

# AASHTO 2021 LEGISLATIVE ACTION AGENDA

## AASHTO'S VISION FOR POLICY

Adopted in October 2019, AASHTO's vision for surface transportation policy recommendations are founded upon transportation serving as the key enabler for a higher purpose: to provide the safest system possible, highest possible quality of life, economic growth, and the most robust economic opportunities for everyone. AASHTO's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan reaffirms this overarching policy vision by calling for Safety, Mobility, and Access for Everyone through achievement of the following objectives:

- ✦ Advance a safe, multimodal transportation system
- ✦ Connect community, economy, land use and the environment
- ✦ Advance equity and social justice
- ✦ Improve asset performance
- ✦ Strengthen resiliency
- ✦ Align transportation interests across partners and regions

## AASHTO'S 2021 POLICY PRIORITIES



### ECONOMIC RECOVERY/STIMULUS



### SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION

## WHAT IS AASHTO?

- The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials—AASHTO—is a 106 year-old nonprofit association of the nation's state departments of transportation (state DOTs).
- AASHTO's membership includes the transportation departments of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Its Board of Directors is composed of CEOs of each state DOT.



## ECONOMIC RECOVERY/STIMULUS

- ★ Investments in highway and transit projects are a critical component of a federal economic recovery package as benefits go well beyond short-term construction jobs created. A well-performing transportation network allows:
  - ★ American families to benefit both as consumers from lower priced goods and as workers by gaining better access to jobs.
  - ★ Businesses to manage inventories and move goods more cheaply, access a variety of suppliers and markets for their products, and get employees reliably to work.
- ★ During the pandemic, a majority of states classified the transportation industry and its workers as essential. This designation demonstrates the important role of state DOTs in sustaining jobs, including in the private sector.
- ★ Providing funding through existing highway and transit formulas is the recommended distribution mechanism, as the existing formulas:
  - ★ Provide economic recovery funding in the quickest, most efficient manner;
  - ★ Are understood by state DOTs and public transportation agencies; and
  - ★ Provide funding to every state and every public transportation agency.
- ★ It is important not to attach unrealistic timelines related to the obligation of economic recovery funding, nor should such funding come with additional federal requirements that delay obligation and expenditure of funds.
  - ★ Focus should be on programs and projects that generate the most benefits through the entire lifecycle of the asset, rather than mandating short spending deadlines which will lead to less efficient use of taxpayer dollars due to project sponsors' inability to address longer-term needs.
- ★ Highway and transit economic recovery funding should be provided at a 100 percent federal share in recognition of the ongoing revenue losses being experienced by state DOTs and public transportation agencies.



## SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION

- ★ AASHTO's core reauthorization principles are:
  - ★ **Timely reauthorization of a long-term bill** to prevent unnecessary program disruptions and delays in safety and mobility benefits to states and communities.
  - ★ **Enact a long-term, sustainable revenue solution to the Highway Trust Fund** to provide multiyear federal funding stability to support state transportation investment needs.
  - ★ **Increase and prioritize formula-based funding to the states** which optimally balances national goals with state and local decision making.
  - ★ **Increase flexibility, reduce program burdens, and improve project delivery** to speed up delivery of transportation investments while protecting the environment and lowering project costs.
  - ★ **Support and ensure state DOTs ability to harness innovation and technology** to achieve a safer and more resilient, efficient, and secure surface transportation system.
- ★ AASHTO members are working on emerging policy areas including:
  - ★ **Performance and asset management** to maximize system-wide efficiency and lifecycle by building upon the MAP-21 performance measures.
  - ★ **Infrastructure resiliency and emergency relief** that utilizes an all-hazards approach to enable flexible solutions for construction, reconstruction, restoration, rehabilitation, and preservation.
  - ★ **Carbon reduction including electric vehicle charging infrastructure** that expands low-carbon travel options and focuses on reduction of tailpipe emissions.
  - ★ **Broadband and other technology deployment in the highway right-of-way** that enables highest and best use of a critical transportation resource owned and operated by state DOTs.
- ★ State DOTs continue advancing a robust multimodal transportation system by:
  - ★ Building, operating, and maintaining a world-class highway system.
  - ★ Investing in public transportation (larger share than federal government) and non-motorized travel modes.
  - ★ Funding 28 intercity passenger rail services that carry approximately one-half of all Amtrak riders nationwide, and supporting the Amtrak Northeast Corridor and National Network.
  - ★ Operating or supporting public transportation systems, short line railroads, airports, and harbors.

# WHAT IS AASHTO?

## AASHTO LEADERSHIP

- 52-member Board of Directors which sets Association policy
- 2020-2021 President: Victoria Sheehan, Commissioner, New Hampshire Department of Transportation
- 2020-2021 Vice President: Shawn Wilson, Secretary, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
- Secretary/Treasurer: Russell McMurry, Commissioner, Georgia Department of Transportation
- Executive Director: Jim Tymon

