ITE FAST ACT
REAUTHORIZATION
PRINCIPLES

Improving Safety, Increasing Funding, Advancing Technology
Introduction

The current authorizing legislation for federal surface transportation programs, the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Public Law 114-94) expires on September 30, 2020. Work has already begun in Congress on a new surface transportation programs authorizing statute. In order to help inform this process, ITE formed a Reauthorization Task Force consisting of ITE leaders in February 2019. The Task Force was charged with reviewing ITE policies and strategic priorities, and developing the principles, programs, and priorities ITE believes should be reflected in the new statute. The work of the Task Force is reflected in the material in this document, which was adopted by the ITE International Board of Direction in July 2019.

Priorities

ITE supports a combination of existing programs that have proven to be effective, combined with federal leadership to help pursue new principles, programs, and priorities needed to address change and innovation in the transportation landscape. Among the principles outlined in this document, we believe the following three are of the highest priority:

SAFETY
No loss of life on our surface transportation system should be acceptable. In particular, we believe increased attention must be paid to the rising fatalities among vulnerable road users (pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists) and new Safe Systems approaches to the planning, design, and operation of our nation’s transportation system must be adopted. ITE supports the establishment of a new federal initiative dedicated to significantly reducing the number of surface transportation fatalities and injuries, consistent with the philosophy of Vision Zero.

INCREASES IN FUNDING LEVELS
Increases in funding levels are needed to address the backlog of existing needs, to help meet future challenges, and to enable the Highway Trust Fund to meet obligations. Increases in funding are critical to meet the transportation challenges of today and tomorrow. In particular, increased federal-aid funding at the metropolitan level is essential to meet the needs of a growing population, address complex transportation challenges, and support implementation of new technologies. Funding flexibility between capital and operations/maintenance investments is also necessary to support local priorities.

TRANSFORMATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES
Transformational technologies such as connected and automated vehicles, electric vehicles, shared mobility, micro-mobility, and data management and analytics are transforming our communities. Federal leadership is needed to advance the fact-based, accelerated research and testing needed to inform policy so these fast-developing technologies can be deployed in a manner and timeframe that meets our nation’s and communities’ transportation needs.
I. Guiding Principles

- ITE supports a United States national transportation policy that includes long-range goals set by the president and Congress and clear, attainable objectives set by the secretary of transportation.
  - These goals should include those specified in section 150 of Title 23, U.S. Code: safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement and economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and reduced project delivery delays.
  - The goals and objectives should be judged on what they accomplish and contribute toward a safe, effective, equitable, and efficient national intermodal and multimodal transportation system.

- The essence of national transportation policies should be to use the inherent advantages of each mode in pursuit of safe, effective, and efficient movement of persons and goods.

- ITE supports continuation of existing programs consisting of a limited number of broad categories with flexibility to transfer funds between categories based on state or local priorities.
  - Flexibility should also be provided to enable choices between capital and operational/maintenance improvements.
  - Project delivery processes should be further streamlined for safety and operational projects that can provide immediate benefits.

- ITE supports federal leadership to help pursue new priorities needed to address change and innovation in the transportation landscape.
  - These new priorities should include transformational technologies, smart communities, emerging business models, equity, health, and climate change impacts.
  - Federal leadership should include support for future mobility planning—envisioned as a short-range strategic plan—that assesses the current state of knowledge and practice on this changing landscape, evaluates the impact on the MPO region, and proposes possible actions that may include policy, program, and projects.
II. Funding and Finance

- ITE supports a predictable, dependable, and adequate source of transportation funding for all modes that achieves a proper balance among capital, systems management, and operations/maintenance programs for transportation facilities.
- ITE supports increases in current funding levels to address the backlog of existing needs and to help meet future challenges, and to enable the Highway Trust Fund to meet obligations.
  - This should include increases of funding flowing down to the local level in recognition of the population growth in metropolitan areas and the complex transportation issues being addressed there.
  - It should also include investing in sustainable infrastructure to address the backlog of rehabilitation and repairs needed for our interstate highways and bridges.
  - A 20-year strategic funding plan that addresses impacts of automated vehicles and changes in vehicle fuel economies should be considered.
- ITE supports mechanisms that will better diversify national transportation revenue generation
  - Fuel taxes, mileage-based user fees, tolling, congestion pricing, public-private partnerships, bonds, infrastructure banks, carbon-based taxes, federal vehicle registration fees, and use of general fund resources are all viable options.
- ITE supports a cohesive, unified planning strategy for transportation investment
- ITE supports requiring that transportation funding investments be performance based and focused on benefits delivered from documented outcomes of before and after data that accounts for economic, environmental, and social costs
  - Transportation initiatives should be assessed through a set of broad-based performance indicators.
  - This approach should include maintaining the implementation of integrated system performance measures (codified at 23 CFR 490) that can be used for tracking trends and setting benchmarks, and providing affected agencies with the flexibility on how best to meet the economic improvement, health, equity, and other national goals and outcomes.

"ITE supports increases in current funding levels to address the backlog of existing needs...future challenges, and...increases of funding flowing down to the local level."

ITE FAST ACT REAUTHORIZATION PRINCIPLES
III. Safety

- ITE supports the establishment of a new federal initiative dedicated to significantly reducing the number of surface transportation fatalities and injuries, consistent with the philosophy of Vision Zero.

- Vision Zero is built upon a shift in approach from one that accepts a certain amount of traffic deaths and severe injuries to one that is built upon the basis that these deaths and injuries are preventable.

- Surface transportation deaths and injuries should be treated as a major health problem; claiming 40,000 lives and resulting in 4.5 million serious injuries in the United States each year.

- This new initiative should provide guidance and funding to enable the most effective deployment of all of the existing and new tools at our disposal.

- New tools and concepts that should be incorporated in this initiative include new technologies such as connected and automated vehicles, Vision Zero, safe systems principles, complete streets, driver behavior laws, and new data collection and analysis tools, among others.

- ITE supports an increased funding focus on vulnerable users.
  - Particular emphasis is required to address the growing number of pedestrian, bicycle, and motorcycle injuries and fatalities, including the impacts of distracted driving and the increasing proportion of larger vehicles.

- ITE supports restoring the flexibility to use Highway Safety Improvement Program funds...
on any safety project (infrastructure-related or non-infrastructure) that meets the overarching requirement that “the funds be used for safety projects that are consistent with the state’s strategic highway safety plan (SHSP) and that correct or improve a hazardous road location or feature or address a highway safety problem.”

IV. Transportation Planning

- ITE supports continuing the federal requirement for metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) in urbanized areas with population of 50,000 or more. MPOs have shown to be the most effective means of planning for and integrating transportation and community needs.
- ITE supports continuing without change the requirements for performance-based planning and programming.
- ITE supports continuing without change the Planning Factors as enumerated in the FAST Act.
- The Metropolitan Planning programs (FHWA and FTA) should be maintained in its current formula-based apportionment to support the ongoing planning work of the Nation’s MPOs.

Source: People for Public Spaces
V. Transportation Systems Management and Operations

- ITE supports applying a total systems management and operations approach to plan and implement the best combination of capital and operational improvements to improve safety, alleviate congestion, improve reliability, enhance economic vitality, and reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
  - A total systems management and operations approach should break down the barriers between project types and modes, and between capital construction and operations/maintenance improvements.
  - The program should facilitate collaboration between state, regional, urban, and rural investments between combination of capital and operational improvements to improve safety, alleviate congestion, improve reliability, enhance economic vitality, and reduce energy.

- ITE supports appropriating additional money to fund a permanent transportation operations discipline and program at USDOT.
  - This program should assist state and local agencies in determining when to apply their scarce apportioned funds to investments that facilitate effective, efficient, and safe operations on the transportation system.
  - Such a program should focus on supporting private and public sector integration of operations technologies, interstate operations management solutions, and a leadership forum and clearinghouse for operations best practices.

- ITE supports continued funding for the National Operations Center of Excellence.
V. Sustainability

- ITE supports programs to provide mobility while maintaining a balance between the following three pillars of sustainability: social, environmental, and economic considerations.
  - Increased priority should be given to health and equity considerations.
- ITE supports accelerated research to better understand impacts of transportation on climate change and vice-versa.
  - Urges the implementation of measures that can best mitigate such impacts while at the same time enhance the ability to meet other mobility, environmental, and societal goals.
  - Urges that steps be taken to adapt transportation facilities and services to increasing weather extremes and other growing threats from climate change.

VI. Research and Innovation

- ITE supports continued funding for the State Planning and Research Program.
  - The State Planning and Research program should be maintained in its current, formula-based configuration and the 25 percent set-aside for research, development, and technology transfer activities should continue in order for state DOTs to continue their commitments to research and implementation of innovative transportation technologies and processes in across the country.
- ITE supports continued funding for the Transit Cooperative Research Program.
  - Funding for the Freight Cooperative Research Program should be restored.
- ITE supports continued funding for the ITS research programs.
  - These programs should include connected vehicle technology, traffic management center operations, traffic incident management, traffic signal system management, public transit management, and advanced traveler information systems.
  - ITE supports establishment of a strategic research program to support a new federal initiative dedicated to significantly reducing the number of surface transportation fatalities and injuries (see Safety section above).
    - This new program should provide evidence-based research to enable the most effective deployment of all of the existing and new tools and approaches at our disposal, including Vision Zero safe systems, complete streets, driver behavior laws, operational measures, new data collection and analysis tools, and measures to protect the most vulnerable road users.
  - ITE supports establishment of a new strategic research program on transformational technologies in surface transportation.
ITE supports establishment of a new strategic research program on transformational technologies in surface transportation.

- The objective of this new program should be to conduct the fact-based, accelerated research and testing needed to inform policy in order to deploy these fast-developing technologies in a manner and timeframe to meet long-term goals; these goals include increasing safety, reducing congestion, enhancing accessibility, increasing environmental and energy sustainability, and encouraging economic development and equity.

- Transformational technologies included in this research program should include connected and automated vehicles, electric vehicles, shared mobility, micro-mobility, and data management and analytics.

- The ability of state and local agencies to operate and maintain these technologies should also be included in this program.

ITE supports making the deployment of connected and automated vehicle infrastructure needs eligible for federal funding, beyond the historical practice of funding only capital expenses, to include operation and maintenance activities necessary to the proper and safe operation of CAVs.

- Operations and maintenance of CAV systems is different than traditional infrastructure and needs to be treated as such from a procurement, funding, oversight, and perspective.

### VII. Transportation Workforce and Opportunity

ITE supports a federal program to help fill the skills gap in the transportation workforce to enable the nation to pursue new priorities needed to address a changing transportation landscape.

- The program should include provisions for enhancing diversity and inclusion in the transportation workforce.

ITE supports continued funding for the University Transportation Centers program.

- ITE supports continuing federally funded fellowships and grants and state education and training programs.

- ITE supports continued flexibility of federal surface transportation program funds to be eligible for use by state and local transportation agencies.

- ITE supports streamlining of procurement procedures to help ensure opportunity, access, and competition based upon Qualifications Based Selection for all transportation projects.
Acknowledgement

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The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) is an international membership association of transportation professionals who work to improve mobility and safety for all transportation system users and help build smart and livable communities. Through its products and services, ITE promotes professional development and career advancement for its members, supports and encourages education, identifies necessary research, develops technical resources including standards and recommended practices, develops public awareness programs, and serves as a conduit for the exchange of professional information.

Founded in 1930, ITE is a community of transportation professionals including, transportation engineers, transportation planners, consultants, educators, technologists, and researchers. Through meetings, seminars, publications, and a network of nearly 16,000 members working in nearly 90 countries, ITE is your source for expertise, knowledge, and ideas.