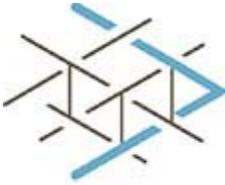


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## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XIII, No. 44, November 18, 2013

# eRegions

### EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

We've launched the 2014 National Conference of Regions (NCR)! I'm excited, as this event focuses regions on policy, and brings our leaders to D.C. to advance the regional agenda. This is the premier event for regional planning organizations to participate in high level discussions with members of the Administration, Congress and congressional partner staff. Every year we invite a select group of our federal partners to discuss policy and funding priorities. During past events we've attracted committee chairmen; Secretaries

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A graphic for the 2014 National Conference of Regions. It features a 3D arrangement of blue and red cubes, with a green globe on top of one of the blue cubes. To the right of the cubes, the text reads "2014 NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REGIONS" in blue, "FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014 WASHINGTON, DC" in blue, and "REGISTER TODAY!" in red. At the bottom left is the NARC logo and the tagline "Building Regional Communities".

2014 NATIONAL  
CONFERENCE OF REGIONS

FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014  
WASHINGTON, DC

**REGISTER TODAY!**

**NARC**  
Building Regional Communities

### Sign-up Today for NARC's Newest Member Service!

Don't miss the debut issue of *Development Digest*, NARC's new Economic and Community Development electronic newsletter premiering on Friday, November 22. This monthly email and online publication will feature a roundup of local and national news, federal policy and agency updates, tools, cutting edge research, and feature NARC member best practices in the fields of community and economic development. Sign up [HERE](#) today for this feature publication. If you have ideas for input in the publication, please contact Autumn Campbell, [autumn@narc.org](mailto:autumn@narc.org).

from U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); Administrators from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other front line agencies; as well as nationally recognized speakers on various topics. This will also be my last NCR as the Executive Director of NARC. Join me, your staff, and your colleagues from around the country in celebrating the regional agenda.

On a sad note our sympathies are with those affected by the storms that raged over the Midwest this weekend. We sincerely hope our members, friends, and families are okay.

Best,  
Fred

## **NARC**LEADERSHIP

**President**  
**Hon. Penny Gross**  
Supervisor,  
Fairfax County, VA

## **PROGRAM**UPDATE

**NARC Meets with DOT and FHWA:** This past week, NARC held meetings with the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Planning and the U.S. Department of Transportation's Public Engagement and Livability Offices. These meetings uncovered several areas of collaboration and opportunities for funding that could prove valuable for members, both in terms of learning opportunities and peer exchanges, as well as capacity expansion in key areas such as asset management, performance management, and specific planning tools such as scenario planning. NARC will be following up with these offices to pursue these opportunities further, and will be reaching out to members as well to uncover what areas are of greatest interest that could be aided by this collaboration.

### **Report Published on Evaluating Economic Impact of Anchor**

**Institutions:** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of University Partnerships, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Democracy Collaborative released a white paper aimed at developing common indicators to begin to measure the economic impact that anchor institutions, such as hospitals, universities and governments, have on local communities. The paper was released today and outlines 12 common indicators of effective community engagement and a series of metrics to evaluate impact in areas of economic development, public health and safety, local education and community leadership and capacity building. The white paper is available [HERE](#) and a link to the webcast of the launch presentation is available [HERE](#).

### **The Proposed 2014 Renewable Fuels Standards, Considering**

**Options and Seeking Input:** On November 15<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the 2014 Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS) Proposal, which outlines the volume requirements and associated percentage standards for cellulosic biofuel, biomass-based diesel, advanced biofuel and total renewable fuel. The proposed standards will ensure that transportation fuel sold in the United States contains a minimum volume of renewable fuel as required by the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. Now, [EPA is looking for feedback from state and local governments for ideas on how to encourage the production and use of renewable energy while balancing practical constraints on the pace at which the market is currently accommodating ethanol blending.](#) You can review the proposal on EPA's

Chair Jim Hassinger,  
Executive Directors  
Council  
Executive Director,  
Southwestern  
Pennsylvania  
Commission

## **NARCSTAFF**

### **Fred Abousleman**

Executive Director

### **Shannon Baxevanis**

Deputy Director

### **Autumn Campbell**

Director of Community  
Programs

### **Mia Colson**

Program Analyst

### **Marcy Fritter**

Office Manager

### **Bridget Gribbin**

Intern

### **Taylor Markwith**

Program Associate

### **Lindsey Riley**

Deputy of  
Communications

### **Anna Rosenbaum**

Communications  
Associate

### **Erich W. Zimmermann**

Director of Transportation  
Programs

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website [HERE](#) and provide feedback during the public comment period, which opens with official publication in the Federal Register. You can also learn more about the ethanol blend-wall by clicking [HERE](#).

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## **POLICYUPDATE**

*The Senate and House are in session.*

### **NARC and Partners Meet with Senior Senate Leadership Staff on**

**WIA Reauthorization:** Last week NARC and partners in the Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce (CIAW) met with senior staff in Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid's office to discuss next steps for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). While it is unlikely that the full Senate will consider the measure in 2013, coalition members are working diligently to generate support for full Senate passage in 2014. NARC staff will reach out in the coming weeks with steps that NARC members can take to help move a Workforce Development package through the chamber. More information on the effort is available [HERE](#).

### **Senate Proposal Would Establish New Financing Tool for**

**Infrastructure Projects:** Last week Senator Mark Warner (VA) and a bipartisan group of nine other Senators introduced the Building and Renewing Infrastructure for Development and Growth in Employment (BRIDGE) Act, which would establish an Infrastructure Financing Authority (IFA), separate from the federal government, aimed at helping local and state governments leverage private investments to spur infrastructure investments. The IFA is intended to be an independent, nonpartisan financing authority to complement existing methods of infrastructure funding that would provide loans and loan guarantees to help states and localities fund regionally significant infrastructure projects. The proposal would require an initial federal investment of \$10 billion and faces significant political obstacles. A summary of the BRIDGE Act is available [HERE](#).

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## **MEMBERREQUESTS**

**Capturing ROI:** The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is seeking information or strategies from their peers on ways to capture or report direct value or return on investment (ROI) for their local government members. Ideally, MORPC is looking to provide something

to each member on a regular basis. As an example, are there specific dollar values that can be aligned with programs/benefits that all members receive? What information is shared that helps members validate the investment?

***Members ask for your thoughtful reply. Please forward any feedback to Anna Rosenbaum, [anna@narc.org](mailto:anna@narc.org), including which member assistance request to which you are responding.***

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## **GRANT OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Environmental Protection Agency – Urban Waters**

*Deadline: November 15 \*\* **Deadline extended to December 16** \*\**

The EPA is soliciting proposals for projects that will advance EPA's water quality and environmental justice goals. Projects proposed for funding must take place entirely within and focus on one of 18 specific Eligible Geographic Areas, as listed in Section I.A and illustrated on the Urban Waters Small Grants program [mapping website](#). More information is available [HERE](#).

### **FTA - Innovative Safety, Resiliency, and All-Hazards Emergency Response and Recovery Research Demonstrations**

*Deadline: December 2*

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announces funds for innovative safety, resiliency, and all-hazards emergency response and recovery research demonstration projects of national significance, with funds available for cooperative agreements to engage in the demonstration of innovative technologies, methods, practices and techniques in three areas: (1) Operational safety, (2) infrastructure or equipment resiliency and (3) all-hazards emergency response and recovery methods. For more information and to apply, click [HERE](#).

### **ArtPlace America – Creative Placemaking Funds Available**

*Deadline: December 6*

ArtPlace America is seeking letters of inquiry for its Innovation Grants Opportunity. Supported through a collaboration of 13 national and regional foundations, awards of \$50,000 to \$500,000 are available to invest in creative placemaking projects that reach for new possibilities and involve a variety of partners who together are committed to increasing the vibrancy and diversity of their communities. More information is available [HERE](#).

**Smart Growth America**

*Deadline: December 6*

Smart Growth America, through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Sustainable Communities' Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Program, is offering free technical assistance to help communities implement smart growth strategies to build stronger economies while protecting human health and the environment. Any unit or subdivision of local, tribal or regional government is eligible to apply. More information is available [HERE](#).

**Wells Fargo Foundation and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation**

*Deadline: December 16*

Designed to support projects that link economic development and community well-being to the stewardship and health of the environment, Wells Fargo and the NFWF have launched a five-year, \$15 million initiative that will be used to leverage other public and private investments with an expected total impact of over \$37.5 million. Funding priorities for this program include supporting sustainable agricultural practices; promoting land and water conservation; facilitating investments in green infrastructure and energy efficiency; and encouraging broad-based citizen participation in project implementation. More information is available [HERE](#).

**Department of the Treasury – Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI)**

*Deadline: December 23*

Funding is available for the CDFI Program, which aims to use federal resources to invest in CDFIs and to build their capacity to serve low-income people and communities that lack access to affordable financial products and services. Through the CDFI program, the CDFI Fund provides two types of monetary awards to CDFIs - Financial Assistance awards and Technical Assistance awards. More information on this opportunity is available [HERE](#), and more information on the CDFI program is available [HERE](#). Funding for the Native American CDFI program is also available. More information can be found [HERE](#).

**Health Resources Services Administration – Rural Health Network Development Planning Program**

*Deadline: January 16, 2014*

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 health care 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](#).

**National Endowment for the Arts**

*Deadline: January 13, 2014*

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](#).

**Community Forest Program Grant**

*Application Due: January 15, 2014*

The US 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.

**National Science Foundation (NSF) - Cyber-Physical Systems**

*Due Date: January 29, 2014*

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, 2014*

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](#).

### **NSF - Cyber-Enabled Sustainability Science and Engineering**

*Due Date: February 4, 2014*

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. More information is available [HERE](#).

### **Energy for Sustainability**

*Due Date: February 20, 2014*

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](#).

### **NSF - Environmental Sustainability**

*Due Date: March 20, 2014*

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](#).

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## **UPCOMINGEVENTS**

### ***WEBINAR: DOE Announces Webinars on Economic Impacts of Offshore Wind, Clean Energy Financing Programs***

*November 20, 2013, 3:00-4:00 pm EST*

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) will present a webinar titled "Jobs and Economic Development Impacts of Offshore Wind." This webinar will provide an overview of the new offshore wind Jobs and Economic Development Impacts model and review four completed economic assessments covering the Great Lakes, Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, and Gulf Coast regions. Register for the webinar [HERE](#).

### ***WEBINAR: The National League of Cities (NLC) on Broadband Investment and the Agriculture Economy***

*November 21, 2013, 2:00 pm EST*

NLC in partnership with the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NTCA), The Rural Broadband Association, and Public Technology Institute will host a webinar to help local elected officials better understand the impact of broadband, or robust telecommunications access, on improving agricultural practices and development. More information about this opportunity and registration are available [HERE](#).

### ***WEBINAR: Improve the Participation of People with Disabilities and Older Adults in Coordinated Planning***

*November 22, 2:00-3:00 pm EST*

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) and the Small Urban and Rural Transit Center (SURTC) will host a webinar to explore how evidence-based practices can be incorporated into strategies to engage people with disabilities and older adults in coordinated transportation planning. Participants will hear stories from SURTC Researchers and

ACL Catalysts about how evidence-based practices are used in their work and obtain resources to identify evidence-based practices, discuss how to tap into the UTC program, and outline other Federal and non-Federal resources related to research. No registration is required. A link to the webinar is available [HERE](#).

**WEBINAR SERIES: EPA Announces Webinar Series for State and Local Governments:** The EPA's State and Local Climate and Energy Program announced a series of webcasts aimed at helping local governments as they explore and plan climate change and clean energy efforts. These regular webcasts highlight EPA resources available to local governments and present examples of successful climate and energy programs and policies implemented locally. More information on this series and links to register are available [HERE](#).

- December 4, 1:00-2:30 pm EST - Gaining Support and Attracting Participation through Communication
- December 11, 1:00-2:30 pm EST - The Role of Communication in Ensuring Sustained Behavior Change
- December 18 1:00-2:30 pm EST - Using Effective Communication to Showcase Program Successes

***NARC's 2014 National Conference of Regions***

*February 9-11, 2014, 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. Additional information will be available in late 2013.

***NARC's 48th Annual Conference and Exhibition***

*June 6-11, 2014, 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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