



**American Public
Works Association
(APWA)
Overview**

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About APWA

- Over 30,000 members in the U.S. and Canada
- 63 Chapters across both countries
- Only national association representing all aspects of public works
- Headquarters office located in Kansas City, MO
- Government Affairs office in Washington, D.C.
- Association Advocacy efforts focus on federal level and empowering our membership to advocate
 - Public Policy Priorities
 - Transportation
 - Water Resiliency
 - Emergency Management & Response



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION PRIORITIES

The American Public Works Association (APWA) believes it is imperative that we work together to make our transportation infrastructure safer and less congested. In doing so, APWA recommends the following priority areas in development of the next federal transportation legislation to succeed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act:

FUNDING: Increase the federal motor fuel tax, and provide a more stable, long-term revenue source for our national and regional multi-modal transportation systems;

STREAMLINING: Eliminate unnecessary, duplicative, and burdensome requirements that delay the delivery of critical transportation improvements; and

SAFETY: Increase the emphasis on safety for all transportation system users.

Current federal funding for transportation infrastructure is not enough to support our economy, maintain the existing transportation system, or to improve its safety and efficiency. Studies by two federal commissions (National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission (January 2008 report) and National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission (February 2009 report)), as well as several engineering and business organizations, confirm this finding. The federal motor fuel tax, which has not been increased since 1993, has lost more than 56% of its construction purchasing power while vehicle miles traveled on our nation's roads have increased by 40%.

To maintain our economic quality of life, APWA joins many organizations in strongly urging Congress to:

- Increase and index the federal motor fuel tax by 25 cents in the short-term;
- Transition to a vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) or similar user fee as soon as possible; and
- Enact a federal transportation reauthorization bill that is a minimum of 6 years long.

APWA 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.

Local governments own and maintain approximately 75 percent of the Nation's four million-mile roadway network, 51 percent of the Nation's bridges (nearly 300,000), and manage 90 percent of our transit systems. **Almost every trip begins and ends on a local road, street, or sidewalk.**

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. APWA believes increased investment in our country's transportation infrastructure is critical to protecting and enhancing economic development in the U.S. We can wait no longer. Funding should be focused on safety improvements, maintenance, and modernization of existing infrastructure. For efficient planning and expenditure of funding, it is imperative that the next federal transportation legislation is a minimum of 6 years in length, with funding above FY2019 levels.

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

APWA supports Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) efforts and recommends standardization of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) agencies' DBE requirements across the Federal Highway, Transit, and Railroad Administrations to enhance those efforts.





- **Increase funding for the High-Risk Rural Roads Program.** Rural roads carry less than half of the Nation's traffic, yet they account for over half of the vehicular deaths. Fifty-three percent (53%) of fatal crashes and 54% of the 35,092 traffic fatalities in 2015 occurred in rural areas. Increased federal investment in rural safety projects for all modes of travel can help reverse these trends.
- **Support an expanded National Distracted Driver Safety Education Campaign.** According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), using a cell phone while driving creates enormous potential for deaths and injuries on U.S. roads. In 2017, motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers resulted in 3,166 fatalities. Giving states incentives to conduct their own campaigns can expand the impact of NHTSA's educational campaign.
- **Provide incentives to states to educate drivers as driver's license renewals are required.** The trend across the U.S. is to require minimal testing for driver license renewals for minimal fees. Providing a 10 - 15 minute safety training video (on subjects such as "texting while driving" and "consequences of not using seat belts") for all license renewals will not only improve driver and road safety, but could be an avenue for additional road safety funding from increased licensing fees.
- **Increase investment in local bridges** by providing more funding for off-system bridges and for local bridges not on the National Highway System. In 2017, FHWA rated 50,000 of the Nation's off-system highway bridges as structurally deficient (52% of the structurally deficient bridge area is off-system) - we can work together to fix this dangerous situation.

- **Increase flexibility in use of Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds** on unpaved roads and a wider variety of projects beyond those listed in the regulations, so cities and counties can meet growing transportation safety needs. Reducing the data required to implement this program will allow more rural communities and smaller cities to participate in the program.
- **Invest strongly in modern vehicle technology**, such as Intelligent Transportation Systems and connected and autonomous vehicles (CAV), as a cost-effective way to improve the safety and efficiency of our nation's transportation systems. Provide funding assistance to states and local governments to meet the infrastructure needs of CAV technology.
- **Strong 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.
- **Allow the greatest flexibility possible in use of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS/drones) for public works purposes.** Public works professionals working in the transportation sector utilize drones in various capacities such as bridge inspections, aerial surveys of land and existing roads, traffic monitoring, weather impacts on transportation infrastructure, and aerial photography for public information. While we recognize the importance of air safety and privacy, it is important federal regulations do not become so onerous and burdensome that localities lose drones as a cost-effective tool for public works data gathering. There needs to be a good balance between protecting the public, while serving the needs of public works and infrastructure.

PUBLIC WORKS

FIRST RESPONDER

APWA recognizes efforts by Congress and the Administration to maintain and improve our nation's transportation infrastructure and to streamline the project delivery process. However, much remains to be done. APWA offers the above recommendations to continue these efforts and stands ready to assist with their implementation. To improve infrastructure in our country we all must step up to address these important issues and form a collaborative partnership. The largest hurdle is funding, because without adequate funding, very little progress is possible.

APWA strongly urges Congress to:

- Substantially increase by 25 cents and index the federal motor fuel tax in the short-term;
- Transition to a vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) or similar user fee as soon as possible; and
- Enact a federal transportation reauthorization bill that is a minimum of 6 years long.

AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION



Your Comprehensive Public Works Resource

APWA Government Affairs - 116th United States Congress
Surface Transportation Reauthorization Priorities
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Engaging at the Local Level

- Lawmakers at all levels have limited exposure to TIM and other public works matters—BE a Resource
- Coalitions and partners at the local level are key
- Communities depend on strong advocacy
- Being involved increases value
- Educating lawmakers leads to better policy and practices
- Public Relations and engagement—utilize social media, share stories, association newsletters, policies, op-eds
- Statistics and data go a long way
- Respond to action alerts



Check out www.apwa.net

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Questions?

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