



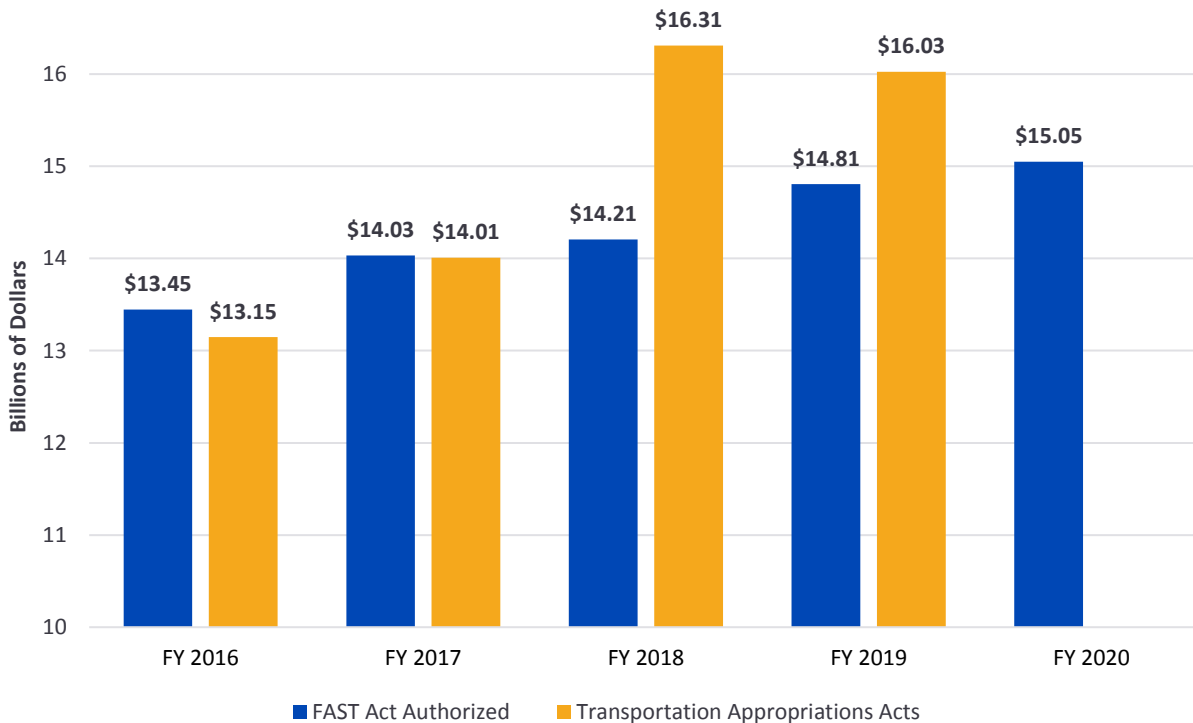
Public Transportation Funding: Increase Critical Investments

Key Points

- **APTA strongly urges Congress to significantly increase public transportation and passenger rail funding.** In the Fiscal Year 2020 Transportation Appropriations bill, Congress should build upon the funding levels provided in recent years and **provide additional funding above levels authorized in the FAST Act for these critical infrastructure investments.**
- **APTA calls on Congress to swiftly enact a bipartisan infrastructure initiative to address the growing demand for safer, better, and more equitable and efficient public transportation and passenger rail.**

Congress passes appropriations acts each year to fund federal public transportation and passenger rail programs authorized by the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). In the appropriations acts, Congress sets an annual obligation limitation for authorized spending from the Highway Trust Fund and appropriates general funds for specific grant programs (e.g., Capital Investment Grants).

Public Transportation and Passenger Rail Funding Levels



Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019

In February 2019, Congress passed, and the President signed, the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019*. The legislation provides more than **\$16 billion** for public transportation and intercity passenger rail, including **\$13.4 billion** for public transportation and **\$2.6 billion** for intercity passenger rail grants in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019. Although these total funding levels are slightly less than the historic FY 2018 funding levels (-\$67 million for public transportation and -\$218 million for intercity passenger rail), they are significant increases over funding in past years and are:

- \$2.0 billion more than the FY 2017 enacted funding levels;
- \$1.2 billion more than the FY 2019 FAST Act authorization levels; and
- \$3.5 billion more than the FY 2019 President's Budget request.

APTA strongly advocated for FY 2019 appropriations to be funded at the highest possible levels for federal public transportation and passenger rail programs.

In addition to these significant funding levels, the Act specifically mandates that the Department of Transportation (DOT) provide funds in an expeditious manner. The legislation provides specific timelines for DOT to issue grant notices and awards for certain programs.

Capital Investment Grants

The legislation provides \$2.6 billion for Capital Investment Grants (CIG) and requires the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to obligate 85 percent of these funds by December 31, 2020. Of the \$2.6 billion, the Act provides \$1.3 billion for New Starts, \$635 million for Core Capacity projects, and \$527 million for Small Starts.

In addition, the legislation specifically requires FTA to administer the CIG program in accordance with the procedural and substantive requirements of current law (49 U.S.C. § 5309). Importantly, the bill prohibits FTA from implementing or furthering new policies detailed in FTA's June 29, 2018 "Dear Colleague" letter to CIG project sponsors. The Administration's Dear Colleague letter established geographic diversity as a factor in FTA funding allocation decisions; considered DOT loans "in the context of" all federal funding sources requested by the project sponsor, and not separate from the federal funding sources; and included other Administration policy objectives. APTA communicated its serious concerns with the CIG policies (as outlined in FTA's letter) to both Congress and the Administration.

BUILD Grants

The Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program (formerly TIGER) provides competitive grants for surface transportation projects, including public transportation and multimodal projects. The legislation provides \$900 million for BUILD grants. The Act requires that DOT ensure equitable geographic distribution of the funds and investment in a variety of transportation modes. One-half (\$450 million) of this funding must be awarded for grants in large urbanized areas (population of 200,000 or more). Moreover, DOT is specifically directed to "not use the Federal share or an applicant's ability to generate non-Federal revenue as a selection criteria in awarding projects."

APTA strongly supports these new BUILD program requirements to restore balance to the BUILD program and ensure that public transportation projects receive a fair percentage of annual grants.