



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. Section 9503 of title 26 of the U.S. Code specifies the allocation of trust fund receipts to those two accounts. 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, 2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
BUDGET INFORMATION												
Millions of dollars, by fiscal year												
Highway Account												
Start-of-Year Balance	89,649	74,632	56,280	34,122	10,156	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Flexed Balances ^b	-1,464	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200	-1,200
Receipts ^c	38,885	38,992	39,068	38,962	38,643	38,138	37,436	36,523	35,706	35,063	34,587	34,271
Interest	4,440	2,394	1,328	530	17	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Outlays	56,879	58,537	61,353	62,259	63,333	63,857	64,854	65,822	66,724	68,170	69,561	70,975
End-of-Year Balance	74,632	56,280	34,122	10,156	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Transit Account												
Start-of-Year Balance	31,926	26,328	24,287	15,085	4,829	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Flexed Balances ^b	1,464	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Receipts ^c	4,995	5,155	5,105	5,020	4,897	4,740	4,548	4,318	4,105	3,923	3,770	3,645
Interest	1,628	1,060	605	265	17	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Outlays	13,686	15,055	16,111	16,741	17,234	17,124	16,991	17,048	16,824	16,766	16,567	16,874
End-of-Year Balance	26,328	24,287	15,085	4,829	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Memorandum:												
Cumulative Shortfall ^a												
Highway Account	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-15,716	-42,635	-71,254	-101,752	-133,971	-168,277	-204,451	-242,355
Transit Account	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-6,291	-17,474	-28,717	-40,247	-51,765	-63,408	-75,005	-87,034

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, 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 January 2025 baseline. Following the rules for baseline construction, those amounts are estimated by adjusting the obligation limitations enacted under the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2025, 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, 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.