Regions and MPOs are positioned to transform their communities with IIJA and IRA funding.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) contain billions of dollars in new formula and competitive funds for a wide range of transportation and infrastructure projects. Regional councils, councils of governments and other regional planning organizations and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) are well positioned to use these funds to rebuild and transform the nation’s transit systems, roads, bridges, and active transportation systems, and do so while accounting for equity, climate, community values, and the negative externalities our transportation system has created in the past.

To maximize the impact of these new investments, Congress and the Administration should:

- Ensure that local governments and regional planning organizations are involved in the process of planning for and distributing the available funds to the maximum extent possible.
- Encourage states to distribute resources locally and coordinate with local governments and regional planning organizations to the greatest extent possible. Programs that are primarily state driven, such as the NEVI Formula Program, require coordination across all levels of government to maximize the successful implementation of this important program.
- Enhance the role Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Rural or Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) play to achieve increased mobility, access to opportunities, and economic prosperity, while addressing rapid shifts in innovative technology and data, demographics, and climate.
Four areas where Congress and the administration should support regional transportation efforts:

Provide adequate, stable, and flexible funding by dedicating additional revenue to ensure Highway Trust Fund solvency, increase funding for the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) and Metropolitan Planning (PL), and increase the portion of STBGP provided to local areas through their MPO.

Prioritize transportation safety and expand opportunities for ensuring the safety of all users. Recognize regional councils and MPOs as leaders in safety and security. Address inconsistencies involving regional participation in safety and security planning and better incorporate regional planning into disaster and resiliency planning.

Empower regions to meet the challenges and utilize the opportunities created by technology and data, including automated and connected vehicles. Ensure regional access to appropriate data for planning, economic development, and other purposes.

Enhance the role of MPOs and RTPOs by improving the planning process to better respond to emerging opportunities and challenges and shorten the time and resources needed to review projects.

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