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Trump Budget Blueprint Mum on Major Infrastructure Plans.

The Trump administration's 2018 budget proposal would make significant cuts in the budgets of three agencies that may be expected to help carry out the president's ambitious infrastructure repair and modernization plans. What isn't included in the budget blueprint are details about the president's often-touted \$1 trillion infrastructure renewal plan.

"[T]he President has emphasized that one of his top priorities is modernizing the outdated infrastructure that the American public depends upon," according to the March 16 blueprint. "To spearhead his infrastructure initiative, the President has tapped a group of infrastructure experts to evaluate investment options along with commonsense regulatory, administrative, organizational, and policy changes to encourage investment and speed project delivery. Through this initiative, the President is committed to making sure that taxpayer dollars are expended for the highest return projects and that all levels of government maximize leverage to get the best deals and exercise vigorous oversight. The Administration will provide more budgetary, tax, and legislative details in the coming months."

In terms of individual department and agency funding, the proposal would slash \$2.6 billion (31 percent) from the Environmental Protection Agency's budget, which would result in the elimination of 50 programs and 3,200 positions, reported The Washington Post. However, the \$5.7 billion agency budget would include \$2.3 billion for state revolving funds (a \$4 million increase) and \$20 million for the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act program (level funding).

The Department of Transportation's budget would be cut by \$2.4 billion (12.7 percent) to \$16.2 billion. This would include eliminating funding for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant program, which funds surface transportation projects. The proposal also calls for privatizing the Federal Aviation Administration's air traffic control function. It is not clear whether this could involve a P3 element.

The Army Corps of Engineers' budget would fall by \$1 billion (16.3 percent) to \$5 billion.

However, the General Services Administration's discretionary budget authority would increase by \$200 million to \$500 million, although it's not clear how much money it will be authorized to spend on costly projects such as the planned FBI headquarters swap or plans to consolidate the Department of Homeland Security at the St. Elizabeth's West campus, reported the Washington Business Journal.

This preliminary budget blueprint will be followed by a more comprehensive budget proposal to be released in May, the Post reported.

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