



November 12, 2024

TRANSPORTATION &
INFRASTRUCTURE
SERVICES COMMITTEE



Memorandum

TO: Transportation and Infrastructure Services (TIS) Federal Advocacy Committee Members

FROM: The Honorable Dan Kealey, Chair of TIS
Council Member, Burnsville, MN

RE: 2024 TIS Federal Advocacy Committee Report

On behalf of the NLC Transportation and Infrastructure Services (TIS) Federal Advocacy Committee, I am pleased to present the enclosed TIS Committee report for 2024. This report contains the recommended policy amendments and resolutions from the TIS Committee to the Board of Directors.

The TIS Federal Advocacy Committee will meet in Tampa, Florida, during City Summit on Tuesday, November 12, 2024, from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Tampa Convention Center in Ballroom D.

The primary role of NLC's Federal Advocacy committees is to oversee the regular review and updating of the [National Municipal Policy](#) to ensure that it reflects the view of local officials on current and emerging federal policy issues. Adopted positions are used to guide NLC's federal advocacy efforts, shape public policy debates, and communicate positions with Congress, the Administration, media and other stakeholders. In addition to developing federal policy, the committees serve as advocates on behalf of cities, towns and villages and lead on finding solutions to local challenges.

This year, the TIS Federal Advocacy Committee worked diligently to push for greater attention to rail safety, and we led on the passage of a new resolution by the NLC Board of Directors to affirm that rail safety legislation must be a priority for Congress. Due to recent court cases like *Horton v. Kansas City Southern Railway Company* and *Ohio vs. CSX*, Congress is the only entity with unquestioned authority to improve rail safety in the U.S. We encourage city leaders to continue to join us in working with Congress to pass rail safety legislation this Congress.

The TIS Committee also is preparing to work with Congress to renew the transportation programs cities, towns and villages are now using through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA or Bipartisan Infrastructure Law).

If you have any questions about the proposals in this report, please feel free to contact me, any member of the Committee, or the NLC staff contact for the Committee, Brittney Kohler at kohler@nlc.org. It has been an honor to serve as the TIS Committee Chair this year. I look forward to seeing you soon!

Transportation and Infrastructure Services (TIS) Committee Agenda

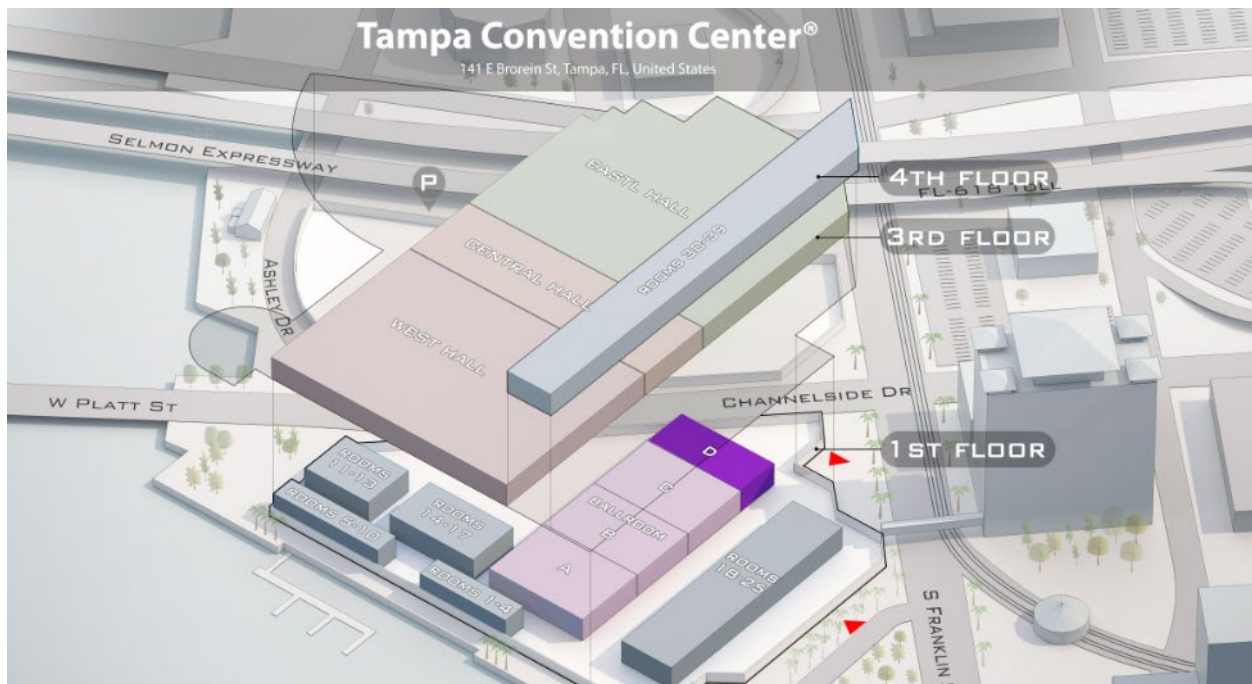
Tuesday, November 12, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Location: Tampa Convention Center, Ballroom D

<p>12:30 – 12:40 p.m.</p>	<p>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND CHAIR’S REPORT</p> <p>The Honorable Dan Kealey <i>Chair of TIS and Council Member, Burnsville, MN</i></p>
<p>12:40 – 1:10 p.m.</p>	<p>TAMPA’S MOBILITY AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS USING FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS AND LOCAL AMBITION</p> <p>Moderated by: The Honorable Vanessa Fuentes <i>Vice Chair of TIS and Council Member, Austin, TX</i></p> <p>The Honorable Luis Viera <i>Councilman, City of Tampa</i></p> <p>Vik Bhide <i>Mobility Director, City of Tampa</i></p>
<p>1:10 – 1:50 p.m.</p>	<p>DISSECTING THE STATE TRANSPORTATION LABYRINTH—AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR FEDERAL REAUTHORIZATION</p> <p>Moderated by: The Honorable Toby Barker <i>Vice Chair of TIS and Mayor, Hattiesburg, MS</i></p> <p>Adie Tomer <i>Senior Fellow, Brookings Metro</i></p> <p>Benjamin Swedberg <i>Research Assistant, Brookings Metro</i></p>
<p>1:50 – 2:10 p.m.</p>	<p>COMMITTEE DISCUSSION: LOCAL REFLECTIONS ON FEDERAL AND STATE INFRASTRUCTURE PROCESSES</p> <p>Moderated by: The Honorable Dan Kealey <i>Chair of TIS and Council Member, Burnsville, MN</i></p>

2:10 – 2:30 p.m.	<p>FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION STRATEGY AND GAMEPLAN FOR 2025</p> <p>Report Out on Local Transportation Coalition Meeting:</p> <p>The Honorable Martha Castex Tatum <i>Vice Chair of TIS and Mayor Pro Tem and Council Member, Houston, TX</i></p> <p>Report on Transportation Reauthorization Process and Congressional Outlook:</p> <p>Brittney Kohler <i>Legislative Director for Transportation & Infrastructure, Federal Advocacy, NLC</i></p>
2:30 p.m.	ADJOURN

MEETING LOCATION MAP



SAVE THE DATE

***NLC Congressional City Conference
Marriott Marquis Hotel – Washington, DC
March 8-12, 2025***

***City Summit
Salt Lake City, UT
November 19-22, 2025***

Enclosures

- City Summit Infrastructure Highlights
- Share How to Reach New Members of Congress
- NLC Joint Letter to Congress on Emergency Disaster Response
- Procedures for the Adoption of National Municipal Policy and Resolutions
- TIS Proposed Policy Amendments to the NLC National Municipal Policy
- TIS Proposed Resolutions for 2025
- Rail Safety in Communities Across the U.S.
- Rail Roundtable Features New Long Train and Blocked Crossing Report
- 2024 Transportation and Infrastructure Services (TIS) Committee Roster
- Local Infrastructure Hub – Grant Trainings

City Summit Infrastructure Highlights

Wednesday, 11/13

9:00 am – 12:00 pm – Port Tampa Bay by Water Mobile Tour

9:00 am – 12:00 pm – Tampa’s Historic Streetcar Mobile Tour

9:00 am – 12:00 pm – Vision Zero: Making Tampa’s Roads Safer Mobile Tour

11:15 am- 12:00 pm - Empowering Cities: How Technology Drives Safety and Equity on Our Roads - Solution Session

12:15 pm- 1:30 pm - Winning Strategies for Small Cities to Secure Grant Funding Luncheon (Invite Only for Cities Under 25K in population; RSVP Required, Contact Marshall@nlc.org)

3:45 pm- 4:45 pm - Drones and Electric Taxis Taking Off: Roundtable Discussion of the NLC Aviation Advisory Forum

Thursday, 11/14

8:00 am- 9:00 am - NLC Rail Roundtable

10:45 am- 12:15 pm - The Future of Work: Preparing Your Community

1:30 pm – 4:30 pm – Port Tampa Bay by Water Mobile Tour Mobile Tour

1:30 pm – 4:30 pm – Tampa Riverwalk (featuring their BUILD Grant) Mobile Tour

2:00 pm- 3:30 pm - Climate-Ready Futures I: City Profiles in Action

2:00 pm- 3:30 pm - Creating Community Opportunity Through Cybersecurity

3:45- 5:15 pm - Climate-Ready Futures II: Financing Infrastructure & Community Initiatives

9:00 pm - Celebrate Infrastructure: An Evening to Celebrate the Success of BIL and IRA for Cities

Friday, 11/15

9:00 am – 12:00 pm –Tampa International Airport Expansion Mobile Tour

9:00 am – 12:00 pm – Tampa Riverwalk (featuring their BUILD Grant) Mobile Tour

3:00 pm- 4:30 pm - The Nuts & Bolts: AI in Municipal Government

3:00 pm- 4:30 pm - Get Current with New Drinking Water Regulations

Saturday, 11/16

9:00 am- 10:30 am - Technical Assistance Showcase (Learn about the Local Infrastructure Hub, Energy Ready, & EJ TCTAC)

10:45 am- 12:15 pm - Community Resilience & Grid Reliability in a Clean Energy Economy

Add Your Name to NLC Joint Letter to Congress on Emergency Disaster Response

We invite state and local elected officials to join a sign-on letter by NLC and other organizations **urging Congress to swiftly pass a comprehensive, clean emergency disaster supplemental bill.** You can find the full letter [here](#) or PDF [here](#).



DEADLINE TO SIGN-ON: NOV. 13 at midnight.

LETTER TEXT:

November 13, 2024

Dear Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Speaker Johnson, and Leader Jeffries,

Thank you for your leadership in passing recent legislation that provided initial Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster relief funding. While this funding was critical in the preparation for and response to Hurricanes Helene and Milton, it will run out soon.

Therefore, we, the [XX] undersigned state and local elected officials **urge Congress to swiftly pass a comprehensive, clean emergency disaster supplemental appropriations bill.** This bill is essential to fund the recovery from more than 160 major disaster declarations since 2023 that have impacted communities across America.

State and local governments, which are on the front lines of disaster response and recovery, require comprehensive federal support and funding to rebuild and recover from all major natural disasters since 2023. Additional funding should also help communities prepare for and respond to the unprecedented and increasingly severe natural disasters nationwide.

We believe the emergency disaster supplemental appropriations should:

- Fully fund FEMA's recovery efforts for recent and future disasters, which will provide essential support for rebuilding and recovery;
- Replenish the Small Business Administration Disaster Assistance Loan Program to help business owners and homeowners rebuild;
- Ensure funding for the Economic Development Administration's on-the-ground response programs;
- Refill the U.S. Department of Transportation Emergency Relief highway and transit funds and provide flexibility to rebuild any road that allows residents to return to their homes and work;
- Provide funding to support long-term recovery efforts through Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Resilience program, which is essential for helping communities sustainably rebuild their infrastructure, housing and economy; and,

- Increase funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for families and children impacted by major national disasters since 2023.

Congress should also allow flexibility of funding for local governments to address the specific recovery needs of their communities.

We urge Congress to act quickly to ensure that every community has the resources to recover and rebuild in the wake of devastation. This funding is not merely a matter of good economic policy, but a fundamental obligation of the federal government to deliver support for our mutual constituents who depend on these resources in their most vulnerable times of need.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. As governors, mayors and council members who are a part of Climate Mayors—a bipartisan network of over 350 mayors committed to climate action; the National League of Cities, representing 19,000 cities, towns and villages nationwide; U.S. Conference of Mayors, representing over 1,400 cities with populations of 30,000 or more; and C40 Cities, a network of mayors from nearly 100 world-leading cities, including 14 in the United States, **we ask for your leadership in passing a clean, disaster emergency supplemental bill as soon as possible.** Our communities cannot wait any longer.

Sincerely,

[GOVERNORS, MAYORS, AND CITY COUNCIL]

Share How to Reach New Members of Congress

As a NLC member, you are likely already in touch with your new Members of Congress and their key staff. If you have a relationship with your Senator or Representative or their staffers, sharing that confidentially with NLC's advocacy team here can help us connect with them early in 2025 as the new Congress gets started. We will also be able to update you on priority issues for your Members of Congress in the future.

Instructions: Scan this code to go to the Quorum online form and share your insights with NLC staff! Link - nlc.quorum.us/campaign/log_relationship



Procedures for the Adoption of National Municipal Policy and Resolutions

City Summit -Tampa, Florida, November 2024

The National Municipal Policy (NMP) is NLC's comprehensive, standing statement of goals, principles, policies and program objectives on federal policy issues directly affecting or of concern to cities, towns and villages. The NMP serves as the basis for NLC's federal advocacy efforts on behalf of the nation's cities, towns and villages. The policy is subject to annual modification by delegates from direct member cities and state municipal leagues at the Annual Business Meeting during City Summit.

Since membership amends the NMP once each year, amendments to the policy typically do not endorse or oppose specific congressional bills, current presidential positions or technical aspects of federal regulations. Instead, positions on such timely matters – which are subject to major changes during the annual legislative and administrative processes – are the subject of NLC resolutions that stand for one year, from their time of passage until the adjournment of the next City Summit.

Direct member cities of NLC and state municipal leagues were invited to submit policy amendments and resolutions by July 7, 2024 for consideration by one of the seven Federal Advocacy Committees. The designated committee has the option of endorsing, amending or rejecting the submittal.

At least two weeks prior to the City Summit, proposed policy amendments and resolutions for 2025 are published on the NLC website and an announcement is sent to all NLC members. The proposed resolutions book for 2025 can be found [here](#). These proposals are subject to change by the Resolutions Committee at City Summit prior to the Annual Business Meeting.

Federal Advocacy Committees

NLC's seven Federal Advocacy Committees manage NLC's National Municipal Policy and Resolutions. At the Congressional Cities Conference (CCC) in March, the Federal Advocacy Committees set agendas for the year. The Committees meet routinely, during the course of the year, to explore topics within their portfolio, engage in advocacy efforts, share best practices and develop policy and resolutions recommendations.

NLC's Federal Advocacy Committees met in person and virtually prior to City Summit to finalize their recommendations for policy amendments and resolutions. During these Federal Advocacy Committee meetings, any policy amendments or resolutions submitted to NLC by the July 7, 2024 submission deadline were considered. Committees had the option of endorsing or rejecting those submittals. Adoption of recommendations is by a majority vote of Federal Advocacy Committee members present and voting. Proxies are not permitted.

Resolutions Committee Meeting: Tuesday, November 12

Proposals approved by the Federal Advocacy Committees are forwarded to the NLC Resolutions Committee for consideration. The Resolutions Committee will meet during City Summit on **Tuesday, November 12 at 10:15 AM in the Tampa Marriott Water Street, Grand Ballroom Salon ABCDE, 2nd Floor**. The Federal Advocacy Committee chairs will report the recommendations of their respective committees to the Resolutions Committee members. The Resolutions Committee consists of the NLC Board of Directors plus representatives appointed by state municipal leagues whose states are not represented on the Board of Directors.

The Resolutions Committee will also consider any appeals from sponsors of proposals that were previously rejected by a Federal Advocacy Committee, as long as these were submitted by the July 7, 2024 deadline. Proposals introduced by members of the Resolutions Committee are also eligible for review.

Only members of the Resolutions Committee can participate and vote in this meeting. Speakers recognized during the meeting by the Chair may include Resolutions Committee members, Federal Advocacy Committee chairs or their designees, and sponsors of appealed policy recommendations. Decisions will be made by a majority vote of the members present. Proxies are not permitted.

The Resolution Committee Official Rules of Conduct and the NLC Bylaws shall govern the conduct of the Resolutions Committee meeting. In the event that procedural matters arise that are not addressed by the Official Rules or Bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 12th Edition shall govern the conduct of the meeting.

Annual Business Meeting: Saturday, November 16

Resolutions Committee actions are referred to the Annual Business Meeting for consideration and adoption by the voting delegates. The report of the Resolutions Committee will include only recommended policy amendments and resolutions. The Annual Business Meeting will be held during City Summit on **Saturday, November 16 at 2:45 PM in the Tampa Convention Center, Ballroom C, 1st Floor**.

To cast a vote at the Annual Business Meeting, all voting or alternate delegates must be present and registered with the Credentials Committee and must have official voting materials. Each direct member city has a certified voting delegate, or alternate, who is entitled to vote at the Annual Business Meeting. The delegate may cast a certain number of votes based upon the direct member city's population, determined by the 2020 U.S. Census; member cities may not split their votes. Each state municipal league is entitled to cast a total of 20 votes by its delegate or delegates, and those votes may be split and distributed at the discretion of each state municipal league. Voting delegates must be present to vote. Proxies are not permitted.

After a brief presentation of the Resolutions Committee's report, the Annual Business Meeting's Presiding Officer will call for adoption of NMP amendments and resolutions as proposed by the Resolutions Committee. Amendments to each chapter will be considered in the order in which those chapters appear in the NMP. Motions from the floor to amend the Resolutions

Committee's recommendations require a majority vote for passage. Final adoption of amendments to the NMP requires a two-thirds vote of voting delegates.

Voting delegates may submit a petition for policy proposals to the NLC Federal Advocacy team by **10:00 AM on the day of the Annual Business Meeting** to the **NLC Policy Office in the Tampa Convention Center, Meeting Room 419, 4th Floor**. Petitions must carry the text of the proposal and printed names, titles and signatures of 10 certified voting delegates with their respective cities and states. The petition must receive a majority vote of the voting delegates to be accepted for floor consideration and require a two-thirds vote for final approval. Petitioners should complete the packet that can be found [here](#).

The Official Rules of Conduct and the NLC Bylaws shall govern the conduct of the Annual Business Meeting. In the event that procedural matters arise that are not addressed by the Official Rules or Bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 12th Edition shall govern the conduct of the meeting.

For further information about this process prior to City Summit or to contact the NLC staff for a Federal Advocacy Committee, contact Dion Taylor at 202-626-3064 or taylor@nlc.org.

During City Summit, please contact the Federal Advocacy staff at the Policy Office located in the Tampa Convention Center, Meeting Room 419, 4th Floor.

TIS Proposed Policy Amendments to the NLC National Municipal Policy

Only sections of the *NLC National Municipal Policy (NMP)* where modifications are proposed are reproduced in this report. The complete text of the current *NMP*, divided into seven policy chapters, can be found at nlc.org/national-municipal-policy

Please note:

- Proposed new language is underlined;
- Proposed language for deletion is struck out; and
- Existing, unchanged language is shown as plain text.

Policy:

- **5.05 Rail**
 - D. Rail Safety

1 **Section 5.05 Rail**

2 D. Rail Safety

3 American deaths and serious injuries by rail have plateaued despite efforts by FRA and railroad
4 operators. NLC calls on FRA and the Surface Transportation Board to continue to regulate safety
5 using existing structures and legal options to follow through on modern safety practices and
6 using policy tools, including incentives and penalties.

7 NLC urges the FRA to redouble its attention to the safety and mobility challenges that result
8 from capital and operational decisions such as the running of longer trains. The FRA should be
9 allowed to conduct outreach and receive information regarding blocked crossings and act on that
10 information. The federal government require rail operators to introduce technology solutions
11 where train length and/or frequency impair the safety, mobility and/or pedestrian connectivity of
12 communities on the project corridor.

13 NLC urges Congress to review the following rail safety issues:

- 14 1. *Pedestrian Safety:* Increased attention is needed for pedestrian fatalities at rail crossings and
15 reasons for trespassing along railroad right of way so that solutions can be identified;
 - 16 2. *Local Access:* Requirements to close multiple rail crossings to receive agreement for support
17 on isolated new investments in safe overpasses, underpasses, pedestrian bridges is unnecessary
18 and unsafe;
 - 19 3. *Blocked Crossings:* The increasing length of freight trains poses a safety hazard to communities
20 which lack grade separations for emergency responders and other vehicular traffic, and safety
21 standards should be established for the maximum length of time and reoccurrence of blocked
22 crossing with appropriate consequences for failure;
 - 23 4. *Technology for Prevention:* NLC supports the continued implementation of advanced rail
24 safety systems and FRA should review the effectiveness of a new range of warning devices
25 and strategies as well as work with FHWA on intelligent crossings that combine highway
26 warning systems with railroad systems to ensure safety on rail lines;
 - 27 5. *Communication:* NLC urges the federal government to direct the FRA to establish direct and
28 transparent channels of communication between host railroads, operators and local
29 governments through which to address safety issues and incidents and pursue productive
30 collaboration between railroads and operators as needed to reduce conflicts, as well as deaths
31 and fatalities related to rail lines. For example, local first responders must have clarity on the
32 train consist when responding to an emergency derailments especially with toxic substances.
 - 33 6. *Maintenance:* Lack of railroad maintenance jeopardizes safety. The closure of poorly
34 maintained crossings, rail cars and infrastructure cause congestion on remaining crossings and
35 derailments putting operators and passengers of motor vehicles at a greater risk;
 - 36 7. *Hazardous Goods Movement and Local Response Capabilities:* The proximity, switching and
37 storage of railroad cars containing volatile and hazardous materials in and through urban and
38 residential neighborhoods is concerning, and more support and collaboration is needed for
39 local first responders to receive hazardous materials response training along all train routes;
 - 40 8. *Crew size:* The hazard of reduced crews undermines the safe and efficient movement of trains
41 and puts local first responders in unsafe situations during rail incidents and accidents.
- 42

43 American deaths and serious injuries by rail have plateaued despite efforts by FRA and railroad
44 operators. NLC calls on FRA and the Surface Transportation Board to continue to regulate safety
45 using existing structures and legal options to follow through on modern safety practices and
46 using policy tools, including incentives and penalties.

47 American deaths and serious injuries by rail have plateaued despite efforts by FRA and railroad
48 operators. NLC calls on FRA and the Surface Transportation Board to continue to regulate safety
49 using existing structures and legal options to follow through on modern safety practices and
50 using policy tools, including incentives and penalties.

51 NLC urges the FRA to redouble its attention to the safety and mobility challenges that result
52 from capital and operational decisions such as the running of longer trains. The FRA should
53 conduct a study including local impact data from rail. The federal government require rail
54 operators to introduce technology solutions where train length and/or frequency impair the
55 safety, mobility and/or pedestrian connectivity of communities on the project corridor.

56 NLC urges Congress to review the following rail safety issues:

- 57 • ~~Local Access:~~ Requirements to close multiple rail crossings to receive agreement for
58 support on isolated new investments in safe overpasses, underpasses, pedestrian bridges is
59 unnecessary and unsafe;
- 60 • ~~Blocked Crossings:~~ The increasing length of freight trains poses a safety hazard to
61 communities which lack grade separations for emergency responders and other vehicular
62 traffic, and safety standards should be established for the maximum length of time and
63 reoccurrence of blocked crossing with appropriate consequences for failure;
- 64 • ~~Technology for Prevention:~~ NLC supports the continued implementation of rail safety
65 systems, such as positive train control (PTC) systems, to ensure safety on passenger rail
66 lines to limit injuries and derailments;
- 67 • ~~Communication:~~ NLC urges the federal government to direct the FRA to establish direct
68 and transparent channels of communication between host railroads, operators and local
69 governments through which to address safety issues and incidents and pursue productive
70 collaboration between railroads and operators as needed to reduce conflicts, as well as
71 deaths and fatalities related to rail lines. For example, local first responders must have
72 clarity on the train consist when responding to an emergency derailments especially with
73 toxic substances.
- 74 • ~~Maintenance:~~ Lack of railroad maintenance jeopardizes safety. The closure of poorly
75 maintained crossings, rail cars and infrastructure cause congestion on remaining crossings
76 and derailments putting operators and passengers of motor vehicles at a greater risk;
- 77 • ~~Hazardous goods:~~ The proximity, switching and storage of railroad cars containing volatile
78 and hazardous materials in and through urban and residential neighborhoods;
- 79 • ~~Crew size:~~ The hazard of reduced crews undermines the safe and efficient movement of
80 trains and puts local first responders in unsafe situations during rail incidents and accidents.

TIS Proposed Resolutions for 2025

NLC Resolutions are annual statements of position that sunset at the end of the calendar year unless action is taken. The committee must review each of the 2024 resolutions that originated in the TIS Committee to determine recommendations for 2025. The committee has the following options:

1. Renew the resolution for the coming year (with or without edits)
2. Incorporate the resolution into permanent policy; or
3. Let the resolution expire.

The TIS resolutions that were approved for 2024 at City Summit with recommendations for 2025 are:

Resolution	TIS Committee Recommendation
NLC RESOLUTION: CITIES, TOWNS, AND VILLAGES CALL ON CONGRESS TO PARTNER WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ON INFRASTRUCTURE REBUILDING FOR NATIONAL RESULTS	Renew with edits
NLC RESOLUTION: LOCAL LEADERS CALL ON CONGRESS TO PASS THE RAILWAY SAFETY ACT (S.576/H.R.1674) TO SUPPORT AMERICA’S FIRST RESPONDERS AND KEEP TRAINS MOVING SAFELY IN COMMUNITIES	Renew with edits

Below is the full text of the final resolutions as agreed to by the Committee during our October review, discussion and vote.

1 **AMERICA’S CITIES, TOWNS, AND VILLAGES CALL ON CONGRESS TO**
2 **PARTNER DIRECTLY WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ON INFRASTRUCTURE**
3 **REBUILDING FOR NATIONAL RESULTS**
4

5 **WHEREAS**, the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) became law on
6 November 15, 2021, and Congress authorized \$1.2 trillion for transportation and infrastructure
7 with a historic increase to local government access to federal grant programs to rebuild and
8 reimagine America’s essential infrastructure; and
9

10 **WHEREAS**, the IIJA has so far provided \$461 billion to over 60,000 projects including more
11 than 2,500 local infrastructure projects that have competitively applied and were awarded
12 infrastructure funding for important local projects that align with federal goals such as the Safe
13 Streets and Roads for All (Safe Streets) which addresses America’s road safety crisis; and
14

15 **WHEREAS**, local governments are substantial owners and major investors in America’s full
16 transportation network – including 77.4% of the nation’s highway lane mileage, 50% of the
17 nation’s bridges, and 46% of urban and rural transit providers – and value the opportunity to
18 become an effective infrastructure partner with the federal government while also growing
19 regional partnerships with our metropolitan and rural transportation planning organizations as
20 well as increasing collaboration with our state partners; and
21

22 **WHEREAS**, the economic potential of the nation’s cities, towns, and villages relies on a safe
23 and efficient multimodal network of locally owned and operated roads, bridges, transit, rail,
24 sidewalks, trails, airports and ports built on strong transportation plans from the local and
25 regional level and intersecting with state and national systems; and
26

27 **WHEREAS**, while America’s \$3.7 trillion infrastructure funding gap will shrink by the
28 combined federal, state and local infrastructure efforts underway, the U.S. still needs to maintain
29 IIJA levels to close the gap in poor infrastructure systems and ease the economic drag on
30 American households and major economic sectors from manufacturing to agriculture.
31

32 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that NLC urges the federal government to
33 prioritize continued infrastructure partnership with America’s cities, towns, and villages through
34 direct, regional and flexible programs that are positioned to meet our shared transportation needs;
35 and
36

37 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that local leaders encourage the U.S. Department of
38 Transportation (USDOT) and all regional offices to continue to provide robust technical
39 assistance to local governments to navigate the federal programs and provide timely clarity on
40 the federal infrastructure process from competition to completion of projects that will serve the
41 transportation system as a whole; and
42

43 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on our state and regional partners – such as
44 state departments of transportation, rural and metropolitan planning organizations, transit, port
45 and airport authorities – for greater commitments to infrastructure collaboration with cities,

46 towns, and villages on the rebuilding and reimagining necessary to complete thousands of
47 projects and to providing sustainable funding structures; and

48
49 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that local government leaders call for federal agencies and
50 state governments to improve their public infrastructure information on all programs and
51 projects, enhance community engagement processes for today’s busy yet connected public, and
52 develop greater collaborative partnerships with regional entities on connected networks to
53 achieve safety and efficiency outcomes; and

54
55 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that America’s local governments continue to urge USDOT
56 and states to expedite and right-size the federal processes for infrastructure projects – especially
57 those projects that are relatively small, supplementary to existing right-of-way, environmentally
58 beneficial, and safety-related to ensure effective delivery of projects that benefit all Americans;
59 and

60
61 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that local governments support effective oversight of major
62 federal programs by Congress and independent experts, like the National Transportation Safety
63 Board, to meet the expectations of American taxpayers who expect a safe, consistent and
64 competitive infrastructure network; and

65
66 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC supports continuing to move toward an outcome-
67 based transportation structure where the goals of the federal programs align with each region’s
68 goals for economic development, sustainability, safety, innovation, equity, and regional
69 connectivity which serve America’s residents and economic vitality.

70

71 **LOCAL LEADERS CALL ON CONGRESS TO PASS RAILWAY SAFETY**
72 **LEGISLATION (S.576 and H.R.8996) TO SUPPORT AMERICA’S FIRST**
73 **RESPONDERS AND KEEP TRAINS MOVING SAFELY IN COMMUNITIES**
74

75 **WHEREAS**, freight rail policy is primarily overseen by Congress, yet rail safety is a concern for
76 all levels of government and residents in more than 12,000 of America’s cities, towns and
77 villages across the country living next to the 140,000-mile rail network; and
78

79 **WHEREAS**, more than 4,000 trains have derailed since 2020 with nearly 70 percent of
80 derailments happening in cities, and recent concerning derailments include: Matteson, IL;
81 Niagara Falls, NY, Bethlehem, PA; Adrian, OH; Grants, NM and Holbrook, AZ; Big Lake, MN;
82 Fargo, ND and many others; and
83

84 **WHEREAS**, derailments have not substantially decreased despite railroads running less but
85 longer trains so trains are more likely to derail carrying hazardous materials that are highly
86 explosive increasing the risk to the communities they pass through; and
87

88 **WHEREAS**, the Norfolk Southern derailment in East Palestine, OH, in 2023 was among the
89 worst train spills in U.S. history which are consistently occurring including Dunsmuir, CA
90 (1991); Superior, WI (1992); Minot, ND (2002); Paulsboro, NJ (2012); and Custer, WA (2020);
91 and
92

93 **WHEREAS**, three times every day America’s local first responders may be called on to be the
94 first line of defense for local communities when a train leaves its tracks with potentially
95 devastating consequences, particularly when trains are carrying hazardous materials; and
96

97 **WHEREAS**, local governments employ, train and prepare critical first responders nationally
98 from limited local budgets for all types of emergency response including hazardous material
99 spills from train derailments but also blocked crossing incidents in addition to all the essential
100 community public safety tasks they must perform;
101

102 **WHEREAS**, the ongoing costs to respond to the East Palestine derailment have surpassed \$1.1
103 billion, but even low-speed train derailments in rail yards create safety issues with over 300
104 deaths and injuries reported and over a billion dollars in damages reported in the last decade;
105

106 **WHEREAS**, Congress remains responsible for rail interstate commerce safety and failure to
107 update and improve rail safety practices is becoming an unnecessary financial burden on local
108 governments who are bearing the costs of emergency response for derailments but also economic
109 losses from extensive blocked crossings;
110

111 **WHEREAS**, America’s local governments recognize that rail is an essential public
112 infrastructure that can be a safe method to transport sensitive materials when proper maintenance
113 and training for staff is consistently prioritized and that railroads and their shareholders benefit
114 financially when trains stay on their tracks and continue operating safely.
115

116 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that America’s local governments call on
117 Congress to pass bipartisan rail safety legislation (S.576 and H.R.8996) before Congress recesses
118 this December, and address the impact of train derailments on the lives of America’s local first
119 responders, the unnecessary costs being passed along to local government budgets of all sizes,
120 and the safety of communities in their districts; and

121
122 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Congress should immediately allow the Federal Railroad
123 Administration to collect and act on data provided to them by local officials and members of the
124 public related to blocked crossings which have led to children climbing over blocked trains and
125 ambulances and firefighters being prevented from reaching residents in emergencies costing
126 lives; and

127
128 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Congress should immediately enable the Federal Railroad
129 Administration to fulfill the rail safety recommendations provided by the experts from the
130 National Academies’ Transportation Research Board Committee report on long trains as well as
131 the National Transportation Safety Board’s findings report on East Palestine, OH, and previous
132 train derailments recommendations like expediting the removal of DOT-111 tank cars from use
133 in the U.S. for the safety of the American public among many others; and

134
135 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Congress should continue to seek expert advice from the
136 National Transportation Safety Board on behalf of the American people to continuously respond
137 to transportation safety emergencies, review the data and science behind transportation deaths
138 and incidents objectively, and make appropriate recommendations.



Rail Safety in Communities Across the U.S.

More than 12,000 cities, towns and villages across the country are impacted by our nation's 140,000-mile rail network crossing through neighborhoods and downtowns. Rail policy is primarily overseen by Congress, yet rail safety is a concern for all levels of government and residents in communities across the country.

Unfortunately, more than 4,000 trains have derailed since 2020 with nearly 70 percent of derailments happening in cities. Train derailments, like the catastrophic Norfolk Southern derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, are not isolated incidents. Recently, derailments have happened in places like: Matteson, IL; Niagara Falls, NY, Bethlehem, PA; Adrian, OH; Grants, NM and Holbrook, AZ; Springfield, OH; and Fargo, ND; Bike Lake, MN to name only a few. Despite railroads running less but longer trains, derailments have not substantially decreased so trains are more likely to derail carrying hazardous materials that are highly explosive increasing the risk to the communities they pass through.

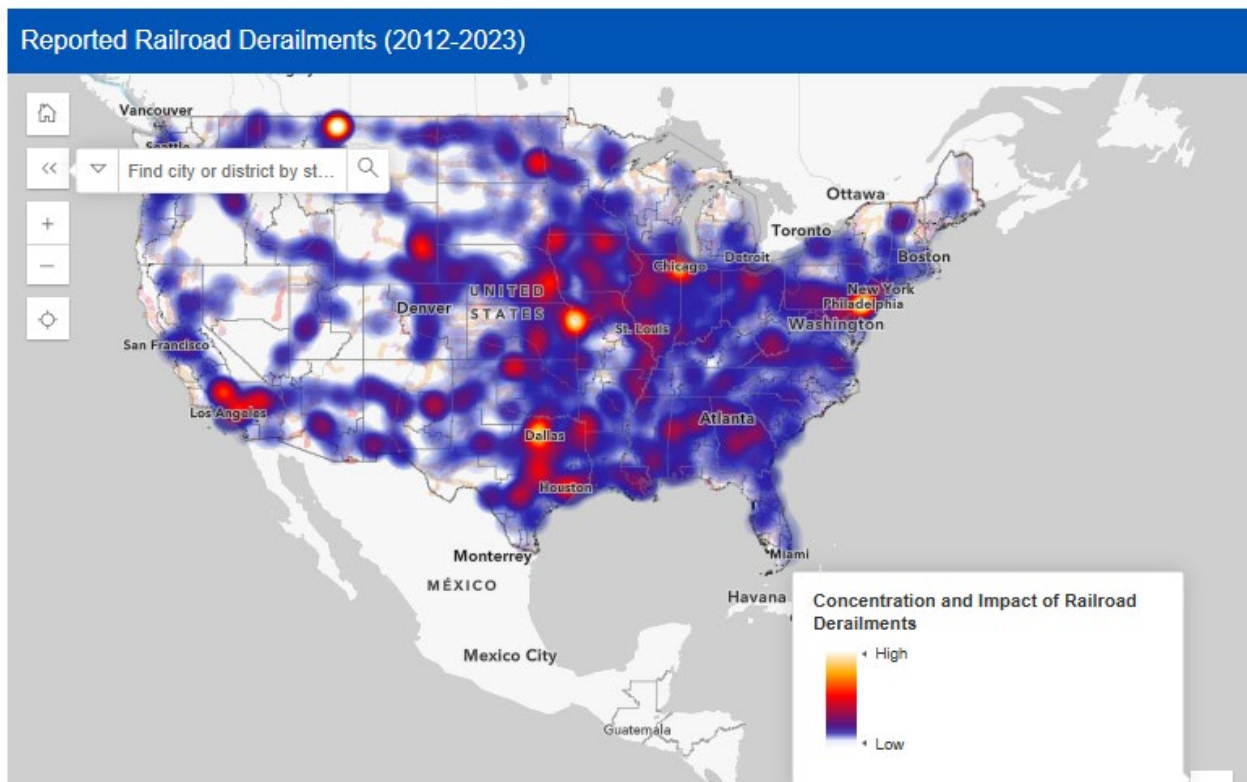
In response to the frequency of rail safety issues and the derailment in East Palestine, OH, both the Senate and House are currently considering legislation to make rail transportation safer. The bipartisan **Railway Safety Act of 2023 (S.576/ H.R.1674)** and the new **Railway Safety Enhancement Act (H.R.8996)** have had strong bipartisan support as well as the ongoing support of both President Biden and former President Trump. America's cities, small towns, governors, counties, first responders, and railroad customers have spent the last year sharing with Congress how helpful the bipartisan legislation would be for safety. Now, the Federal Railroad Administration testified to Congress that they see stagnation in railroads' safety performance. Due to recent court cases like *Horton v. Kansas City Southern Railway Company* and *Ohio vs. CSX*, Congress is the only entity with unquestioned authority to improve rail safety in the U.S. Rail safety is a priority for the National League of Cities, and we encourage you to join us in working with Congress to pass rail safety legislation this Congress.

Rail Safety Facts to Know

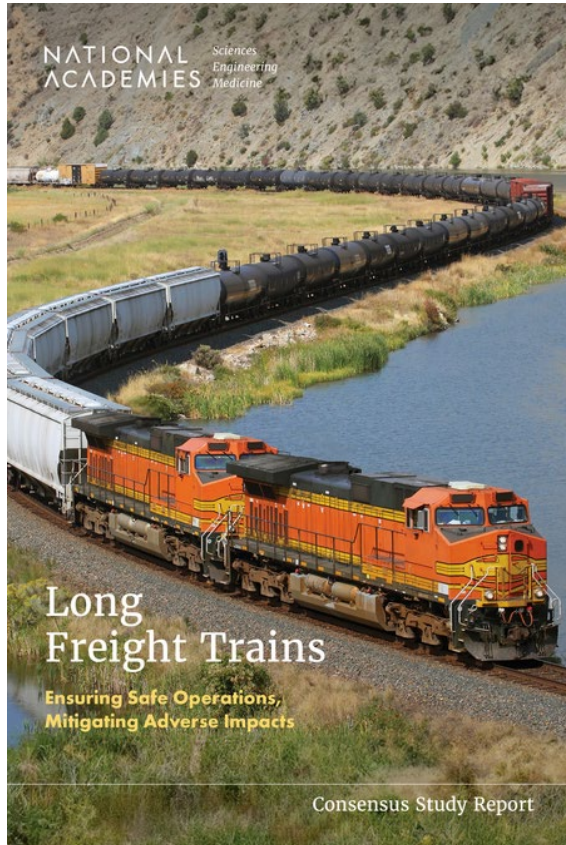
- Every day in the U.S., an average of three trains derail with as many as half potentially carrying hazardous substances
- Two-thirds of all rail accidents (66%) happen within cities
- Nearly 1 in every 5 cities have been affected by rail incidents since 2020
- On average, cities experienced 6 reports of rail incidents for every 10,000 people
- More than half of all accidents are derailments (51%)
- Derailments are the most common type of accident to happen in a city (68%)
- While rail incidents are in every region of the country fairly equally, blocked crossings are most common in the Mid-West where the average number per 10,000 people is 41.8 as compared to next highest of 24.6 in the South
- More than half of cities (58%) are touched by the national rail network
- Small cities are disproportionately affected by rail accidents: Cities with fewer than 1,000 residents have an average of 12.9 accidents as compared to 3.1 for cities between 1,000 and 10,000 and less than 1 for cities over 50,000.
- While train accidents happen in every region, there are more overall in the West than any other region.

Use NLC's Derailment Map to See Your Community's Risk

NLC's interactive train derailments map allows you to easily see the frequency of derailments in your city and Congressional district area.



Rail Roundtable Features New Long Train and Blocked Crossing Report



Join us from 8:00 am- 9:00 am on Thursday, 11/14, in Ballroom D for NLC’s Rail Roundtable, featuring a brand new expert report on long train safety and blocked crossings.

New Report: [Long Freight Trains: Ensuring Safe Operations, Mitigating Adverse Impacts \(2024\)](#)

Longer trains have more cars, possibly a greater variety of car types and sizes, and more requirements for power distributed across the train in comparison with shorter manifest trains. Because of this and other factors, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) should revise the Risk Reduction Program (RRP) rule to require railroads to address all major operational changes in their RRP’s in an explicit and comprehensive manner.

TRB Special Report 353: Long Freight Trains: Ensuring Safe Operation, Mitigating Adverse Impacts, from the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies of Sciences,

Engineering, and Medicine, examines—in response to a request from the U.S. Congress—the safety challenges arising from the operation of longer freight trains, and particularly from the increased use of longer manifest trains that transport a mix of freight in many different types of railcars. The report makes several other recommendations to FRA and also examines issues such as the impact of increasing freight train length on the frequency and duration of blocked highway-rail grade crossings and the scheduling and efficient operations of Amtrak intercity passenger trains.

[Download Free PDF - nap.nationalacademies.org/download/27807](https://nap.nationalacademies.org/download/27807)

How to Reach Out to Your Railroad Partners

[State Railroads Representatives \(Excel\)](#)

[State Railroads Representatives \(Interactive Map\)](#)

[State Railroads Associations Directory \(PDF\)](#)

2024 Transportation and Infrastructure Services (TIS) Committee Roster

Leadership

- Committee Chair Dan Kealey, Council Member, City of Burnsville, MN
- Vice Chair Toby Barker, Mayor, City of Hattiesburg, MS
- Vice Chair Martha Castex-Tatum, Vice Mayor Pro Tem and Council Member, City of Houston, TX
- Vice Chair Vanessa Fuentes, Council Member, City of Austin, TX

Members

- Jennifer Adams, Vice Mayor, City of Tempe, AZ
- Riakos Adams, Councilmember At-Large, City of Killeen, TX
- Stuart Adams, Council Member, City of College Park, MD
- Paul Akinjo, Council Member, City of Lathrop, CA
- Robert Bauman, Alderman, City of Milwaukee, WI
- John Bauters, Councilmember, City of Emeryville, CA
- Priya Bhat-Patel, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Carlsbad, CA
- Jaime Brown, DEI Strategist, City of Concord, NC
- Eric Bunch, Councilman, City of Kansas City, MO
- Charlene Bybee, Councilwoman, City of Sparks, NV
- Chelsea Byers, Councilmember, City of West Hollywood, CA
- Wally Campbell, Council Member, City of Goodyear, AZ
- Rodney Craig, Mayor, Village of Hanover Park, IL
- Karen Darch, Village President, Village of Barrington, IL
- Bryant DeLong, Mayor, City of North Kansas City, MO
- Dan Devine, Mayor, City of West Allis, WI
- Tricia Diamond, ARPA Implementation Director, City of New Orleans, LA
- Steve Douglas, Mayor, City of Commerce City, CO
- Yvette Drucker, Council Member, City of Boca Raton, FL
- Johnathan Duncan, Council Member, City of Kansas City, MO
- Solana Flora, Mayor, City of Mission, KS
- DeDreana Freeman, Council Member, City of Durham, NC
- Joshua Fuller, Vice Mayor, Town of Bay Harbor Islands, FL
- Joseph Geierman, Mayor, City of Doraville, GA
- Alicia Goforth, Councilmember, City of Mesa, AZ
- Derek Gunderson, Councilmember, City of Victoria, MN
- Gary Hansen, Council Member, City of Eagan, MN
- OD Harris, Councilmember, City of Chandler, AZ

- Mike Herr, City Manager, City of Bartow, FL
- Rachel Hultin, Council Member, City of Wheat Ridge, CO
- Sandy Hunt, Mayor, City of New Martinsville, WV
- Daniela Jean, Commissioner, City of North Miami Beach, FL
- Clifford Keheley, City Manager, City of Mesquite, TX
- Nick Knoth, Council Member, City of Columbia, MO
- Mike Laven, Council Member, City of Mankato, MN
- John Lopez, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Grand Prairie, TX
- Jon Mallo, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Loveland, CO
- Omar Martinez, Grants and Strategic Initiatives Manager, City of El Paso, TX
- Tammy Maurer, Council Member, City of Centennial, CO
- George McCall, Council President, City of Prichard, AL
- Mary McComber, Mayor, City of Oak Park Heights, MN
- William McLeod, Mayor, Village of Hoffman Estates, IL
- Steven McMichael, Mayor, City of New Haven, IN
- Gregory Mills, Mayor, City of Brighton, CO
- Sherri Neil, Intergovernmental Affairs Manager, City of Portsmouth, VA
- Johnny Olson, Council Member, City of Greeley, CO
- Kevin O'Neill, Councilman, City of Kansas City, MO
- Laura Pastor, Councilmember, City of Phoenix, AZ
- Dale Paullus, Council Member, City of Fairfield, OH
- Chelsea Reed, Mayor, City of Palm Beach Gardens, FL
- Jaime Resendez, Council Member, City of Dallas, TX
- Timothy Rippe, Councilor, City of Forest Grove, OR
- Melissa Robinson, Councilmember, City of Kansas City, MO
- Wes Rogers, Council Member, City of Kansas City, MO
- Jennifer Selin, Council Member/Mayor, City of Morgantown, WV
- Christopher Shaw, Commissioner, City of Dayton, OH
- Austin Shelton, Director of Planning + Development, City of Doraville, GA
- Jeffrey Slavin, Mayor, Town of Somerset, MD
- Blair Stewart, Council Member, City of Brea, CA
- Gayle Sturdivant, Acting Public Works Director/City Engineer, City of Colorado Springs, CO
- Fabiola Stuyvesant, Commissioner, City of Sunny Isles Beach, FL
- Austin Ward, Councilmember, City and County of Broomfield, CO
- Carroll Watson, Mayor, City of Lincoln, AL
- Kristen Weaver, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Greenbelt, MD
- Jerry Weiers, Mayor, City of Glendale, AZ
- Max White, Council Member, City of Avondale, AZ

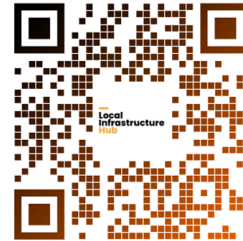
Local Infrastructure Hub: Grant-Writing Trainings

Since it first launched in July 2022, the Local Infrastructure Hub has delivered assistance and guidance to over 1,000 cities from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. To date, participating cities have been awarded over \$314 million in federal grants. The trainings are **free** and open to communities with populations under 150K.

Below are the current grant-writing trainings:

- **Grant Implementation, Compliance, and Management**
- **Developing Clean Energy Projects**
- **Clean Water State Revolving Fund**
- **Safe Streets and Roads for All**
- **Combined Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) and Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)**

Scan this QR code to get registered!



Register at <https://localinfrastructure.org/application-bootcamp/>