



PRIORITIZE METROPOLITAN PLANNING (PL)

The current federal multi-year surface transportation authorization legislation expires on September 30, 2026.

Utah's metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) have jointly developed priorities for a multi-year reauthorization to keep Utah moving, and have identified increasing Metropolitan Planning funding (PL) as their top reauthorization priority.

1 PL funds are the core source of federal financial support for MPOs to conduct transportation planning.

- MPOs use PL to engage stakeholders, analyze/model development and infrastructure scenarios, and determine transportation system enhancement needs – embodied in the [Wasatch Choice Vision](#) and [Utah's Unified Transportation Plan](#).
- Despite their critical role, metropolitan planning funds remain below 1% of total national transportation formula funds (.83%, or \$474M of the total \$56.8B).
- Utah annually receives \$498M in transportation formula dollars, of which PL is \$4.6M (.93% of the Utah total).

2 Planning is the first step and foundation of effective transportation project delivery.

- Planning is key to greater efficiency by: (i) building consensus, (ii) prioritizing the most impactful policies and investments, and (iii) streamlining project development. Strategic planning assures leaders at all levels — federal, state, local, and private — that transportation dollars are invested wisely.

- As Utah grows, planning has become increasingly complex given the growing number of interrelated policy issues associated with maintaining high quality of life. Addressing transportation choices, housing affordability, air quality, and economic development requires more advanced modeling and planning of land use and infrastructure investments, as well as robust community engagement and interagency coordination.

3 Increasing PL funding is particularly important to Utah.

- Utah is a national model for collaborative planning.
- Ensuring adequate PL funding is even more important in fast-growing states like Utah, because we have fallen behind when it comes to federal dollars. Due to outdated funding allocations – based on population data from the 2000s – high-growth states like Utah are not seeing their proportionate share of transportation dollars.
- Utah transportation stakeholders recommend consolidating and streamlining discretionary grant programs created by the IJJA, and refocusing that funding to core formula programs – including PL – which are efficient and predictable. This prudent approach works within existing federal transportation funding levels, as opposed to a topline increase.

"You wouldn't build a house without a blueprint—so why build the transportation networks that connect our communities, drive our economy, and shape our future without one? Planning is that blueprint. It guides every step, aligns investments with local and national priorities, and ensures that every project is designed for long-term success."

- Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations