



Highway Trust Fund Accounts

The federal government's surface transportation programs are financed mostly through the Highway Trust Fund, which has two accounts, one for highways and one for mass transit. The fund records inflows from revenues collected through excise taxes on the sale of motor fuels, trucks and trailers, and truck tires; taxes on the use of certain kinds of vehicles; and interest credited to the fund. It records cash outflows for spending on designated highway and mass transit projects, mostly in the form of grants to state and local governments. Most of the authority to spend is controlled by limitations on obligations contained in appropriation acts.

Highway Trust Fund Accounts

	Actual, 2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
BUDGET INFORMATION												
Millions of dollars, by fiscal year												
Highway Account												
Start-of-Year Balance	98,913	89,649	78,730	63,019	42,842	19,119	a	a	a	a	a	a
Flexed Balances ^b	-1,065	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200
Revenues and Interest ^c	41,958	42,897	41,392	40,056	38,912	37,900	37,284	36,829	36,261	35,824	35,397	35,072
Outlays	50,157	52,616	55,902	59,033	61,435	63,642	65,159	66,427	67,733	69,076	70,434	71,798
End-of-Year Balance	89,649	78,730	63,019	42,842	19,119	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Transit Account												
Start-of-Year Balance	34,555	31,926	28,093	22,213	14,777	5,969	a	a	a	a	a	a
Flexed Balances ^b	1,065	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Revenues and Interest ^c	6,271	6,718	6,173	5,682	5,277	4,932	4,767	4,637	4,486	4,355	4,228	4,119
Outlays	9,965	11,750	13,254	14,318	15,285	16,033	16,417	16,691	16,624	16,764	16,709	17,006
End-of-Year Balance	31,926	28,093	22,213	14,777	5,969	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Memorandum:												
Cumulative Shortfall ^a												
Highway Account	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-7,823	-36,899	-67,697	-100,369	-134,820	-171,057	-208,982
Transit Account	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-3,931	-14,381	-25,236	-36,174	-47,383	-58,663	-70,350

Components may not sum to totals because of rounding; n.a. = not applicable.

- a. Under current law, the Highway Trust Fund cannot incur negative balances. However, following the rules governing baseline projections in the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, CBO's baseline for surface transportation spending reflects the assumption that obligations presented to the Highway Trust Fund will be paid in full. The memorandum to this table shows the cumulative shortfall of fund balances, assuming spending amounts consistent with CBO's February 2024 baseline. Following the rules for baseline construction, those amounts are estimated by adjusting the obligation limitations enacted under the Further Continuing Appropriations and Other Extensions Act, 2024, by projected inflation.
- b. Flexed balances are amounts transferred from the highway account to the transit account.
- c. Some of the taxes that are credited to the Highway Trust Fund are scheduled to expire on September 30, 2028, including the taxes on tires and all but 4.3 cents of the federal tax on motor fuels. However, under the rules governing baseline projections, these estimates reflect the assumption that all of the expiring taxes credited to the fund will continue to be collected after fiscal year 2028.