

TRANSPORTATION POLICY PRIORITIES

FUNDING:	Dedicated, long-term revenue for funding of national and regional multi-modal transportation systems
STREAMLINING:	Improve processes to support regulations by eliminating unnecessary, duplicative, and burdensome requirements
SAFETY:	Provide additional emphasis on safety of all transportation system users

PRIORITY: FUNDING

Our aging roads and bridges are deteriorating, traffic is increasing, and deaths on our roads are unacceptably high. Our nation cannot remain economically competitive if our transportation network is not maintained and improved. The professionals of the American Public Works Association (APWA) believe that continued investment in our country's transportation infrastructure is needed now!

Investment in transportation projects is a proven way to create jobs. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) estimates that every \$1 billion invested in transportation creates about 27,800 jobs and up to \$6 billion in gross domestic product.

APWA makes the following funding recommendations:

- **Increase and index the federal motor fuel tax**, whose purchasing power has plummeted by over 64% since it was last raised in 1993, due to inflation and improved fuel economy.
- **Support a near-term transition to a more fiscally viable method of collecting transportation revenues based on usage of the road system**, such as a vehicle-miles traveled or similar fee. A per-mile fee would also assure that all vehicles pay their fair share.
- **Expand access to innovative financing tools**, such as loan guarantees, public-private partnerships and local tax-free municipal infrastructure bonds.
- **Enhance state and local flexibility in the use of federal funds**, so that cities, counties and states can decide which projects are best for their citizens.
- **Support a multi-modal system to enhance the cost-effectiveness of our existing transportation network** and do so through funding operational improvements on highways and local streets, improved bus and rail transit, safer bikeways, pedestrian crossings and pathways, and airport safety improvements.
- **Fund professional development training initiatives** to assist with the growth and utilization of innovative activities related to having a diverse, high-quality workforce and continued career opportunities in the transportation sector.

PRIORITY: STREAMLINING

Current federal regulations can add at least 20% - 30% to the cost of building transportation projects. Reducing those costs would significantly increase the number of projects that can be built without new taxes.

APWA applauds FHWA's "Every Day Counts" initiative, but more changes are needed to reduce project delays and escalating costs, such as:

- **Set time limits for federal agency review of projects** under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) so that projects are not unnecessarily delayed. APWA supports federal level efforts like One-Federal Decision to empower federal agency cooperation on environmental review and permitting for major infrastructure projects.
- **Exempt environmentally beneficial, active transportation or public transit projects from federal regulations** (especially NEPA), such as projects funded under the Scenic Byways, Transportation Enhancement, and Safe Routes to Schools programs.
- **Allow states with strong environmental review laws to substitute their laws for NEPA** and remove the current 2-year legal window for environmental lawsuits.
- **Allow right-of-way to be acquired prior to completion of federal NEPA requirements** to speed up delivery of projects that can demonstrate no significant adverse impact.
- **Exempt small projects** from federal regulatory requirements - those that receive less than \$1,000,000, or less than 25% of the total project cost from federal sources.
- **Clarify that state and local projects do not become subject to federal laws and regulations** until a project has been approved to receive federal funding, and not retroactive to past project phases.
- **Protection of state and local level control** regarding public works projects is key to successfully designing, maintaining, and operating transportation infrastructure. **APWA opposes unfunded mandates and any effort to impede the appropriate use of public right of way.** APWA strongly encourages the federal government and industry to coordinate with state and local governments on transportation and infrastructure projects.

PRIORITY: SAFETY

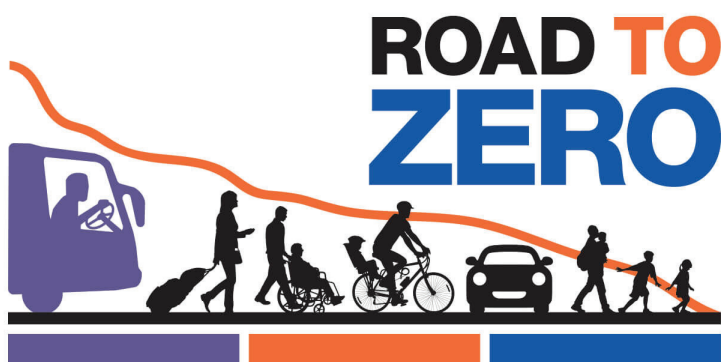
APWA is committed to improving the safety for travelers on our nation's roadways. In 2017, traffic fatalities reached 40,100--up 23% since 2011. About 15% of those killed were pedestrians. When added to the 4.57 million people seriously injured in motor vehicle crashes, the human and economic impact of traffic collisions is staggering and unacceptable.

Another important aspect for transportation safety is cybersecurity and data protection. With transportation technology advancing rapidly, and the increasing research and roll-out of connected and autonomous vehicles, it is crucial that an appropriate level of federal support and resources are directed to state and local governments for enhancing security and upgrading infrastructure. This type of investment will help to ensure the traveling public's safety is paramount, and personal information is protected.

To eliminate these deaths and injuries, APWA supports the following:

- **Increase funding for safety projects to reduce collisions, injuries and fatalities** on all public roads, sidewalks and bikeways. APWA is a member of the Road to Zero coalition and we applaud these efforts in researching critical safety improvements.
- **Increase funding for High Risk Rural Roads and Safe Routes to Schools Programs.** Rural roads are where a majority of traffic fatalities occur. Pedestrian and bicycle injuries and fatalities are also rising. Increased federal investment and education focused on eliminating distracted driving can help reverse these trends.

- **Increase investment in local bridges** by providing more funding for off-system bridges and for local bridges not on the National Highway System. In 2015, FHWA rated 24% of the nation's off-system highway bridges deficient - we can work together to fix this dangerous situation.
- **Allow more flexible use for Highway Safety Improvement Plan (HSIP) funds** on unpaved roads and a wider variety of projects beyond those listed in the regulations - without cumbersome data gathering requirements. Cities and counties are already struggling to meet rural safety needs.
- **Support investment in modern vehicle technology**, such as Intelligent Transportation Systems, and connected and autonomous vehicles, as a cost-effective way to improve the safety and efficiency of our nation's transportation systems.
- **Support for FHWA's Traffic Incident Management (TIM) initiative to reduce and eliminate injuries and deaths of crash victims and crash responders**, such as public works, police, fire, tow-operators, and emergency medical services to best protect the traveling public. APWA is a member of the Executive Leadership Group for TIM and strongly supports all TIM-related efforts.
- **Public works professionals working in the transportation sector utilize drones in various capacities** such as for inspecting bridges, aerial surveys of land and existing roads, traffic monitoring, weather impacts on transportation infrastructure, and to have photos for educating the public. It is important that federal regulations do not become onerous and burdensome to localities in their use of drones for public works purposes.



Local governments own and maintain approximately 75 percent of the nearly four million-mile roadway network and nearly 51 percent of the nation's bridges (nearly 300,000) and manage approximately 90 percent of our transit systems. Nearly every trip begins and ends on a local road, street, or sidewalk. Let's work together to make our transportation infrastructure safe and less congested. APWA will also be releasing a policy statement in 2019 specifically outlining priorities for the next surface transportation reauthorization legislation to follow the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Public Law 114-94) which expires in September 2020.

The American Public Works Association represents over 30,000 public works professionals across North America dedicated to providing essential and high-quality services to millions of people in rural and urban communities, both small and large. APWA members serve in both the public and private sectors providing expertise to the local, state and federal government levels. Working in the public interest, our members plan, design, build, operate and maintain our vast transportation network, as well as other key infrastructure assets essential to our nation's economy and way of life.

AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION



Your Comprehensive Public Works Resource

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Transportation Priorities
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