

# Transportation Reauthorization

## The Issue:

Congress approved the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) in June 2012 after 10 extensions. The 27-month, \$105.2 billion surface transportation reauthorization package set the stage for future transportation policy and makes changes to the distribution of funding for federal highway and public transportation funding. The president signed the measure into law on July 6, 2012. Current revenue sources to the Highway Trust Fund are insufficient to meet needs, and have been supplemented from the General Fund in recent years.

The city of Phoenix has been participating in discussions with regional and national associations regarding themes that should be addressed in the next reauthorization bill. Suggestions for the national transportation program include:

- Significantly increase federal transportation infrastructure investment.
- Place program emphasis on energy independence and sustainability.
- Dramatically streamline and simplify the federal aid process, with direct funding to large cities and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Direct funding from the Federal Highway Administration to large cities would cut years of duplication and delay.
- Improve project delivery by adding such tools as expanding on the use of Alternative Project Delivery Methods versus Design-Bid-Build.
- Increase the federal funds to regions commensurate with the regional funding. This could eliminate the matching requirement due to significant regional funds already matching the federal funds.
- Provide incentives to regions with more than one million in population that contribute regional funding to the federal transportation system. Incentives would include: increased and direct funding to MPOs; mode-neutral federal funding; streamlined planning processes; and more direct reporting to federal agencies.
- Support an urban focus that heightens the federal commitment to mass transit and other alternatives to highways and private automobiles.
- Continue the dedicated 2.86 cent per gallon motor fuel tax to the Mass Transit Account to provide for stable and predictable funds source for public transit.
- Continue use of formula funding in addition to discretionary grants.
- Support credit for coordinated efforts involving housing, economic development and transit.

Additionally, as a result of the 2010 Census, there are five new large Urbanized Areas (UZA). Since the Section 5307 funding formula first apportions funds by three UZA population size categories (i.e., 50,000-199,999, 200,000-999,999 and 1,000,000 and greater), the addition of new large UZA's decreased funding apportioned to many of the previously existing large UZA's, as more UZA's now are sharing essentially the same level of funding. Phoenix recommends adjusting the funding formulas to mitigate this negative effect, as the number of UZA's changes with each Census.

Phoenix also recommends changes to the New Starts program (funding source for light rail) that would make the federal requirements for a project proportional to the federal percentage of investment in the construction and reduce project review time.