

Moving in a New Direction

This year, we have an opportunity to update a national program that has changed little since it was created in the 1950s to build the Interstate highways. The interstate highway system has been completed, but is now starting to crumble, even as rising fuel prices and overburdened highways and public transit systems are causing many Americans to look for better, cheaper and more convenient ways to get around. It's time to imagine a new future for America.



What could this new future look like? Imagine that because of a “fix it first” philosophy, all American bridges are rated safe, roads are better maintained, and cars and trucks experience fewer repairs – lowering costs for drivers and businesses. There’s less chance of being stuck in traffic congestion on your way to work, as people have more transportation options. Light rail trains, streetcars, vanpools and efficient buses run more frequently to shopping centers, major employers and to where people live; and people can inexpensively rent cars or bicycles for a few hours or a day. Increased transportation options also ensure lower-income workers can get to and hold down jobs.

Imagine a system where projects are chosen on merit — not the strength of political connections. Projects are judged on how well they use tax dollars to get people where they need to go, reduce dependence on oil, improve air quality, reduce traffic deaths and injuries and create jobs.

Imagine a future where we’re making great strides towards energy independence. The \$400 billion we once handed over to foreign dictators every year is being invested in our own economy. Investments in public transportation projects have re-energized America’s hard hit construction and manufacturing sectors, putting thousands of engineers, factory workers, accountants and construction workers back to work with new skills they can transfer into other private sector jobs.



**Transportation
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Want to help?
Our website contains re-sources you can use to get involved and make change in your community.
t4america.org



More than four-in-five voters say that “the United States would benefit from an expanded and improved transportation system.”



12 percent of our nation’s bridges are rated “structurally deficient” — the same rating as Minneapolis’ I-35W bridge before its collapse.



Four-in-five voters agree that federal funding to improve and modernize transportation “will boost local economies and create millions of jobs from construction to manufacturing to engineering.”

INVESTING WISELY FOR THE FUTURE

Principles for a new national transportation program

Make it Work



When we invest in transportation, we deserve a system that gets us where we need to go quickly, efficiently and affordably. Our hard-earned tax dollars must be used to ensure we are never stranded without an option.

Public transportation ought to operate on a level playing field with strategic highway investments in terms of timeline, process and construction, and service must be funded at a level that ensures reliability.

A successful program to move our freight as fast and as cleanly as possible would relieve highway congestion, clear our air and create good jobs.

Make It Safe



Our nation's highways are the backbone of our economic competitiveness. For every dollar we spend today on maintenance, we avoid \$14 in future costs. We must ensure that money intended to rehabilitate existing roads, bridges and highways is not siphoned off to other uses. When we fix our

current system, we free up future tax dollars to invest in continued growth and economic competitiveness.

Thousands die driving, walking or biking each year. Our federal dollars should provide safe accommodation for all users of streets and roads.

Make it Accountable



Most Americans think state and local transportation projects are picked based on politics, not merit. According to a Rockefeller Foundation poll, 90 percent of voters believe local regions should have a greater say in how transportation funds are used.

We need to eliminate bureaucratic waste and prioritize more strategic investments to get the “best bang for the buck.”

Citizens are tired of being over-taxed and underserved. By taking a page from the private sector's playbook, our communities can have less traffic and less wasteful misuse of critical infrastructure funding. We can restore citizens' confidence in transportation agencies by doing more with less.

Executive Committee

- Smart Growth America (co-chair)
- Reconnecting America (co-chair)
- Alternatives for Community & Environment
- America Bikes
- American Public Health Association (APHA)
- Apollo Alliance
- LOCUS: Responsible Real Estate Developers and Investors
- National Association of City Transportation Officials
- National Association of Realtors
- National Housing Conference
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- PolicyLink
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
- The Surface Transportation Policy Partnership
- Transit for Livable Communities (Minn.)
- U.S. Public Interest Research Group

Find a full list of our 500+ national, state and local organizations and elected official partners on our website, t4america.org

TRANSPORTATION FOR AMERICA (T4) is the largest, most diverse coalition working on transportation reform today. We believe it is time for a bold new vision — transportation that guarantees our freedom to move however we choose and leads to a stronger economy, greater energy security, cleaner environment and healthier America. We're calling for more responsible investment of our federal tax dollars to create a safer, cleaner, smarter transportation system that works for everyone.