



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.

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Actual,

2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031

BUDGET INFORMATION

Millions of dollars, by fiscal year

Highway Account

Start-of-Year Balance	24,652	12,541	7,759	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Flexed Balances ^b	-1,556	-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	37,710	32,914	37,794	38,347	38,233	38,168	38,135	38,214	38,259	38,343	38,435	38,564
Intragovernmental Transfers ^d	0	10,400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outlays	48,265	46,896	46,004	46,477	47,510	49,570	51,548	53,049	54,223	55,545	56,601	57,766
End-of-Year Balance	12,541	7,759	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a

Transit Account

Start-of-Year Balance	8,254	5,126	5,291	2,293	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Flexed Balances ^b	1,556	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	5,249	4,584	5,236	5,296	5,280	5,249	5,217	5,190	5,162	5,138	5,114	5,094
Intragovernmental Transfers ^d	0	3,200	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outlays	9,934	8,819	9,434	10,545	11,724	12,145	12,368	12,589	12,664	12,845	13,080	13,319
End-of-Year Balance	5,126	5,291	2,293	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a

Memorandum:

 Cumulative Shortfall^a

Highway Account	n.a.	n.a.	-1,650	-10,981	-21,458	-34,059	-48,672	-64,708	-81,872	-100,273	-119,640	-140,042
Transit Account	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-1,756	-7,000	-12,696	-18,648	-24,848	-31,149	-37,656	-44,423	-51,448

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

- Under current law, the Highway Trust Fund cannot incur negative balances. However, consistent with section 257 of 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 July 2021 baseline. Following the rules for baseline construction, those amounts are estimated by adjusting the obligation limitations enacted under, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, by projected inflation.
- Flexed balances are amounts transferred from the highway account to the transit account.
- Some of the taxes that are credited to the Highway Trust Fund are scheduled to expire on September 30, 2022, 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 2022.
- Section 1204 of the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act required certain intragovernmental transfers from the general fund of the Treasury to the Highway Trust Fund.