



METROPOLITAN PLANNING

Fiscal year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Estimated funding*	\$329 M	\$336 M	\$343 M	\$350 M	\$359 M

*Calculated (sum of estimated individual State Metropolitan Planning apportionments)

Program purpose

The FAST Act continues the Metropolitan Planning program. The Program establishes a cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive framework for making transportation investment decisions in metropolitan areas. Program oversight is a joint Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration responsibility.

Statutory citation: FAST Act § 1201; 23 U.S.C. 134

Funding features

Type of budget authority

Funded by contract authority from the Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund. Funds are subject to the overall Federal-aid obligation limitation.

Apportionment of funds

The FAST Act continues the MAP-21 approach to formula program funding, authorizing a lump sum total instead of individual authorizations for each program. Once each State’s combined total apportionment is calculated, funding is set aside for the State’s Metropolitan Planning program from:

- the State’s base apportionment [23 U.S.C. 104(b)(6)]; and
- the State’s apportionment for the National Highway Freight Program [23 U.S.C. 104(b)(5)(D)].

(See “Apportionment” fact sheet for a description of this calculation.)

Transferability to other Federal-aid apportioned programs

The Fast Act continues to prohibit transfer of Metropolitan Planning Program funds to other apportioned programs. [23 U.S.C. 126(b)(1)]

Federal share: In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 120. (See the “Federal Share” fact sheet for additional detail.)

Program Features

Except as specified above or below, the FAST Act continues all of the metropolitan planning requirements that were in effect under MAP-21.

Support for intercity bus and commuter vanpools

The FAST Act continues to require metropolitan transportation plans and transportation improvement programs (TIPs) to provide for facilities that enable an intermodal transportation system, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities. It adds to this list other facilities that support intercity transportation (including intercity buses, intercity bus facilities, and commuter vanpool providers). The FAST Act also requires that the metropolitan long-range plan include identification of public transportation facilities and intercity bus facilities. [23 U.S.C. 134(c)(2) & (i)(2)]

Selection of MPO officials

The FAST Act clarifies that metropolitan planning organization (MPO) representation is selected by an MPO according to its bylaws/enabling statute. It also changes the selection criteria for MPO officials to—

- grant a representative of a transit provider authority equal to that of other MPO officials; and
- allow a representative of a transit provider to also represent a local community.

[23 U.S.C. 134(d)(3)]

Consultation with other planning officials

The FAST Act continues to encourage MPOs to consult with officials responsible for other types of planning activities. It adds to the list of such activities tourism and the reduction of risk of natural disasters. [23 U.S.C. 134(g)(3)(A)]

Scope of planning process

The FAST Act expands the scope of consideration of the metropolitan planning process to include—

- improving transportation system resiliency and reliability;
- reducing (or mitigating) the stormwater impacts of surface transportation; and
- enhancing travel and tourism. [23 U.S.C. 134(h)(1)(I) & (J)]

Capital investment and other strategies

The FAST Act continues to require a metropolitan transportation plan to include strategies to meet current and projected transportation infrastructure needs. [23 U.S.C. 134(i)(2)(G)]

Resilience and environmental mitigation activities

The FAST Act expands the focus on the resiliency of the transportation system as well as activities to reduce stormwater runoff from transportation infrastructure. In addition, it newly requires strategies to reduce the vulnerability of existing transportation infrastructure to natural disasters.

[23 U.S.C. 134(d)(3) & (i)(2)(G)]

Transportation and transit enhancement activities

The FAST Act continues to require a metropolitan transportation plan to include transportation and transit enhancement activities. When proposing these activities, the plan must now include—

- consideration of the role that intercity buses may play in reducing congestion, pollution, and energy consumption in a cost-effective manner; and
- strategies and investments that preserve and enhance intercity bus systems (including those that are privately owned and operated. [23 U.S.C. 134(i)(2)(H)]

Participation by interested parties in the planning process

The FAST Act explicitly adds public ports and certain private providers of transportation, including intercity bus operators and employer-based commuting programs to the list of interested parties that an MPO must provide with reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan.

[23 U.S.C. 134(i)(6)(A)]

Congestion management

The FAST Act adds examples of travel demand reduction strategies for congestion management in a transportation management area (TMA). While retaining the requirement for a congestion management process for MPOs that serve a TMA, the law also allows an MPO that serves a TMA to develop a congestion management plan (distinct from the congestion management process) that will be considered in the MPO's transportation improvement program. Any such plan must include regional goals for reducing peak hour vehicle miles traveled and improving transportation connections must identify existing services and programs that support access to jobs in the region, and must identify proposed projects and programs to reduce congestion and increase job access opportunities. The FAST Act specifies certain consultation requirements MPOs must use in developing the plan. [23 U.S.C. 134(k)(3)]

Treatment of Lake Tahoe region

For the purpose of 23 U.S.C., the FAST Act treats the Lake Tahoe Region of California and Nevada as—

- a metropolitan planning organization;
- a TMA; and
- an urbanized area comprised of a population of 145,000 in California and 65,000 in Nevada.

[23 U.S.C. 134(r)]