

# NEWSLETTER

February 2024

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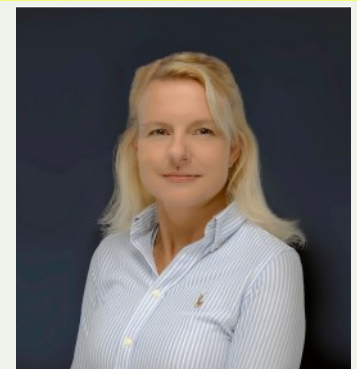
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## Director's Message

Dear readers,

February marks the second anniversary of the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#) (NRSS). To date, 36 states and many organizations and business have answered the NRSS [call to action](#) on road safety. As part of the continued USDOT commitment to safety for local public agencies, another round of Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant funding has just been announced.



The [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\) Grant Program](#) funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries and are awarded on a competitive basis. Acceptable activities include planning, infrastructural, behavioral, and operational initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets involving all roadway users.

FHWA explains the SS4A program funds are based on two types of grants: Planning and Demonstration Grants and Implementation Grants. [Planning and Demonstration Grants](#) provide Federal funds to develop, complete, or supplement a Safety Action Plan.

(continued on next page)

## Director's Message (continued)

The goal of an Action Plan is to develop a holistic, well-defined strategy to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries in a locality, Tribal area, or region. Planning and Demonstration Grants also fund [supplemental planning activities](#) and [demonstration activities](#) in support of an Action Plan. [Implementation Grants](#) provide Federal funds to implement projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan to address a roadway safety problem.

Eligible projects and strategies can be infrastructural, behavioral, and/or operational activities. Applicants must have an eligible [Action Plan](#) to apply for an Implementation Grant. New in FY24, potential Implementation Grant applicants may submit their Action Plan(s) for [pre-application review](#) so that USDOT may affirm their eligibility to apply for an Implementation Grant.



### SS4A/Safety Resources

- [How to Apply](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [What's New in 2024?](#)
- [Eligible Applicants for SS4A](#)
- [SS4A Calculating Percent of Population in Underserved Communities](#)
- [Proven Safety Countermeasures in Rural Communities](#)

Please consider applying for this safety funding to support your community. Safety action plans are the perfect place to start deploying a safety strategy in your agency. A series of webinars, beginning March 7, have been scheduled to help educate potential grantees on SS4A: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A/webinars>



## Rural Grant Applicant Toolkit for Competitive Federal Transportation Funding

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) developed the [Rural Grant Applicant Toolkit](#) for Competitive Federal Transportation Funding to guide potential applicants in identifying and navigating these discretionary opportunities for rural transportation projects.

USDOT developed this toolkit to provide guidance as part of the Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) Initiative.

Although the focus of the Grant Applicant Toolkit is rural transportation projects, many of the grant funding resources contained throughout also apply more broadly to other types of transportation projects.

The Grant Applicant Toolkit is designed for all levels of grant applicant experience. Learn more about how the [toolkit can help your organization here](#).

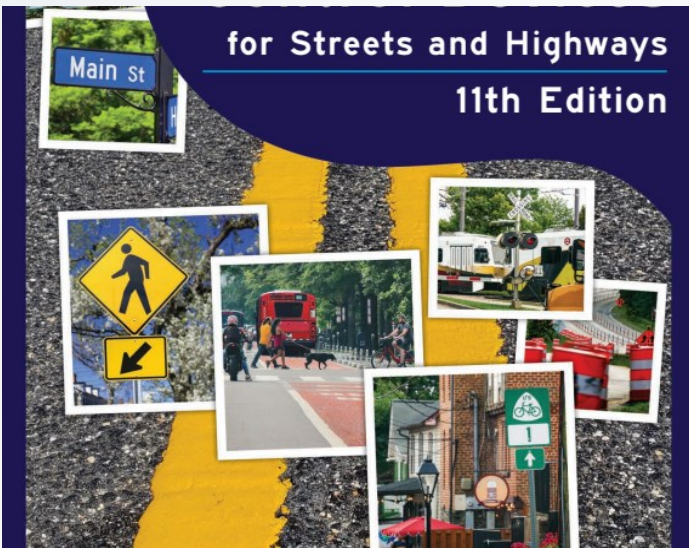
## Implementing BIL Investments

The Bipartisan Infrastructure law was a major victory for counties, who worked closely with their partners in Congress throughout the legislative process to ensure county priorities were included. Currently, the BIL is being implemented through agencies and departments across the federal government. The BIL provides \$973 billion over five years from Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 through FY 2026, including \$550 billion in new investments for all modes of transportation, water, power and energy, environmental remediation, public lands, broadband and resilience. [See how the BIL has been invested so far at the county level here](#).



## STEM and Transportation

Teen drivers have a deadly crash rate nearly three times as high as adult drivers per mile driven. The National Safety Council declared that "motor vehicle crashes continue to be the number one cause of preventable death for U.S. teens," and that crashes involving young drivers impact people of all ages. Using virtual reality, augmented vision, and video games, [see how driver's education classes are](#)



## for Streets and Highways 11th Edition

### 11th Edition of the MUTCD is Now Available!

Recently the final rule adopting the 11th Edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD) was published in the Federal Register. The new MUTCD includes a number of updates to improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and all road users. [Read the changes and find out how New Jersey will adopt](#)

### Countermeasures to Reduce Roadway Fatalities

For agencies and practitioners seeking zero roadway fatalities through the Safe System Approach, knowing where to start can be a challenge. FHWA has released a new resource to help prioritize engineering and infrastructure-based countermeasures. [The 38-page Safe System Roadway Design Hierarchy \(FHWA-SA-22-069\)](#) outlines a four-tiered approach that is general in nature and applicable to any scenario, from a city street to an interstate freeway. In the coming months, the Office of Safety will publish supplemental resources, including SSA Frameworks for projects and policies and will schedule future trainings.

### Minimum Pavement Marking Retroreflectivity

A year ago, FHWA published the final rule establishing minimum pavement marking retroreflectivity levels. The first two videos of what will be several are live and ready for viewing. The [Executive Overview video](#) is geared toward senior and executive leaders of transportation agencies and provides a high-level overview of the final rule and its requirements. The [Practitioner video](#) is more in depth and helps practitioners understand the key points of the rulemaking, decide which roads on the system the rule applies to, what methods are available to them to implement the rule, and what constitutes compliance with the final rule. Future videos will go into greater detail about the methods for maintaining minimum pavement marking retroreflectivity for practitioners and inspectors at transportation agencies. |



# Jacob's Junction

## Question #1

Regulations stipulate that all steel or iron on a project has to be domestically sourced. But what if I do not use federal funds to purchase that product? Can it be used in the construction of a project?

*As per federal requirements, the Buy America policies stipulate that even if a product is not purchased with federal funds, no foreign based iron or steel can be permanently installed on a project. The key word here of course, is permanently. Things like sheet pilings and drill shaft linings are not subject to Buy America requirements if they are not permanently installed on the project.*

**As an instructor for NJLTAP, Lloyd Jacobs draws on four decades of experience when he teaches professional development courses and trainings. See what he has to say today!**

## Question #2

What steps can I take to ensure my change orders are approved and I can avoid liquidated damages for going over the specified contract time? What records should I keep?

*Anything and everything you can. The best documentation to have is keeping accurate records that show the time, labor, equipment, and materials used. Evaluations of the construction schedule modifications needed, and the cost estimates prepared by the agency that can be compared to the costs in the proposed change order.*

## New Jersey's Build a Better Mousetrap Competition

People involved in the transportation industry often find better ways to do their job. Whether it's a new gadget that improves the quality and safety of a project, or an innovative process that reduces costs and improves efficiency, it is typically the people on the front lines that often realize the latest and best practices.

Now is the time to share those new ideas with others in New Jersey's **Build a Better Mousetrap Competition**. We are looking for submissions from any employee of a **local** or **state** public agency (municipalities, counties, parks commissions, NJ Department of Transporta-



tion, NJ Transit) that has created an alternate or better way of doing something in a transportation project. We will gather the best ideas from around the state and judge them using a 5-point rating system. As a reminder, this competition is open to **any** local, county, or state transportation agency, including NJDOT and NJT employees. Two winners will be selected: one for the best local agency and another for the NJDOT/NJT submission.

<https://cait.rutgers.edu/mousetrap/>

**Download the entry form today!**

## **Upcoming CLASSES**

### **NJLTAP -Traffic Engineering Studies (In-Person)**

**March 11, 8:30am—12:30pm**

This course will review basic concepts in probability and statistics and their application in designing traffic control features and regulating traffic.

### **NJLTAP - Grant Management (In-Person)**

**March 14, 9:00am—12:00pm**

Are you a recipient of a Federal Aid grant? Effective and efficient “management” of the funds received from such a grant is critical to insuring future eligibility and reimbursement.

### **NJLTAP - Basic Math and Plan Reading (In-Person)**

**March 22, 8:30am—12:30pm**

This course provides a refresher on basic math skills related to construction inspection and road maintenance, as well as how to locate information within a set of plans. Topics will include reading notes, determining quantities and understanding topography, basic Geometry, area and volume.

## **NJLTAP Team**

Janet Leli, Director

[jleli@soe.rutgers.edu](mailto:jleli@soe.rutgers.edu)

Jessica Brown, SPC Supervisor

[job32@soe.rutgers.edu](mailto:job32@soe.rutgers.edu)

Omid Sarmad, Program Coordinator

[sarmad@soe.rutgers.edu](mailto:sarmad@soe.rutgers.edu)

David Maruca, Program Developer

[dem200@soe.rutgers.edu](mailto:dem200@soe.rutgers.edu)

Lloyd Jacobs, NJLTAP Instructor

[ljacobspe@verizon.net](mailto:ljacobspe@verizon.net)

### **Workshop Information**

[caitregistrar@soe.rutgers.edu](mailto:caitregistrar@soe.rutgers.edu)

### **Physical Address**

100 Brett Road, Piscataway, NJ 08854



### **Publication Statement**

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