



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS



NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REGIONS

FEBRUARY 11-14, 2018
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Registration is Open!

CONGRESS BRIEF

Letter to OMB and USDOT from VA and MD Senators

Senators Tim Kaine (D-VA), Mark Warner (D-VA), Benjamin Cardin (D-MD), and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) penned a letter to the Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney and USDOT Secretary Elaine Chao regarding Washington, DC Metro funding on February 1. The letter asks for the fiscal year 2019 budget to include the annual \$150 million for capital and safety improvements for the Washington, DC area transit system as a part of the 10-year federal-state funding partnership. The capital area senators also asked for additional dedicated funding as part of the administration's infrastructure plan and highlighted the shortcomings of the system and the improvements General Manager Paul Wiedefeld has made.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

The Infrastructure Plan is Coming?

Based on sources within the Trump administration, the infrastructure community in Washington is anticipating the release of the president's long-awaited infrastructure package on Monday morning. The release is likely to come in the form of "principles," and it is unknown how closely they will reflect separate leaks in recent weeks of the funding and the streamlining provisions. The administration's budget will also be released on Monday. The plan is rumored to ring in at the more recent \$1.5 trillion figure, though only \$200 billion will come from federal sources and no pay-for will be identified. This is the kickoff to the process of writing the legislation.

Outgoing House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Bill Shuster told fellow Republican lawmakers at their policy retreat last week that an infrastructure plan must be bipartisan, and expressed his willingness to consider a variety of funding solutions including a gas tax increase, asset recycling, and public private partnerships. Shuster specifically called out the gas tax as a logical way to fund improvements because the money goes directly from the pump to the highway trust fund to rebuild highways, bridges, and roads. He received mixed responses from

his party and acknowledges that a bipartisan plan may lose some Republicans.

State and Local Governments: Let's Rebuild America

NARC and its state and local government partners issued a press release today calling for a bipartisan infrastructure package that supports a wide range of projects. The group stated its desire to work together to secure the long-term solvency of the highway trust fund and streamline the federal review process. Other groups on the letter include the National League of Cities, National Association of Counties, Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, United State Conference of Mayors, and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, among others.

Using Non-DOT Funds for Local Match

To maximize flexibility and improve transportation coordination, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) has clarified and publicized the ability of grantees to use *Older Americans Act* (OAA) Title III-B Supportive Services Funds to match to specific FTA programs. FTA recently added this information to guidance documents to include the OAA funds, including these factsheets: **Urbanized Area Formula Grants (Section 5307)**, **Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and People with Disabilities (Section 5310)**, and **Formula Grants for Rural Areas (Section 5311)**.

Rail System Safety Delays

Another deadly Amtrak crash was in the news this week when a passenger train hit a freight train killing two employees and injuring over 100 passengers. The crash was caused by a locked switch, which sent the passenger train onto a side track where the empty freight train was parked. After a series of deadly crashes, Congress passed a law in 2008 requiring positive train control (PTC) technology to be implemented to prevent this exact type of accident. PTC uses GPS, radio, and computers to automatically slow or stop trains that are in danger of derailing, colliding, or entering an off-limit track. Due to cost and the size of the rail system the implementation date of December 31, 2015 was delayed to December 31, 2018. And some companies have already requested another extension past 2018, indicating a continued delay for achieving safer rail.

REGIONS BRIEF

A Look Into Chicago's Electric Vehicle (EV) Future

Resilience and mobility have emerged as two primary themes of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) On TO 2050 regional planning process. As part of planning for the future, Chicago and CMAP are expanding electric vehicle infrastructure investments, including managing funds under Drive Electric Chicago, which is used to improve emissions and replace older vehicles. Additionally, last October, CMAP awarded Chicago a **\$15.5 million federal grant** for EV infrastructure. The grant will fund 182 electric fleet vehicles, including six electric airport buses, nine fast-charging stations, and 182 lower level charging stations. Currently the focus is on fleet electrification, but CMAP also hopes to expand consumer options and is working with the public to understand their view of the future.

Air-Taxi Startup Has a Working Prototype

Joe Ben Bevirt and his startup Joby Aviation Inc. have created a prototype of a flying car named Rachel. Reporters who saw the invention in person said it performed 15 minutes of flight in a 15-mile loop with a safe landing. It uses electric motors and functions like a cross between a drone and a small plane. Bevirt made his fortune by selling bendable tripods and other camera accessories, which he has poured into this project and believes that one day these will shuttle people all around cities. Many other companies are working on similar ways to incorporate air travel into daily life, but Bevirt is reluctant to give a rollout date acknowledging the regulatory and public perception challenges that lie ahead.

2017 Global Traffic Scorecard

The INRIX *2017 Global Traffic Scorecard* uses a methodology to provide an evaluation of urban travel, traffic health, and vibrancy for over 1,360 cities around the world. Topping the list of most congested cities is Los Angeles followed by Moscow and New York City. The United States holds 10 of the top 25 spots across the globe for most congested. You can use the interactive tool to find how your city compares.

JOBS

Senior Planner, Transit

Stanislaus Council of Governments, Modesto, CA

Senior Transportation Planner

Stanislaus Council of Governments, Modesto, CA

Data Scientist

Spokane Regional Transportation Council, Spokane, WA

Finance Director

Sacramento Council of Governments, Sacramento, CA

Transportation Planner

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Philadelphia, PA

MPO Transportation Planner

Bloomington/Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization, Bloomington, IN

Deputy Director

Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, Albany, OR

Director of Community Development

Metropolitan Council, St. Paul, MN

Community and Economic Development Specialist

Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, Albany, OR

OPPORTUNITIES

[View full list of grants and events!](#)

TPM Implementation Office Hours

Starting February 13

FHWA is hosting TPM Implementation Office Hours, a flipped teaching, webinar-based approach to ensure the successful implementation of a performance-based federal-aid highway program. Flipped teaching is an instructional technique that requires participants to review materials ahead of time and bring their questions to discuss during a webinar. Two 90-minute sessions will be held for each of the performance areas.

ITS Deployment Tracking: 2016 Survey Findings on Current Levels and Trends

February 20, 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

What are the deployment trends in surveillance and advanced detection technology? Does the adoption of adaptive traffic signals by arterial agencies still occur at a rapid pace? How are transportation agencies using social media to gather and distribute information on travel conditions and schedules? This webinar will answer some of the biggest questions regarding ITS deployment in the United States by focusing on key findings from the 2016-2017 survey and highlighting trends in ITS deployment.

TAM Refresher Webinar

February 22, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

The TAM Refresher will cover topics relevant to compliance with the TAM final Rule. It will highlight technical assistance resources available in advance of the October 2018 TAM Plan deadline. The TAM Refresher webinar is part of a larger webinar series FTA is hosting in 2017-2018 to address important topics relating to asset management.

CONTACT US

