

## President Biden introduces behemoth infrastructure plan



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On Wednesday, March 31, 2021, President Joe Biden introduced a “once-in-a-generation” proposal, called the American Jobs Plan, to completely overhaul the country’s aging infrastructure. The newly introduced \$2 trillion package is one that the president says will, “build our economy from the bottom up and the middle out, not the top down.” Although both political parties have acknowledged the need to update and overhaul the country’s infrastructure, especially as other countries continue to fund and improve upon their own, the behemoth package has already ruffled many political feathers. Many Republicans have asserted that President Biden’s package is over reaching and would be better described, as Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell stated, as a “Trojan horse.”

The American Jobs Plan seeks to completely overhaul the current infrastructure system, including the speed of our internet, how electricity is generated, the types of vehicles we drive, the quality of water, and the condition of the roads, bridges and highway systems Americans utilize every day. The package, which is expected to be paid for within 15 years, would be funded through increased taxes on certain corporations. The main corporate tax rate would be increased to 28%, only 7% higher than the current rate of 21% set in 2017. This money is expected to be spent within the first 8 years of the package’s life and would include the following improvements:

- \$115 billion to modernize over 20,000 miles of the country’s bridges, highways, roads, and main streets. This funding is aimed to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, improve and provide

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connections to rural and tribal communities, and improve road safety.

- \$85 billion to modernize existing public transportation and expand current systems in order to provide critical transportation services to individuals and families that rely upon public infrastructure for their everyday commute.
- \$80 billion to create reliable passenger and freight rail service throughout the United States. Unlike many other countries, the United States has not historically funded its rail service, doing so would allow for climate friendly travel alternatives, fast inter-city travel and easy access to new high-potential locations and cities.
- \$174 billion to invest in the rapidly expanding electric vehicle market. President Biden asserts that this investment would allow automakers to create domestic supply chains, increase local job opportunities, and ensure that electric vehicles are affordable for all families. The package would also establish grant and incentive programs for state and local governments and the private sector to encourage the construction of a national network of electric vehicle chargers by 2030.
- \$25 billion to upgrade the country's airports and FAA assets, provide additional funding to the Airport Improvement Program, and the creation of a new program to support terminal renovations and multimodal connections for affordable car-free access to air travel.
- \$17 billion to improve inland waterways, coastal ports, land ports of entry and ferries.
- \$20 billion for the creation of a new program to reconnect neighborhoods cut off by historic investments and to ensure that new infrastructure projects increase opportunity, advance racial equity and environmental justice, and promote affordable access.

The above list is only a small glimpse into the expansive package introduced by the president. In addition to funding for traditional infrastructure expenses, such as rebuilding highways and bridges, the plan seeks to implement even larger goals, including, but not limited to:

- Protecting people of color and low-income people and neighborhoods from flooding and climate change due to a historical lack of reliable infrastructure.
- Increasing response to and protection from extreme wildfires, coastal resilience to sea-level rise, and the protection of major land and water resources like Florida's Everglades and the Great Lakes.
- Replacing 100 percent of the country's lead pipes and service lines and modernizing the existing drinking water, wastewater and stormwater systems.
- Providing reliable and fast broadband service to the entire country, including rural and low-income areas, while promoting competition among internet providers and lowering the cost of internet access.
- Modernizing the electrical grid and lower energy bills to avoid other catastrophic shutdowns such as the Texas shutdown in 2021.
- Constructing energy efficient homes, schools, child care facilities and commercial building to address the affordable housing crisis.

The package is undoubtedly ambitious and will certainly face many political obstacles in the coming months. However, the promise of better infrastructure, a healthier environment, and the creation of more employment opportunities across the United States are all positive outcomes that President Biden and supporters of the American Jobs Plan hope will be enough to encourage the plan's adoption and implementation. For more information on the American Jobs Plan, you can read the entire fact sheet, [here](#).

