

# The National Beat

## August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024

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### Federal Updates

On August 13<sup>th</sup>, HUD announced the opening of the second round of applications for the Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing) program ([read here](#)). The application deadline is October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. MPOs are eligible to apply. This program provides \$100 million in competitive grant funding to help communities remove barriers to affordable housing production and preservation, improve housing strategies, and develop sustainable housing policies ([view NOFO here](#)). There is no matching requirement for this funding opportunity.

#### USDOT

On August 16, USDOT released a roadmap aimed at accelerating the deployment of vehicle-to-everything (V2X) technology, which allows vehicles to communicate with each other and surrounding infrastructure to enhance road safety and efficiency. The decade-long plan outlines goals for V2X implementation across the National Highway System, with milestones set for short-, medium-, and long-term phases. However, the plan faces challenges, including regulatory uncertainty from the FCC regarding the 5.9 GHz spectrum, which has delayed broader adoption of V2X technology. [Read here](#).

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, FHWA issued a memorandum that clarifies the waiver of the non-Federal share for SPR and PL funds used for Complete Streets initiatives ([read here](#)). This updated guidance aligns with the FTA’s match waiver for its corresponding programs, first issued on March 10, 2023 ([read here](#)). This clarification confirms that the “100 percent Federal” share applies to **all** eligible Complete Streets planning activities supported by SPR and PL funds, as outlined in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) § 11206(c). This is not restricted to the 2.5 percent minimum expenditure threshold mentioned in BIL § 11206(b). The clarified match waiver will terminate if a MPO or State opts out of the requirements set forth in BIL § 11206(e) after receiving FHWA approval for an annual request. Additionally, FHWA’s implementation guidance for BIL § 11206, initially released on April 12, 2023, will be updated and re-issued to incorporate this clarification.

On August 14<sup>th</sup>, FTA finalized new training requirements to enhance safety oversight in public transit systems. The updated rule aims to better prepare transit and state safety officials through a uniform safety curriculum, ensuring a safer and more reliable experience for passengers and workers alike. [Read here.](#)

On August 13<sup>th</sup>, USDOT awarded \$2.4 million to 12 small businesses to develop AI tools aimed at improving transportation infrastructure. These projects, part of the Complete Streets AI Initiative, will help design safer and more connected streets across the country, supporting USDOT's push for innovative and responsible use of technology. [Read here.](#)

On August 13<sup>th</sup>, USDOT announced the expansion of the Freight Logistics Optimization Works (FLOW) initiative to include the Port of Oakland and the Northwest Seaport Alliance, which encompasses the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma. The initiative, a public-private partnership, aims to enhance supply chain efficiency and resilience by improving data sharing and decision-making across the nation's supply chains. [Read here.](#)

On August 12<sup>th</sup>, FHWA announced a \$19.2 million grant to Texas under the "Saving Lives with Connectivity: Accelerating V2X Deployment" program. The grant, awarded to the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, will fund the Texas TRUST Project, which aims to deploy vehicle-to-everything (V2X) technologies in the Greater Houston area and College Station. [Read here.](#)

### **Congressional Hearings, Meetings, & Markups**

*\*All Quiet on the Hill—please note that both the House and Senate are currently in recess.*

- On July 31st, the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee held a full committee hearing to examine long-term economic benefits and impacts from Federal infrastructure and public transportation investment. [Watch here.](#)
- On July 31st, the Senate Budget Committee held a full committee hearing on the future of EVs. [Watch here.](#)
- On July 31st, the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee held a full committee business meeting to mark up several bills. [Watch here.](#)

### **National Transportation News**

On August 20th, an Amtrak report revealed the complex factors behind the commuter chaos on New Jersey Transit and Amtrak trains this summer, highlighting aging infrastructure, extreme weather, and increasing demand as key contributors. Despite some improvements, the issues have persisted, drawing attention from the White House and leading to calls for increased investment in the Northeast Corridor. While billions of dollars from the infrastructure law are earmarked for upgrades, the full scope of needed repairs far exceeds current funding, leaving the timeline for resolution uncertain. [Read here.](#)

On August 14<sup>th</sup>, FTA directed New York City's transit agency and its overseeing body to increase oversight of Manhattan's subway system due to a rise in near misses involving transit workers. The FTA's directives come after a June audit revealed a 58% increase in potential employee contact incidents in 2023 compared to the previous year. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has been instructed to conduct a comprehensive safety risk assessment and implement corrective actions. The

Transport Workers' Union has called for immediate action from MTA leadership and Governor Kathy Hochul in response to safety concerns. [Read here](#).

## Policy Analysis

### NOFOs

*Learn about federal grants available to MPOs and key NOFO information in AMPO's NOFO Tracker ([access here](#)). The tracker is also available on [ampo.org](http://ampo.org) under the "Resources" drop down.*

### New (MPO Eligible)

- HUD's [Pro Housing](#)
  - **Description:** to help communities remove barriers to affordable housing production and preservation, improve housing strategies, and develop sustainable housing policies.
  - **Deadline:** 10/15/2024