



National Association County Engineers

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NACE UPDATE

The almost bi-weekly newsletter for Board members, Committee Chairs, and Members
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(Note: Sources of information include the AASHTO Journal, NACo staff, Senate and House publications, the Federal Highway Administration, and other association news journals)

FHWA, ATSSA & NACE Present a Free Webinar - Stimulus Program 101: Making It Work for States and Locals

Let us explain the complex implementation of the Economic Recovery Package at the local level with a focus on highway safety spending...

**Wednesday, February 25, 2009
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm (EST)**

Topics:

Overview of Final Stimulus Bill

Presented by Laura Dennis, Director of Government Relations, ATSSA

You will learn the final details surrounding highway funding, key conditions surrounding those funds, and a timeline for implementation. Also, find out about the transparency and accountability aspects of the law.

Implementing the Stimulus Bill in Your States and Localities

Presented by Joseph S. Toole, Associate Administrator for Safety Federal Highway Administration

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*Harlan Miller, Team Leader of Planning, Planning Oversight & Stewardship Team
Federal Highway Administration*

You will learn how the funds will be funneled down to the states and local governments, and where to go in your State for assistance in accessing those funds. A brief overview of the Federal-aid processes that apply to these projects and the key areas to which you will need to pay particular attention will be presented. A discussion will follow on how these funds can be used for safety projects and other system improvements, as well as contracting models that could be used to accelerate that process.

Webinar Materials to Take Home:

- A summary of the Stimulus Bill targeted specifically at the needs of local governments and their contractors
- Sample of contract packages that have been used to accelerate programmatic improvements in States and local areas
- Low Cost Local Road Safety Solutions
- FHWA Link to Stimulus Information:
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/economicrecovery/index.htm>
- FHWA tools and resources to get your questions answered
- 9 Safety Counter Measures Quick Reference Guide

Sign up Today; Space is Limited! This Session is Provided at No Cost to You!!!

Visit the following link to sign up for your spot:

https://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/webconference/web_conf_learner_reg.aspx?webConfID=16411

You must pre-register; there are only a certain numbers of slots available.

Also, please review important information and Q & A on the economic recovery effort at the following section of the FHWA website prior to calling into the webinar:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/economicrecovery/index.htm>.

Once you are pre-registered to join the call please take the following steps:

1. LINK TO JOIN THE WEB CONFERENCE: <http://fhwa.na3.acrobat.com/stimulus101/>

TELECONFERENCE NUMBER TO ACCESS AUDIO PORTION

1-800-988-0375

Participant Passcode: 6879162

Free One-Day Safety Workshop will be held at NACE 2009: Developing County Solutions to Improve Rural Road Safety

On Thursday April 23, 2009 from 9:30 am to 5:00 pm this peer to peer workshop is planned at the Hotel Pere Marquette, Peoria IL. Co-sponsored by the National Association of Counties, FHWA and NACE its goal is to present best practices in safety programs currently being accomplished nationwide at the county level and teaming county elected and professional officials who want to improve their safety programs. Registration is free but limited. To register

for this workshop contact James Davenport, National Association of Counties at jdavenpo@naco.org or Tony Giancola, NACE Executive Director at agiancol@naco.org

Early Bird Registration for NACE 2009 Further Extended to February 27, 2009

Haven't got your early bird registration payment in as yet. Not to worry since the early bird registration has been extended to February 27, 2009. Please have your check or money order dated by February 27, 2009.

American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (H.R.1) Finalized

On February 17, President Barack Obama signed into law the \$789 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. On February 13, after a relatively short Conference Committee, both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate cleared the bill for the President's signature. The bill provides investments in infrastructure, health, education and energy, as well as more than \$280 billion in tax cuts. The legislation also contains no earmarks and establishes oversight and accountability mechanisms. The following is an overview of several key funding highlights included in the bill:

Transportation

Transportation \$1.5 billion for an intermodal discretionary grant program

Highways	\$27.5 billion
Transit	\$8.4 billion
Rail	\$9.3 billion (including \$1.3 billion for Amtrak)
Airports	\$1.1 billion for the Airport Improvement Program

Environment and Water

\$4 billion Clean Water State Revolving Fund
\$2 billion Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund
\$4.6 US Army Corps of Engineers Water Resources Projects
\$1 billion US Bureau of Reclamation Rural Water Projects
\$1.38 billion Rural Water & Waste Disposal Program
\$6 billion for Superfund
\$1 billion for Brownfields
\$3.2 billion for Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant Program
\$3 billion for Diesel Emission Reduction Act Grants

One resource is www.recovery.gov, which features information on how the Act is working, accountability and up-to-date data on the expenditure of funds. Additionally State-by-state [fact sheets](#) which provide funding levels and estimated benefits of the overall stimulus bill. A useful website developed by FHWA to help with understanding the stimulus bill and very useful Question and Answer section is accessible at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/economicrecovery/index.htm>.

Transportation

The stimulus bill provides \$48.1 billion for transportation programs. In most cases the legislation includes 100 per cent funding with no match requirements and there are "use it or lose

it” provisions or time limits for spending the funds in most categories and a number of oversight and transparency reporting requirements.

Highways and Bridges

The bill provides \$27.5 billion for highways and bridges. Fifty percent of the money will be distributed to the states based on states’ 2008 share of highway and bridge dollars and 50 percent using the Surface Transportation Program (STP) formula. The funds can be used any STP-eligible project with no state or local match required. The legislation requires that 30 percent of the funds apportioned to each state be sub allocated within a state using the existing STP formula, which distributes funds to areas over 200,000 population, under 200,000 and under 5000. This totals to about \$8 billion. These are the funds that generally county governments will have access to and in large metropolitan areas are programmed by the MPO. Additionally, 3 percent of each state’s share will be available to the Enhancement Program, which counties have often been able to use for their local projects. This totals to about \$800 million. There are several other set asides, including \$310 million for Indian reservation roads and \$170 million national park roads, \$60 million for the Forest Highway Program, \$10 million for Refuge Roads and \$20 million for highway surface transportation and technology training. The remaining \$17.9 will be spent at the discretion of the states. Generally, 50 percent of the highway funds must be obligated within 120 days and 50 percent within one year. The \$8 billion in funds sub allocated have a year to be obligated.

Competitive Grants for Surface Transportation

The bill includes \$1.5 billion for new competitive/discretionary grants to state and local governments for transportation projects. Highways, bridges, transit, rail and ports are eligible. Grants would be made in the \$20 million to \$300 million range and generally need to be completed in three years. Funds must reflect an equitable geographic distribution and balance between addressing urban and rural needs.

Mass Transit

The bill provides \$8.4 billion for mass transit, almost of which goes to local governments and all with a 100 percent federal share. The transit formula program will receive \$6.9 with 80 percent going to urbanized areas (\$5.440 billion), 10 percent to rural areas (\$680) million and 10 percent to high growth and high density regions (\$680 million) and \$100 million for grants to transit agencies to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gases. There is also a set-aside for tribal transit needs. The fixed guideway modernization program will distribute \$750 million in formula grants. For both these formula programs, recipients will have 180 days after grant awards to obligate 50 per cent of the money and two years after the award for the remaining 50 percent. The new starts program will receive \$750 million and priority will be given to projects that are currently under construction or can be obligated within 150 days.

Aviation

The bill provides \$1.1 billion for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), which provides grants to locally owned airports, with a 100 per cent federal share. Unlike the existing AIP program, the spending will be all discretionary rather than formula and must be applied for. Fifty percent of the grants must be awarded within 120 days and the remaining 50 percent within one year.

Rail

The rail section of the bill provides for \$9.3 billion in spending. Amtrak would receive \$850 million for capital projects with priority given to repair, rehabilitation and upgrading of rail infrastructure. An additional \$450 million is provided for security grants. The largest rail funding is \$8 billion for high speed rail. The Secretary of Transportation is given flexibility in allocating these funds with the goal of advancing the deployment of intercity high speed rail service in the United States. It is not clear how these funds are to be spent on upgrading existing rail service versus the development of new high speed rail routes.

NACE/NACo Provide Testimony to House Subcommittee Technology & Innovation

On February 12, the House Committee on Science and Technology's Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation held the first hearing to review the research, development, and deployment activities of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). In his opening remarks, Subcommittee Chairman David Wu (D-OR) said, we must implement the most recent and proven surface transportation technologies to ensure that we are building the highways of the future, not the highways of the past. Wu also commented that in light of the current economic climate, federal investments in surface transportation R&D must be made in as effective and efficient a manner as possible. These new investments must be targeted to overcome the challenges of congestion and surface transportation's impact on the environment. The hearing focused on research priorities to incorporate in the upcoming surface transportation authorization. In 2005, SAFETEA-LU authorized \$2.2 billion dollars through FY09 for research and related programs. There was a consensus amongst the witnesses that for the new authorization: 1) a new transportation research paradigm is necessary; 2) that the new approach must do a better job at measuring outcomes; 3) that technology transfer needs to be a high priority; and 4) that a more integrated-holistic approach is necessary to achieve the best, and most cost-effective R & D program. Testifying at the hearing were: Paul Brubaker, former Administrator of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation; Dr. Elizabeth Deaking, Director of the University of California Transportation Center at the University of California, Berkley; Robert Skinner, Executive Director of the Transportation Research Board); Amadeo Saenz, Executive Director of the Texas Department of Transportation; and David Wise, Acting Director of Physical Infrastructure at the Government Accountability Office. NACE/NACo provided written testimony for the hearing and recommended the below. The full testimony is available on the NACE website www.countyengineers.org

- An increase in funding for the LTAP programs
- Funding and specific direction for the National Highway Institute (NHI) to develop local road components in all their course materials
- Establishment of technology deployment offices in each State Transportation Agency
- A general requirement or statement of policy that all organizations that receive federal funding for R & D must include a component that addresses the needs of local road agencies. If you leave local government deployment out of your efforts you will miss the deployment of new technologies affecting 75 percent of the nation's roads.

Upcoming Web Conference Event: IHSDM Application in Road Safety Audit (RSA)

You are invited to participate in the next scheduled **Interactive Highway Safety Design Model (IHSDM)** web conferencing series event on **Thursday, March 12, 2009**.

Web Conference Details –

IHSDM Application in Road Safety Audit (RSA)

Thursday, March 12, 2009

Start time: 11:00 am (EST)

End time: 12:30 pm (EST)

Registration -

Meeting URL, teleconferencing number and additional instruction will be sent to you after registration. [Please register her by March 11](#) (Registration URL: Link to Register:

http://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/webconference/web_conf_learner_reg.aspx?webConfID=16359)

General Information -

A Road Safety Audit (RSA) is the formal safety performance examination of an existing or future road or intersection by an independent, multidisciplinary team. This web conference will discuss case studies of applying IHSDM to provide quantitative measures of safety issues on the section of roadway on which the RSA was conducted. Also, following lists additional reference and contact information for your future reference:

- For additional information: www.tfrc.gov/safety/ihsdm/ihsdm.htm
- IHSDM Technical Support: IHSDM.Support@fhwa.dot.gov; (202)-493-3407
- To download the 2008 Release (free-of-charge): www.ihsdm.org
- IHSDM Training Course: FHWA-NHI-380071 in NHI catalog at <http://nhi.fhwa.dot.gov>

If you have any questions contact Clayton Chen, Federal Highway Administration Office of Safety R&D, (202) 493-3054 – voice or email: clayton.chen@fhwa.dot.gov

Best Practices for Low-Cost Safety Improvements on Iowa's Local Roads

The Center for Transportation Research and Education at Iowa State University has released a report that explores various maintenance strategies practiced in Iowa to ensure safe travel on low-volume local roads. The report provides photos and narrative on these maintenance practices and references the agencies that apply these techniques. [\[More\]](#)

Winter Roadway Safety Audit Newsletter Available for Viewing

The Winter 2009 edition of the FHWA Road Safety Audit (RSA) newsletter is available for viewing at: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/rsa/newsletter/>

Please send any comments or questions about the newsletter to Becky Crowe, FHWA RSA Program Manager, at Rebecca.Crowe@fhwa.dot.gov.

Development of Performance-Based Guidelines for Selection of Bituminous-Based Hot-Poured Pavement Crack Sealant

The Virginia Transportation Research Council, a partnership of the Virginia Department of

Transportation and the University of Virginia, has released a report that explores the development of a systematic process to aid in the selection of bituminous hot-poured sealants for pavement cracks and joints. [\[More\]](#)

Evaluating Roadway Subsurface Drainage Practices

The Minnesota Department of Transportation has released a report that examines configurations of pavement subsurface drainage systems, and the efficacy of these systems. [\[More\]](#)