



# Federal Update

June 15, 2021  
Southern California Association of Governments

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## Infrastructure Package

- On March 31, President Joe Biden introduced the American Jobs Plan of 2021. The framework requests \$2 trillion over eight years to modernize the nation's infrastructure. The infrastructure plan includes funding for roads, bridges, and ports, and also addresses resiliency, the climate crisis, broadband access, waterways, and housing.
- The second half of Biden's infrastructure proposal, known as the American Families Plan, includes a \$1.8 trillion for major investments in education, child care, and paid family leave.
- President Biden and top GOP negotiator Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R- W.V.) were not able to reach an agreement during negotiations, so the White House has shifted course to talks with a bipartisan group of 10 senators led by Sens. Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio).
- The group has proposed a framework that includes \$974 billion on infrastructure over five years, of which \$579 billion would be above baseline federal spending.

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## Surface Transportation Reauthorization

- The current surface transportation authorization bill, the FAST Act, expires on September 30, 2021. Both House and Senate leadership want to pass a bill this year. However, an extension is likely until Congress identifies a pay-for.
- Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Committee oversees transportation authorization in House. Three committees oversee authorization in the Senate:
  - Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee – Highways
  - Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation – Safety/Goods Movement/Rail
  - Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs – Transit
- On May 26, the Senate EPW Committee passed the five year Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act of 2021 unanimously with bipartisan support. Senate Commerce will mark-up its bill on June 16<sup>th</sup>, and Senate Banking is still drafting the transit title.
- On June 10, the House T&I Committee passed the INVEST Act by a vote of 38-26. Only two Republicans voted for the bill. A House floor vote on the bill is slated for the week of June 28<sup>th</sup>.

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## Surface Transportation Reauthorization – Senate EPW

- Authorizes \$304 billion for highway programs, a 22% increase over current funding. California would receive \$25,304,432,195 in highway funding. Bill highlights include:
  - Establishes a \$3.265 billion new competitive bridge grant program
  - Creates a pilot grant program for MPOs to develop and implement publicly accessible, transparent prioritization processes to assess and score local transportation projects
  - Creates a \$2.5 billion electric vehicle (EV) grant program
  - Increases funding for the existing INFRA freight and goods movement grant program
  - Establishes a \$250 million competitive grant program to reduce idling and emissions at port facilities
  - Creates a \$6.4 billion carbon reduction formula program to reduce transportation emissions
  - Establishes a \$250 million congestion relief competitive grant program for projects in the largest, most congested urbanized areas
  - Creates a \$1.4 billion formula and competitive grant program for resiliency improvement, community resilience and evacuation route grants, and at-risk coastal infrastructure
  - Establishes a \$500 million community connectivity pilot grant program to study the feasibility and impacts of removing or mitigating existing transportation facilities that create barriers to mobility, access, or economic development and to construct projects to remove or mitigate these barriers

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## Surface Transportation Reauthorization – Senate Commerce

- On June 16, the Senate Commerce Committee will markup its \$78 billion bipartisan rail and safety surface transportation bill. The bill would:
  - Establish a \$10 billion National Infrastructure Project Assistance Program to provide grants to projects that generate national or regional economic, mobility, or safety benefits
  - Authorize \$1.5 billion a year for the current RAISE/BUILD grant program called the Local and Regional Project Assistance Program
  - Require the DOT Secretary to establish a program to develop intercity passenger rail corridors
  - Create a \$1 billion Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program for MPOs and local governments to develop and implement carry out comprehensive Vision Zero safety plans

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## Surface Transportation Reauthorization – House INVEST Act

- Authorizes \$547 billion over five years for highways, transit, rail, and safety programs—38% increase over current funding.
- Provides \$26,957,166,116 in highway funding and \$1,436,997,083 in transit funding for the state of California over 5 years.
- First transportation authorization bill to include earmarks in 16 years. SCAG secured three Member Designated Spending projects:
  - \$480,000 for Highways to Boulevards. Requested by Reps. Karen Bass, Nanette Barragán, Jimmy Gomez, and Grace Napolitano
  - \$4 million for the Mobility Wallet Demonstration and Research Study. Requested by Reps. Ted Lieu and Alan Lowenthal
  - \$3,357,895 for the TRI-CONNECT, SoCal Freight Initiative. Requested by Rep. Jimmy Gomez

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## Surface Transportation Reauthorization – House INVEST Act cont.

- INVEST Act Highlights:
  - \$4 billion for EV charging infrastructure
  - \$8.3 billion for new carbon pollution programs
  - Requires that MPOs planning considerations include a holistic view of housing and land use policies
  - \$6.25 billion for new pre disaster mitigation and resiliency formula programs
  - Targets investments to areas of persistent poverty, rural communities, and other disadvantaged areas
  - Creates a reduced-fare pilot program to improve access for low-income transit riders
  - Streamlines the Capital Investment Grant program and includes incentives for projects that preserve or encourage higher density affordable housing

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## Surface Transportation Reauthorization – House INVEST Act cont.

- Provides funding for corridor planning and development of high-speed rail projects, reducing traffic congestion and shortening travel times
- Creates a \$12 billion Projects of National and Regional Significance (PNRS) program for large highway, transit, and passenger and freight rail projects
- Establishes a \$500 million Gridlock Reduction Grant program for large metropolitan areas
- Provides \$3 billion for a reconnecting neighborhoods discretionary grant program to remediate economically-disadvantaged and underserved communities

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