



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS

WASHINGTON BRIEF

CBO Releases Updated Projections

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) recently issued its March baseline data for federal spending, including an update on the health of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). The report contains a sliver of good news in terms of HTF solvency. Slower than expected program spending reduced the amount of funding necessary to extend the program past its expiration on May 31, 2015. The new funding needed to pass a six-year bill is now estimated at \$92 billion, which is lower than previous estimates that were north of \$100 billion.

House T&I Hearing on Transportation Reauthorization

On March 17 at 9:30 AM ET, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will hold the second part of their full committee hearing titled *Surface Transportation Reauthorization: Laying the Foundation for U.S. Economic Growth and Job Creation*. Among the panelists is Salt Lake City, UT Mayor and National League of Cities President Ralph Becker.

Supreme Court Ruling Favors Amtrak

In 2008, federal law gave Amtrak a joint role with the Federal Railroad Administration to develop standards for measuring rail performance. The Association of American Railroads (AAR) challenged the federal law on the basis that Amtrak's status as a private company would make Amtrak's authority over freight railroad standards unconstitutional. Although a U.S. Court of Appeals concurred with AAR in 2013, the **Supreme Court defined** Amtrak as a government entity.

REGIONS BRIEF

San Francisco Mobility Mapping Tool

The San Francisco Transit Accessibility Map designed for the San Francisco Metropolitan Transit Authority allows residents to view their city in terms of accessibility to transit and walking paths based on time of day. This tool educates residents on the effect of transit reliability and original location on their commute times. The interactive map provides best, average, and worst-case scenarios and, with additional data layers, represents an opportunity for planners to improve transit services.

Seneca's All-Electric Bus Fleet

Operated by Clemson Area Transit and running on rechargeable batteries energized by the city's three charging stations, Proterra's six-bus EcoRide fleet in Seneca, SC is the first all-electric municipal fleet in the world. The project was funded by federal TIGGER III and Livability grants.

CMAP Senior Fellow Honored by Amtrak

The Amtrak Board of Directors chose to honor former Board Member and current CMAP Senior Fellow Joseph Szabo by dedicating the Joseph C. Szabo Chicago Control Center on his behalf. They recognize Szabo for his long-time dedication and contribution to the national intercity passenger rail system, and his leadership and council to the Amtrak board and staff.

Brookings Proposes Dedicated Freight Funding Policy

The Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program proposed an \$11.1 billion five-year authorization for a national freight investment program. It would include four separate freight programs: National Freight Corridor, dedicating \$5 billion in formula grants to states with the most interstate trade; Metropolitan Freight, dedicating \$5 billion in competitive grants to state-MPO partnerships; Rural Freight, dedicating \$1 billion in competitive grants; and Freight Innovation, dedicating a one-time \$100 million competitive program to support freight policy innovation. The proposal includes freight investment selection criteria to ensure trade efficiencies are maximized.

JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

Transportation Planner II

Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, Toledo, OH

Active Transportation Planner

Wasatch Front Regional Council, Salt Lake City, UT

Transportation Planner/Engineer

Wasatch Front Regional Council, Salt Lake City, UT

OPPORTUNITIES

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

WEBINAR SERIES: Beyond Traffic Framework

March 17, 1:00-2:00 PM ET - Beyond Traffic: How We Move

March 17, 3:00-4:00 PM ET - Beyond Traffic: How We Move Things

March 25, 1:00-2:00 PM ET - Beyond Traffic: How We Move Better

March 25, 3:00-4:00 PM ET - Beyond Traffic: How We Adapt

March 30, 1:00-2:00 PM ET - Beyond Traffic: Dollars and Decisions

USDOT will host a series of Virtual Sessions, each session focuses on a different theme of the **Beyond Traffic Framework**.

WEBINARS: Complete Streets

March 24, 1:00 PM ET: **Safer Streets, Stronger Economies**

March 31, 1:00 PM ET: **Evaluating Complete Streets Projects: A Guide for Practitioners**

Created by Smart Growth America, the National Complete Streets Coalition will host two webinars to discuss the benefits of their Complete Streets projects and how to measure the performance of such projects. The goal of **Complete Streets** projects is to design and operate streets that are safe and accessible for all users and modes of transportation.

WEBINAR: Understanding the Travel Needs of Older Adults

March 24, 1:00-3:00 PM ET

USDOT's Accessible Transportation Technologies Research Initiative is a joint program for mobility research that is co-led by FHWA and FTA. Through this initiative, this webinar will be used to promote discussion and gather feedback on technological solutions for disabled travelers with mobility issues.

EVENT: Stand Up for Transportation Day

April 9

The American Public Transportation Association is calling on local leaders to coordinate public events in their communities to advocate for federal programs that support our public transportation systems. These events will take place during the spring congressional recess while members of Congress are in their home districts. The goal of this national movement is to raise public awareness, garner local media coverage, and generate the support of Congressmen and local officials to pass a surface transportation bill before the MAP-21 extension expires.

GRANT: Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Technical Assistance Initiative

Deadline: April 10

FTA will provide \$1 million for the first year, and up to \$4 million total for four years, to a qualified non-profit for providing a technical assistance team in their area of transportation expertise in public transportation, transit-oriented development, land use, urban planning, affordable housing, environmental justice, or community-based economic development.

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