Rhode Island Secures $60M for Transit Enhancements

In a significant boost to Rhode Island’s transportation infrastructure, US Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse, alongside Congressmen Seth Magaziner and Gabe Amo, have announced a substantial allocation of federal transit funding for the Ocean State in 2024, the *Newport Buzz* reports.

The $60.1 million allotment, released by the US Department of Transportation’s Federal Transit Administration (FTA), signifies a notable investment aimed at enhancing public transportation services statewide. This funding, sourced from various legislative acts including the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2024 (P.L. 118-47), represents a $4.2 million increase for the Rhode Island Public Transit Agency (RIPTA) network, encompassing bus services, trains, and ferry operations.

The infusion of $4.2 million into RIPTA's budget is a direct outcome of the $16.6 billion earmarked for the FTA in the 2024 Appropriations law, a notable augmentation from the House of Representatives’ original appropriations bill.

These federal funds will be instrumental in modernizing, maintaining, and operating public transportation systems throughout Rhode Island. From upgrading stations, tracks, and maintenance facilities to planning and designing new transit corridors, the investment aims to improve accessibility and reliability for seniors and riders with disabilities. Read more.

McKee Criticized Over $400M Bridge Replacement

Rhode Island Governor Dan McKee says replacing the Washington Bridge will cost the state more than $400 million and take years, drawing GOP criticism over his administration's response to the incident, *The Center Square* reports.

The new price tag for the project — which is more than $100 million higher than initial estimates — includes demolition of the structurally deficient structure that serves as a gateway to Rhode Island’s largest city, Providence, carrying about
100,000 vehicles a day over the Seekonk River.

McKee said Rhode Island will apply for a US Department of Transportation grant to pay for 60% of the expense. McKee has also submitted a budget amendment to borrow up to $334.6 million to pay more of the bridge replacement cost if the state doesn't get the federal grant. He said his administration is investigating the circumstances that led to the need to shut down and replace the bridge and has pledged that a "day of reckoning" will be "coming soon."

But Rhode Island Republican Party Chairman Joe Powers says the bridge's failure comes as "no surprise" and blames the McKee administration for ignoring deficiencies flagged by bridge inspectors over a decade ago. Read more.

Stay up to date on legislative issues through the NSPE Advocacy Center.

Get Involved! NSPE Seeks Volunteers for 2024-25 Committees

NSPE's passionate and dedicated committee volunteers are essential to our mission. Why serve? In addition to giving back to the professional engineering community, NSPE volunteers form strong connections with committee colleagues, learn new skills, enjoy networking with leaders or hone their own leadership skills.

Learn more and apply to NSPE’s 2024-25 Committees by June 3. (You must log-in with your NSPE credentials to submit an application.)

If you do not see an opportunity that interests you in the link above, check out Get Involved throughout the year to learn more about other areas of engagement, including short-term projects.

NSPECon24 Keynote Speakers
NSPECon24 (Raleigh, North Carolina, August 7-9), the prime national event for professional engineers, will feature keynote speakers to provide inspiration and guidance to help elevate your career in addition to putting a spotlight on emerging issues within the industry. Early-bird registration rates are available until June 27. Access registration information and rates here.
Paul Doherty, chairman and CEO of The Digit Group, will present the session “Unlocking the Metaverse: AI, Engineering the Future of Our Industry” to provide insight on emerging technologies and explore real-world solutions and projects that are challenging our industry.

Dan Heath, author and senior fellow, The Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE), Duke University, will present the session “RESET: How to Change What’s Not Working” to explore a framework for getting unstuck and making the changes that matter.

Access the preliminary NSPECon24 program for more details on the keynote speakers and session topics.

NSPECon24 also offers a variety of sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities to put your company or organization in front of senior executives and other decision-makers from across the industry. A special exhibitor discount is being offered to Research Triangle-based businesses.

Welcome to Our 2024 Sponsors!
Inaugural Leadership Institute for Women PEs
NSPE’s Women Leadership Program is sponsoring the Leadership Institute for Women Professional Engineers, a three-day program designed to support mid-career women PEs in confidently navigating their career path and leveraging their leadership skills.

The institute agenda is interwoven into the NSPECon24 program with participants attending pre-conference opening sessions on Wednesday, August 7, and sessions the mornings of Thursday, August 8 and Friday, August 9, in Raleigh, North Carolina. Attendees must register for NSPECon24 to attend the institute.

Access more information and register.