

# The CARES ACT

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was passed by Congress and signed into law on March 27th, 2020. This over \$2 trillion economic relief package delivers on the Trump Administration's commitment to protecting the American people from the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19. The CARES Act provides fast and direct economic assistance for American workers, families, and small businesses, and preserve jobs for our American industries. Through the Coronavirus Relief Fund, the CARES Act provides for payments to State, Local, and Tribal governments navigating the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The CARES Act includes funding and financing for airlines and aviation businesses as well as grants for airports, public transit and Amtrak. The CARES Act includes \$10B to support the US airports. FAA's Office of Airports will be administering the grants.

- **\$500M** has been set aside to increase the federal share to 100% for FY2020 for the AIP and supplemental discretionary grants.
- **\$7.4B** is going toward commercial service airports,
- **\$2B** toward primary airports (large/medium/small hubs),
- at least **\$100M** for general aviation airports.
- **\$56M** additional funding was set aside for essential air service grants to ensure airlines continue serving rural communities.

The Council has sent out/posted to their web site FAA's CARES Act Airport Grant FAQs, as well as FAQs to airport sponsors.

A total of **\$25B** was included for FTA programs, and those funds are being distributed through formula programs for large and small urban areas (\$22.7B) and rural areas (\$2.2B).

## Nebraska Cares Act Grants

### Aeronautics

The spreadsheet [link](#) details the CARES Act grants to Nebraska airports totaling over \$64.6 million. Every airport that is included in the National Plan of Integrated Airports System is automatically eligible. The Aeronautics Division is assisting Nebraska's airports in applying for these grants. The grant amounts indicated are based on calculations specified in the act.

As of April 2019, these grants were starting to be funded. The grants are to be used as reimbursement for operating expenses or for airport infrastructure improvements, though FAA is strongly encouraging they be used for operating expenses.

### Transit

Nebraska received \$27.1 million from the CARES Act to support rural public transportation in the state. The funding has been apportioned to Nebraska through the Federal Transit Administration but NDOT has to apply for the funds before they become available to the state. Nebraska can use 100% of the money to support eligible expenses under the Section 5311 program which includes operating assistance and capital purchase of vehicles.

NDOT's budget will prioritize reimbursement of operating assistance expenses to support 59 rural agencies through the current grant cycle which ends June 30, 2021. Under the CARES Act guidelines, funds can be used to compensate wages for transit employees placed on administrative leave due to a reduction in service or because they meet the CDC definition of an individual at high risk for the virus. Any remaining funds will be used to replace transit vehicles in the rural fleet which have exceeded their useful life per NDOT's Transit Asset Management Plan.

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