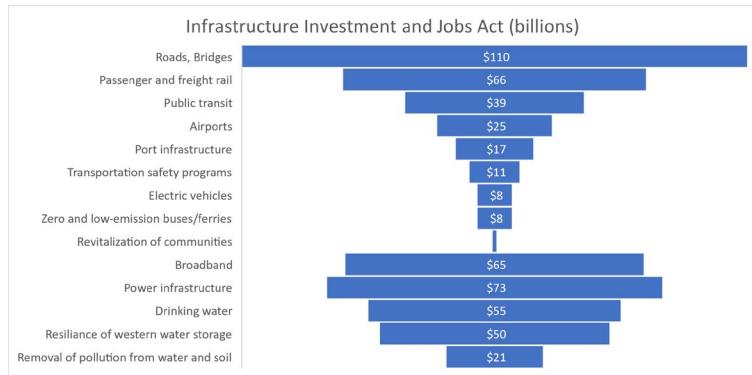


# Preparing for Direct Federal Aid Opportunities

You have surely followed the Infrastructure Bill passed by the Congress last November. Known by various super-catchy names (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, IIJA, Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, and originally in the House as INVEST in America Act), what caught a good deal of attention is the provision for direct funding in some cases to local agencies, as opposed to the more common appropriation through departments of transportation, such as DelDOT.



The details will dribble out to us throughout the life of the Act and we are early on with just a couple of large initiatives currently rolled out. The Act will fund more than what we commonly think of as infrastructure and it will extend beyond transportation to include broadband access, drinking water facilities, and the electric grid, just to name a few. In all, \$1.2 trillion (\$550B in newly authorized spending) will be spent through the Act and some of that may find its way directly to some Delaware local agencies. A number of Delaware stakeholders, including the Governor’s Office, DelDOT, the Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and even the Delaware T2/LTAP Center, are looking at ways to leverage the Act for local agencies, recognizing that most Delaware local agencies do not have experience with the administrative challenges that come with direct federal funding.

But even if your local agency does not anticipate the administration of federal funds, there are some on-line resources that can be equally useful for your other contracting operations, regardless of the funding. The Federal Highway Administration hosts their [Federal-aid Essentials for Local Public Agencies](#) and many of the topics there can be useful for all levels of projects. The video library tab is broken down into topics that include right-of-way, project development, project construction, contract administration, environment, civil rights, and finance. Here you will find a series of videos under each topic area that are relatively brief and can get you oriented to considerations you should think about as you develop and implement projects.

A good example is Introduction to [Project Construction and Contract Administration](#). It is truly an overview and you’ll eventually want a deeper understanding of the topic, but this gives you a start to understanding such topics as documentation, changed conditions, change orders, quality assurance, time extensions, safety, operations, form FHWA-1273 (dealing with non-discrimination, payroll issues, jobsite posters, and worker safety), disadvantaged business enterprises (DBE), prevailing wages (Davis-Bacon Act), and Made in the USA provisions. For some of these topics, there are additional video links where they delve a bit deeper into the individual topic.

Again, these resources can be helpful in making your day-to-day contracting better for your

local agency. But with the prospect that some local agencies may have opportunities under the IIJA to receive direct federal funding, getting a head start on some of these topics can be a real benefit.

The Delaware T<sup>2</sup>/LTAP Center's Municipal Engineering Circuit Rider is intended to provide technical assistance and training to local agencies, so if you have contract management questions or other transportation issues, contact Matt Carter at [matheu@udel.edu](mailto:matheu@udel.edu) or (302) 831-7236.