



## TRANSPORTATION BILL REAUTHORIZATION UPDATES AS OF 2/15/2011

### **U.S. Department of Transportation Budget Invests \$129 Billion in Restoring America's Economic Competitiveness**

Targeted Investments in Safe, Efficient Transportation Will Spur Growth

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today said President Obama's \$129 billion budget for the U.S. Department of Transportation, the first year of a comprehensive six-year transportation plan, will lay a new foundation for economic growth and competitiveness by rebuilding the nation's transportation systems, enabling innovative solutions to transportation challenges and ensuring the highest level of safety for all Americans.

"President Obama's budget for the Department of Transportation is a targeted investment in America's economic success," said Secretary LaHood. "If we're going to win the future, we have to out-compete the rest of the world by moving people, goods, and information more quickly and reliably than ever before. President Obama's investments in rebuilding our crumbling roadways and runways, and modernizing our railways and bus systems will help us do just that."

Nationwide, our transportation systems are already congested and overburdened. With the United States' population expected to grow from more than 300 million in 2010 to more than 400 million by 2050, rebuilding and expanding the capacity of our roads, airports and transit systems is a strategic necessity for long-term economic growth. The transportation investments proposed in President Obama's FY12 budget will put Americans to work repairing the bridges and repaving the roads we have now, while supporting the development of the new electric buses and high-speed rail lines of America's future.

While these investments in transportation infrastructure and safety are critical, President Obama's budget also reflects the need to live within our means. The budget proposal for the Department of Transportation consolidates unnecessary programs, institutes common sense government reforms, and cuts red tape. More than 55 separate highway programs will be streamlined into just five core programs, eliminating wasteful overlap and making it easier for communities to build the projects they need to spur economic growth. And by cutting inefficiency and bureaucracy, projects will be able to move forward more quickly, while still protecting public safety and the environment.

The Administration's national high-speed rail proposal is a critical part of its vision for modernizing America's transportation network. Last week, Secretary LaHood joined Vice President Biden to announce that the budget provides \$8 billion for the first year of a six-year, \$53 billion high-speed rail investment plan. The budget will place high-speed rail on equal footing with other transportation programs, revitalize domestic rail manufacturing, and ensure that the nation can reach President Obama's goal of providing 80 percent of Americans access to high-speed rail within 25 years.

The Administration's six-year proposal will also provide \$336 billion, a 48 percent increase over the previous authorization, to rebuild America's roads and bridges, and \$119 billion, a 128 percent increase over the previous authorization, in funding for affordable, sustainable, and efficient transit options.

In order to ensure that American businesses are equipped to out-succeed competitors around the world, the Administration's budget also prioritizes innovative programs and technological solutions to address our transportation challenges. For the first time, the budget will establish a National Infrastructure Bank that will leverage private capital to build complex large-scale projects that hold significant economic benefits to a region or the nation as a whole. A new competitive incentive program, called the Transportation Leadership Awards, will reward unique projects that find new ways to connect people to opportunities and products to markets. The FY 2012 budget also includes \$1.2 billion to modernize America's air-traffic control system and help airlines transition from the radar-based air traffic control system of the past to the more reliable and more efficient satellite-based system of the future, known as Next Generation technology.

The new budget also reaffirms Secretary LaHood's strong commitment to maintaining the highest safety standards for Americans traveling by any mode of transportation. While road, transit and air travel are currently the safest they have ever been in America, the Department will build on previous success to make it even safer. To accomplish that goal, the budget provides \$50 million for the Department's ongoing campaign against distracted driving, as well as \$35 million to promote seatbelt use and get drunk drivers off the road. Also, for the first time, the Federal Transit Administration will be given the authority to oversee rail transit safety in cities across the country.

A [budget summary document](#) (PDF) is available.

### Excerpts from "Department of Transportation Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Highlights":

Highways is funded at \$336 billion over six-years (a 48% increase over SAFETEA-LU).

Programs are consolidated from more than 55 to five new categories that invest in roads most critical to the National interest:

- National Highway Program
- Highway Safety Improvement
- **Livable Communities**
- Federal Allocation
- Research, Technology, and Education

Establishes a performance-based highway program in the critical areas of safety and state of good repair.

Provides resources and authorities to spur innovations that will shorten project delivery and accelerate the deployment of new technologies.

Local metropolitan areas with greater technical capacity will have a role in project selection.

Livable Communities Program: \$4.1 billion funds formula and competitive grant programs to establish place-based planning, policies, and investments to help communities increase transportation choices and access to transportation services choices and access to transportation services.

### Additional Excerpts:

#### *Helps Communities to Become More Livable and Sustainable*

Fostering livable communities—places where coordinated transportation, housing, and commercial development gives people access to affordable and environmentally sustainable transportation—is a transformational policy shift. The Administration's reauthorization proposal adopts a multi-pronged approach to help communities achieve this goal. For example, in the Federal Highway Administration, the Administration proposes a new livability grant

program (\$4.1 billion in 2012 and \$28 billion over six years) for projects like multi-modal transportation hubs (where different forms of transportation converge) and streets that accommodate pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access. The proposal also seeks to harmonize State and local planning requirements and facilitate more cooperation—and includes competitive grant funding (\$200 million in 2012 and \$1.2 billion over six years) to improve those entities' ability to deliver sound, data-driven, and collaboratively-developed transportation plans. The Budget also includes \$119 billion for transit programs over six-years, more than doubling the commitment to transit in the prior reauthorization for both existing capacity and capacity expansion. This unprecedented increase for buses, subways, and other systems of public transportation will help improve and expand travel options and help make our communities more livable.

### ***Consolidates 55 Highway Programs Into Five***

The Administration's proposal would consolidate 55 duplicative, often-earmarked highway programs into five streamlined programs. This would give States and localities greater flexibility to direct resources to their highest priorities. In the interest of taxpayer value and accountability, that flexibility will come with reformed requirements on States to establish and meet performance targets tied to national goals and to move towards rigorous cost-benefit analyses of major new projects before they are initiated.

## **LIVABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM**

**The new Livable Communities Program (\$4.1 billion) establishes place-based planning, policies, and investments to help communities increase transportation choices and access to transportation services. This program will fund transportation projects that improve quality of life in both rural and urban areas, provide users with enhanced transportation choices, and improve air quality in large metropolitan areas. The program consists of three components:**

- Livable Communities Program – A new \$3.4 billion formula-based program to enable recipients to deliver transportation projects for rural and urban areas that benefit quality of life.
- Investments for Livable Communities Grant Program - A new \$500 million discretionary grant program to support highway investments for livable communities.
- Livability Capacity Building Grant Program - Continues the \$200 million discretionary grants program to support livability-related capacity building across the country.

Specific budget justification by agency within the Department of Transportation are now available at:  
<http://www.dot.gov/budget/2012/budgetestimates.html>.

### **The Federal Highway Administration Budget Summary Overview**

(<http://www.dot.gov/budget/2012/budgetestimates/fhwa.pdf>) provides more discussion of the Administration's reauthorization proposal. In particular, see the Livability Program starting on page III-51 (page 73) which discusses the National Scenic Byways Program. Here are some excerpts:

**The new Livability Program addresses the critical need to enhance the relationship between transportation and land use while protecting the environment and promoting multi-modal choices in communities, from rural to urban, across the country. Further, the program will address the needs and eligibilities previously authorized in individual programs such as Transportation Enhancement Activities, Transportation and Community and System Preservation, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement, and National Scenic Byways in a more cohesive, seamless, and comprehensive manner.**

### **Eligible activities will include but are not limited to the planning, design, and/or development of:**

- o Activities for safety and education of pedestrians and bicyclists and to encourage walking and bicycling;
- o Activities that maintain and improve scenic byways;
- o Projects that improve access to jobs and services in rural areas;
- o Projects that improve air quality and reduce emissions, including greenhouse gases;
- o Projects that relieve traffic congestion;
- o Projects that improve the human environment through community preservation, environmental mitigation, control of outdoor advertising, and historic and archeological preservation, planning, and research; and
- o Funding for full-time coordinators to facilitate livability related transportation activities.

## **Livable Communities Program**

A State may obligate funds apportioned to carry out the livable communities program for any of the following projects or activities:

- ***Planning, designing, or construction of boulevards, main streets and scenic byways, including:***

- o Redesign of an underused highway, particularly one that is no longer a principal route after construction of a Bypass or Interstate System route, into a context-sensitive boulevard or main street that supports multiple forms of transportation;
- o New street construction that enhances connectivity, increases the efficiency of network performance, and encourages the use of public transportation, pedestrian walkways, or bicycle infrastructure;
- o Redesign of a street to enhance connectivity, increase the efficiency of network performance, and encourage the use of public transportation, pedestrian walkways, or bicycle infrastructure;
- o Redesign of a highway to support public transportation, including transit-only lanes and priority signalization for transit;
- o Planning or implementation of changes to State or local laws, codes, or ordinances that provide transportation facilities to support infill, transit-oriented or town center development that will support trip-chaining, non-motorized transportation, or more efficient use of the road network;
- o Safety improvements to a State scenic byway, National Scenic Byway, All-American Road, or one of America's Byways; and
- o Historic preservation and other improvements to the streetscape that support livable communities, and the rehabilitation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities for transportation use.

- ***Providing transportation choices, including:***

- o On-road and off-road facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other security-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990;
- o The planning, design, and construction of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes to access daily needs;
- o Activities for safety and education of pedestrians and bicyclists and to encourage walking and bicycling, including efforts to encourage walking and bicycling to schools and community centers;
- o Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users that enhance the efficiency of the transportation network; and
- o Carpool, vanpool, and car share projects

- ***Supporting livability through planning, project development, and programmatic mitigation, including archaeological and historic preservation planning and research, and storm water management.***

- ***Improving air quality and reducing congestion by means of transportation projects or programs for an area in a State that is or was designated as a nonattainment area for ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, or particulate matter under the Clean Air Act.***

- ***Construction, rehabilitation, or replacement of ferry boats and ferry boat terminals.***

- ***Capital costs for transit projects eligible for assistance under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code, including vehicles and facilities, whether publicly or privately owned, that are used to provide intercity passenger service by bus, and fringe and corridor parking or other transportation project to support transit-oriented development.***