

# Research Community Perspective

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**M**ore than half of the research group represented university-based research programs. The group defined a national transportation research program as being much more than the sum of the following:

- Local, state, and regional needs;
- Needs of mission-based federal agencies;
- The five sectors of the National Science and Technology Council's plan; and
- Needs of personal and freight models.

There exists an overarching rationale for a strong federal role to

- Rebuild, maintain, and advance the national transportation system, especially its infrastructure;
- Contribute to reducing oil imports;
- Reduce emissions to mitigate health effects; and
- Enhance international competitiveness through reduced shipping costs and improved logistical systems.

The origins of research needs and opportunities are many and diverse: they range from stakeholders who are increasing in number and should be represented, to investigators who can innovate totally new approaches. A variety of organizations also can contribute:

- Universities, which also will train the next generation of professionals and researchers;
- National laboratories;
- Not-for-profit organizations;
- For-profit organizations; and
- Public-private partnerships.

Likewise, a variety of funding and procurement approaches should be employed:

- Client-based technical services;
- Project-based solutions to specific problems;
- Investigator-initiated proposals; and
- Development/field test partnerships.

The group concluded that there is a clear and important need to increase federal support for transportation research.