

The National Beat

November 14th, 2024

Contents

Federal Updates.....	1
USDOT.....	3
Congressional Hearings, Meetings, and Markups	5
National Transportation News.....	5
AMPO Analysis.....	6
Notice of Proposed Guidance: Evaluation of the Appropriateness of Public-Private Partnership Project Delivery Including Value for Money or Comparable Analyses	6
NPRM on Asset Management Plans; Management and Monitoring Systems	7
Brookings Institution Report.....	8
Updated Interim CMAQ Guidance	10
NOFOs	11
New (MPO Eligible)	11
Upcoming NOFOs (MPO Eligible).....	12

Federal Updates

On November 13th, the GAO released findings on the DOT's National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) program, which provides competitive grants for large, complex transportation projects, such as highways and bridges. While the DOT's FY22 award process aligned with general guidelines, the GAO identified gaps in documentation, particularly around designating projects as "exemplary." Previous GAO recommendations encourage improved documentation and transparency in DOT's decision-making. The GAO suggests implementing these recommendations to enhance the program's clarity and accountability in future funding rounds. [Read here.](#)

On November 13th, Senator John Thune (R-SD), formerly the Republican whip and conference chair, ascended to Senate leadership. Thune will be responsible for guiding the Senate confirmation process for Trump's Cabinet nominees. On the house side, Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) is expected to prioritize collaboration within his elected leadership team. [Read here.](#)

On November 12th, Politico reported that President-elect Donald Trump's return to office could jeopardize unspent funds from President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which allocated \$145.4 billion for climate-related initiatives. While federal agencies have announced awards for roughly two-thirds of the appropriated funds, the exact amount formally committed—key to securing the money

from rollback—is unclear. Agencies like the EPA have committed substantial portions of their funds, but many other IRA allocations remain tentatively awarded rather than legally obligated. [Read here](#).

On November 11th, President-elect Donald Trump announced the nomination of former Rep. Lee Zeldin (R-NY) as his choice to lead the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Zeldin, is expected to play a key role in the administration’s plan to roll back Biden-era climate regulations, particularly those aimed at limiting power plant and vehicle emissions. The administration is also likely to reassess CA’s authority to set stricter environmental standards than federal requirements, affecting similar policies in over a dozen states. Zeldin’s appointment signals a prioritization of deregulation and energy independence in Trump’s environmental agenda, though his background includes bipartisan involvement on issues like PFAS regulation and watershed protection. [Read here](#).

On November 8th, POLITICO reported that President-elect Donald Trump has selected Skip Elliott and Brigham McCown to lead transition efforts at the USDOT for his second term. Elliott previously served as the administrator of the PHMSA under Trump and has a background in rail safety at companies like CSX and Conrail. McCown, who was part of Trump’s first transition team and served briefly as a senior adviser to former DOT Secretary Elaine Chao, also held leadership roles within PHMSA during the Bush administration. [Read here](#).

On November 7th, POLITICO reported that Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) is likely to become the next chair of the Senate Commerce Committee, positioning him to influence transportation policy. Cruz, known for his adaptable political stance, has previously collaborated across the aisle, such as with former committee chair Maria Cantwell (D-WA) on the FAA reauthorization bill. [Read here](#). *If you’re unable to access the article, please email Katie Economou at, keconomou@ampo.org.*

On November 7th, President-elect Donald Trump announced initial plans for dismantling Biden-era climate policies, which include prioritizing fossil fuel interests and rolling back federal climate regulations. Trump has pledged a Day 1 executive order to boost US oil and gas production, targeting economic impacts like inflation and energy costs. Other promises include reversing electric vehicle incentives, eliminating climate-based investment practices, and reducing regulatory oversight on fossil fuel production. [Read here](#).

On November 7th, several news outlets reported on President-elect Donald Trump’s anticipated transportation infrastructure priorities, which are likely to focus on reducing spending. Congressional Republicans aim to streamline the 2021 infrastructure law, potentially reclaiming unspent funds and reducing support for projects beyond “hard infrastructure” like roads, rails, and bridges. The upcoming reauthorization of the infrastructure law by 2026 offers Trump’s administration a platform to reshape priorities. [Read Bloomberg here](#). [Read POLITICO here](#). [Read WAPo here](#). [Read NBC here](#). *If you’re unable to access these articles, please email Katie Economou at, keconomou@ampo.org.*

On November 6th, Donald Trump won reelection, capturing both the popular vote and electoral college with a projected 312 Electoral Votes to Kamala Harris’s 226. Trump’s popular vote share is at 50.7%, potentially marking the first outright Republican popular vote majority since 2004. Trump regained states he had won in 2016 but lost in 2020, such as Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, with significant shifts toward the republican party in urban and minority-heavy areas. Trump’s post-election priorities include appointing campaign co-manager Susie Wiles as White House Chief of Staff, highlighting her extensive experience within Republican power circles and her past successes in Florida.

Trump's next potential Transportation chief will likely be expected to focus taxpayer money on infrastructure like roads and highways, instead of transit. Key contenders include Garret Graves (R-LA) and House T&I Committee Chair, Sam Graves (R-MO). However, there are strategic limitations in Congress potentially affecting Republican members' eligibility for administration roles due to tight House and Senate margins. [Read more here](#). [Read Eno Transportation's Election analysis here](#). *If you're unable to access the article, please email Katie Economou at, keconomou@ampo.org.*

On November 6th, the Republican Party reclaimed the US Senate majority, following a series of key victories in the 2024 elections. This shift in Senate control will impact committee leadership, with anticipated chair roles for key Republicans on transportation-related committees: Susan Collins (Appropriations), Rick Scott (Banking), Ted Cruz (Commerce), and Shelley Moore Capito (Environment and Public Works). Davis also noted that the Republican party will vote on a new Senate Floor Leader, with candidates including John Cornyn, John Thune, and Rick Scott. Additionally, control of the House remains undecided due to close races in California and Arizona, where results are pending. The Republicans need to secure 218 seats for a majority but currently hold 219, with a net loss of seats in this election cycle. [Read here](#).

USDOT

On November 13th, FHWA issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) amending regulations governing risk-based Asset Management Plans (AMPs) for the National Highway System (NHS) While the NPRM focuses on State DOTs, there are several areas relevant to MPOs. The NPRM will remain open for comments until **January 12th, 2025**. [Read here](#). *Check out AMPO's overview of the NPRM in the "NPRM Analysis: Asset Management Plans; Management and Monitoring Systems" section in today's edition of the National Beat.*

On November 13th, USDOT announced proposed guidance to clarify the evaluation of Public-Private Partnerships (P3) for large-scale transportation projects. The proposed guidance outlines requirements for Value for Money (VfM) or comparable analyses to assess the potential benefits of P3 project delivery. This guidance aims to improve transparency and inform public sponsors about statutory evaluation requirements when seeking federal credit assistance. Although the focus is primarily on state DOTs, the guidance holds relevance for MPOs involved in high-cost projects or P3 structures seeking federal support. Public comments are open until **December 31st, 2024**. [Read here](#). *Check out AMPO's overview of the proposed guidance in the "Notice of Proposed Guidance: Evaluation of the Appropriateness of Public-Private Partnership Project Delivery Including Value for Money or Comparable Analyses" section in today's edition of the National Beat.*

On November 13th, FHWA announced the launch of a new Federal Land Management website to support transportation planning on Federal and Tribal lands. The website, developed by Federal Lands Highway (FLH), provides tools and resources for transportation planners, including an interactive GIS mapping tool, an MPO database, and a compendium on FLMA coordination in transportation planning. The website aims to strengthen partnerships between federal, state, and local agencies in managing transportation on Federal and Tribal lands. [Read here](#).

On November 8th, FHWA published new guidance for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program. The new Interim Guidance that brings several updates to the program which impact MPOs. Comments are due by **January 6th, 2025**. [Read here](#). *Check out AMPO's overview of*

the updated CMAQ interim guidance in the “Analysis: Updated Interim CMAQ Guidance” section in today’s edition of the National Beat.

On November 8th, FHWA announced \$43.1 million in Emergency Relief funding for repairs in National Forests and the Blue Ridge Parkway in response to Hurricane Helene. This funding will aid the US Forest Service and the National Park Service in restoring damaged infrastructure in North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. The funds will support critical repairs, enabling safe access for emergency services and boosting local tourism by reopening popular areas. [Read here.](#)

On November 5th, FHWA announced updated regulations to enhance safety for motorists and roadside workers in highway construction work zones. The updates to the Work Zone Safety and Mobility Rule and the Temporary Traffic Control Devices Rule introduce new safety and mobility performance measures for states, aiming to reduce travel disruptions, congestion, and crashes. [Read here.](#)

On November 4th, USDOT announced the NOFO for the FY 2025 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program. This program provides discretionary grants for surface transportation projects with significant local or regional impact. A portion of the \$1.5 billion is set aside for highly rated but previously unselected projects from FY 2024. These projects, designated as "Projects of Merit," can be reconsidered for funding without needing a new application. Round one which is reserved for FY 2024 Projects of Merit, has a request deadline of **December 2nd, 2024**. Round two is open to all eligible applicants, with a submission deadline of **January 30th, 2025**. [View NOFO here.](#)

On November 1st, FHWA announced \$16.6 million in grants to eight states to support advanced digital construction technologies in transportation projects. Funded through the Advanced Digital Construction Management Systems (ADCMS) program. It aims to improve project delivery, reduce reliance on paper, and increase transparency. This funding will help states adopt digital workflows, enhance data sharing, and expedite project timelines, supporting innovation and efficiency in the transportation sector. [Read here.](#)

On November 1st, FHWA announced \$7.6 million in grants to advance innovative technologies in highway projects across eight states. These grants, part of the Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration program, will fund projects like debris removal, work zone safety systems, drone infrastructure inspections, and sustainable bridge design, aiming to enhance safety, efficiency, and resilience in transportation infrastructure. [Read here.](#)

On October 31st, FTA announced \$10.5 million in grants to support affordable housing development near public transit. The grants, funded by the Pilot Program for Transit-oriented Development (TOD) Planning program, will help 11 communities across 10 states create TOD plans that encourage ridership and increase housing accessibility. This initiative aligns with the Administration’s goal of reducing transportation and housing costs by creating more affordable, connected neighborhoods. [Read here.](#)

On October 31st, FHWA announced nearly \$635 million in funding for 22 bridge projects across 19 states as part of the Bridge Investment Program. This historic investment is part of a \$40 billion effort to modernize America’s bridges, enhancing safety, supporting economic growth, and improving access for communities. [Read more.](#)

On October 31st, BTS updated the National Transportation Statistics (NTS), providing historical data on U.S. transportation trends. This update includes data on the age and condition of urban transit vehicles,

safety in hazardous pipeline transport, U.S. energy consumption by transport mode, and noise exposure around airports. These statistics offer insights into various aspects of the national transportation landscape. [Read more.](#)

Congressional Hearings, Meetings, and Markups

Both the House and Senate are on Recess until November 12th. Party caucuses may conduct leadership elections for the 119th Congress and conduct other business during the week of November 12th.

- On November 19th, the House T&I Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management will hold a hearing on the oversight of FEMA’s Disaster Readiness and Response. [Watch here.](#)
- On November 14th, the House T&I Subcommittee on the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation held a hearing on the Coast Guard’s efforts to recapitalize icebreakers and the Service’s ability to fulfill its icebreaking and polar region responsibilities. [Watch here.](#)

National Transportation News

On November 13th, David Zipper reported on America’s dangerous roads, highlighting Roosevelt Boulevard in Philadelphia as a prime example of how state-controlled urban roads, originally designed for fast-moving traffic, have become hazardous for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike. Roads like Roosevelt Boulevard, which often cut through densely populated, low-income neighborhoods, account for a disproportionate share of traffic fatalities. Despite local demand for safety improvements, such roads are typically managed by state DOTs, which prioritize traffic flow over pedestrian safety and transit access. The article suggests a shift in transportation policy that includes context-sensitive road design, enhanced federal funding flexibility, and possible road transfers to local governments to address these legacy road issues. [Read here.](#)

On November 13th, Jared Brey reported on the impact of the 2024 election on transportation policy, noting that local ballot measures supporting public transit gained widespread approval, with voters committing over \$50 billion to infrastructure. State and federal election outcomes, however, may influence long-term infrastructure funding and policies, particularly regarding electric vehicles and emissions standards. Congress will also face renewed pressure to address the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF), which remains strained due to stagnant gas tax revenues. [Read here](#), and check out AMPO’s [HTF primer here](#).

On November 12th, Brookings Metro published a report titled, “[Connecting the DOTs: A Survey of State Transportation Planning, Investment, and Accountability Practices](#)”, which brings forward some critical points about how states approach transportation investments. It shows that while states manage the bulk of transportation funds and planning, there are significant issues with transparency, accountability, and cooperation with MPOs. While there are challenges, there are also opportunities and best practices detailed in the report that we look forward to exploring. *Check out AMPO’s overview of the report in the “Brookings Institution Report” section in today’s edition of the National Beat.*

On November 8th, Eno transportation reported on the results of transportation-related ballot measures from the 2024 General Election. Across the U.S., around 75% of transportation measures passed or are likely to pass, with voters approving significant funding for public transit, road, and pedestrian projects.

Notable outcomes include Denver's Issue 7A, allowing the Regional Transportation District to retain \$60 million annually, and Nashville's transit referendum, which will raise revenue for a major transportation improvement program. Fairfax and Arlington counties in Northern Virginia also passed transportation bonds to fund the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority improvements. However, in Charleston County, SC, voters rejected a half-cent sales tax for an extension of I-526, citing environmental concerns. Additionally, Cotati, CA, repealed its ban on constructing roundabouts, allowing the city to consider traffic calming measures. These results reflect active public involvement in shaping local transportation priorities, collectively deciding the future of infrastructure funding and policy across the nation. [Read more here](#). *If you're unable to access the article, please email Katie Economou at, keconomou@ampo.org.*

On November 1st, AASHTO announced its new leadership for 2024-2025, electing Garrett Eucalitto, Commissioner of Connecticut DOT, as President, and Russell McMurry, Commissioner of Georgia DOT, as Vice President. Eucalitto's priorities include emphasizing safety across state DOT actions, focusing on community, user, and worker safety, and preparing for the reauthorization of the IIJA. [Read more](#).

AMPO Analysis

Notice of Proposed Guidance: Evaluation of the Appropriateness of Public-Private Partnership Project Delivery Including Value for Money or Comparable Analyses

On November 13th, USDOT announced proposed guidance to clarify the evaluation of Public-Private Partnerships (P3) for large-scale transportation projects. The proposed guidance outlines requirements for Value for Money (VfM) or comparable analyses to assess the potential benefits of P3 project delivery. This guidance aims to improve transparency and inform public sponsors about statutory evaluation requirements when seeking federal credit assistance. Although the focus is primarily on state DOTs, the guidance holds relevance for MPOs involved in high-cost projects or P3 structures seeking federal support. Public comments are open until **December 31st, 2024**. [Read here](#).

Key Highlights

- **VfM Analyses:** For large projects seeking federal support through P3s, USDOT requires a detailed analysis to assess if a P3 brings more public value than traditional project delivery. This requirement applies to projects over \$750 million that are expected to generate user fees and may seek financing through TIFIA or RRIF programs.
- **P3 Evaluation Process:** USDOT outlines a phased approach for evaluating P3s, including initial screenings, qualitative reviews, and detailed assessments before finalizing a P3 contract. The process aims to ensure that P3 projects align with public goals and serve the best interests of communities.
- **Transparency:** USDOT emphasizes accountability through post-project reviews, where public sponsors must assess the private partner's performance and publicly share results. Independent audits are also recommended to ensure transparency and accountability.

Potential MPO Impacts:

- **MPOs as Project Sponsors:** MPOs that pursue large infrastructure projects may need to meet these VfM analysis requirements if considering a P3 model, particularly for complex, high-cost projects with regional impact.
- **Enhanced Data and Transparency:** MPOs may need to make VfM analysis results and project performance data public, emphasizing the importance of clear documentation and data sharing in these large projects.
- **Collaboration with State DOTs:** For MPOs working alongside state DOTs, this guidance underscores the need for close coordination, especially in states with P3 laws or in projects involving joint funding and regional infrastructure planning.

NPRM on Asset Management Plans; Management and Monitoring Systems

On November 13th, FHWA issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) amending regulations governing risk-based Asset Management Plans (AMPs) for the National Highway System (NHS). [Read here](#). While the NPRM focuses on State DOTs, there are several areas relevant to MPOs, especially given the need for alignment and collaboration between DOTs and MPOs for statewide and regional planning efforts. **The NPRM will remain open for comments until January 12th, 2025.**

Key NPRM Highlights

- **Performance-Based Planning Updates:** The NPRM proposes updates aimed at advancing policies on performance-based planning and programming, with a focus on clearly defined AMP content to improve the condition and performance of NHS assets.
- **Process and Compliance Adjustments:** State DOTs are directed to update their AMP development processes, including new procedures for submission and recertification to ensure compliance with federal requirements.
- **Modernization and Definitions:** Outdated regulations on transportation management and monitoring systems are proposed for removal, and new definitions are suggested for key terms such as "critical infrastructure," "climate change," and "extreme weather events," with implications for how resilience and risk management are handled in AMPs. Some key definitions include:
 1. **Critical infrastructure:** "Critical infrastructure means those facilities the incapacity or failure of which would have a debilitating impact on national or regional economic security, national or regional energy security, national or regional public health or safety, or any combination of those matters."
 2. **Climate change:** "Climate change means any significant change in the measures of climate lasting for an extended period of time. Climate change includes major variations in temperature, precipitation, or wind patterns, among other environmental conditions, which occur over several decades or longer and poses adverse impacts to the condition of assets. Climate change may manifest as a rise in sea level, as well as increase the frequency and magnitude of extreme weather events now and in the future."
 3. **Extreme weather events:** "Extreme weather events mean events that can include significant anomalies in temperature, precipitation, and winds and can manifest as heavy precipitation and flooding, heatwaves, drought, wildfires, and windstorms (including tornadoes and tropical storms). Consequences of extreme weather events

can include safety concerns, damage, destruction, and/or economic loss. Climate change can also cause or influence extreme weather events.”

4. **Life-cycle planning:** “Life-cycle planning means a process to analyze strategies for managing an asset class, or asset sub-group, and the included assets over their whole life with demonstrated consideration for extreme weather events and resilience, minimizing cost while preserving or improving their condition, and extending the life of the assets. It includes analyzing life-cycle cost, condition, and other life-cycle benefits of alternative strategies that vary by work type and timing.”
5. **Risk management:** “Risk management means the processes and framework for managing potential risks, such as adverse impacts associated with extreme weather events and other risks to system resilience. Risk management includes the identification, analysis, evaluation, and management of risks to assets and system performance.”

Potential MPO Impacts:

- **Increased Collaboration:** MPOs may be called on to coordinate closely with DOTs to align regional plans with state AMPs, particularly around resilience planning.
- **Data Sharing and Regional Coordination:** With new AMP processes requiring regional data, MPOs and local governments may play a larger role in data sharing and coordination with DOTs.
- **Performance-Based Alignment:** MPOs might need to adjust their performance targets to reflect state-level AMP requirements, ensuring plans are consistent and mutually reinforcing.

Brookings Institution Report

On November 12th, Brookings Metro published a report titled, “[Connecting the DOTs: A Survey of State Transportation Planning, Investment, and Accountability Practices](#)”, which brings forward some critical points about how states approach transportation investments. It shows that while states manage the bulk of transportation funds and planning, there are significant issues with transparency, accountability, and cooperation with MPOs. While there are challenges, there are also opportunities and best practices detailed in the report that we look forward to exploring. Here’s a closer look at the report’s findings, how they matter for MPOs, and how they align with AMPO’s priorities:

Key Takeaways:

- **States Set Goals but Don’t Track Progress Well:** Many states establish long-term transportation goals, but few states reliably track progress or link their goals to measurable outcomes. Only a small number of states, like Oregon and Rhode Island, have effective systems for measuring progress against their goals, while others don’t publish or consistently update this information.
 - For MPOs, this lack of accountability means it’s challenging to advocate for local needs and ensure that long-term transportation projects align with broader goals, like safety and sustainability.
 - Our focus on improved accountability in reauthorization directly aligns with this, as better tracking would help MPOs make the case for investments that truly benefit communities.
- **Unclear Project Selection:** The report highlights that in most states, it’s hard to know why specific transportation projects are selected. Most states lack public-facing project selection

processes, which makes it difficult for MPOs and communities to see how state priorities align with local needs.

- This gap in transparency affects MPOs directly. Without clear criteria for project selection, it's tough to advocate for projects that align with regional goals.
- Our push in reauthorization for increased transparency and meaningful involvement in funding decisions at the state level would give MPOs a better seat at the table, allowing for projects that respond to regional and community priorities.
- **Limited Funding for Local Projects:** On average, states share only 14% of transportation funding with local and regional governments, with some states giving as little as 5%. This leaves MPOs with limited resources to address regional needs and puts more power in the hands of state DOTs.
 - AMPO's advocacy for more direct federal funding to MPOs is important here. When MPOs control more of the funding, they can better pursue projects that reflect their communities' needs, rather than competing for limited resources with the state DOT.
- **Public Engagement Falls Short:** The report finds that many states lack systems to involve the public in planning and project selection meaningfully. While many states provide basic information portals, there's little opportunity for public input or feedback, which limits transparency.
 - For MPOs, public engagement is essential, as local voices help shape projects that reflect community values.
- **Missed Opportunities for Independent Oversight:** Many states have independent commissions to advise their DOTs, but these commissions often lack real authority. Empowering these commissions would help improve oversight, ensuring that transportation planning reflects community and environmental needs more effectively.
 - This recommendation in the report might give MPOs a more structured channel to share input and collaborate with state DOTs, making transportation planning more of a partnership.

Aligning with AMPO's priorities:

The Brookings report's findings align closely with AMPO's priorities, especially around increased funding, accountability, and transparency.

- **Direct Funding:** The limited funding states share with local governments reinforces our call for more direct federal funding for MPOs. Giving MPOs more control over funding would allow them to address the specific needs of their regions, leading to projects that directly improve quality of life for residents.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** The lack of public project selection processes in most states underscores the need for transparency. Our goal to increase transparency and accountability would help ensure that transportation investments align with regional priorities and that the public understands why certain projects are chosen.
- **Collaboration with MPOs and Local Partners:** Only a few states effectively incorporate MPO priorities into their state transportation plans. AMPO's legislative agenda includes advocating for stronger collaboration requirements, so MPOs can ensure that the projects advancing in their regions align with community needs.

The report also suggests several specific changes that might support our legislative priorities, including:

- **Increase Direct Funding to MPOs:** Expanding federal funding to MPOs would address the funding shortfall many localities face, especially in states that allocate a small percentage of funds to regional and local partners.
- **Strengthen Regional Representation in State Plans:** Requiring state DOTs to integrate MPO plans into their LRTPs would ensure MPOs have a say in how state transportation goals align with metropolitan priorities.
- **Empower Independent Oversight Bodies:** Strengthening commissions to provide genuine oversight would give MPOs a greater role in state decision-making, making transportation planning a more collaborative process.

Overall, the report highlights why legislative changes and specific process fixes are essential to support MPOs, improve accountability, promote regional priorities, and enable better planning outcomes. As AMPO continues to advocate for [legislative priorities in reauthorization](#), we can use these findings to highlight how greater regional control and transparency can lead to transportation systems that better serve communities across the country.

Updated Interim CMAQ Guidance

On November 8th, FHWA published new guidance for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program. [Read here](#). Comments are due by **January 6th, 2025**. FHWA is hosting two webinars (November 13th and November 20th) to provide an overview of the guidance available [here](#). The new Interim Guidance that brings several updates to the program, including:

- **FHWA's Role in Project Administration:** FHWA will directly administer CMAQ-funded projects in cases where the FTA lacks statutory authority (e.g., school bus projects) (p. 14).
- **Performance Measures:** States and MPOs must implement three FHWA-defined performance measures, and large MPOs are encouraged to develop plans to monitor progress in minority or low-income populations (p. 40).
- **Expand Operating Assistance:** Eligibility for operating assistance is now open to transit systems in areas with populations under 200,000, without a time limit for eligibility (p. 26).
- **Enhanced Project Evaluation:** The guidance incorporates FHWA's cost-effectiveness tables to help prioritize projects with the highest emissions reductions. (p. 16)
- **Federal Share for Certain Projects:** Most CMAQ projects remains eligible for 80% federal funding, but specific projects like traffic signalization and roundabouts may qualify for up to 100% federal funding. (p. 12).
- **Flexibility with Fund Transfers:** States may transfer up to 50% of their CMAQ funds to other programs, though PM2.5 set-aside funds are excluded from transfer. (p. 6).
- **Expanded Project Eligibility:** New eligible projects include lock and dam improvements, marine highways, shared micromobility options, and zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles. (p. 18)
- **Truck Parking and Electrification:** CMAQ funds can now support advanced truck stop electrification to reduce idling emissions, though construction of new truck parking facilities remains ineligible. (p. 8)

- **Focus on Equity for Disadvantaged Communities:** Priority is given to projects benefiting low-income or disadvantaged communities, especially in PM2.5 nonattainment areas. (p. 10)
- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP):** The guidance encourages MPOs and state DOTs to explore PPPs for CMAQ projects, including partnerships with defined goals, roles, and responsibilities. (p. 13)
- **Labor and Workforce Standards:** MPOs and DOTs are encouraged to apply labor standards such as local hiring and apprenticeship programs, particularly for projects that create jobs for underrepresented populations. (p. 8)

As a reminder, **the guidance also emphasizes collaboration between State DOTs, MPOs, and air quality agencies:**

- “State DOTs are encouraged to consult with MPOs and air quality agencies to determine regional and local CMAQ priorities and work with them to allocate funds accordingly. **Specifically, 23 U.S.C. 149(h) encourages States and MPOs to consult with State and local air quality agencies in nonattainment and maintenance areas on the estimated emission reductions from proposed CMAQ programs and projects. This process should provide an opportunity for States or local agencies to select eligible projects that will best use CMAQ funding to meet the requirements and advance the goals of the CAA.** An overview of the project selection and funding process of a CMAQ project is available on the [CMAQ Website](#).” (p. 15).

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](#) under the "Resources" drop down.

New (MPO Eligible)

- **USDOT's [Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity \(RAISE\) Program](#)**
 - **Description:** provides discretionary grants for surface transportation projects with significant local or regional impact, is now accepting applications. These projects should enhance safety, environmental sustainability, economic competitiveness, and quality of life, while promoting innovation and partnership.
 - FHWA will be hosting several informational webinars in the coming months ([register here](#)).
 - **Deadlines:**
 - **Round 1:** Reserved for FY 2024 Projects of Merit, with a request deadline of **December 2, 2024**.
 - **Round 2:** Open to all eligible applicants, with a deadline of **January 30, 2025**.
- **FHWA's [Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation \(PROTECT\) Program](#)**
 - **Description:** Program to plan for and strengthen surface transportation to be more resilient to natural hazards, including climate change, sea level rise, flooding, extreme

weather events, and other natural disasters. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides over \$1.4 billion over five years through this program to fund projects that address the climate crisis by improving the resilience of the surface transportation system, including highways, public transportation, ports, and intercity passenger rail.

- FHWA will be hosting several informational webinars in the coming months ([register here](#)).
- **Deadlines:**
 - **FY 2024-2025:** 2/24/2025
 - **FY 2026:** 2/24/2026
- **Build America Bureau's, [Regional Infrastructure Accelerators \(RIA\) Program](#)**
 - **Description:** Regional Infrastructure Accelerator (RIA) grants assist entities in developing improved infrastructure priorities and financing strategies for the accelerated development of a project that is eligible for funding under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Credit Program. These grants are intended to support RIAs that: (1) serve a defined geographic area; (2) act as a resource to qualified entities in the geographic area; and (3) demonstrate the effectiveness of the RIA to expedite the delivery of projects eligible for the TIFIA credit program.
 - A webinar will be hosted on November 13th at 2:00 PM (ET) ([register here](#)).
 - **Deadlines:** 1/9/25

Upcoming NOFOs (MPO Eligible)

- FTA's [All Stations Accessibility Program](#): Expected November, 2024.
- OST's [Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program](#): Expected November, 2024.
- Maritime Administration's [Port Infrastructure Development Program \(PIDP\)](#): Expected December, 2024.
- USDOT's [Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities \(RTEPF\) Program](#): Expected December, 2024.