

ACEC

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) expires in September 2026, and Congress should take steps this year to reauthorize and reform federal surface transportation and water infrastructure programs. These critical federal investments facilitate the efficient movement of people and goods, improve safety, provide clean water, and advance new economic development opportunities for our communities.

KEY POINTS

MAINTAIN FUNDING COMMITMENTS

The IIJA provides long-term funding stability to state and local agencies, which enables the planning and delivery of significant and complex infrastructure projects. A new surface transportation bill and reauthorization of water infrastructure programs with at least the same levels of investment, including inflationary increases, will provide the certainty needed to deliver critical projects to the public.

PROMOTE INNOVATION

Emerging technologies, including digital design tools, generative AI, and machine learning are transforming engineering processes by increasing productivity and enhancing precision. Proper contracting and payment structures such as lump sum contracts can support this technological integration by allowing firms more flexibility in resource allocation, optimizing project timelines, and improving cost control. Newer procurement methods like Progressive Design Build and Integrated Project Delivery provide benefits to public agencies, such as financial risk transfer, reduced administrative workload, and enhanced predictability in budgeting and project delivery.

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The proliferation of IIJA grants to local entities created uncertainty around federal procurement rules. The reauthorization bill should clarify the expectation that all grantees comply with long-standing requirements that engineering firms be selected based on their qualifications, experience, and expertise, which leads to lower costs, time savings, and improved project outcomes.

ASSIST LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The IIJA included dozens of new programs that opened new funding opportunities for cities, towns, and municipalities to meet their unique needs. However, the administration of these grants has been slow, in many cases taking 12-18 months to execute project agreements. ACEC supports additional technical assistance and program reforms necessary to get these projects done sooner.

REQUEST

- 1** Sustained long-term funding commitments for roads and bridges, transit systems, rail programs, and drinking water and wastewater systems.
- 2** Provisions to support public agencies utilizing lump sum contracting for engineering services.
- 3** Uniform procurement requirements for all funding recipients to comply with qualifications-based selection of engineering firms.
- 4** Mechanisms to facilitate more efficient local grant administration.