forward while providing even better service to our members.

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Deputy of

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Anna Rosenbaum

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Erich W. Zimmermann

Director of Transportation

Programs

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Also in 2014, NARC will continue to build robust collaborative frameworks with our sister organizations, especially the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations and the National Association of Development Organizations. Working together to influence federal decision-making on issues of common interest will give us all a stronger voice in our Nation's Capital. I'm sure you will agree that we all – urban, suburban or rural, large or small -- share similar principles on issues that matter: economic and social sustainability and prosperity for our regions.

NARC staff, our Board of Directors, and the Executive Directors' Council are enthusiastic about the New Year, and hope you are, too. Please plan to attend one, or all, of our conferences in 2014. The National Conference of Regions will be held in Washington, D.C. on February 9-11; NARC's Annual Conference and Exhibition will be in Louisville, Kentucky, on June 8-10; and the Executive Directors' Conference will be in Des Moines, Iowa (dates TBD).

Each new year marks a transition. For NARC this year, the transition will lead to a new Executive Director, as Fred Abousleman moves to a new position in Oregon this spring. Our national search process is underway. I hope you will join me in thanking Fred for his service to NARC, and wishing him all the best at his new council.

It is an honor and a pleasure to serve as NARC president, and I look forward to seeing you at the National Conference of Regions in February. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me, or with NARC staff, about any regional issue of interest to you. Let's make 2014 the best ever!

Penny

Penelope A. Gross, President

National Association of Regional Councils

and

Fairfax County, VA Board of Supervisors

PROGRAMUPDATE

EPA Green Infrastructure Listserv: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is launching a green infrastructure listserv, GreenStream, to share training opportunities, newsletters and publications. To join,

email join-greenstream@lists.epa.gov.

NRDC Report on Value of GI for Commercial Real Estate: The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) recently released a report titled *The Green Edge: How Commercial Property Investment in Green Infrastructure Creates Value*. This report illustrates the multi-faceted value that green infrastructure delivers. Click [HERE](#) to read the report.

POLICYUPDATE

House is in session. Senate returns to session tomorrow, January 7.

House Sets January Agenda: House Majority Leader Eric Cantor released January's legislative agenda, which includes the following: passing conference reports for the farm bill, legislation to fund the nation's water programs and FY14 appropriations bill.

Appropriations Update: The House and Senate Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee chairmen are slated to meet this week to resolve any policy and funding disputes and to finalize a \$1.012 trillion omnibus bill that will provide funding for the remainder of FY14. The bill must be finalized and signed by January 15 (expiration of the current continuing resolution) to avoid government shutdown. It is possible for a compromise draft to be released as early as Wednesday. Last month, Senate Appropriations Chairman Mikulski (D-MD) stated that the House would likely consider the omnibus first with the Senate scheduled to vote by January 13.

Farm Bill Compromise Expected Soon: In addition to closely watching congressional action on appropriations and debt ceiling priorities, many eyes in Washington will be on lawmakers hashing out long-term Farm Bill reauthorization. Conference committee leads, who have been meeting regularly since late October and who may engage in extended meetings in the coming weeks, are expected to unveil a compromise package in January for consideration early this year. NARC will have legislative update when conference bill is released.

House Lawmakers Ask Administration for Increased RD Funding: Lawmakers in the House are appealing the Obama Administration to include increased funding for Rural Development (RD) programs in its 2015 budget due in early February. Support for Rural Development programs has decreased over \$700 billion since 2010. A copy of the

letter, authored by Rep. Ruben Hinojosa is available [HERE](#). Please contact your representative to encourage support for this effort. The point of contact for signatures is Holly Bullard in Rep. Hinojosa's office at holly.bullard@mail.house.gov. The deadline for Congressional sign-on is today, January 6.

Administration Nominates Wu for ETA Assistant Secretary: Last month the Obama Administration announced the nomination of Portia Wu to Serve as Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Labor Employment Training Academy (ETA). Wu currently serves as the Assistant to the President for Workforce and Labor Policy at the White House Domestic Policy Council and previously served as the General Council for the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee. The announcement is available [HERE](#).

REGIONS360

Chicago-area Leaders Collaborate on Regional Approach to Economic Development: Executives from Metropolitan Chicago's seven counties, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Executive Director Randy Blakenhorn, and other regional leaders met prior to the holiday season to discuss opportunities for regional collaboration on economic development issues like: identifying potential areas for collaboration on freight and logistics, exports and food processing, and packaging. The group also developed working subcommittees to tackle issues before their next meeting in six months. Read *Crain's Chicago Business* article [HERE](#).

MEMBERREQUESTS

Request for Proposal Executive Search Firm: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments is seeking an Executive [Search Firm](#) to conduct a search for the position of Director of Transportation Planning. The salary range for this Director position is \$124,654-\$192,922, depending on experience and qualifications. The Executive Search Firm will report to the COG Executive Director as Contracting Officer, who will administer this contract, and to a Search Committee comprised of COG senior staff, representatives of the Transportation Planning Board (TPB), and other partners as may be deemed necessary. The Executive Search Firm must be able to commit to working within the time frame stipulated herein, with the position [filled](#) within three to four months of the contract award.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

National Endowment for the Arts

Deadline: January 13

The NEA Our Town Program aims to support creative placemaking projects that contribute toward 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. More information is available [HERE](#).

Institute Without Borders

Deadline for Expression of Interest: January 13

The Institute without Boundaries (IwB) is seeking curriculum partners for Connecting Divided Places, a project that investigates social, economic, environmental and cultural divisions in cities. IwB seeks applications from municipalities, not-for-profit organizations, and companies interested in working to address the problems dividing cities and regions. IwB is looking for organizations interested in collaborating on design solutions that make for more balanced, healthier and resilient city-regions of the future. Read more [HERE](#).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Deadline: January 15

As part of the Diesel Emission Reduction Program (DERA), the 2013 Construction Equipment Funding Opportunity will provide rebate incentives to selected eligible applicants to either retrofit or to replace their nonroad construction equipment engines. Applicants may submit only one application for up to five pieces of equipment and up to \$120,000 in rebate funds. Applications may be downloaded from the website. Completed applications and required documentation should be sent by email. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Forest Service - Community Forest Program Grant

Deadline: January 15

The U.S. Forest Service's Community Forest Program (CFP) protects forests that are important for people and the places they call home. CFP provides funding to local governments, tribal governments and

nonprofits to establish community forests that provide continuing and accessible community benefits. Click [HERE](#) for more information about available funding.

Health Resources Services Administration – Rural Health Network Development Planning Program

Deadline: January 16

Funding is available to develop and promote the planning and development of rural healthcare networks aimed at achieving efficiencies; expanding access to, coordinating, and improving the quality of essential services; and strengthening the rural health care system as a whole. This program brings together key parts of a rural health care delivery system, particularly those entities that may not have collaborated in the past under a formal relationship, to work together to establish and improve local capacity and coordination of care. This grant program supports one year of planning with the primary goal in helping networks create a foundation and focus efforts to address important regional or local community health needs. More information about this opportunity is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Deadline: January 22

EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) has announced FY 2014 EPA funding for Brownfields Job Training Grants, Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Grants, Brownfields Assessment Grants, Brownfields Multi-Purpose Grants, Brownfields Cleanup Grants, State Assistance Grant, Hazardous Waste Management Grant Program for Tribes, Tribal Solid Waste Management Assistance Project. More information is available [HERE](#) and the National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals (NALGEP) will host a webinar on December 4th to discuss this opportunity. Sign up for the webinar [HERE](#).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Deadline: January 23

As part of its Science to Achieve Results (STAR) program, the U.S. EPA is seeking applications proposing research to improve understanding of the effects of climate change on indoor air quality and the resulting health effects. EPA is interested in supporting research that will explore the anticipated effects of climate change on indoor air quality directly through a variety of mechanisms, and indirectly through adaptations in building use and design. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of the Interior – Bureau of Reclamation

Deadline: January 23

Funding is available through the Bureau of Reclamation’s WaterSMART program to support new Water and Energy Efficiency Grant projects. Proposals are sought from states, Indian tribes, irrigation districts, water districts and other organizations with water or power delivery authority to partner with Reclamation on projects that increase water conservation or result in other improvements that address water supply sustainability in the West. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Labor – Employment Training Administration

Deadline: January 27

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), has announced \$100 million in grant funds for the Youth CareerConnect grant program. The program is designed to provide high school students with education and training that combines rigorous academic and technical curricula focused on specific in-demand occupations and industries for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers as well as the related activities necessary to support such training to increase participants’ employability in H-1B in-demand industries and occupations. More information is available [HERE](#).

National Science Foundation (NSF) - Cyber-Physical Systems

Deadline: January 29

The National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have a shared interest in advancing basic and applied research in Cyber Physical Systems (CPS), which are systems in which physical processes are tightly intertwined with networked computing. For transportation, CPS will provide the foundation necessary for a safe, efficient highway transportation system connecting vehicles, infrastructure, people, and goods in a vibrant, competitive economy. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Deadline: January 30

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the availability of \$181 million to develop commercial-scale biorefineries or retrofit existing facilities with appropriate technology to develop advanced biofuels. Funding is available through the Biorefinery Assistance Program provides loan guarantees to viable commercial-scale facilities to develop new and emerging technologies for advanced

biofuels. The announcement is available [HERE](#), more information about the program is available [HERE](#) and the full text of the Federal Register notice is available [HERE](#).

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Deadline: January 31

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) has announced funding for the Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Competitive Grant Program, which will support projects that reduce communities' vulnerability to the growing risks from coastal storms, sea level rise, flooding, erosion, and associated threats through strengthening natural ecosystems that also benefit fish and wildlife. The program will award more than \$100 million in grants to states officially declared a natural disaster as a result of Hurricane Sandy. Details available [HERE](#).

Health Impact Project

Funding Announced in February

The Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, is planning to launch a call for proposals for funding in February 2014. Grants will support health impact assessment (HIA) demonstration projects as well as development of HIA programs to integrate health in decision-making. More information on this opportunity is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Housing

Deadline: February 3

Funding is available for FY 2013 and FY 2014 Continuum of Care Program Competition (CoC) to promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; to provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, States, and local governments to quickly re-house the homeless while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness; to promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by the homeless; and to optimize self-sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness. Full text of the notice of funding availability (NOFA) is available [HERE](#).

National Science Foundation - Cyber-Enabled Sustainability Science and Engineering

Deadline: February 4

The Cyber-Enabled Sustainability Science and Engineering (CyberSEES) program aims to advance interdisciplinary research in which the science and engineering of sustainability are enabled by new

advances in computing, and where computational innovation is grounded in the context of sustainability problems. Read more [HERE](#).

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Deadline: February 5

The Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program seeks to develop nation-wide-community stewardship of local natural resources, preserving resources for future generations and enhancing habitat for local wildlife. Projects seek to address water quality issues in priority watersheds, such as erosion due to unstable streambanks, pollution from stormwater runoff, and degraded shorelines caused by development. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Deadline: February 18

The Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) Cooperative Agreement Program provides funding for eligible applicants for projects that address local environmental and public health issues within an affected community. The CPS Program is designed to help communities understand and address exposure to multiple environmental harms and risks. More information about this opportunity is available [HERE](#).

Energy for Sustainability

Deadline: February 20

This program supports fundamental research and education that will enable innovative processes for the sustainable production of electricity and transportation fuels. Processes for sustainable energy production must be environmentally benign, reduce greenhouse gas production, and utilize renewable resources. Current interest areas in sustainable energy technologies are: Biomass Conversion, Biofuels & Bioenergy, Photovoltaic Solar Energy, Wind Energy, and Advanced Batteries for Transportation. Learn more about this program [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Value-Added Producer Grant Program

Deadline: February 24

The USDA announced \$10.5 million in carry-over funding from 2013 to help U.S. agricultural producers enter into value-added activities. Awards may be made for either economic planning or working capital activities related to the processing and/or marketing of valued- added agricultural products. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Energy

Deadline: Concept Papers due January 13; Final applications due March 13

As part of a new \$19 million investment in solar energy, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced funding available under the SunShot Incubator 9 program. This program will focus on early-stage support for small companies, encouraging private-sector investment and seeking app and web developers from both inside and outside of the energy industry to zero in on reducing soft costs of solar adoption. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration

Deadlines: March 14 for funding cycle 3 of FY 2014;

June 13 for funding cycle 4 of FY 2014

EDA is soliciting applications from applicants in rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. EDA provides competitive, merit-based investments that support economic development, foster job creation, and attract private investment in economically distressed areas of the United States. The full announcement is available [HERE](#).

National Science Foundation - Environmental Sustainability

Deadline: March 20

The Environmental Sustainability program supports engineering research that seeks to balance society's need to provide ecological protection and maintain stable economic conditions. Research in Environmental Sustainability typically considers long time horizons and may incorporate contributions from the social sciences and ethics. There are four principal general research areas which are supported: Industrial Ecology, Green Engineering, Ecological Engineering, Earth Systems Engineering. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

Climate Solutions University Accepting Applications

Application Deadline: Rolling

The Model Forest Policy Program is offering a special funding opportunity for qualifying U.S. urban and rural communities working together addressing ecosystem services. Urban decision makers need to plan for climate impacts that result from land changes beyond their jurisdictional boundaries. To find out more about the Climate Solutions University, click [HERE](#).

UPCOMINGEVENTS

WEBINAR: Sound operations and maintenance (O&M) and Green: Best Practices for Green Infrastructure Operations and Maintenance

January 7, 1:00-2:30 PM EST

This webcast will provide a general overview of best practices for creating a green infrastructure operations and maintenance plan. Register [HERE](#).

WEBINAR: Kick-starting Your Energy Management Program

January 7, 3:00-4:00 PM EST

Join this U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) webinar to hear Better Buildings Challenge Partners Shorenstein and Allegheny College as they describe solutions for time, money, and expertise barriers when developing a robust energy management program. Register [HERE](#).

WEBINAR: Sunshot Incubator Virtual Showcase

January 7, 4:00-5:00 PM EST

Register [HERE](#) to learn about DOE SunShot Incubator projects, products, and future development needs.

New! WEBINAR: Integrated Ecological Framework: Step 7, Programmatic Consultations & Agreements

January 8, 2:00-3:00 PM EST

Learn about (1) existing programmatic agreements and consultations that transportation agencies and partners have established related to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act and (2) effective strategies for developing these programmatics and integrating them into the transportation project development process. To register, click [HERE](#).

New! WEBINAR: Planning for Green Infrastructure at the Landscape Scale

January 14, 1:00-3:00 PM EST

Join the EPA's Healthy Watersheds Program for a webinar highlight planning for green infrastructure at the landscape scale, highlighting New York State's new green infrastructure guide. For more information and to register, click [HERE](#).

New! WEBINAR: Financing Energy Efficiency Upgrades with ENERGY STAR

January 16, 2:00 PM EST

Learn how public sector organizations are improving energy efficiency with innovative solutions to financial barriers, financing projects in public and private sectors, basics of performance contracting, and how EPA's tools and resources can help you make the decision to improve your facilities now or later. Register [HERE](#).

New! WEBINAR: Green Goods: How to Create Sustainable County Purchasing and Procurement Programs

January 22, 2:00-3:15 PM EST

This National Association of Counties webinar will explore how local governments can develop an environmentally preferred purchasing program, navigate the myriad of product eco-labels and green purchasing guidelines, and hear success stories from counties that have established sustainable purchasing and procurement programs. Register [HERE](#).

FREE Regional Solar Workshop: Detroit, MI

January 23, 8:30-12:30 PM EST

Local governments interested in learning about how to make their community solar ready in Southeast Michigan are invited to a free workshop sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy's SunShot Solar Outreach Partnership, City of Lathrup Village, Southeast Michigan Regional Energy Office and NARC. The workshop will provide actionable information on creating local –level solar policies and permitting processes. Areas of focus include: (1) The benefits and barriers of solar development in your region; (2) Revising planning and zoning codes and ordinances; and (3) Streamlining the permitting processes to enable solar development in your community. For more information and to register for the event, click [HERE](#).

NARC's 2014 National Conference of Regions

February 9-11, Washington, DC

The National Conference of Regions is the forum that NARC uses to determine key policy issues and a legislative agenda on topics of

relevance and importance to executive directors and local elected officials representing regional organizations and boards. Registration, hotel information and a draft agenda are available on the conference website [HERE](#).

New Partners for Smart Growth Conference: “Are Your Building and Land Use Codes Ready for the Changing Climate?”

February 13-15, Denver, CO

The New Partners for Smart Growth Conference fosters discussion on building safe, healthy, equitable and prosperous communities. The conference will feature a session that explores code changes that communities can make to better prepare themselves for climate change in addition to providing other benefits. Register [HERE](#).

NARC's 48th Annual Conference and Exhibition

June 6-11, Louisville, KY

The Annual Conference and Exhibition is the largest national event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education. Held annually in June, NARC's Annual Conference is the premier place to learn how to engage in effective regional collaboration. Additional information will be available in early 2014.

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