

May 5, 2009

## NADO Releases Report on CEDS and Transportation Planning

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The NADO Research Foundation has recently released the new report *Role of Transportation Planning in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Process: A Nationwide Scan*, produced by Norman Walzer and Melissa Henriksen at the Center for Governmental Studies at Northern Illinois University under contract to the NADO Research Foundation's Center for Transportation Advancement and Regional Development.

The purpose of the research study was to identify the extent and methods used by economic development districts to incorporate transportation plans, projects, stakeholders, and issues into the regions' comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) documents. The research team also ascertained promising practices and case studies coordinating economic development and transportation planning processes, project priorities and investments.


View the full report at <http://www.ruraltransportation.org/uploads/cedsreport.pdf>. For more information, contact NADO Program Manager Carrie Kissel at [ckissel@nado.org](mailto:ckissel@nado.org) or 202.624.8829.

*The report is supported by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under Agreement No. DTFH61-06-H-00029. Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of FHWA.*

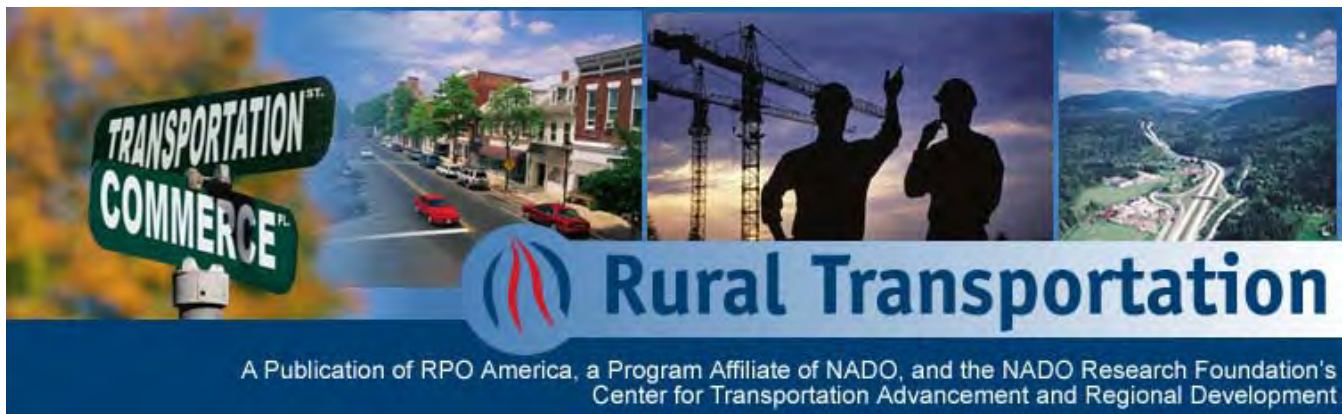
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Save the date for the upcoming webinar entitled "Climate Change Is Heating Up: The Latest Information and Resources for Transportation Planning Agencies in Rural, Small- and Medium-sized Regions," which will take place on Thursday, May 21, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. This webinar will be offered free of charge, and AICP Certification Maintenance credits may be offered to attendees.

The webinar will feature presentations by Cindy Burbank, National Planning and Environment Practice Leader for PB Americas, and Harrison Rue, Principal for ICF International. Burbank and Rue will provide an overview of climate change information and its relationship to transportation planning, discuss potential regulatory and legislative issues, economic impacts and prospects for addressing climate change, opportunities to adapt to and mitigate climate change, and provide additional resources.

NADO members are encouraged to email questions they have about climate change and transportation planning to NADO Program Manager Mike Bellamente at [mbellamente@nado.org](mailto:mbellamente@nado.org) by Friday, May 15. This will allow the speakers to prepare information specifically addressing NADO members' questions and concerns.


Registration and additional information will be available in the coming days. For more information, visit [www.ruraltransportation.org/pages/page.asp?page\\_id=69578](http://www.ruraltransportation.org/pages/page.asp?page_id=69578).

*This webinar is supported in part by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under Agreement No. DTFH61-06-H-00029. Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of FHWA.*

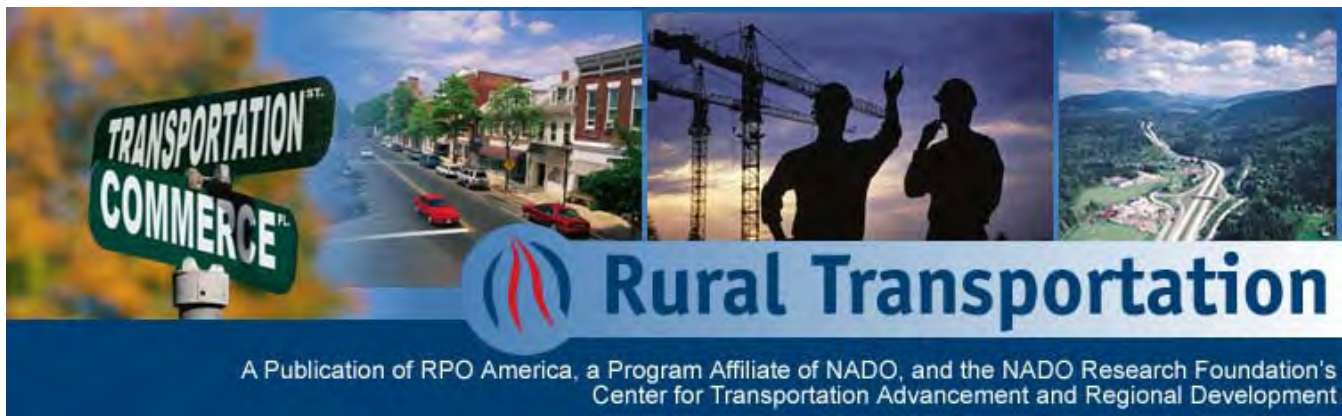
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## Save the Date for National Rural Transportation Conference

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Plan now to attend the 2009 National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference, to be held October 28 – 30 in Savannah, Georgia. This year's conference will feature mobile workshops, peer training, and networking opportunities specifically designed for rural and small metropolitan regions.

Training sessions will cover such policy and technical issues as transportation and economic development, land use, climate change, relationships with state departments of transportation and other planning partners, planning for regional transit and coordinated human services transportation, GIS and technology applications, safety planning, freight and intermodal transportation, finance and other topics.

**NADO member organizations are encouraged to submit abstracts of presentations online until May 30** at [www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB228TVR2RJRJ](http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB228TVR2RJRJ).

This year's conference will also include special networking and learning events held jointly with the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Annual Conference. This will provide an opportunity to share practices with transportation professionals from medium and large metropolitan regions as well as rural and small metropolitan regions.


The National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference is sponsored by Development District Association of Appalachia, Appalachian Regional Commission, Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Mo-Kan Regional Council, NADO Research Foundation and NADO's RPO America, and Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission.

For more information, contact NADO Program Manager Carrie Kissel at [ckissel@nado.org](mailto:ckissel@nado.org) or 202.624.8829. For more details on the conference, visit [http://www.RuralTransportation.org/pages/page.asp?page\\_id=59355](http://www.RuralTransportation.org/pages/page.asp?page_id=59355).

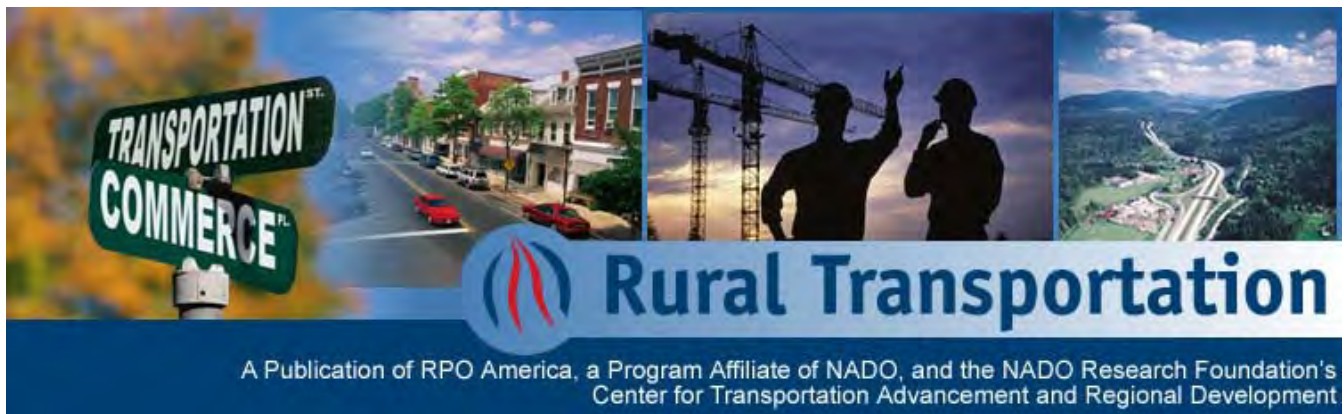
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**The deadlines for abstracts for the National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference and NADO's Excellence in Regional Transportation Awards have been extended to May 30.** Don't miss this chance to share your successful projects, programs or initiatives in rural and small metropolitan transportation planning.

Individuals and organizations can now submit presentation ideas online for the 2009 National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference at <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB228TVR2RJRJ> until May 30. Occurring October 28 - 30 in Savannah, Georgia, this year's conference will feature mobile workshops, peer training and networking opportunities.


Winners of the 2009 Excellence in Regional Transportation Award will also be honored during the conference. To apply for the award, visit [www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB228TUY6R3KU](http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB228TUY6R3KU).

For more information on the award or call for abstracts, contact NADO Program Manager Carrie Kissel at [ckissel@nado.org](mailto:ckissel@nado.org) or 202.624.8829. For more details on the conference, visit [www.RuralTransportation.org/pages/page.asp?page\\_id=59355](http://www.RuralTransportation.org/pages/page.asp?page_id=59355).

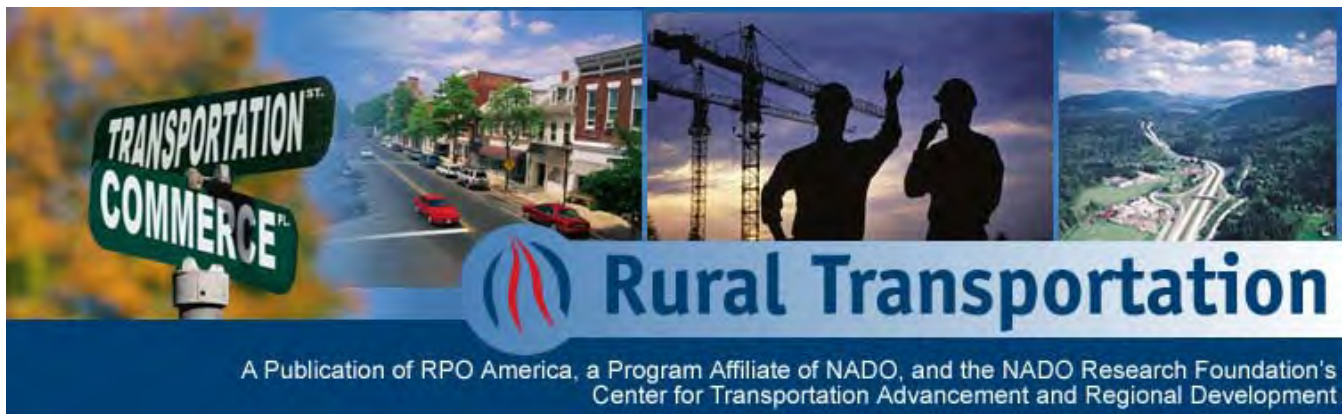
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## Innovative Ridesharing Programs in Rural Areas: An Affordable and Environmentally Friendly Mode of Transportation

*Arefa Vohra, NADO Graduate Research Fellow*

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With fluctuating gas prices and an uncertain future for alternative energy sources, rural regions are taking transportation efficiency into their own hands. Emphasis is often placed on metropolitan ridesharing programs, but rural regions are just as in need if not more for alternative transportation options because of the distances rural and small metropolitan residents may have to travel for work or services. In South Carolina and Iowa, two Councils of Governments (COGs) share their success stories on bringing affordable rural ridesharing programs to life.

Santee Lynches Regional COG, headquartered in Sumter, South Carolina, helped to facilitate an alternative rideshare program for its rural region for only a \$2,500 start-up cost and less than a year of planning. Informal discussions for the program began in November 2007 and spring 2008 seven major employers joined the rideshare program discussion. Then on August 1, 2008, the official launch of the public/private rideshare program took place with participation from such regional employers as Square D, Dorn Veterans Administration, Becton, Dickinson & Co., Central Carolina Technical College and the University of South Carolina. More employers have since joined.

With its low start-up costs, the rideshare program uses a system in which everyone utilizing the service contributes. In addition, this public-private funded program functions through the participation of the Santee Lynches Regional COG, Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority (a local public transit provider), AlterNetRides (a private Web-based ride planning service), and VPSI (a private vanpool provider). Costs for providing the system are offset when new employers join in the venture and contribute to the monthly administrative expenses. The Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority is then able to pay for the riders' use of AlterNetRides' Web-based service. Recently, Santee Lynches Regional COG assisted the Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority in obtaining a \$100,000 grant to look at public transit routes for the rideshare program over a two-year period.


Vanpool provider VPSI does not charge a fee until the commuters select the vanpool option. The cost of the van, gas and other expenses are covered by the vanpool riders. If employers provide the federal commuter tax benefit to at least six employees using the vanpool service, all costs are covered. The federal commuter tax benefit works by providing a certain amount that employees can exclude from taxable income based on employer-provided transit benefits. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 increased the tax-free transit benefit month. Also, if the employer chooses, an additional cost can ensure a commuter's ride home in cases of emergencies by using the Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority. Through the rideshare program, Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority offers rides to cities within and outside of the region and participating company sites, including a medical center and a university.

A private partner in the rideshare program since September 2008, Santee Cooper Power and Electric Company utilizes the rideshare service for 18 of its facilities with 378 employees benefitting from the program. Santee Cooper Spokesperson Ray Smith remarks, "The rideshare program has given us creative ways to help the environment and employees. It helped create a partnership with the rural transportation authority, Tri County Link." To date, Santee Cooper ridesharing employees have saved 993,694 miles and reduced CO2 emissions by 314,559 lbs. In addition, Santee Cooper is promoting further rideshare options by sponsoring four buses for mass transit and making monthly reduced bus fares available for purchase to employees.

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The successful rideshare program has also inspired other COGs to embark on similar projects. The Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester COG in South Carolina is interested in pursuing this because, according to Senior Planner Jeff Burns, "It is a tailored service where we can help with trip routing and some of those features that enables citizens to travel more efficiently and cost effectively."

In Carroll, Iowa, Region XII COG is preparing to launch Job Jet, the state's first rural commuter van service. The COG embarked on this venture in July of 2007. Since Region XII COG operates the local public transit system and promotes economic development, it was extremely important to offer a beneficial rideshare program for local residents commuting to work. Widely fluctuating gas prices affect commuters, and employers in Crawford County and throughout the region had a fear of losing employees due to long commutes.

Much needed funding for the program came from Iowa's Congestion Management/Air Quality funds with an initial amount of \$146,000. \$118,000 was used to purchase five 15-passenger vans and \$28,000 was for a three-year operational fund. The Iowa Department of Transportation also contributed \$8,000, enabling Region XII COG to create marketing materials and to advertise Job Jet through its Web site and at local events.

The COG's recent van purchase will jumpstart the rural vanpool program, which will have a sliding scale rate per mile. There will also be an incentive for employees participating in the program through a payroll deduction. Volunteer drivers are currently being recruited and others have expressed interest in joining the program as a rider. The drivers in the program are typically employees helping transport other co-workers to their job. The driver also needs to join the drug and alcohol testing program and have a good driving record.

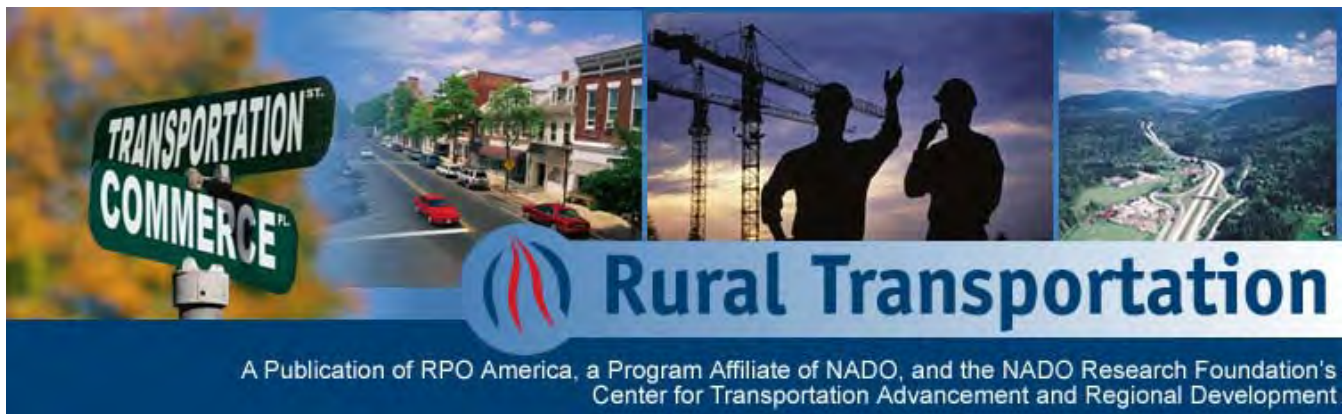
Job Jet is expected to launch in June 2009. Chris Whitaker, Region XII COG transportation planner, says, "Job Jet is a new and exciting program that will assist employers to increase their available labor market while also providing a reliable and economic source of transportation for employees to get to and from work."

For more information, visit Santee Lynches Regional COG's Web site at <http://www.santeelynchescog.org> and Region XII COG's Web site at <http://www.region12cog.org>.

*This article is based upon work supported by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under Agreement No. DTFH61-06-H-00029. Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of FHWA.*



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## Oregon Evaluates Area Commission on Transportation Process

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The Oregon Department of Transportation recently conducted an evaluation of the effectiveness of its Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs), which are voluntary associations of governmental and non-governmental transportation stakeholders that serve as advisory bodies to the Oregon Transportation Commission. ACTs were established in the mid-1990s to improve coordination of state highway project prioritization across jurisdictions as well as to broaden the regional transportation perspective and enhance communication between the public and private sectors. The evaluation was to determine how ACTs are functioning, assess the relationships of the ACTs to the state's federally designated MPOs, and improve collaboration and coordination among the ACTs.

The final evaluation report, called *Oregon's ACTS: Cross-Jurisdictional Collaboration and Improved Transportation Planning*, found that travel crossing boundaries of ACTs and MPOs affected the need to coordinate among entities, as did addressing major transportation corridors. Results also showed that over 80 percent of ACTs felt that the regional approach used by ACTs was effective or very effective at prioritizing project recommendations for the statewide transportation improvement program (STIP).

Some of the people interviewed in the assessment had been involved in transportation prioritization prior to the formation of ACTs and were able to provide a comparison. They indicated that forming ACTs was a significant improvement in communication, information exchange and learning about transportation funding. Particular ACT strengths include getting local buy-in for project priorities and funding allocations for STIP and other state programs and for cutting projects to meet the state budget.

The evaluation also analyzed communication and coordination among ACTs and between ACTs and MPOs, as well as providing steps that would enhance the ACT process through communication, addressing travel sheds, stakeholder involvement, policy and planning, the STIP prioritization process and reviewing the current structure.


View the full report at <http://www.ruraltransportation.org/uploads/oractrpt.pdf>, and its appendices at <http://www.ruraltransportation.org/uploads/oractapdx.pdf>. Additional information on Oregon's ACT process is available at [http://www.ruraltransportation.org/pages/page.asp?page\\_id=61112](http://www.ruraltransportation.org/pages/page.asp?page_id=61112).

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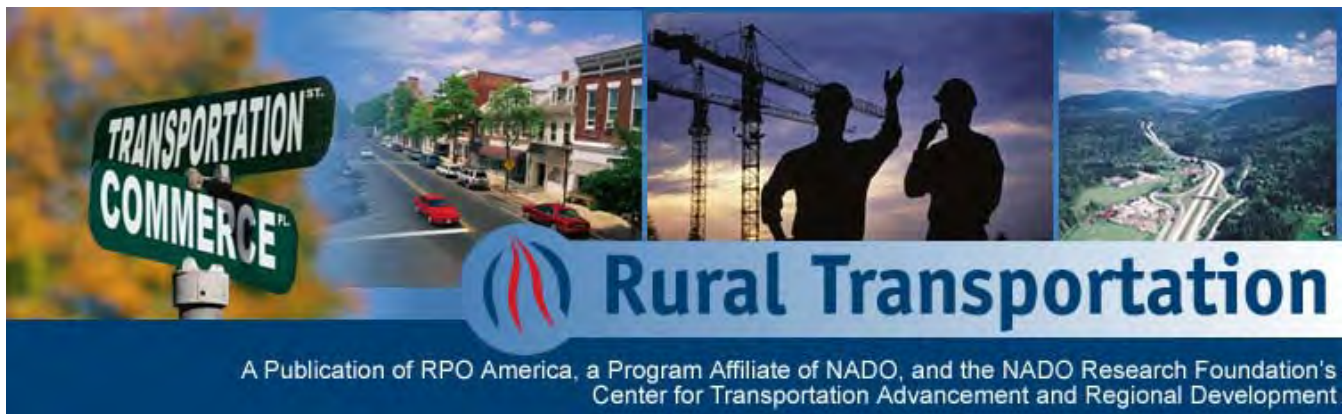
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NADO program affiliate RPO America has established a Group page on Facebook. The RPO America Facebook page provides a space for rural and small metropolitan transportation planning professionals to network, have discussions on transportation topics and share information.


Already, RPO America members have added photos and content from NADO's Annual Training Conference in Anchorage, October 3 – 7, and the National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference in Duluth, August 17 – 19. Join the online group by logging into Facebook and searching for "RPO America," or view the page without logging in at [www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=36190137698](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=36190137698).

RPO America was founded by the NADO Board of Directors to serve as the national professional association for rural transportation planning professionals, practitioners, policymakers and other stakeholders. For more information on RPO America, visit [www.RuralTransportation.org](http://www.RuralTransportation.org) or contact Program Manager Carrie Kissel at 202.624.8829 or [ckissel@nado.org](mailto:ckissel@nado.org).

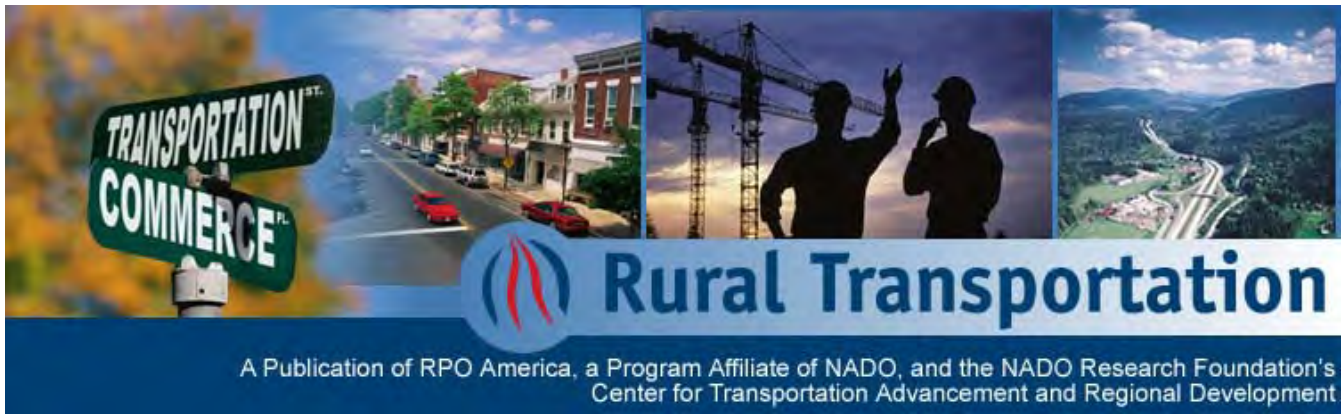
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**Transportation News and Notes**

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**EPA Finds GHGs Threaten Public Health**

On Friday, April 17, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a proposed finding that six greenhouse gases (GHGs), four of which come from motor vehicle engines, endanger public health and welfare, and also cause or contribute to climate change. Read the Federal Register notice published April 24 and find details about submitting comments at <http://epa.gov/climatechange/endangerment.html>.

This finding was released at the same time as the new EPA report *Climate Change Impacts on Regional Air Quality*. The report finds that climate change may cause ozone pollution to worsen in some areas of the country, and that future decisions about managing ozone may need to account for those possible effects. Read the report at <http://tinyurl.com/c5l73t>.

EPA's proposed finding does not lay out specific proposals for regulations, rather discussing the overall impact of climate change, such as possibly leading to higher levels of ground-level ozone, increased drought, more intense storms and flooding, more frequent and intense heat waves and wildfires, and greater sea level rise. The transportation sector is mentioned specifically as the second largest greenhouse-gas emitting sector in the nation, following electricity generation.

**U.S. DOT Requests Public Comments on ITS Program**

The Research and Innovative Technology Administration is requesting public comments on the strategic direction of its Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Program. Comments will be used to shape the next, multi-year, ITS research agenda. Specifically, the Department seeks comment and insight on a set of proposed goals and objectives for the ITS Program. Additionally, the Department is interested in exploring new opportunities for research and development, technology transfer, and evaluation of next generation ITS technologies. Responses should take into account the critical role of advanced technologies in achieving transformative change in the areas of safety, mobility, environmental stewardship, and deployment policy. More information and instructions for submitting comments can be found at <http://www.regulations.gov> under docket number RITA 2009-0001 or by contacting Kim Riddle at 202.366.5128.

**EIA: High Oil Prices, GHG Controls Would Help Clean Energy Grow**

The U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration (EIA) recently released its full *Annual Energy Report*. The report provides an examination of various scenarios for the future of U.S. energy, including analyzing various price points for oil and the impact on biofuels and imported fuels, as well as the impact of controlling GHG emissions on energy production. [Read the EIA's Annual Energy Outlook 2009 here.](#)

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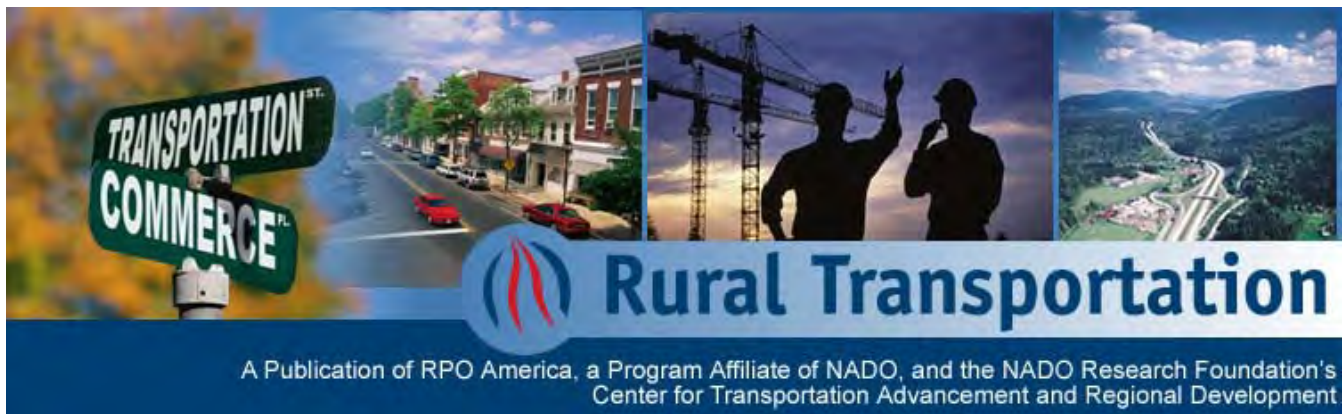
**Traffic Deaths Down in 2008**

Early estimates from the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) indicate

that 2008 fatalities in motor vehicle traffic crashes may have dropped to 37,313, a 9.1-percent decline from 41,059 in 2007. This figure is an estimate based on preliminary data and projections, will be revised with an actual count for 2008 in August 2009. Read NHTSA's traffic safety fact sheet to learn more, at <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811124.PDF>.



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## Transportation Glossary and Acronym Lists Released

The Transportation Research Board's (TRB's) *Transportation Research Circular E-C133: Glossary of Regional Transportation Systems Management and Operations Terms* is designed to provide clear definitions of terms as they are typically used in the context of regional transportation systems management and operations. View the glossary online at <http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/circulars/ec133.pdf>.

The new website developed by CTAA's National Resource Center for Human Service Transportation Coordination, [www.NRCtransportation.org](http://www.NRCtransportation.org), contains a comprehensive list of acronyms used in the transportation and human service fields, as well as over one hundred regional coordination plans and additional information and resources.

## New Transit Resources Available

TRB's *Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Report 129: Local and Regional Funding Mechanisms for Public Transportation* explores options for transit funding mechanisms with a focus on traditional tax- and fee-based funding and common business, activity and related funding sources. View the PDF report online at <http://www.ruraltransportation.org/uploads/localtransfunds.pdf>. The report release includes a companion online regional funding database that provides an extensive list of funding sources that are in use or have the prospect of being used at the local and regional level to support public transportation. Note that the database is a very large zipped file and may take some time to download. Click here to access the online regional funding database and the user manual for the database.

A new report, *Best Practices in Transit Service Planning*, was written by the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida to assist transportation agencies in designing their services around clear and defined principles and monitoring the results achieved. This research identifies existing best practices in transit service planning and develops a generic model approach that could be adapted and used by public transit agencies for fixed route bus transit service planning, specifically to include Service Design Standards, Service Performance Measurements, and a standard Service Evaluation Methodology. Read the report online at <http://www.nctr.usf.edu/pdf/77720.pdf>.

## Transportation and Evacuation Report Released

The *National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Synthesis 392: Transportation's Role in Emergency Evacuation and Reentry* has just been released by TRB. The goal of this study was to collect and document information on transportation's role in emergency evacuation and reentry by summarizing aspects of its planning, control, necessary communications, and research on travel characteristics of evacuees, as well as highlighting effective and innovative practices. View the study at [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp\\_syn\\_392.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_syn_392.pdf).

## Environment and Planning Resources Available

FHWA's Office of Planning, Environment and Realty has launched a new "Highways and Climate Change" web site. The site provides information on FHWA climate change activities, resources on transportation and climate change issues and research, and houses the FHWA Transportation and Climate Change Newsletter. The site can be found at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/climate/index.htm>.

The FHWA site and additional resources on climate change and transportation planning have been compiled by the NADO Research Foundation, at [http://www.RuralTransportation.org/pages/page.asp?page\\_id=61144](http://www.RuralTransportation.org/pages/page.asp?page_id=61144). To suggest additional resources or to share information about your region's climate-related activities, contact NADO Program Managers Carrie Kissel, at [ckissel@nado.org](mailto:ckissel@nado.org), or Mike Bellamente, at [mbellamente@nado.org](mailto:mbellamente@nado.org).

### New Rural Transportation Safety Resources Online

The new FHWA publication *Traffic Calming on Main Roads through Rural Communities* summarizes an evaluation of the effects on speed of low-cost, traffic-calming treatments on main rural highways passing through small, rural communities. Speed management can be a significant challenge for smaller communities, especially when the main roadway through the town provides high-speed travel over long distances but within each town must accommodate local access, pedestrians, on-street parking, bicycles, and local traffic. For more information, visit <http://www.tfsrc.gov/safety/pubs/08067/index.htm>.

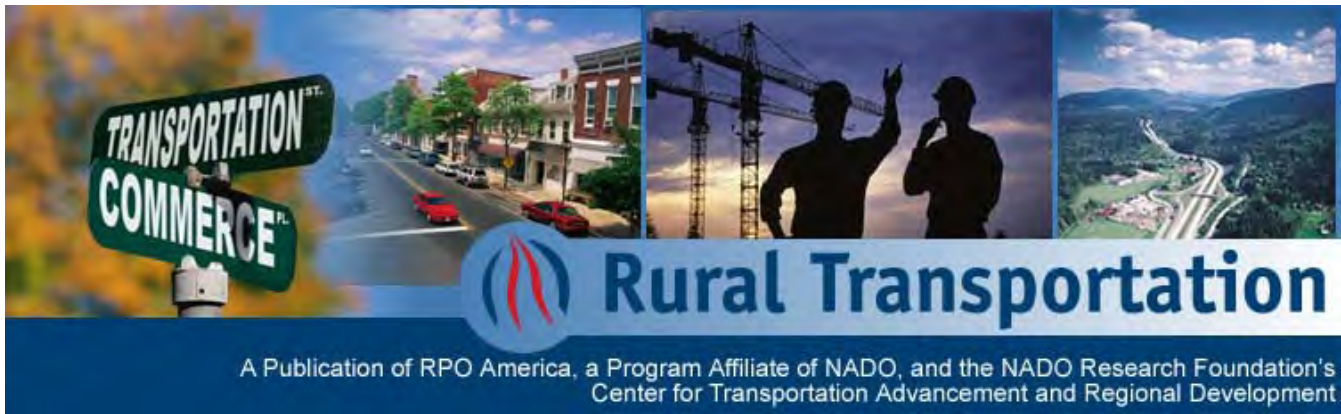
Other recent FHWA safety publications include the *Strategic Intersection Safety Program*, online at <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersections/fhwasa09004/>, which serves as a tool to assist agencies at the state and local levels in developing strategic, systematic approaches for planning, developing, implementing, and maintaining an intersection safety program. *Two Low-Cost Safety Concepts for Two-Way STOP-Controlled, Rural Intersections on High-Speed Two-Lane, Two-Way Roadways* is available at <http://www.ruraltransportation.org/uploads/fhwaintersect.pdf>. Another guide, *Cost Effective Safety Improvements for Two-Lane Rural Roads*, is posted at <http://www.ruraltransportation.org/uploads/twolane.pdf>.

FHWA also recently released an updated version of the *Best Practices Manual: Wildlife Vehicle Collision Reduction Study*. The publication examines the causes and impacts of wildlife-vehicle collisions and provides tools, methods, and other measures to mitigate collisions, especially with large wildlife that pose the greatest threat to travelers and cause the most damage. To read the report, visit <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/hconnect/wvc/index.htm>.

TRB's *National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 500, Vol. 23: Guidance for Implementation of the AASHTO Strategic Highway Safety Plan: A Guide for Reducing Speeding-Related Crashes* provides suggested guidance on strategies that can be employed to reduce crashes involving speeding due to both driver behavior and driver response to the environment. The guide provides strategies for both low-speed and high-speed roads. View the guide at <http://www.RuralTransportation.org/uploads/nchrp500v23.pdf>. This report is the most recent of a 23-volume series on safety, often referred to as the NCHRP 500 Series, available at <http://tinyurl.com/nchrp500>.



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May 5, 2009

## Calendar

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- [NADO and AMPO to Offer Climate Change Webinar](#)
- [Save the Date for National Rural Transportation Conference](#)
- [Deadlines Extended for Abstracts, Award](#)
- [Innovative Ridesharing Programs in Rural Areas: An Affordable and Environmentally Friendly Mode of Transportation](#)
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## Upcoming NADO, NADO Research Foundation and RPO America Events

Visit [www.RuralTransportation.org](http://www.RuralTransportation.org) for more details on upcoming events.

May 21 • Webinar

[Climate Change Is Heating Up: The Latest Information and Resources for Transportation Planning Agencies in Rural, Small- and Medium-sized Regions](#)

Sponsored by the NADO Research Foundation's Center for Transportation Advancement and Regional Development and the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO)

August 29 – September 1, 2009 • Chicago, Illinois  
[2009 NADO Annual Training Conference](#)

October 28 – 30, 2009 • Savannah, Georgia

[National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference](#)

*RPO America and the National RPO Council of Peers will meet during the conference  
 Co-sponsored by the Development District Association of Appalachia*

*Conference organizers are applying to offer AICP Certification Maintenance credits for the sessions at these events. Details will be posted as they become available.*

[Click here](#) for the archive of previous NADO conferences

## Other Conferences and Meetings

May 4 – 6 • Irvine, CA

[Ports, Waterways, Freight and International Trade Conference](#)

Transportation Research Board

May 6 • Webinar

[The Accessible Mobility Experience Part I](#)

Easter Seals Project Action

May 20 • Webinar

[Talking Freight: Freight Corridor Programs](#)

Federal Highway Administration

May 28 • Teleconference

[Senior Transportation Programs: Raising Revenue and Awareness](#)

National Center on Senior Transportation

May 31 – June 5 • Providence, RI

[Community Transportation Association EXPO](#)

June 1 – 3 • Washington, DC

[ITS America's 2009 Annual Meeting and Exposition](#)

June 8 – 10 • Kansas City, MO

[National ADA Symposium](#)

June 22 • Big Sky, MT

[National Rural Summit on Traffic Safety Culture](#)

Western Transportation Institute and AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

July 28 – 29 • Denver, CO

[TRB Summer Conference on Transportation Planning, Land Use and Air Quality](#)

TRB Transportation and Air Quality Committee

August 19 – 21 • Portland, OR

[Safe Routes to School National Conference](#)

October 27 – 30 • Savannah, GA

[AMPO Annual Conference](#)



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