



The National Beat

April 3, 2026

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Feature Focus

FY2026 SS4A NOFO and the BASICS Act

[Safe Streets and Roads for All NOFO FY2026](#)

On March 27, **USDOT released the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 SS4A NOFO**. This NOFO makes available **\$687,809,874 for Implementation Grants** and **\$305,678,320 for Planning and Demonstration Grants**. Applications are due on **May 26, 2026**. Technical questions and pre-application eligibility review requests for Implementation Grants are due on **April 24, 2026**.

Key changes include project prioritization for public safety infrastructure, updates to definitions, updated application review language, and application conformity to new executive orders and USDOT orders. Application review information can be found on pages 46-72, outlining how USDOT will assess each grant application and score project criteria.

 [Read AMPO's Analysis of the FY2026 SS4A NOFO here.](#)

Helpful Resources:

- [FY2026 SS4A NOFO](#)
- [Implementation Grant Application](#)
- [Planning and Demonstration Grant Application](#)
- [SS4A Website](#)
- [SS4A FY26 Self Certification Worksheet](#)
- [Identifying Underserved Communities](#)
- **Webinars:**
 - **Implementation Grants:** Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 1:30-3 PM (EST) ([Register here](#))
 - **Action Plans:** Thursday, April 9, 1:30-3 PM (EST) ([Register here](#))
 - **Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Activities:** Tuesday, April 14, 1:30-3 PM (EST) ([Register here](#))

[BASICS Act](#)

On Feb. 9, [Rep. Kristen McDonald Rivet \(D-MI\)](#) and Rep. Rob Bresnahan (R-PA) introduced [HR 7437](#), the [Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success \(BASICS\) Act](#). **The legislation would invest in bridges, deliver regional priority projects, improve road safety, enhance transparency and collaboration, and build stronger rural and urban regions.** Cumulatively, this would improve local and regional access to funding to plan, deliver, and maintain the systems that communities rely on every day.


 [Access AMPO's Analysis of the BASICS Act here](#)



What's Next?

The legislation has been introduced in the House and referred to the House T&I committee. The LOT Coalition is working to identify sponsors in the Senate to lead a companion bill. As reauthorization discussions move forward, building visible support now increases the likelihood that key provisions are reflected in the next surface transportation reauthorization bill. There are several ways for MPOs and their board members to support this bill.

Member Support:

 [Rapides Area Planning Commission \(RAPC\) CEO Matt Johns highlighted the BASICS Act in an article published by the National Association of Counties \(NACo\):](#) AMPO Board member Matt Johns stated that he knows firsthand the challenge local leaders face when federal funding does not reach their communities. He noted that rising construction costs and limited federal formula funding force local governments to prioritize maintenance over growth projects. A project to extend Sugarhouse Road, for example, has been a RAPC priority for over two decades due to lack of funding. The core problem is structural: **counties own 44% of public road miles and 38% of bridges nationwide, but receive only 14% of federal formula funding.** The bipartisan BASICS Act ([H.R. 7437](#)) aims to change that by growing the share of formula funding available for locally selected projects, including bridges and safety infrastructure. With the current surface transportation law expiring in September, NACo and more than 70 partner organizations are pushing for the BASICS Act to be included in the next reauthorization bill, urging county leaders to make their case directly to their representatives in Congress.

→ **BASICS Act Toolkit**

For all things BASICS Act, refer to the LOT Coalition's BASICS Act Toolkit, which includes bill text, summaries, one pagers, action items, and supporting materials.

LOT Coalition Letter to AASHTO

On Feb. 25, the LOT Coalition, including AMPO, sent a formal letter to AASHTO leadership in response to recent public comments regarding the BASICS Act. The response includes a Q&A section directly addressing AASHTO's comments and further explaining the bill's structure and funding assumptions.

We believe it is important to clarify the intent and structure of the legislation. As drafted the BASICS Act is built on growth in the overall federal program and is intended to increase funding for both State DOTs and local and regional partners. The LOT Coalition does not seek to reduce state funding.

→ Access the LOT Coalition's Letter to AASHTO [here](#).

Spring Fly-In

On March 17 and 18, AMPO hosted their Spring Fly-In with MPO participation from both our Policy and ART Committees, representing MPOs from across the country.

- Members met with federal partners, congressional offices, and industry leaders, helping inform federal research and policy and amplify the impact of MPOs nationwide.
- Policy Committee members were able to meet with congressional offices to educate and inform staffers on the BASICS Act and how planning funds directly translate into project delivery.

Webinars

On Feb. 19, the LOT Coalition hosted a webinar to share more about the BASICS Act. Please refer to the BASICS Act Toolkit to review the slides and content.

On March 4, AMPO **hosted a webinar on: "Inside the BASICS Act: What it Means for MPOs and the Road to Reauthorization."** To revisit the discussion, please refer to the following resources:

- **BASICS Act [Webinar Slides](#)**
- **BASICS Act [Webinar Recording](#)**

Resources!

Brief your MPO Policy Board on how these priorities affect transportation outcomes in your region:

- **[MPO Policy Board Member Letter of Support Template](#)**
- **[Board Resolution Template](#)**

Educate your Congressional Delegation and speak to how the provision would benefit your region:

- **[MPO Education Outreach Template](#)** to connect with your delegation. Using data-backed, local examples make a difference.

Work through your MPO Statewide Association: Coordinate with MPOs statewide to share a letter in support of the BASICS Act:

- **[Statewide MPO Association Letter of Support](#)**

Invite your Members of Congress to the district and consider hosting a regional roundtable or site visit. Demonstrating local needs firsthand helps connect federal policy to on-the-ground priorities.

Note: Please let AMPO Staff know if you intend on submitting any **Letters of Support** and if we can assist you in any way!

Visiting DC? Questions about the BASICS Act? Want to meet with your Delegation?

Please contact AMPO's Legislative Director [Katie Economou](#)



Congress

Congressional “Vibe” Check


Reauthorization. Reauthorization activity continues to accelerate as committees refine draft language and begin shaping the next surface transportation bill.

Where things stand:

- **House T&I.** Majority and minority staff are finalizing draft sections. All titles **have circulated internally**. Staff-to-staff negotiations on base text are now underway, and other House committees and off-committee members are beginning to surface their own reauthorization priorities.
 - Bill text is *expected* to be released in late April or early May, with markups anticipated and potential floor consideration in the spring, although this is not certain. Chairman Graves has stated his **goal of passing a bill out of the House this spring**. With the IIJA set to expire on Sept. 30, 2026, and with Chairman Graves in his final term amid an approaching midterm election cycle, House leadership has strong incentives to complete work this Congress.
- **Senate.** Among Senate committees, EPW is furthest along. Chair Capito (R-WV) has indicated that major action on **the bill may not happen until the summer, and that passing legislation prior to IIJA’s expiration will be a “challenge.”**
- **Administration.** On the Administration side, FHWA, FTA, and other USDOT operating administrations are transmitting their reauthorization proposals to the Office of Management and Budget, the final step before formal submission to Congress.

A general note on timing: Given the remaining FY 2026 work, midterm elections on the horizon, and the long history of surface transportation bills missing deadlines, **a continuing resolution/extension appears to be likely**. Even so, MPOs should operate under the assumption that reauthorization could move on time. This engagement window will not open twice, and once base text is released, shaping major provisions becomes significantly harder via amendment.

The Buzz on Reauthorization

 [The White House releases the President’s Budget for FY 2027:](#) On April 3, the White House published the [President’s Budget](#), outlining the administration’s proposed funding levels and policy priorities for Fiscal Year 2027. Essentially, the budget acts as a blueprint that signals priorities to Congress as it develops appropriations legislation. The budget plays a key role in



shaping federal spending discussions, including how much funding federal agencies, such as USDOT, and federal programs could receive or see reduced. For surface transportation reauthorization, the President's budget can also signal administration priorities that may influence topline funding discussions and which programs could be emphasized or proposed for changes.

AMPO will provide a detailed analysis of the budget in next week's National Beat.

Introduced Legislation Related to Reauthorization

Whether you want to see what marker bills could be included in the next surface transportation reauthorization or are curious about what Congress is working on, AMPO is tracking all relevant legislation that has been introduced since December 2025. Please refer to our legislation tracker to see what bills have been introduced, who introduced them, and what they would do.

[→ 119th Weekly Congress Legislation Tracker](#)

What's Making Headlines? A number of transportation issues on the Hill are drawing attention this week outside of reauthorization.

- [🔗 Rep. Sam Graves \(R-MO\) to Retire:](#) House T&I Committee Chairman Sam Graves (R-MO) announced that he will retire from Congress following the completion of his current term. Rep. Graves was to also step down as committee chairman at the end of the current Congress but announced his retirement in advance of the 2026 mid-term elections. Rep. Graves has served in Congress since 2000 and has served as either Ranking Member or Chairman of the House T&I Committee since 2019. During his tenure, he helped coordinate the passing of the 2021 IIJA and an FAA reauthorization. With his retirement, House Republicans will look for his successor, with **Rep. David Rouzer (R-NC) being the current front-runner**. Rep. Rouzer is currently the Committee's chairman for the Highways and Transit panel, and he has openly expressed interest in the position.
- [🔗 Sen. Ed Markey Sends Letter to NHTSA Regarding Autonomous Vehicles \(AV\):](#) On March 31, Sen. Ed Markey (D-MA) sent a letter to NHTSA Administrator Jonathan Morrison requesting an investigation regarding multiple AV companies using remote assistance operators (RAOs) within their vehicles, allowing a human to remotely provide guidance when vehicles encounter an uncertain driving setting. Sen. Markey's concerns for RAOs is not over their use, but the current lack of proper oversight, transparency, and safeguards. Specifically, companies are not currently required to disclose how often they utilize RAOs and that there are currently variations in the capabilities in the technology and their standards. Ultimately, Sen. Markey is calling for greater transparency and accountability for the technology with federal standards creating a framework for proper AV operation.
- [🔗 Changes Coming to the Next Congress:](#) A recent Roll Call report listed the Members of Congress who will be leaving their seats following the next election. The report lists those retiring, those running for other offices, those who left for other positions, those who lost their primaries, those who were elected to another position, and those who have passed away. In total, **39 Members will be retiring at the completion of their terms, with, in**



general, **80 total changes or potential changes to occur** since the start of this current (119th) Congress. You can access the report [here](#).

- [🔗 Reconciliation, again?:](#) On April 1, 2026, the **White House urged Congress to pass a second reconciliation bill by June 1**. The previous reconciliation bill included a slew of tax reform and funding provisions, as well as served as the catalyst for the [recission of unobligated transportation funding](#). Now, the White House is hoping to use another reconciliation bill as a vehicle to move funding for immigration enforcement, in addition to a [potential Senate-House deal on the ongoing Department of Homeland Security \(DHS\) shutdown](#).

See AMPO's Analysis of the previous Reconciliation Bill [here](#)



Administration & Agencies

USDOT

- [🔗 NHTSA to Invests \\$665 million in Traffic Safety Initiative:](#) USDOT and NHTSA invested \$665 million into an initiative aimed at improving roadway safety, specifically by targeting distracted driving, lack of seatbelt use, impaired driving, and speeding. Funding will provide state highway safety offices with resources for traffic enforcement activities, child safety seat clinics, post-crash care, and public education.
- [🔗 FTA Announces FY2026 Apportionments:](#) The FTA announced \$20.6 billion in FY 2026 funding for public transportation. Access apportionment tables below:
 - [FY 2026 FTA Grant Apportionments](#)
 - [FY 2026 Metropolitan Planning Apportionments \(5303 & 5304\)](#)
- [🔗 NHTSA Announces Significant Decrease in Traffic Related Fatalities in 2025:](#) NHTSA announced that there was a 6.7 percent decrease in traffic fatalities last year, setting the second-lowest rate in recorded history. Still, there were an estimated 36,640 traffic fatalities, and reports showed that VMT had increased by 29.8 billion miles (0.9%).
- **USDOT is expected to host its next monthly stakeholder call on Friday, April 10, from 2 to 3 PM (ET).** The call will likely cover upcoming funding opportunities, provide updates on grant status, and discuss implementation of the Secretary's infrastructure agenda.



National News

- [🔗 Mayors Back More Housing in Theory, but There is No Consensus on What Policies to Implement:](#) A new report from the 2025 Menino Survey of Mayors finds that while a growing

majority of mayors believe increasing housing supply would reduce costs, many remain hesitant to adopt the policies needed to promote change. The survey, based on interviews with 115 mayors of cities over 75,000 residents, found that 75% agree that building more market-rate housing will reduce prices (a change of 60% from 2021), and 80% report their city is missing multifamily housing. Yet support for specific reforms is inconsistent: while roughly 70% back administrative streamlining and 82% strongly support expanding apartments near transit, only 48% strongly support allowing multifamily housing by right citywide. **Mayors cited financing challenges, neighborhood opposition, and electoral risk as the primary barriers to getting beneficial housing projects built.** The survey also revealed sharp partisan divides, with Democratic mayors far more likely than Republicans to identify insufficient construction as a major driver of rising costs and to support supply-focused zoning reforms. The findings point towards tension in urban housing policy with mayors accepting the concept of more housing, but still being hesitant to implement reforms that would meaningfully address the shortage.

- [!\[\]\(9063468a59e93f469b71000ac5796bc3_img.jpg\) **Eno Highlights Housing and Transit Coordination:**](#) Huntsville, Alabama, one of the fastest-growing cities in the US, is exploring transit-oriented development (TOD) as part of a broader strategy to manage growth, improve mobility, and maintain housing affordability. The city is planning an 8.9-mile bus rapid transit (BRT) corridor along University Drive and received a federal grant in 2024 to study TOD opportunities around the route. While Huntsville currently benefits from relatively affordable housing and a growing apartment supply, local leaders are incorporating equitable TOD (ETOD) strategies to ensure that future development includes a mix of housing types and affordable units. However, the city faces challenges, including relatively low existing density, the need to build ridership before major transit investment, and a lack of state funding for transit, which complicates efforts to expand service and implement TOD policies.
- [!\[\]\(1db6320223680ab4bd04b0d269ab6c8a_img.jpg\) **Why the Next Transportation Bill Must Earn Every Dollar:**](#) As Congress works on the next surface transportation reauthorization, an Eno Center for Transportation article discusses the growing insolvency of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) and how it highlights the need for both stronger public support and a more equitable funding approach. Lessons from local transportation **referendums show that voters are willing to support funding when it delivers visible improvements to roads, bridges, transit, and sidewalks with clear priorities and measurable results, rather than abstract national benefits.** To build that support nationally, Congress must ensure **more funding reaches locally selected priority projects**, potentially by expanding flexible models like STBG.. At the same time, any new funding promote reliability, administrative simplicity, privacy, fairness, and affordability, especially as families face rising costs. Ultimately, restoring the HTF's solvency will require diversifying revenue sources, improving accountability for how funds are spent, and ensuring communities see tangible value.
- [!\[\]\(cd69309a3e813d8c682e56d54a0f4a01_img.jpg\) **The Case for High-Speed Rail Between Chicago and St. Louis:**](#) The proposed high-speed rail corridor between Chicago and St. Louis could become a critical foundation for a future Midwestern and national high-speed rail network, but its progress depends on whether Illinois lawmakers extend the state's High Speed Rail Commission beyond its planned 2027 sunset.

Supporters argue the corridor is positioned for success because it largely sits within one state, builds on two decades of incremental upgrades to existing service, and connects to Chicago's, the nation's busiest rail hub. Advocates believe a successful project could demonstrate a scalable model for expanding high-speed rail across the Midwest and beyond, though political priorities and funding decisions remain the biggest obstacles, particularly over the historical preference for highway spending over passenger rail. Ultimately, the coming state and federal budget decisions will determine whether the corridor advances or becomes another stalled infrastructure effort.

- [🔗 Fixing the Gas Tax](#): A new report finds that the US significantly undercharges drivers for the true cost of building and maintaining highways, largely because the **federal gas tax has lost 81 percent of its purchasing power since 1993 due primarily to rapidly rising construction costs rather than fuel efficiency or electric vehicles**. Researchers argue that relying mainly on gas taxes and general fund transfers is unsustainable, and that Congress should consider a broader mix of funding tools such as tolls, vehicle-miles-traveled fees, and EV-related charges, despite their political challenges. At the same time, experts stress that solving the HTF's problems cannot rely on new revenue alone; policymakers must also control costs by avoiding overly complex and expensive highway expansions and prioritizing more cost-effective transportation investments. Ultimately, a fairer system would better align costs with road usage and vehicle weight, ensuring heavy users and freight operators pay more while recognizing that transit riders, cyclists, and pedestrians can reduce congestion and system wear, benefiting the overall transportation network.

💰 Notice of Funding Opportunities

- [🔗 All Stations Accessibility Program \(ASAP\)](#): Assists in the financing of capital projects to repair, improve, modify, retrofit, or relocate infrastructure of stations or facilities to make all public area of the station accessible to people with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs.
 - **Deadline:** May 1, 2026
- [🔗 Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\)](#): Provides federal funds to states, US territories, federally recognized tribal governments, and local governments for hazard mitigation activities by supporting the modernization of infrastructure and promoting community resilience against natural hazards.
 - **Deadline:** July 23, 2026
- [🔗 Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\)](#): supports local initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets, commonly referred to as "Vision Zero" or "Toward Zero Deaths" initiatives. The SS4A program supports the US Department of Transportation's (DOT) [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#) and a goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on our nation's roadways.
 - **Deadline:** May 26, 2026



Funding Updates from USDOT

USDOT is expected to begin releasing FY 2026 NOFOs across programs and modes in the coming months. AMPO will monitor USDOT press releases and keep members informed of any updates. The following funding opportunities were flagged.

- **Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) program NOFO** will be posted in the coming weeks.
- **Truck Parking Funding NOFO** is similarly expected soon, as outlined in the **FY26 Transportation-HUD Appropriations package**
 - (See AMPO's Analysis of THUD Appropriations [here](#)).
- **USDOT's \$100 Million in Funding to Enhance Public Transportation in 2026 FIFA World Cup Host Cities** – see the table below for information on general funding criteria:

Category	Details
Eligible Activities	Planning: Logistics, scheduling, preparation activities Operating: Driver salaries, mechanics/dispatchers, customer service/security personnel, fuel, short-life items (<1 year) Capital: Leasing vehicles, wayfinding improvements, security equipment
Eligible Recipients	- Public transportation providers serving the UZA of the stadium - Providers not already direct FTA recipients can become subrecipients Characteristics: Fixed-route systems, demand-response services, services open to general community (not fan-specific)
Ineligible Services	- Charter buses - Amtrak - Courtesy shuttles - Premium fare/event-specific services - Services requiring World Cup ticket for entry
Funding Distribution (Formula)	- 70% based on stadium capacity - 30% based on match count
Application & Obligation Deadlines	- TrAMs Grant Application: Jan. 31, 2027 - Funds must be obligated by July 20, 2027
AMPO staff will provide updates as we learn more about the program and key deadlines	

[➔ Access AMPO's NOFO Tracker here.](#)



Recent Editions

- [March 27 \(2026\)](#)
- [March 16 \(2026\)](#)
- [March 6th \(2026\)](#)
- [February 27th \(2026\)](#)
- [February 20th \(2026\)](#)
- [February 13th \(2026\)](#)
- [February 6th \(2026\)](#)
- [January 29th \(2026\)](#)
- [January 23rd \(2026\)](#)
- [January 15th \(2026\)](#)
- [January 9th \(2026\)](#)

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