



American Road  
& Transportation  
Builders Association



# MOVING AMERICA FORWARD:

A BLUEPRINT FOR STRATEGIC  
HIGHWAY & PUBLIC TRANSIT INVESTMENT





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# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



**2025 ARTBA Chairman**  
Jeff Nelson  
David Nelson Construction

America has always been built on the idea that we never stop moving forward.

From the federally-led transcontinental railroad to the Interstate Highway System, every generation has strengthened the foundation that moves our economy and connects our communities. But progress is not automatic. It requires vision, investment, and action.

By any objective measure, the 2021 infrastructure law illustrates the type of tangible results that can be achieved through strategic transportation investment:

- **90,000 transportation projects**—modernizing roads, enhancing transit and commuter rail options, and improving safety in every congressional district; **4,600 more** than under the first three years of the previous law.
- **35% more bridge improvements**—with over 19,000 projects making crossings safer and more reliable.
- **Upgrades at 9 of the 10 worst U.S. bottlenecks**—reducing costly freight delays and strengthening supply chains.
- **40,000 skilled highway and construction workers hired**—reflecting the demand for increased project activity.

These aren't just data points; they represent real-world benefits: getting home faster, saving lives, supporting businesses, strengthening supply chains, and making daily life more rewarding.

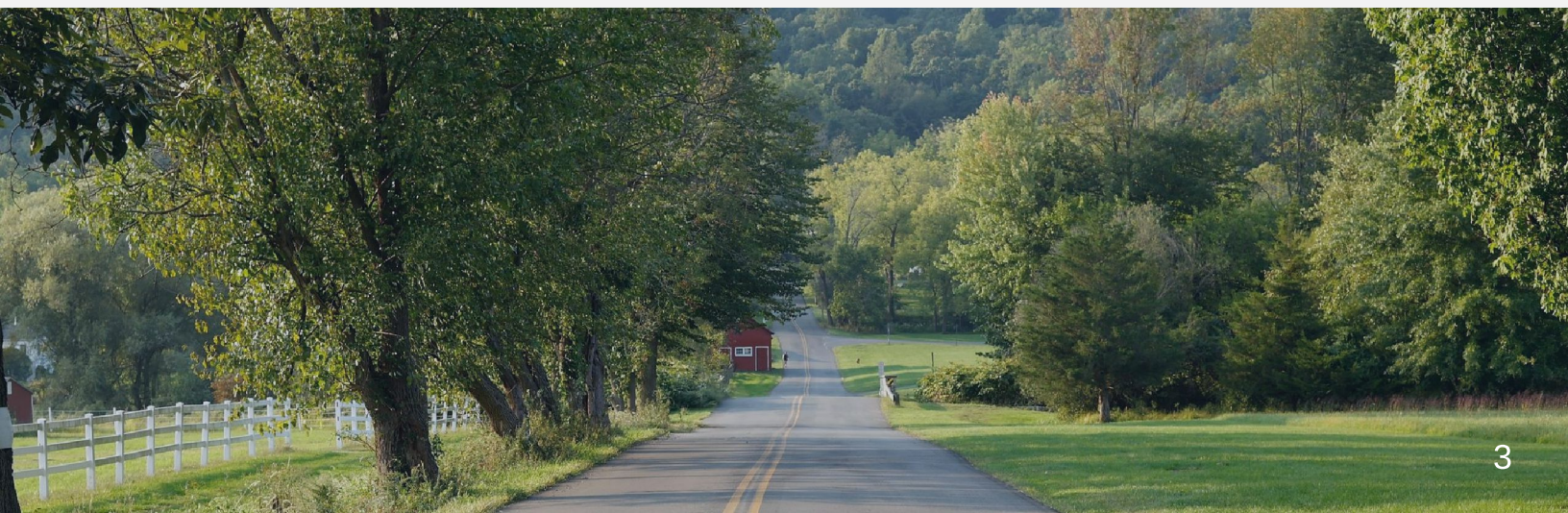
## How Transportation Investment Shapes Daily Life

Looking ahead, the members of the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA)—the professionals who design, build, and maintain our highways, roads and bridges, public transit systems, airports, ports, and waterways—envision a state-of-the-art infrastructure network that powers our unique quality of life.

Transportation infrastructure is more than asphalt and steel—it's the thread that binds our nation's economy and communities together. The orange juice on the breakfast tables of Montana families starts on citrus farms in Florida. Idaho potatoes travel thousands of miles to become French fries at burger restaurants across the country. Millions of tourists drive into our national parks to experience America's breathtaking landscapes. And every day, millions of commuters rely on roads, bridges, and public transit to get to work, school, and home.

**While recent federal investments have enabled substantial improvements, the work is not done.**

Continued →



## The Road Ahead: A Balanced Approach

Historic investment levels in the 2021 surface transportation program reauthorization set the stage for transformation, but excessive regulatory hurdles have slowed implementation, delaying the full benefits of these investments. Inefficiencies waste taxpayer dollars and create chokepoints in delivering critical infrastructure.

To meet the needs of a growing population and dynamic economy, funding alone is not enough. Combining investment with fewer regulatory barriers will help maximize impact. The 2026 highway and public transit bill must take a two-pronged approach:

1. **Secure increased funding**—while recent progress has been made, much work remains to enhance the safety and efficiency of the nation's transportation systems.
2. **Streamline project delivery**—regulatory delays must be reduced to ensure infrastructure improvements are completed safely, on time and on budget.

### ARTBA's Reauthorization Task Force: Industry Leadership at Work

In September 2024, ARTBA convened a diverse, 27-member work group to shape industry policy for the next reauthorization.

Co-chaired by industry leaders Tony Fassino (Caterpillar Inc.), Tom O'Grady (HNTB), and Dave Zanetell (Kraemer North America), the task force forged consensus on key policy reforms to cut project costs, expedite the delivery of mobility improvements and connect Americans. Their success is reflected in the policy recommendations in this report.

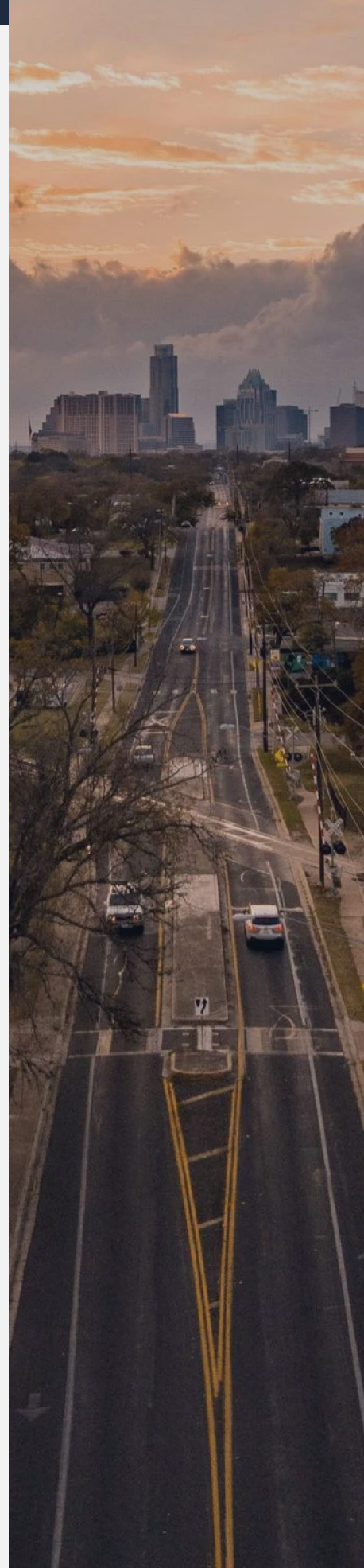
### A Vision for America's 250th Anniversary

The 2026 highway and public transit bill is more than a policy debate—it's an opportunity. As America celebrates its 250th anniversary, we can make a lasting impact. Now is the time to act. With bold leadership, we won't just keep America moving—we'll build a stronger and more connected future for generations to come.



The 2021 infrastructure law's increased highway and transit formula and discretionary grant funding allowed states to add major capacity and make other enhancements:

- Over **4,170** transportation projects focus on adding new lanes and reconstruction—a **50% increase** from the **2,730** under the 2015 law.
- Strategic investments are planned or underway at **9 of the 10 worst U.S. bottlenecks** to improve freight movement and reduce costly truck delays.



# REAUTHORIZATION **TASK FORCE**



**Tony Fassino**

CATERPILLAR INC.  
Co-Chair



**Tom O'Grady**

HNTB  
Co-Chair



**Dave Zanetell**

Kraemer North America  
Co-Chair

|                            |                                       |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Ashley Antoskiewicz</b> | JOHN DEERE                            |
| <b>Austin Bone</b>         | VULCAN MATERIALS                      |
| <b>Chris Boylan</b>        | GENERAL CONTRACTORS ASSN. OF NEW YORK |
| <b>Carlos Braceras</b>     | UTAH DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION          |
| <b>Stephen Brich</b>       | VIRGINIA DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION      |
| <b>Kevin Cornish</b>       | TYLIN                                 |
| <b>Nick DiBartolo</b>      | ROGERS GROUP                          |
| <b>Scott Grannas</b>       | GRANNAS BROS.                         |
| <b>David Harwood</b>       | TERRACON                              |
| <b>Chris Hawkins</b>       | HAWKINS CONSTRUCTION                  |
| <b>Cyndee Hoagland</b>     | TRIMBLE                               |
| <b>Laura Huizinga</b>      | LINDSAY CORPORATION                   |
| <b>Gary Johnson</b>        | GRANITE CONSTRUCTION                  |
| <b>Darren Kettle</b>       | METROLINK                             |
| <b>Michael Knodler</b>     | UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS           |
| <b>Ryan Lindsey</b>        | CRH AMERICAS                          |
| <b>Beau Memory</b>         | TRANSURBAN                            |
| <b>Dustin Olson</b>        | W.W. CLYDE                            |
| <b>Mike Paine</b>          | DUNNET BAY CONSTRUCTION               |
| <b>Melinda Peters</b>      | RK&K                                  |
| <b>Skip Powe</b>           | ALABAMA ROAD BUILDERS ASSN.           |
| <b>Ananth Prasad</b>       | FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION BUILDERS ASSN. |
| <b>Meg Rietschlin</b>      | RIETSCHLIN CONSTRUCTION               |
| <b>Shawn Wilson</b>        | WSP                                   |

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

America's surface transportation infrastructure is essential to mobility, economic strength, and quality of life. As Congress prepares for the 2026 reauthorization of federal highway and public transit programs, it must take decisive steps to address:

- 1. Investment:** Increase and stabilize long-term federal investment through a diversified user-based funding model, supplemented with General Funds, as necessary.
- 2. Project Delivery:** Eliminate redundant reviews and empower state and local agencies to expedite projects that will reduce taxpayer costs.
- 3. Innovation:** Ensure flexibility for state and local governments to advance technological improvements.
- 4. Workforce:** Invest in programs that attract and train the next generation of transportation workers.

This policy and revenue recommendations in this blueprint represent a unified, outcome-oriented vision from the public and private sectors of the transportation construction industry to help ensure that America's transportation network remains second to none.



America's transportation network must remain second to none.

## WOWT 6 Nebraska

Overdue roads project in southwest Omaha getting underway.

*"...we've been working on this one for over a decade...it's time to build it."*

## WPIX 11 New York

New Second Avenue subway line, awaited since the 1920s, finally rolls out.

*"...the nearly two mile segment... is expected to carry about 200,000 riders daily."*

## NBC Montana

Missoula receives \$25 Million for downtown project

*"This is a big deal for downtown Missoula."*

# Local Headlines Show the Value of Infrastructure Investment

## WAVY Virginia

Va. Gov. Youngkin breaks ground on I-64 widening

*"...we're already seeing companies make significant investments along the corridor."*

## KFOX 14 New Mexico

Highway 404 project to help reduce crashes on New Mexico's Anthony Gap

*"...that area has been scary...I'm just really happy that they're finally doing something about it."*

## WSB-TV Georgia

The deadliest interchange in Georgia is getting a change that should save lives.

*"...the most important highway construction project in, literally, the history of our county."*

# 1. STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS TO POWER AMERICA'S ECONOMIC FUTURE

A strong federal commitment to infrastructure investment lays the foundation for a more prosperous future. Thanks to record federal investment, at least one transportation improvement project is underway in nearly every U.S. county—**delivering real results.**

## Building on Promises Kept

As the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives consider the next long-term highway and public transit bill in 2026, lawmakers must take decisive action to ensure every community continues to benefit. To boost overall investment levels, a combination of new and existing user fees, and General Funds, as necessary, should be on the policy option table.

The next reauthorization bill should include the following congressional actions:

- **Increasing surface transportation investment levels:** The minimum investment goal should be to offset the impact of historic inflation over the past four years by **increasing highway investment to \$84.6 billion and transit investment to \$26.3 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2027**, and adjust upward in subsequent years over the life of the bill. These investments will support:
  - continued repair and replacement of **bridges in poor condition**;
  - unaddressed **freight bottlenecks**;
  - enhanced **mobility improvements** nationwide; and
  - **bolstered safety practices** to protect system users and industry workers.
- **Increasing current or introducing new user fees** that meet the following criteria:
  - derived from system use;
  - generate recurring revenue;
  - dedicated to highway and public transit improvements; and
  - capable of supporting sufficient investment to meet the nation's mobility needs.
- **Rejecting any efforts to reduce or eliminate existing user fees** unless new revenue sources fully replace or exceed lost funds.
- **Mandating completion of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) cost allocation study**, which was **last updated 25 years ago** and no longer reflects the dynamics of the U.S. automobile and truck fleet. The 2021 surface transportation law directed the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to complete a new study along with recommendations for user fee solutions to address its findings. As the U.S. DOT has completed minimal work on this assignment, the next law should provide resources to **hire an independent update of 2000 report.**



A strong transportation system is vital to **facilitating growth in communities large and small**, driving a strong U.S. economy. A robust system requires **continued strong federal investment**. Investment in our transportation network yields big returns in safety, personal and freight mobility, and overall quality of life.

*-Tom O'Grady, HNTB, Reauthorization Task Force Co-Chair*



## Expand Financing Options

Congress should complement increased transportation investment **with flexible financing tools that foster innovation and accelerate project delivery including:**

- **Protect and promote state and local revenue authority:** Oppose any restrictions on state and local governments' ability to raise revenue for transportation projects.
- **Eliminate the cap on Private Activity Bonds (PABs):** Enable more private investment and financing assistance for improvements that might not otherwise move forward.
- **Enhance TIFIA:** Strengthen the Transportation Infrastructure Finance & Innovation Act (TIFIA) program by **raising assistance to 49% for all creditworthy projects**, increasing the funding threshold for Rural Project Initiative loans to \$300 million, removing current National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)-related barriers and improving transparency and streamlining of application processes, especially for sponsors with exemplary records of managing and delivering projects.
- **Lift the federal ban on Interstate tolling:** Provide states the flexibility to fund improvements in critical corridors, with strict requirements ensuring toll revenues are reinvested in improving, maintaining, or expanding the tolled facility.

## Prioritize Results

Maximizing the return on taxpayer investment requires prioritizing outcomes and efficiency. The following recommendations will ensure that resources are put towards projects that drive results:

- **Refocus performance management** metrics on system safety and pavement conditions rather than emissions and livability, utilizing technologies to support efficient condition monitoring. Performance standards should:
  - address the **causes, economic costs, and consequences** of traffic congestion;
  - **be data driven;**
  - reflect the **impact of infrastructure conditions** on roadway, commuter rail and transit safety;
  - align with **national freight policy;**
  - balance **pavement smoothness, durability and an assessment of subsurface conditions** and foundations when assessing pavement condition standards.
- **Maintain Capital Investment Grants:** Implement strict timelines and process improvements to advance these critical projects more expeditiously.
  - Reaffirm the federal role in providing **capital infrastructure dollars for transit projects**, leaving operating costs to state and local partners.
- **Protect against inflation-driven cost spikes:** Allow federal-aid resources under Titles 23 and 49 to cover unanticipated **material shortages, government policy decisions or extreme price increases**—especially crucial for small businesses facing financial strain because of dramatic cost fluctuations.

**Outcome:** By implementing these bold actions, Congress can ensure the next surface transportation law delivers lasting benefits to communities, businesses, and the national economy.



## Opportunities to Generate Highway Trust Fund Revenue

ARTBA supports any revenue mechanism that delivers resources to the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) at a pace that sustains the federal-share of investment necessary to maintain and improve the nation's highway and public transportation systems. Options include:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Electric Vehicle (EV) Fee</b>                                   | EVs do not pay into the HTF. While 36 states have enacted an EV fee, there is no federal fee.  |
| <b>Federal Motor Fuels Tax Increase and Indexing for Inflation</b> | The federal motor fuels tax has not been increased since 1993. With low administrative costs, the system is effective and established.   |
| <b>Road Usage Charge</b>   | Revenues generated are a more accurate reflection of system use and takes into account hybrids and EVs.  |
| <b>Freight Fee</b>   | Revenue would be extracted from vehicles that use roads and bridges to deliver consumer goods, modeled after the air cargo fee or recent "package fees" enacted in Minnesota and Colorado. |
| <b>National Registration Fee</b>                                   | A new revenue stream, collected annually, on all personal and commercial vehicles that varies by vehicle weight.   |

## 2. REWARDING SUCCESS; REMOVING INEFFICIENCIES

The impact of federal highway and public transit investment depends not only on investment levels, but on eliminating the inefficiencies that delay projects and dilute outcomes.

### Empower States to Lead

States are best positioned to determine where and how federal transportation dollars are invested in local communities. To strengthen the federal-state partnership and prioritize state leadership in project delivery, Congress should:

- Return to the **90-10 ratio** of formula funds to discretionary and allocated grant funds; and
- Refrain from dictating project delivery decisions **such as procurement methods and product and material choices**. Instead, state transportation agencies have the flexibility to select projects based on performance expectations, programming and delivery methods in accordance with federal programmatic guidelines.

### Fix Discretionary Grant Inefficiencies

Discretionary grants play a critical role in funding projects with regional and national impacts. However, bureaucratic processes, inexperienced applicants, and straying beyond congressional intent, can hinder their effectiveness. To improve utilization of discretionary grants, Congress should:

- **Streamline the application and agreement process** to eliminate redundancies and enhance clarity between applicants and U.S. DOT;
- **Foster greater collaboration between states and non-state applicants** to ensure awarded funds are used quickly and that projects meet readiness and contingency standards; and
- **Reallocate stalled project funds:**
  - If a non-state grantee has not expended funds **within one year** of a signed grant agreement, the state should have the option to assume the project, if located on a state-owned asset.
  - If states decline, funds **should be returned to FHWA for redistribution** through formula programs.
  - States assuming projects should receive **expedited review of revised grant agreements** to avoid further delays.

Empowering states to lead means faster project delivery and better taxpayer value.

### Accelerate Project Delivery Via NEPA Reform

While all states are eligible to assume NEPA responsibilities, only eight have done so. States that take on NEPA assignments report faster permitting and review times while maintaining federal environmental standards.

Congress should encourage more states to assume these responsibilities by:

- **Making NEPA assignment permanent** after the initial five-year audit period, eliminating the need for periodic reapplication;
- **Simplifying and standardizing the application process**, removing unnecessary or duplicative requirements, and providing technical assistance as needed; and
- **Expanding Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) eligibility to cover state costs** associated with taking on NEPA assignment.

### Allow States to Lead on Major Projects

Federal-aid projects exceeding \$500 million are subject to additional layers of oversight and approvals by FHWA. However, several states have delivered complex projects successfully, making this level of oversight unnecessary. To lessen these inefficiencies, Congress should:

- Establish a pilot program modeled after NEPA assignment, allowing **state DOTs to assume full delivery responsibility for major projects**. This would focus FHWA and U.S. DOT resources on collaboration with owners less experienced in delivering these projects, ensuring use of federal oversight where it adds the most value.

### Harness Innovation from Emergencies

When natural or manmade disasters have damaged or destroyed transportation assets, the industry has always met or exceeded expectations in repairing and rebuilding them. To integrate these practices into everyday project delivery, Congress should:

- **Direct U.S. DOT's Volpe Center to assess emergency response innovations** and highly-focused collaborations deployed by state agencies and industry; and
- **Require Volpe to compile a report for Congress on strategies** for deploying these best practices on non-emergency projects, accelerating project completion nationwide.

**Outcome:** A strong federal-state partnership that maximizes states' flexibility will turn investment into action more quickly.



#### Spotlight on Success: Emergency Response

Sanibel Causeway, Southwest Florida

After Hurricane Ian cut access for 6,000 residents of Sanibel Island in 2022, crews worked around the clock, rebuilding a temporary causeway **in just 15 days**.



## SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS: NEPA ASSIGNMENT

States are seeing cost and time savings since taking over the environmental review and permitting process from the federal government.

- **California** shaves years off its environmental reviews by utilizing NEPA assignment.
- **Florida** estimates \$22 million in annual savings
- **Ohio** reports \$32 million in avoided construction delays and inflation costs.
- **Utah** saves between nine and 11 months by handling NEPA responsibilities.

# 3. DELIVERING PROJECTS FASTER: MAXIMIZING INVESTMENT EFFICIENCY

Time is money. Every delay in securing regulatory approvals or waivers drives up costs for taxpayers and slows the delivery of transportation improvements. Congress should enact reforms that accelerate project timelines while maintaining critical safeguards.

## Build Projects and Manufacturing through Buy America

While the transportation construction industry fully supports Buy America's purpose of strengthening domestic manufacturing, Congress should minimize project disruptions related to current market realities, like higher costs or limited availability of many domestically-produced items. The following improvements will better harmonize these two policy objectives:

- **Make the waiver review process work**—With short-term, targeted waivers needed for certain items, Congress and the executive branch should fully empower the experts at FHWA and Federal Transit Administration to review and approve (or disapprove) them through an expeditious, transparent process;
- **Refocus the White House Made in America Office (MIAO)**—Shift the office from micromanaging domestic preference programs for federal agencies to focusing on important “big picture” initiatives like developing catalogs of compliant products;
- **Preserve existing exclusions**—Because of restrictions on domestic production and other supply chain limitations, Congress should maintain the exclusion of paving-related materials from coverage, as well as longstanding policy applying Buy America only to permanent components of projects;
- **Establish meaningful “de minimis” thresholds**—Inexpensive commercially-available off-the-shelf (COTS) products, like nails and screws, can be impossible to track for Buy America purposes. U.S. DOT should clarify its current “de minimis” waiver to recognize that certain projects require greater use of COTS products, and thus a higher threshold for exclusion;
- **Impose a compliance surcharge when needed**—To avoid disrupting projects because of Buy America-related dilemmas, contractors should have the “last resort” of paying a 15 percent surcharge on the cost of items which they cannot, or have inadvertently failed to, procure in domestic form.

## Improve Environmental Reviews to Cut Red Tape

Despite recent reforms, **the NEPA process remains a major roadblock to timely project delivery.** The law was designed to help facilitate the development of Interstate Highway System projects, without jeopardizing important environmental safeguards.

Today, however, most transportation projects occur in existing rights-of-way, which precludes the need for extensive federal oversight. Key reforms include:

- **Expand the use of categorical exclusions (CEs)**—The next surface transportation bill should make common-sense changes to the environmental approval process by allowing CEs for all federal-aid highway and transit projects under \$10 million.

**Most projects occur in existing rights-of-way--  
reducing the need for federal oversight.**



Accelerating delivery of projects **ensures timely improvement** of our eroding infrastructure, while minimizing the costly impacts of escalation and diminished year-over-year buying power. By streamlining processes, and embracing innovation, we can unlock the industries potential to advance America's transportation needs.

*-Dave Zanetell, Kraemer North America, Reauthorization Task Force Co-Chair*



#### **Other recommended NEPA enhancements:**

- **Hold federal agencies accountable**—Agencies must take full responsibility for meeting established NEPA deadlines, eliminating burdens on project owners and curbing costly “pre-NEPA” activities.
- **Limit lawsuits that stall progress**—Restrict NEPA lawsuits to those filed **within 120 days of final agency action** and only by parties who submitted substantive claims during the public comment period.
- **Eliminate barriers to One Federal Decision utilization**—As this process only applies to projects receiving federal support, its expedited procedures should apply to any major projects requiring an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment.
- **Focus environmental documentation on action-oriented content**, limiting reports to:
  1. Clear statement of project purpose and need.
  2. Analysis of significant environmental impacts.
  3. Concise comparison of reasonable alternatives.
  4. Targeted mitigation measures.
  5. Summary of public input and agency responses.

#### **Clarity on Waters of the United States (WOTUS)**

Clearly define **WOTUS** to exclude roadside ditches. Regulatory uncertainty around Clean Water Act jurisdiction continues to cause project delays. Congress should **explicitly exempt roadside ditches** to prevent unnecessary permitting hurdles.

#### **Ensure Utility & Railroad Coordination**

Utility and rail relocation activities are a major source of project delays—and are often beyond the control of the owner and the contractor. Congress should:

- **Require utilities and railroads to provide accurate as-built data** before project initiation;
- **Mandate adherence to relocation schedule**, ensuring contractors can plan and bid accurately; and
- **Hold utilities and railroads accountable**—if they deviate from established standards, they should pay appropriate damages to contractors.

#### **Facilitate Exploration of Innovative Contracting Methods**

To help states work with industry to identify the right delivery methods for complex projects, Congress should incentivize the use of innovations like progressive design-build, construction manager general contractor (CMGC), and others with:

- An **enhanced federal match** to encourage wider consideration; and
- **Clearer guidance** for FHWA Special Experimental Project (SEP)<sup>14</sup> approvals, ensuring state DOTs can innovate without unnecessary restrictions.

#### **Reform the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program**

- Ensure that the statutory basis for the DBE program **complies with current court rulings** relating to its constitutionality and other critical legal issues.

## Update Davis-Bacon Prevailing Wage Thresholds

The \$2,000 wage threshold for projects with federal dollars has remained unchanged for decades, and should be **retroactively adjusted for inflation** to reflect modern economic realities.

## Prohibit Anti-Competitive Procurement Practices

- **Limit Project Labor Agreements (PLAs)**, which can diminish competitiveness by imposing arbitrary requirements on bidders. Congress **should prohibit the use of PLAs** on direct federal or federal-aid construction projects without **meaningful industry input** in that decision, ensuring workforce availability and cost efficiency.
- **Ensure objectivity in procurement by** banning the use of subjective contractor rating systems, which can alter bids on federal-aid projects.

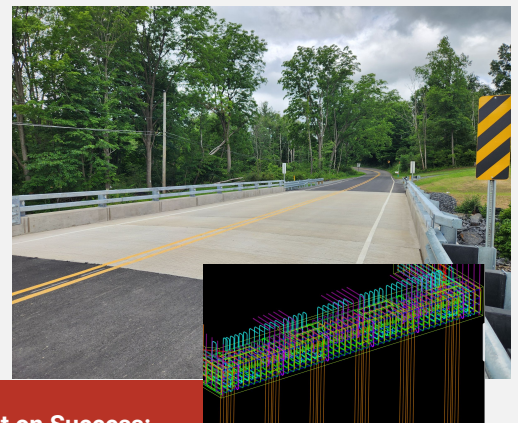
## Eliminate Duplicative & Outdated Paperwork Mandates

- **Modernize delivery of required information** to employees by allowing QR codes to require workplace posters and bulletin boards, a much better option for mobile project sites.
- **End redundant reporting** by prohibiting the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs from resurrecting unnecessary paperwork like the CC-257 report form which duplicates existing contractor reporting requirements.

## Accelerate Adoption of Digital Construction

Technology can help transform project delivery by enhancing productivity, collaboration, and cost-effectiveness. Congress should:

- Increase funding for **Advanced Digital Construction Management Systems (ADCMS) grants**, expanding on the program's strong results in leveraging technology to streamline design and construction;
- **Create a parallel program to ADCMS** that incentivizes states to deploy these technologies in other areas, like work zone safety;
- **Enable lifecycle digital workflows** by supporting the implementation of processes including **model as the legal document** and the development and promotion of **national open data standards**, which would provide reliable and repeatable information to streamline bidding and accelerate adoption of digital construction and asset management; and
- Encourage **widespread use of digital technologies in the NEPA process** to help facilitate environmental reviews.



### Spotlight on Success:

#### Digital Delivery

Gardner Creek Bridge, Newton Township, Pa.

Finished ahead of schedule thanks to paperless, digital workflows and 3D modeling.

*Photo Courtesy of PennDOT and HDR, Inc.*

**Outcome:** The American public wants taxpayer dollars spent on transportation enhancements—not bureaucracy. By streamlining regulatory processes, reforming outdated mandates, and leveraging technology, Congress can cut costs and reduce delays, without compromising important environmental protections.

# 4. BUILDING A SAFE & SKILLED WORKFORCE

## Invest in Workforce Development

The success of infrastructure projects depends on a highly-trained and safety-focused workforce. Congress should:

- **Increase investment for research, technology, and education programs**, including University Transportation Centers. These initiatives generate novel solutions to enhance safety and workforce development;
- Require U.S. DOT to assess and report on how states use **highway formula funds to support workforce development activities** to help ensure adoption of best practices;
- **Expand the Highway Construction Training Program** to help accommodate more states and **increase the award cap to \$500,000**. Prioritizing applications that demonstrate partnering plans with other existing state workforce programs can also help boost success;
- Require strategic workforce development activities be included in each round of innovations via **FHWA's "Every Day Counts"** program;
- **As artificial intelligence (AI) reshapes industries**, Congress should urge **state DOTs to evaluate AI's role** in workforce planning, during development of State Human Capital Plans, to ensure future training programs align with technological advancements; and
- **Truck parking facilities** are currently an eligible activity via three of the eight formula programs. If Congress and the executive branch decide to devote investment for this activity, they **should be additive to the overall funding levels**, rather than draw from existing critical safety and project needs.



Continued federal investments in infrastructure as well as **safety research, technology and awareness campaigns** will continue to help workers on jobsites across the nation go home safely every day while also enhancing our U.S transportation network.

*-Tony Fassino, Caterpillar Inc., Reauthorization Task Force Co-Chair*



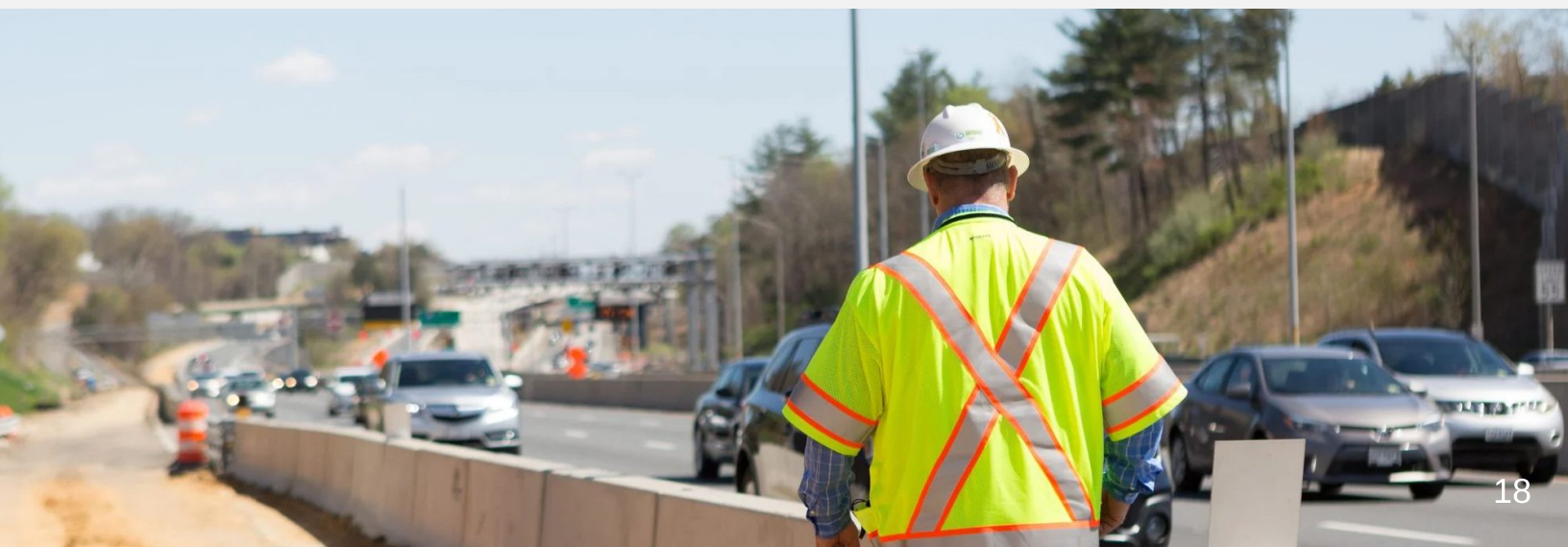
## Strengthen Roadway Work Zone Safety

Motorist and worker fatalities in road construction zones—which exceed 800 annually—are unacceptably high. Stronger federal policies can help protect both those who build and maintain America's roads and system users.

In most cases, **the safest way to protect workers on transportation projects is to close the site**, but current guidance is outdated on best practices for its utilization. To rectify this situation, the next bill should:

- **Update FHWA research and guidance** in a report to Congress that incorporates all options to create positive separation between motorists and work zones;
- **Expand Highway Safety Contingency Fund eligibility** to include an active law enforcement presence designed to create safer driving in work zones. Positive protection and speed camera enforcement have been shown to reduce roadway fatalities and injuries by 20 to 37 percent, according to FHWA studies;
- **Preserve and enhance the Highway Safety Improvement Program**, including a boost in the **work zone safety grant program** to \$10 million annually, which can support activities including:
  - providing training for transportation construction workers on the prevention of injuries and fatalities in highway and road construction;
  - developing **guidelines for the prevention of highway work zone injuries and fatalities**;
  - **conducting training for state and local government transportation agencies** and other groups implementing guidelines for the prevention of highway work zone injuries and fatalities; and
  - **gathering and disseminate data, research and other information to improve work zone safety** for workers and system users.
- **Accelerate the testing and approval process for all roadside safety hardware and new temporary traffic control technologies** and require a report to Congress on how to achieve such timely approvals;
- Expand funding and create a work zone safety advisory group to foster ways for **creating a national culture shift related to driving through work zones**. The recommendations from this group should inform broader roadway safety strategies to protect all roadway users and promote improved driver behavior; and
- Require states to include roadway worker safety advocates in the development of State Highway Safety Plans to **ensure workers are treated as “vulnerable road users”** similarly to pedestrians, cyclists, or other groups.

**Outcome:** Developing the next generation of roadway construction workers is critical to ensuring the modernization of the nation's transportation system. Creating a safer job site for workers and improving the driving culture is a win-win for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and all other roadway users.



## CALL-TO-ACTION

Now is the time for Congress to demonstrate **bold, bipartisan leadership**.

The next highway and public transit law must be more than a funding bill—it must be a **strategic reinvestment in America's future**.

By embracing the policy and funding recommendations outlined in this blueprint, lawmakers can deliver **improvements to the U.S. economy, safety, and quality of life**—a legacy that moves America forward for generations to come.

[transportationinvestmentatwork.org](https://transportationinvestmentatwork.org)



