

Memorandum

From: Capitol Transportation Consulting and Pavluchuk & Associates

To: James Corless, Executive Director

Date: September 26, 2024

Subject: Federal Policy Monthly Report

Advancing Green Means Go

The federal team continues to look for opportunities to advance SACOG's Green Means Go (GMG) program and other legislative priorities. The federal team has been working with other national organizations to understand their priorities for the next surface transportation bill, which Congress will begin drafting next year. We are looking for areas of shared opportunity with SACOG to help advance our key priorities, including Green Means Go. We are particularly focused on supporting additional funding opportunities through key planning associations, AMPO and NARC. SACOG's team attended the AMPO conference, where issues such as increased planning funding and the intersection of housing, transportation and land use were discussed.

FY 2025 Appropriation Update

We are full swing in the Presidential election season, which means Congress will have trouble passing any significant legislation until after the November election. Before breaking for the election, Congress needed to pass a short-term extension to fund the government. Congressional leaders struck a deal on a stopgap funding bill through Dec. 20. The House and Senate will pass the bill ahead of the September 30th government shutdown deadline. After voting on the CR, the House and Senate will recess and aren't expected to return to the Capitol until mid-November. When they return, Congress will take up the larger appropriations funding bills, which includes transportation funding for DOT and transportation earmarks.

Grant Funding

- FHWA is now accepting applications for its National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) grant opportunity. The program provides funding to States and Indian Tribes to implement eligible projects on highways designated as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads (America's Byways®), State scenic byways, or Indian Tribe scenic byways; and to plan, design, and develop a State or Indian Tribe scenic byway program. Applications for the 2024 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) must be submitted electronically through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on December 16, 2024.
- The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is accepting applications for its Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) Grant Program. The R&E Grant Program assists with operating costs for eligible projects that will establish service on new routes, restore service on routes that formerly had intercity passenger operations, and enhance service on existing routes. Applications for the R&E Grant Program are due by September 30, 2024.
- More than \$600 million is available for capital construction and community planning grants through the third round of the Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program. The RCP Program

focuses on improving access to daily needs such as jobs, education, healthcare, food, nature, and recreation; fostering equitable development and restoration; and providing technical assistance to further these goals. The deadline for applications is 11:59 p.m. ET on September 30, 2024.

- FHWA has made available \$800 million in funding under the Low Carbon Transportation Materials Grants (LCTM) Program to tackle the climate crisis. LCTM will support the use of low-carbon materials and products used in transportation that reduce air pollution, specifically greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). FHWA made \$1.2 billion available under this program to state departments of transportation in March 2024 and is now opening funding up to other potential applicants such as cities, metropolitan planning organizations, tribal governments and other federal, state, and local agencies that also carry out transportation activities. NOFO for non-State DOTs is open in [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and will close on November 25, 2024, at 11:59 p.m., ET.