

RIC Messenger

Boone, Clay, Kanawha, Putnam Counties

A publication of the B-C-K-P Regional Intergovernmental Council

Winter 2022



Chairman Fletcher's Message

I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays and stayed safe during our first big snow of the season!

I would like to take this opportunity to provide an update on RICs recent projects and accomplishments.

Community Development News

In Boone County, Boone Memorial Hospital opened bids in December for a project connecting the hospital annex in Danville to the sanitary system. Boone Memorial Hospital is also transforming the former Magic Mart building into a full -service facility. In Clay County, the Town of Clay received a \$5,000,000.00 HUD Community Development Disaster Recovery Grant to rehabilitate their aging treatment plant that was affected by the 2016 flood. Environmental clearance is currently being sought for this project. In Kanawha County, four U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) applications are being developed under the American Recovery funding. The applications are for West Virginia International Yeager Airport eVTOL electric aircraft charging station, as well as the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and West Virginia Regional Technology Park for an infrastructure assessment and construction of a new twelve-acre addition. In Putnam County, environmental clearance is currently being worked on for the Putnam County Commission's Jim Ridge Phase II waterline extension.

Transportation News

The RIC transportation staff along with Burgess & Niple are working on road safety assessments. This is a new project aimed at improving safety throughout the two-county planning area of Kanawha and Putnam counties. In addition, the transportation staff developed the new FY 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The transportation staff also worked with the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH), Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority (KRT) and the West Virginia Division of Public Transit to prepare updated performance targets.

I look forward to meeting with everyone at our March 10, 2022 annual meeting as we work together as a team to promote local communities, regional solutions, and statewide impacts.

David Fletcher
Chairman

RIC Says Farewell to Emily Hammond



Emily Hammond accepted a position with the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission. RIC is thankful for Emily's service as Economic Resiliency Coordinator. We will miss her and wish her the best in her new position.

If you have any questions regarding hazard mitigation, please contact Sam Richardson at srichardson@wvregion3.org. If you need assistance with economic resiliency projects, please contact Colt Sandoro at colt@wvregion3.org or Terry Martin at terrymartin@wvregion3.org.

Welcome New RIC Board Members

- Kara Greathouse, Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority
- Cassidy Riley, Kanawha County Commission

Grant Announcements

- ◆ The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is accepting applications through January 31, 2022.
- ◆ The 2021 HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program announced their grant period from December 3, 2021 – March 3, 2022. Funding will be available for:
 - 1) Infrastructure, Parks and Recreation
 - 2) Blighted and Abandoned Properties
 - 3) Brownfields
 - 4) Community Planning.

Please contact Terry Martin or SoJuana Ellis for assistance at 304-744-4258.

USDOT: Benefits of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for West Virginia

For decades, infrastructure in West Virginia has suffered from a systemic lack of investment. In fact, the American Society of Civil Engineers gave West Virginia a “D” on its infrastructure report card.

Specifically, with regard to transportation, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will:

- **Repair and rebuild our roads and bridges with a focus on climate change mitigation, resilience, equity, and safety for all users, including cyclists and pedestrians.** In West Virginia there are 1,545 bridges and over 3,222 miles of highway in poor condition. Since 2011, commute times have increased by 6.4% in West Virginia, and on average, each driver pays \$726 per year in costs due to driving on roads in need of repair. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is the single largest dedicated bridge investment since the construction of the interstate highway system. **Based on formula funding alone, West Virginia would expect to receive approximately \$3.7 billion over five years in Federal highway formula funding for highways and bridges. On an average annual basis, this is about 35.2% more than the State’s Federal-aid highway formula funding under current law (1).** West Virginia can also compete for the \$12.5 billion Bridge Investment Program for economically significant bridges and \$15 billion of national funding in the law dedicated to megaprojects that will deliver substantial economic benefits to communities. West Virginia can also expect to receive approximately \$73 million over five years in formula funding to reduce transportation-related emissions, in addition to about \$83 million over five years to increase the resilience of its transportation system (2). States may also apply federal aid dollars towards climate resilience and safety projects.
- **Improve the safety of our transportation system. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invests \$13 billion over the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act levels directly into improving roadway safety.** Over five years, West Virginia will receive approximately \$15 million in 402 formula funding for highway safety traffic programs, which help states to improve driver behavior and reduce deaths and injuries from motor vehicle-related crashes. On an average annual basis, this represents about a 29% increase over FAST Act levels (3). Local and tribal governments in West Virginia will also be eligible to compete for \$6 billion in funding for a new **Safe Streets for All program** which will provide funding directly to these entities to support their efforts to advance “vision zero” plans and other improvements to reduce crashes and fatalities, especially for cyclists and pedestrians. In addition, West Virginia can expect to receive approximately \$17.2 million over five years in funding to augment their commercial motor vehicle (CMV) safety efforts to reduce CMV crashes through the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) formula grant. This represents about a 51% increase in funding compared to FAST Act levels (4). West Virginia will be able to apply for funds to modernize data collection systems to collect near real time data on all reported crashes, including fatal ones, to enhance safety and to allow the Department to understand and address trends as they are identified.
- **Improve healthy, sustainable transportation options for millions of Americans.** West Virginians who take public transportation spend an extra 76.7% of their time commuting and non-White households are 4.9 times more likely to commute via public transportation. 30.9% of transit vehicles in the state are past useful life. **Based on formula funding alone, West Virginia would expect to receive about \$195 million over five years under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to improve public transportation options across the state (5). In the first year, this represents about a 38% increase over 2021 FAST Act formula transit funding levels.**
- **Build a network of EV chargers to facilitate long-distance travel and provide convenient charging options.** The U.S. market share of plug-in electric vehicle (EV) sales is only one-third the size of the Chinese EV market – in 2020, plug-in electric vehicles made up only 2.3% of new car sales in the U.S., compared to 6.2% in China. The President believes that must change. The law invests \$7.5 billion to build out the first-ever national network of EV chargers in the United States and is a critical element in the Biden-Harris Administration’s plan to accelerate the adoption of EVs to address the climate crisis and support domestic manufacturing jobs. **Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, West Virginia would expect to receive about \$46 million over five years to support the expansion of an EV charging network in the state (6). West Virginia will also have the opportunity to apply for grants out of the \$2.5 billion available for EV charging.**

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- **Modernize and expand passenger rail and improve freight rail efficiency and safety.** The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law includes \$66 billion above baseline to eliminate the Amtrak maintenance backlog, modernize the Northeast Corridor, and bring world-class rail service to areas outside the northeast and mid-Atlantic. Within these totals, \$22 billion would be provided as grants to Amtrak, \$24 billion as federal-state partnership grants for Northeast Corridor modernization, and \$12 billion for partnership grants for intercity rail service, including highspeed rail. On top of this, West Virginia will be eligible to compete for \$5 billion for rail improvement and safety grants and \$3 billion for grade crossing safety improvements.
- **Improve our nation's airports.** The United States built modern aviation, but our airports lag far behind our competitors. **Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, airports in West Virginia would receive approximately \$44 million for infrastructure development for airports over five years (7).** This funding will address airside and landside needs at airports, such as improving runways, taxiways and airport-owned towers, terminal development projects, and noise reduction projects. In addition, \$5 billion in discretionary funding is available over five years for airport terminal development projects that address the aging infrastructure of our nation's airports, including projects that expand accessibility for persons with disabilities, improve access for historically disadvantaged populations, improve energy efficiency, and improve airfield safety.

State and local governments can look forward to these new & expanded competitive grant programs in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) anticipated to launch over the course of the next year:

- **Safe Streets for All (\$6B, new)** – This program will provide funding directly to local and tribal governments to support their efforts to advance “vision zero” plans and other improvements to reduce crashes and fatalities, especially for cyclists and pedestrians.
- **Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grants (\$15B, expanded)** – RAISE grants support surface transportation projects of local and/or regional significance.
- **Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grants (\$14B, expanded)** – INFRA grants will offer needed aid to freight infrastructure by providing funding to state and local government for projects of regional or national significance. The BIL also raises the cap on multimodal projects to 30% of program funds.
- **Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Low and No Emission Bus Programs (\$5.6B, expanded)** – BIL expands this competitive program which provides funding to state and local governmental authorities for the purchase or lease of zero-emission and low emission transit buses as well as acquisition, construction, and leasing of required supporting facilities.
- **FTA Buses + Bus Facilities Competitive Program (\$2.0B, expanded)** – This program provides competitive funding to states and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities.
- **Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program (\$23B, expanded)** – The BIL guarantees \$8 billion, and authorizes \$15 billion more in future appropriations, to invest in new high-capacity transit projects communities choose to build.
- **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Terminal Program (\$5B, new)** – This discretionary grant program will provide funding for airport terminal development and other landside projects.
- **MEGA Projects (\$15B, new)** – This new National Infrastructure Project Assistance grant program will support multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional projects of national or regional significance.
- **Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program (\$8.7B, new)** – PROTECT will provide \$7.3 billion in formula funding to states and \$1.4 billion in competitive grants to eligible entities to increase the resilience of our transportation system. This includes funding for evacuation routes, coastal resilience, making existing infrastructure more resilient, or efforts to move infrastructure to nearby locations not continuously impacted by extreme weather and natural disasters.
- **Port Infrastructure Development Program (\$2.25B, expanded)** – BIL will increase investment in America's coastal ports and inland waterways, helping to improve the supply chain and enhancing the resilience of our shipping industry. BIL overall doubles the level of investment in port infrastructure and waterways, helping strengthen our supply chain and reduce pollution.
- **5307 Ferry Program (\$150M, existing)** – BIL retains the \$30 million per year passenger ferry program for ferries that serve urbanized areas.
- **Electric or Low Emitting Ferry Program (\$500M, new)** – This competitive grant program will support the transition of passenger ferries to low or zero emission technologies.
- **Rural Ferry Program (\$2B, new)** – This competitive grant program will ensure that basic essential ferry service continues to be provided to rural areas by providing funds to States to support this service.
- **Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) competitive grants for nationally significant bridges and other bridges (\$12.5B, new)** – This new competitive grant program will assist state, local, federal, and tribal entities in rehabilitating or replacing bridges, including culverts. Large projects and bundling of smaller bridge projects will be eligible for funding.

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- **FTA All Station Accessibility Program (\$1.75B, new)** – This competitive grant program will provide funding to legacy transit and commuter rail authorities to upgrade existing stations to meet or exceed accessibility standards under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- **Charging and fueling infrastructure discretionary grants (Up to \$2.5B, new)** – This discretionary grant program will provide up to \$2.5 billion in funding to provide convenient charging where people live, work, and shop.
- **Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program (\$1B, new)** – This new competitive program will provide dedicated funding to state, local, MPO, and tribal governments for planning, design, demolition, and reconstruction of street grids, parks, or other infrastructure.
- **FHWA Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (\$1.5B, expanded)** – This discretionary program provides funding for the construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of nationally-significant projects within, adjacent to, or accessing Federal and tribal lands. BIL amends this program to allow smaller projects to qualify for funding and allows 100% federal share for tribal projects.
- **Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grant Program (\$1B, new)** – The SMART Grant program will be a programmed competition that will deliver competitive grants to states, local governments, and tribes for projects that improve transportation safety and efficiency.
- **Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (\$2B, new)** – This new competitive grant program will improve and expand surface transportation infrastructure in rural areas, increasing connectivity, improving safety and reliability of the movement of people and freight, and generate regional economic growth.

--- (1) These values are estimates and may change based on updated factor data each fiscal year. (2) These values are estimates and may change based on updated factor data each fiscal year. (3) These values are estimates based on the 2020 FHWA public road mileage data for FYs 2022- 2026. Formula funding amounts in FYs 2023-2026 are subject to change as a result of the annual public road mile data certified by FHWA. The 402 amounts do not include redistribution of unawarded 405 balances per 23 USC § 405(a)(8) as that information is unknown at this time. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law specifies NHTSA must distribute the supplemental appropriations for Section 402 in “equal amounts for each fiscal year 2022 through 2026”. This analysis is subject to provisions of FY 2022-FY2026 appropriations acts. (4) These values are estimates and may change based on updated factor data each fiscal year. (5) Transit formula funding amounts are subject to changes resulting from the 2020 census or from annual transit service data reported to FTA’s National Transit Database. (6) These values are estimates and may change based on updated factor data each fiscal year. (7) Precise allocations would change each year because the formulas use current passenger boarding and cargo data, and this estimate is based on 2019 data. Source: USDOT

Upcoming RIC Meetings

March 10, 2022

June 9, 2022

September 8, 2022

December 8, 2022

All meetings will be held at 12:00 Noon at the West Virginia Regional Technology Park, pending any changes due to public health conditions. We will continue to offer a virtual option as well.

RIC's ADA Transition Plan Assistance Program

Made possible by the guidance of Dr. Ron Eck of West Virginia University's West Virginia Local Technical Assistance Program (WVLTAP), the Regional Intergovernmental Council (RIC) is reaching out to its constituents seeking new participants for its American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan Assistance Program. This member-only program is designed to provide all the tools possible your municipal government needs to ensure compliance with the latest surface transportation infrastructure accessibility guidance. With these tools, your town will be on its way to ensuring your public spaces meet the needs of all community members regardless of ability. Through this collaborative partnership we can offer your town the following services free of charge:



The Town of Marmet received \$50,000 in federal highway money for the design of sidewalk on MacCorkle Avenue near Lens Creek Road shortly after adopting an ADA transition plan with the assistance of RIC.

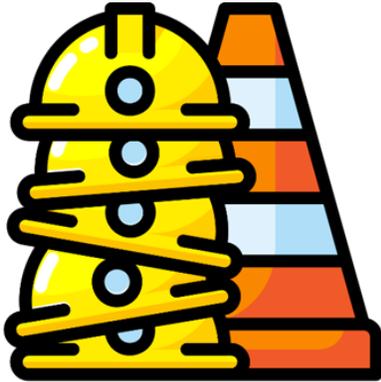
- **Virtual/in-person classroom/field training:**
 - ◇ Equip your staff with the knowledge from WVLTAP to be aware of existing surface transportation accessibility and safety deficiencies.
- **On-site self-evaluations:**
 - ◇ Enlist RIC staff to audit your transportation infrastructure of any existing surface transportation accessibility or safety deficiencies.
- **ADA Transition Plan drafting:**
 - ◇ Enlist RIC staff to assist in drafting your first ADA Transition Plan from outline to resolution.
- **ADA Transition Plan auditing:**
 - ◇ Enlist RIC staff to conduct an internal review of your existing ADA Transition Plan for quality, compliance, and adherence.
- **Transportation Alternative Grant Application Drafting**
 - ◇ Following the adoption of a strong ADA Transition Plan, your municipality is in a good position to work with RIC staff on acquiring federal, state, and community funding to get your project designed and built through the federal Transportation Alternatives funding program.

By continuing this program RIC's goal is to create regional conformity by upholding each of our partner's ADA transition plans to a high standard. No matter where your municipality is in the ADA Transition Plan process, contacting RIC staff to assist you can be your first step to ensure your town is eligible to receive federal grant assistance and working to reduce the risk of liability.

Mayor Kay Summers reached out to RIC and enlisted the Town of Clendenin in the assistance program. RIC will conduct an updated sidewalk inventory and assist with updating the ADA transition plan in hope of applying for federal money for sidewalk renovation design and construction projects.

If you are interested in one or any combination of these services offered through this program, please contact Sam Richardson at srichardson@wvregion3.org or Kelsey Tucker at ktucker@wvregion3.org.

Road Safety Assessments Project



RIC, in conjunction with Burgess & Niple, Inc., have initiated the Road Safety Assessments project—a project dedicated to reducing crashes on roadways in Kanawha and Putnam counties. Several safety studies will be performed at prioritized locations as part of the project. Currently, RIC transportation staff is reviewing crash analyses, previous studies and engaging with local stakeholders to identify and prioritize potential study locations.

The project will be divided into two tasks – Task 1: Location Identification and Task 2: Location-Specific Studies.

Task 1: Location Identification

The purpose of this task is to determine which locations should be studied in more detail in Task 2: Location Specific Studies.

Task 1.1: Survey Development

B&N will develop an online GIS-based survey to be distributed to area stakeholders. The results of the survey will be considered when selecting locations for further study.

Task 1.2: High Level Crash Review

B&N will review the data analyzed by RIC and compare it with the results from the prioritization conducted as part of the 2019 project. This information will feed into the decision-making process.

Task 1.3: Meeting with WVDOH

RIC, Burgess & Niple staff, and WVDOH will meet to discuss the locations being considered for study. From this meeting, the list of study locations will be finalized.

Task 2: Location-Specific Studies

Selected locations identified in Task 1 will be studied in more detail. The specific locations as well as the extent of the analyses to be performed will be determined after the completion of Task 1.

Questions about the project? Contact Kelsey Tucker, Transportation Planning Manager, at (304) 744-4258 or ktucker@wvregion3.org

Sign-up to Join the RIC Email List

If you would like to receive information about upcoming events and opportunities, sign up to join our email list at <http://eepurl.com/dH-hyj>

*Regional Intergovernmental Council
315 D Street
South Charleston, WV 25303*



Upcoming RIC Meeting

March 10, 2022 - 12:00 Noon

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Executive Director: Colt Sandoro*

Newsletter prepared by Joanna Keller

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Local Communities / Regional Solutions / Statewide Impacts