INFRA Grant Webinar Closed Captioned Transcript

July 13, 2017 2:00 – 4:00PM

Ladies and gentlemen thank you for standing by Welcome to the how to compete for INFRA grants conference call. We will conduct a question-and-answer session at the end. If you require assistance press star than zero. I want to hand the conference to your host Laura Black.

>> Hello. I want to welcome everyone to the webinar on how to do compete for INFRA. My name is Laura Black I am in the US DOT and I will be providing technical assistance for the webinar. I will introduce Paul Baumer who's the advisor in office for the under Sec. of transportation. I want to point out a few key features. On the top left side of your screen you will find audio information if you are disconnected from the webinar at any time, please use that information to reconnect. Below the audio information is a list of attendees and below the list of attendees is a box titled materials for download where you can access a copy of the presentation. Select the file and click download files and follow the prompts. In the lower left corner of your screen is a chat box where you can submit questions during the webinar. US DOT staff will be answering your questions in the chat pod or you may choose to answer via phone. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions over the phone after the presentation. Instructions will be given at that time. If you experience technical difficulties use the chat box to send a private message to me. The webinar is scheduled until 4 PM and we are recording so if you are unable to join you can review the material. The recording will be sent to everyone and posted on the INFRA grant website. We have a few poll questions we want you to answer. Thank you for your responses. I will close the polls and a few seconds and I want to turn it over to Paul Baumer.

>> Thank you, Laura. Good afternoon we are excited to be joined by you to discuss the INFRA program. Infrastructure for rebuilding America. On today's webinar, we will be going over a lot of information, some of which you may be familiar with if you are familiar with the program. Some of it will be new. You can see it organized on this table of contents. We will go over an introduction followed by the statutory requirements which were unchanged from previous versions. We will go into the selection criteria which are an important difference between this program and its recent past. After that we will discuss the application format and then finally be open to questions and answers over the phone. Throughout the webinar today, if you have questions or answers that come up and you don't want to forget them, feel free to throw them in the chat pod. We have a few colleagues here responding to questions in the chat window. If your question comes up in the chat window and it's not responded to immediately, be patient we may be saving it to the end to deliver a verbal response. For a simple question, we will try to take care of those as we go along.

The INFRA program is the discretionary grant program authorized by the FAST Act that you may have known as the FASTLANE program. This notice we are discussing today, we will be competing with $1. 5 billion for infrastructure grants for fiscal year '17 and '18.

The INFRA program preserves the statutory requirements that have been in place, but utilizes updated criteria to evaluate and align this program with national and regional economic vitality goals. Some include leveraging by you our local project sponsors and promoting improved project performance and accountability and providing maximum flexibility for innovative solutions to address their specific local needs. The application deadline to get this out right out of the box is November 2 at 8 PM Eastern time and plenty of time for you to prepare these applications and we will have 20 to discuss between now and then. Let's talk about some statutory requirements.

Eligible applicants for INFRA Grants include states, Metropolitan planning organizations, political subdivisions of state or local governments, public authorities and tribal governments and consortiums as well as multistate or multistate jurisdictional group of public entities. I know we have groups of broad representation across the spectrum. Eligible projects are unchanged. INFRA Grants can be used for highway projects carried out on the highway freight network. It can be for highway or bridge projects carried out on the highway system. That would include projects on the interstate. They can also include grade crossing or grade separation projects. That is real way or highway separation projects. Regardless of whether or not the project is on the national highway system. That is a separate category. There's eligibility for intermodal projects that are either port projects or rail truck facilities and things of that nature. They are also eligible for INFRA dollars. Eligible project costs this comes direct from the statute. Development phase activities including planning feasibility and revenue forecasting and review and design and other activities are eligible expenses. That second category of construction activity include rehabilitation, property acquisition, environmental mitigation and contingencies. That is where we are focused on projects that are delivering and will be delivering construction project. While FASTLANE INFRA dollars are eligible to be used on all of these sources, the department is seeking to look for projects that are resulting in construction.

The INFRA program is - - has gotten some interesting requirements regards - - regarding how large your project is. It divides them into large and small projects. Large projects or projects with cost in excess of the lesser of either $100 million or 30 percent of your states FY and in this case it should say 2016 apportionment for FY $17. For most states that number is $100 million. There are some smaller states for which that amount gives lower than 100 million in order to be a large project. We have a table on our website and in the notice of opportunity that spells out what the total is in order to be considered a large project for each of your - - for every state in the country as well as if you have multistate projects. Small projects are those that don't meet that large project definition. It's important if you are applying for a large project or small project because the requirements that the department has to assess are different. They are different from those assessed small projects. We will discuss that in a later slide. Also the amount of money available is different. Large projects have - - can compete for 90 percent of the funds while small projects are eligible for only 10 percent in any given fiscal year. In this upcoming competition, we expect small projects will be competing for around $80 million. We don't have a specific number yet, but the large projects will be competing for the vast majority of the funding. Another way it matters is in terms of what the minimum award is you can receive. Large projects, the minimum award for large projects is $25 million. The minimum award for small projects is $5 million. The cost share is up to - - for the total project cost or future cost we can only go to maximum of 60 percent of the total funding. That's an important consideration. We will discuss more when we discuss leverage criteria and how we address the cost share aspect.

There are requirements for large and small projects that I mentioned. Large projects are required - - the department is required to determine they generate national or regional economic, mobility, or safety projects. They have to be cost-effective, and they have to contribute to one or more goals listed in 23 USC 150. There based on the result of pulmonary engineering. One or more stable and dependable funding or financing sources are available for large projects to complete the construction, operation, and maintenance of the project. Similarly, the project cannot be completed without other federal funding, and then the project is reasonably expected to begin construction with 18 months from obligation. For every large project we have to make sure before we can award it it meets these requirements. The notice of funding of opportunity goes into great detail on what we would expect for large project applicants to provide us in order to make sure we can make that determination that the project meets the requirements. Small projects is less restrictive. The department is required to consider the cost-effectiveness of small projects. As well as consider the effect of small projects on the mobility in the projects state or region. We are also making consideration for state or region but the same requirements may not - - apply.

Let's discuss the selection criteria. There are four FAST Act selection criteria. Throughout this presentation, we are going through this information and all of it is spelled out in detail in the notice of funding or opportunity. The selection criteria are described in section E of this notice. After this webinar, if you have any questions we can try to answer them. I highly encourage you to review section E of the notice of funding of opportunity to determine and understand how we will be using the selection criteria. The first criterion is the support for national or regional economic vitality. I'm not going to go through all of these bullets on the slide. The main take away from this particular criteria is this is where we will be evaluating the outcomes of your project. Not only the economic outcomes in terms of having benefits to conjunction reduction or freight movement. Also safety outcomes as well as benefits in terms of economic development, if there are bottle X you are eliminating as part of your project. This is the all encompassing outcome criterion. In assessing this particular criterion, we plan to rely on your benefit cost analysis. This program and other discretionary programs have long requested applicants to supply the cost analysis. In this particular case we are going to use the information provided in that benefit cost analysis to assessed - - to assess the way it supports the vitality. It's important you do a good job with the analysis. And that the application we will discuss how to present it. At the same time, if you have additional benefits you are not able to incorporate into the benefit cost analysis, we would invite that you share those in this section addressing the selection criterion. The first thing to make sure as you focus on the benefit cost analysis and the benefit you are including their that is what we will use to assess this particular merit criteria. The second criteria is leveraging of federal funding. It's made clear the department is clear in maximizing the benefits and the impact of this INFRA award. In particular we are interested in making sure we get a strong bang for our buck in that our local and state project sponsors are bringing as much of their resources as possible to make sure we get the best possible outcome. We will look at what is your nonfederal leverage. We will compare not only your INFRA request but also the amount of other dollars you may have in your project against the amount of nonfederal dollars. Comparing that against other projects for looking for the projects that have the best possible ratio. We recognize not all areas in this country are created equal. There are varying levels of resources and constraints both on a state and local government as well as tribal governments and ports. All are different applicants and based different restraints when it comes to providing nonfederal leverage. In assessing this criterion we will ask you to describe what those constraints are including your ability and your fiscal capacity. We will also ask you to describe if you are a regular recipient of federal funding. It may be the policy of your agency will concentrate federal dollars in as few projects as possible. That minimizes the footprint federal regulations have on your overall transportation program. If that's the case we ask you to describe that. And then we might consider your overall programs leveraging rather than the specific INFRA projects leveraging. And then finally and this is important, we want to make sure the projects are set up to succeed over the long haul. We will be asking applicants in addressing this to describe how they are accounting for future operation and maintenance costs associated with this. In particular we will be interested in applicants that are better able to manage their costs without having to rely on future federal appropriations.

The third selection criteria is the potential for innovation. This has three sub areas which I will go over quickly. The first area is a new approach to environmental reprove - - review. The administration is focused on improving the way project approvals are taken care of. They are interested in perhaps having some of the INFRA projects be models for a new streamlined approach to permitting and project delivery that can be shown as examples and perhaps test some approaches that can be applied more broadly moving forward. If your project would be a good candidate for that you approach - - this approach, in section A as well as section B, we would ask why you would describe the project would be a good candidate. We will be looking for some projects that may be strong candidates. We know it won't apply to all projects because some are through the permitting process. We are not necessarily going to hold that against a particular projects but in some of those projects we may be interested in seeing how the approaches used. A similar area is in the use of the federal highways experimental project Highway delivery authority. Which some of you know is SEP -14/15 . This applies to highway projects. Federal highways has experimental authority to potentially waive specific DOT regulations in the interest of piloting experimental approaches to project delivery. It's important I make clear we will not be making the determination as part of the INFRA selection process. That approach is acceptable or will be acceptable. We ask you describe in your application if you think you have an innovative approach how you think using the SEP -14/15 authorities will help you advance that approach. We may assess that as part of the evaluation. At the end of the day ultimately a separate process will be determined by Federal highways if your project is selected whether or not we are willing to waive those regulations as part of the SEP -14/15 process. The final area is in safety and technology. Safety is important to DOT. We want to make it clear that for your basic safety improvements the important safety measures that Federal highways routinely publish as part of their project, we are expecting that all projects be made as safe as appropriate for that particular project. Those normal safety improvements will be a general expectation or requirement that after you are selected you implement your project to include those safety countermeasures that are known. That is described in section F in the notice of funding and opportunity. With this criterion, what we are getting at is whether the innovative approaches to safety in the area of innovative designs, and in the area of technology or improvements that help enhance the environment for automation or automated vehicles, as well as improvements that enhance the detection and mitigation of infrastructure risks and things like that. Where are you incorporating technology in your project for the purposes of advancing safety. We have some samples here but that's the third area we would be interested in seeing some projects that incorporate those particular pieces to help advance the innovation and transportation sector.

The final selection criterion is the performance selection criterion. This is where we ask applicants to make a proposal to us that we will evaluate as part of the overall selection and evaluation process. We are having projects that allow the department to condition funding on specific, measurable outcomes. We have a few examples of what they might be. It was not meant to be exhaustive. For example, you can propose rather than taking the usual 12 months to finalize your environmental review and permitting, you can promise you will do it in six months. You made improvements in your process for finalizing those procedures, and you believe you can do it more quickly. You can make a proposal that the department would - - that you would adopt specific policy changes, either the project sponsor would or the jurisdiction the project sponsor applied is making adoption changes. That may advance the administration policy goals. That would be something we could potentially SS. Or finally - - assess, or finally that your project would support economic vitality or improve safety. In the proposal we are asking you to identify what it is you will be doing to demonstrate your performance or other possibilities. And whether or not you are willing to condition some or all of your funding on the completion of that particular goal . We are interested in applicants that are willing to put their money where their mouth is. At the same time we are not intending to impose those conditions on unwilling or interested INFRA recipients. I think it's important to be clear there but we want INFRA recipients that are willing to agree to one of these measures as part of a condition of receiving these awards or funds. That is the fourth selection criteria.

There are two other important selections the first is geographic diversity. This comes from the statute. It will consider [Indiscernible] including the need for balance in urban and rural areas. Some of this is interesting. You may be aware that INFRA program statutes defines rural areas quite broadly as areas with a population of 200,000 people or fewer. The department in this notice has made it clear that the balance between urban and rural areas is not just a binary balance of urban or rural, but that we will consider the relative population as we try to strike that balance. Secondly, project readiness is a consideration for us. We will be considering the risks to the delivery of your project including things like your environmental review permitting and feasibility and your funding and financial risk. That is in part because of one of the large project requirements which requires the project can get to obligation, and can get to construction. The obligation deadline for the INFRA funding . - - Is listed here. We have a big window that we want to make sure we make these awards to projects that will get built and so we will be assessing any risk to your project delivery and that readiness section.

How do we want to see these applications formatted? Section D goes through this in quite a bit of detail repeating not only the section headlines you see on this slide but within the criteria section the four different merit criteria and how we want you to - - what kind of information would be helpful in assessing each of those. What we are asking for is you submit an application cover page. We have a template for that in the notice followed by a project narrative that is a 25 page limit. It will cover these individual sections. The project description where you describe upfront here is what my project is. The project location, this is where you give us all the details and maps and drawings of where your project is so we can assess if it's in an urban or rural area or things relating to understanding the geography around your project. The project parties where we understand the partners you brought together and the various entities and who is controlling what and what the funding is. Moving into the grants funds. The sources and uses. This is important for delivery. We want to understand what you are proposing and where it is coming from and how secure is it. The merit criteria were we going to detail where you make your case along each criteria to the extent applicable how your project addresses that merit criteria. And then the project readiness section, where you address information about the timing and schedule of your project and risks for delivery. And finally a section that summarizes how your project addresses the large and small requirements. That may be duplicative with some information you have earlier in the application so if you are concerned about states and want to cross-reference other sections you can do that. Otherwise it's helpful for us to have that separately spelled out so we can see how you meet all of the large or small requirements. We would also ask you supply a benefit cost analysis - - not just asked but require you supply it as an appendix to the narrative. So the results of the benefit cost analysis will be addressed as part of the economic vitality selection criteria, but we want to see your work. We want to see it in an Excel spreadsheet so our economists can dig in there and see what your assumptions are, and see that your math is correct and see the relationships are there. And also so they can tinker with it and test assumptions so they can come up with a robust analysis of your benefit cost analysis. Finally we allow for supplemental information to be submitted in an appendix. It's not required, but a lot of applicants will supply letters of support and additional information on their environmental documentation. They will supply other maps or images again if they are concerned for space in the narrative. They can supply supplemental information in separate appendices. The one thing I will say about that to the extent you are supplying a lot of supplemental information, be aware of a grants. gov restriction in the limit for the number of attachments. I believe the limit is 10. If you can have fewer than 10 attachments and not supply any massive datafiles, that would be helpful as well. Finally a little more about grants. gov mentioned the applications must be submitted by 8 PM Eastern daylight Time on November 2, 2017. We strongly encourage you to make submissions in advance of the deadline. Either the person they need to sign the document is out of the office or their computer crashes or something else happened. It becomes difficult for us to help you if that happens after the deadline. Give yourself at least 24 hours because we appreciate the need to make last-minute changes but if you can go before that that is great. For those of you unfamiliar with grants. gov we have a lot of information on our site about it but also there is a lot of information on the grants. gov website sure people are aware, in order to apply for a grant on grants. gov, you need to have a DUNS number and you need to be able to register for the SAM system as well as needing to have this in your organization to register. These are not systems we control at the US Department of Transportation. We want to make sure people understand there are other systems out there they need to make sure the organization is prepared to use. They are necessary for us to receive and review your application. Finally, we will leave this up here. This has the additional information about the INFRA program on our website. Transportation. gov/build America. We have an inbox where you can send technical questions and I know I have seen my colleagues typing here so I am sure there are great questions. We will now open it for questions either in the chat window or on the line.

>> Ladies and gentlemen if you want to ask a question please press star one. A voice prompt on the line will indicate when the line is opened. You may remove yourself by pressing the \* key followed by the number two. If you are using a speakerphone pick up the handset before pressing the digits. Once again press star one to ask a question at this time.

At we received >> In listening to this presentation I don't understand how the INFRA grant is different from FASTLANE .

>> The program is the same program statutorily that was called FASTLANE but we changed the selection criteria. We placed an increased emphasis on leverage with mitigating information about fiscal capacity. The criteria relating to innovation is new and the criteria relating to the performance and accountability is new. All of that information is new information that reflects emphasis on how we want to assess projects to receive awards under this program which we now call the INFRA program. That is the main difference. The underlying program is the same. We anticipate if you've previously applied for a FASTLANE grant, and that grant was ineligible, - - was an eligible application it will still be. We are looking at different things in terms of determining what projects we want to award. We want to make sure that we are clear to everyone that that is what this focus. The second thing that is different is this upcoming round. We are competing two years, almost 2 years with the funding at the same time. We have a much larger pool of funding for FY 17 and FY 18. here is one exception to that for those of you who may have brought this up, if you apply for a small project award from the FY 17 funds that was solicited in December, we are still intending to make selections for small projects that applied for FASTLANE in December 2017. We will use the old FASTLANE criteria to make those selection. We hope to announce them soon. If you apply for a large project, you will have to resubmit for an award under the INFRA program. Addressing the criteria. We hope that part of the information you compiled will be useful. We hope it will be. Certainly all the information will be useful. We have to be sure you address the new criteria if you apply projects - - for projects you previously applied for. If you applied for a small project, we are still making selections for those awards in the near future, but in the meantime, if you are working on a large project we want to get this notice out so you concert to work on it. Those are the main differences between the INFRA program and the FASTLANE program.

>> You touch on the timeline and you said it will be soon is there a timeline for the INFRA award?

>> We do not have a timeline for that. It's a new program with new criteria. We are going to work diligently on it, but we do not have an estimated time of announcement.

>> That would apply for FY 17 and FY 18 would you say?

>> We encourage that they will be announced at the same time as part of the competition.

>> For folks that have pending FASTLANE small project applications, how would you suggest that they - - what advice would you give for these?

>> I think for those of you who applied as small projects and FY 17, the amount of money available for small projects for FY 17 FASTLANE was the most $80 million. We had about 123 small project applications. They requested north of $1. 8 billion arithmetic alone, it is definitely - - we will not be able to award a huge number of small project application. That said, we will be making selections. We will be trying to make them as quickly as possible. I think it's up to you to determine how much resources you want to devote to the program potentially to reapply as a INFRA grant in the immediate future . I think it's fair to say that we know there's a lot of great applications we will not be able to award so consider the odds as you make the research with that decision.

>> Just to clarify can you talk about the status of FASTLANE browned to applications for large projects ?

>> If you applied for a large project in round two in December 2017, we will not be making selections from those applications. That money that was set aside for a large project is being combined under this notice for a new competition so we are looking forward to hearing from you and seeing your application for the INFRA program. We do have - - the notice described in addendum if you have previously applied. We think you can resubmit your application. Provided you have in a project - - an appendix that has the new criteria. The selection criteria is different. We think a lot of the information you have done should be able to be reused. It will be important or helpful to you to address this selection criteria if you want to compete for INFRA funding.

>> We had a couple of questions earlier to discuss whether or not FASTLANE applicants would be able to provide feedback on their application. Because this is now considered [Indiscernible] the previous evaluations for FASTLANE projects were not completed. Feedback will be limited.

>> Will an applicant be able to submit their [Indiscernible-low audio. ]

>> This is being rolled out as one opportunity. We will apply both 2017 and 2018 funds. It's one large competition not to separate once. You should submit one application for a project that you have that could be a revised version of your fast Lane project provided the application addresses the criteria. We are not doing separate competitions. It is one large competition which is combining the large project dollars

>> There are several questions regarding eligibility. [ Indiscernible-low audio. ]

>> Provided they are subdivisions of state and local governments. We had a number of regional and government entities apply. It's been determined to be eligible. If you look at the language it refers to a political subdivision of state or local governments and those entities typically apply under that category.

>> Do projects need to be inside an organized area?

>> They do not. In fact we have awarded projects both in urbanized and non-urbanized areas. There is a set-aside percent of the funds must be awarded to projects that are defined as rural by the FASTLANE - - excuse me by the INFRA statute. We do welcome applications from both urban and rural areas. We will balance the needs of urban and rural areas in making our selection.

>> We have a question on the phone.

>> I wondered I see on the website you are going to have a revised guidance document. Is that document available?

>> We are currently in the process of updating our benefit cost analysis guidance. We are taking a look at some of the parameters. Our goal is to try to make it more helpful for all of the applicants. Our target is to give that or to release that early next week.

>> There is another question on the phone.

>> Since the fiscal 2017 and fiscal 2018 are combined, can applications specify which year of funding they would like to meet the milestones for construction for a specific project?

>> I think that's fine if applicants want to include that. I think because these dollars are available like all highway trust fund dollars, they are available for up to three years up to the - - after the year of authorization. We are not anticipating there would be a lot of constraints for much of these products in terms of timing. However, if there is a strong opinion that this timeline would be better served by receiving $2018, please feel free to include that in your application.

>> Thank you.

>> There are no further - - excuse me there is one question.

>> Can you go back and explain one of the criteria relative to whether or not an applicant had received federal award - - awards previously. I'm trying to understand how that will be scored. Would it be a positive attribute or a detriment?

>> Sure. I think you are talking about leveraging criteria. As a first matter of priority we are interested in projects that minimize the use of federal funding to achieve the maximum benefit. We will look at that ratio an assessment of what is your nonfederal leverage in your project. However, we are willing to consider a number of pieces of mitigating information that we are asking applicants to provide in assessing that particular ratio and how it fits in the overall evaluation. One of those you hinted on was if an applicant is a recipient of federal funding. I think in your plot - - case we would not be thinking of [Indiscernible]. Although you had previously received funding it would be good to know a little about what your match on that was and how you maximized it in the past. And if that has impact on your request for this particular award. I think in general we were thinking about traditional recipients like your state DOT or NPO that may programmatically achieve very high leverage. Let's say the federal dollars are only 20 percent of the overall transportation program, that most - - if you count all of their projects they do, 80 percent of it is done by nonfederal, state local or private dollars. If you could argue that and use that to say that that statement - - the state may condense those dollars into as few projects as dollar - - as possible or maximize the shares. Estate may say we will use 50 percent of our [Indiscernible] but we are asking for a INFRA award for 50 percent of the project. We will use the other 30 percent will be other federal formula dollars. We will have a maximum share that is allowed by this program which is 80 percent. We do that because across our overall program, we achieved very high leverage. We happened to concentrate the formula dollars into as few projects as possible maximizing the federal participation. That is what I meant by that. If an applicant is a regular recipient of federal dollars, they can make that case if that is the case, they can say we may not have achieved very high leverage on this project alone, but an hour program - - on our program we did. We will take that when we assess the leverage criteria.

>> What are the funding requests that define if a project is small or large?

>> There are no request limits that are maximum. However, if a small project is located in the state where by definition it has cost less than $100 million, because the maximum participation of a FASTLANE award in a particular project is 60 percent. The hypothetical one would be $60 million. There may be some nuance there if you are talking about future eligible costs or previously incurred costs. I won't go into those now, but for small and large projects what matters is the total project size, including previously incurred costs and the maximum can only be 60 percent of that total project cost. So whether you are only asking for $60 million in which case you can only request $38 million around there or whether you had a $400 million project or let's say a $500 million project in which case you can only request $300 million, that is the maximum for how much you can request. The minimums are 25 and five. If you are large project you can't receive less than $25 million so you may as well as for at least $25 million. If you are a small project the minimum is $5 million. That means also as a small project your minimum total cost has to be more than $8. 3 million a project just short of $8. 4 million in order to apply for this award.

>> Can you address what is meant by a network of projects and how that may affect the size of the project?

>> Because of the project size requirements, we are interested in projects that bring together a network approach of what could be functionally smaller projects together to have a large, widespread impact. The belief there is that there is only so many projects out there for certain funds but there may be a lot of communities that have smaller projects they can bundle together that have a logical connection, either because they are all part of a single network or they are all serving a similar function within a confined geographic area. That may be able to compete together because they will show a lot of benefits that are more network oriented than just any individual piece. That is what we mean by network of projects. We are interested in providing flexibility for project sponsors to propose potentially more transformative, impactful projects because they take advantage of a bundling approach.

>> We've had questions about leverage. Can other federal non-formula funds be used as leverage?

>> Yes. I think we would views - - view those as other federal dollars. If you're talking about community development block grants or other sources of federal funding that is not Department of Transportation related but you would incorporate in a project. That would likely constitute other sources and we would count that. There is a unique situation within that. I know with some particular program so I think if you have a specific source of funding that you want to incorporate and you want to know does it count as federal or nonfederal, it would be good to email the INFRA Grants website we will try to update our FAQs . We will provide that information more broadly. I think in general, it doesn'thave to come from D. O considered federal but we understand sometimes there are unique dollars there. There may be a specific legal requirement.

>> Would greater credit be given to applications which use nonfederal match rather than state or local funds?

>> We view state and local funds as nonfederal if it doesn't come from the federal government. That said, we are and the notice describes this, in addition to state and local dollars we are interested in applicants telling us to what extent they assessed private dollars and if they were available. We are interested in seeing more partners and more nonfederal partners involved in building infrastructure. If you evaluated those options, and whether or not you were successful in attracting private dollars, we would love to know what your findings were and your determinations were in that regard. I think we are looking for all sources of nonfederal matches.

>> What about incoming matches? Does that count toward funding requirements?

>>It is a match by D. O regulation. I think it's fair to say it sometimes more difficult to assess. If you are right on the threshold, you have to be careful if you rely on a substantially high valuation of time to count as match. It is technically allowed as a match. That said I think consistent with current practice we are interested in going beyond the minimum amount of match and trying to get as much as possible. If you are in a rural area or a less well-off area and you are articulating the only possible match you can afford is an in-kind match, we will review that.

>> Any questions over the phone?

>> Not at this time. Once again that is star one to answer - - ask a question over the phone lines.

>> Are inland waterway projects eligible?

>> The surface transportation elements of in land waterway projects are eligible. By that I mean that we have had ports on the in land waterways apply for wharf and peer improvements for elevators for rail access and paving things along those lines. They are eligible as port projects. It gets a little bit trickier if you are talking about navigational dredging. That's the responsibility of the Army Corps. It's not eligible for receiving these funds. We can't supplement what is what they are responsible for. There is flexibility around dredging work if it's part of constructing a new birth, but that would be under the eligible category as port infrastructure.

>>required a benefit to freight do I understand properly that [Indiscernible] projects do not need to show a freight benefit?

>> Highway projects are eligible. The requirements for highway projects are that there's economic mobility or safety benefits. It is not necessarily freight specific. On the intermodal side, the rail projects particularly specific to freight rail not passenger rail. We are looking for freight rail projects. Although grade crossings and separations do not have that modifier. So if you have a grade crossing or separation that does not necessarily need to be a freight grade crossing or railway. Highway projects - - as long as it's on the highway system it is eligible.

>> And a question on Multimodal project. Our alternative projects such as transit, bike, or pedestrian eligible if they have an impact on the system?

>> If it's not a highway project, it is not eligible or a freight rail or a grade crossing or grade separation. So transit projects by and large are not eligible. With the one exception of a railway crossing or grade separation that carries a commuter rail service. Otherwise it has to be a highway project that would be eligible for a title 23. Not just any roadway but it has to be on the national Highway freight network or the system.

>> [ Indiscernible-low audio. ]

>>We would probably have to take a good look at the specifics to determine whether or not it is eligible or whether it's too attenuated from the port itself and should be more classically considered as an NHS project. Certainly if you are not on the NHS if you want to make the case that you are a port project you should present that information. We would assess it for eligibility. If you are determined to be a port project in your eligible because you are not on the NHS or because you are a port, it would be subject to the $500 million cap.

>> May a private industry partner with a local government in a INFRA Grants application?

>> Yes. We are interested in projects that have the support of the private sector. Either freight shippers or other entities that may be interested in specific project. The important thing to note is that the lead applicant has to be one of those public-sector agencies I described on the applicant slide. Ultimately that entity is the one that will be responsible for the federal grant funds. We have a lot of project sponsors that work with railroads, where the county or the city or the authority basically acts as who receives the grant but the railroad does the work. The public authority is the entity to which we make the word.

>> If a project crosses both urban and rural areas, how is it determined which category it falls in?

>> We look to see where the project is located. Specifically where the bulk of the costs will be incurred. If you have a highway project that literally is 10 miles and the costs are evenly applied across that 10 miles, if six miles is in an urban area and for miles is a rural area we will look at the award and it doesn't have to be necessarily urban or rural. We would assign 60 percent of the dollars to the urbanized area and 40 percent of the dollars to a rural area. Potentially, require that our dollars get spent in one particular portion or another portion. It's not often that it comes up but we are able to deal with it when it comes up. If you cross a boundary like that the best thing to do that you describe for us not only what you think you are in terms of urban and rural but what percentage of your project is located in the urbanized area or the rural area. We will assess the information to make sure in meeting our requirements for the set-aside we have you properly pocketed and the dollar amounts properly targeted.

>> Is there a [Indiscernible] template that the department provides?

>> They do not have a syllable template. What I will say is we strongly encourage applicants to provide a benefit cost analysis but in an Excel spreadsheet file that is unprotected and shows calculation. It helps our reviewers analyze the benefit cost analysis. We do not have a fillable form or Excel file.

>> We will release the guidance as early as next week and the guidance will go into a number of topics that would traditionally be found in a benefit cost analysis. Please look for that. We will also have a webinar soon focused on benefit cost analysis.

>> We've had questions about environmental work on project. How stringent is the requirement to begin construction within 18 months? Will be difficult to attain this target and as noted by the webinar the environmental process is [Indiscernible] by federal requirements and for Sharon Hurst grants how does this look to work through these guidelines.

>> On the requirement question with large projects at the legal requirement that the apartment - - department determined that you will enter into construction within 18 months of obligation. That's a key point because obligation sometimes does not occur until months and even potentially 18 months to two years after we select a project and announce it. For most projects we obligate funds once a lot of work has been completed. There are exceptions to that and sometimes if you want to use some of your award dollars for that were, we can undertake partial obligation. In general at the time of award we have to feel comfortable that once you are obligated you will be able to get under construction within 18 months. I would say for most project the biggest risks we would look at would be financial ones or general project delivery ones. Are you an entity that is reliably delivering projects that use federal dollars once they are obligated. In general, the obligation is not something that happens when we announce a project but can happen many months later if there are milestones to be completed. On the second question, on how we look at the environmental review and permitting approach. We certainly understand a lot of requirements are federal in nature, but we also understand in order to complete those documents on time requires a lot of work from local project sponsors and collaboration at the local level between the federal and local. I think our expectation is that we are proposing some exciting approaches to streamline that approach and to potentially accelerate beyond what would normally be expected in terms of federal approval. We would also expect from our awardees a partner that is willing to accelerate their own processes to move projects along quickly. If you think it's a good candidate and you are willing to put in time and energy, the department would throw its resources behind not only doing the work here at D. O NOFO outlined across federal agencies to make sure all the approvals are being arrived at in a timely and efficient manner. That is how we are looking at this criteria.

>> Another question about litigation. How does the D department defined expenses? Do they have to be identified in the project?

>> I'm not an expert in this. I would suspect that comes from federal highway regulations and a lot of pre-existing documents about eligible costs for the use of title $23. If you want to send a know we can follow up with specific information. We are not creating new definitions but relying on the traditional definitions federal highways uses to apply to all federal funds.

>> Will the selection criteria be weighted in any way?

>> We are not in a specific fashion. We will look at all of them and assessing them in making our selection. At this point, we aren't waiting one over any other.

>> It's on club there whether it's a disadvantage or advantage to use [Indiscernible] funds for the proposed project. For the NOFO they are considered federal assistance . For the purposes of the leveraging of federal funding criteria it will be considered.

>> Who asked that question?

>> Great question. That is confusing. There was not a lot we could do to avoid it. Our expectation and the way we look at this in terms of leverage is that it's a loan so we think of it as nonfederal in terms of advancing your nonfederal leverage in assessing how your project does on the leverage criteria. We think it's a great thing. If you want to borrow from what we understand will be repaid from local dollars, that is nonfederal funding. However, for statutory requirements, it counts as federal assistance towards that 80 percent maximum. If you have that loan that is amounting to about 33 1/3 percent of your total project cost. You can have a maximum INFRA award of only 47 2/3 percent. Ultimately only 80 percent of your project can have federal assistance. That includes that loan. What we would do on the leverage front is look at that as having 47 2/3 percent federal. We would count the other loan is nonfederal for the purposes of assessing the criteria.

>> Does the road classification national highway freight system matter for rail grade separation ?

>> It does not. If a railway highway grade separation project is a separate category of eligibility from the national highway system or freight network, so your railway highway grade separation project does not need to be on one of those networks. However, because of that we are going to going to look - - only going to look at the expenses with the separation project. It gets more dicey the further away you go from the crossing project in terms of eligible cost. At a certain point it would need to be on the national highway system.

>> If Amtrak contributes to a project is that included within the 80 percent Back or not?

>> Good question. I don't want to commit to an answer. I need to understand the nature of the funding. We will look into that. It may depend on where it's coming from. We will follow up. Good question

>> If you would like to email us so we can reply to you directly that would be grace.

>> Are applicants required to start project construction within 18 months after they are awarded and a follow-up to that is how stringent is that requirement because of right-of-way and environmental needs?

>> Applicants are not required to begin construction within 18 months of when we announce or propose they were selected. We are - - we must determine what we are making the selection that they be under construction within 18 months of one we obligate the dollars. That obligation date depends a lot on project specific factors. Obviously if your project is ready to go, once we make the announcement we can get to obligation quickly. Some projects we announce we will be awarding them understanding they have milestones to go before we would obligate funds. In that case that 18 month clock doesn't start until we are anticipating at the time of award, that we would obligate your project.

>> Could you give the folks on the line a little bit more clarity on an example for folks that are considering applying for INFRA and knowing the application deadline is November . Can you walk them through the evaluation process and the notification. To give them a sense of generally when you're talking about 18 months from obligation, they are trying to figure out in their mind when would that occur. Maybe you can give them a little bit more information.

>> We are receiving applications in November. As I mentioned at the beginning, we will proceed to evaluate quickly. We are evaluating a number of applications and its new criteria. We don't know how long the evaluation process will take. Let's say for the purposes of - - Justin's sample. - - We make an example Let's say we make them June 1, 2018. The first step once we made the selection as we make - - we notify Congress that we made our selections and provide a list of them. 60 days have to pass before we can obligate at minimum any projects. Sometimes we use award and obligate interchangeably. Other people use award to mean when we made our announcements so that it causes confusion. At a minimum, we can't obligate funds for at least 60 days while Congress reviews the selections that we made. Once that 60 day window has passed, we will reach out to applicants specifically and begin working on developing a grant agreement or project agreement or whatever structure the project will be delivered under and if your project is fully permitted and ready to go, that can go quickly. We can then sign in your - - and you are often running rolling a project. If your project has milestones to complete like environmental work, we traditionally will wait to obligate until after it's completed. Let's say it's a longer timeline project. We may not be obligating dollars until June 1, 2019. That gives us plenty of time that 420 $17 we have until September 30, 2020 to get to that obligation. For FY 20 $18, we have until September 30 of 2021 to get that obligation. That is the constraint on the obligation. Let's say it's June 1, and we are moving - - you obligate the dollars, our expectation would be you would get under construction within 18 months of that. I honestly think it would be unlikely for us to obligate the dollars if there were milestones. There may be some exceptions if you obligate early for environmental work. That may be more of a risk. At the end of the day, we are only required to have made a determination at the time of selection that we expect you to get to that deadline. There's a lot of flexibility built into it. It could be your application - - you may have a project that will not be ready until 2020. We would be able to assess that and consider it. From a competitive standpoint, I think certainly some projects we select the administration will want to see some projects are ready to go. We want projects that are focusing dollars on construction. We don't want them with a huge amount of environmental milestones. From a strict eligibility standpoint we will be easy to work with you.

>> Will private activity bonds be counted toward the 80 percent maximum. Can [Indiscernible] funds be used as leverage?

>> They are transactions that are from a private borrower to a private developer. I have a hard time believing federal financial assistance. We will double check that. There's no federal money. And then secondly the Garvey bond could be used with leverage. We will have to follow-up with some of our leadership. We haven't addressed that specifically. For those of you who are unaware what Garvey bond Czar, they are bonds that are issued to borrow against future federal dollars that they expect to be getting. They are Grant anticipation revenue vehicles or something along those lines. I think the spirit of the criteria is to show us that you are going to be able to deliver this project while not relying on future federal dollars. I think you should keep that in mind when you are thinking about leveraging.

>> A question about the timing. First with the department announce [Indiscernible] will there be new [ Indiscernible-low audio. ]

>> On the second question, there is the FY $18 . 10 percent of the FY $18 are set aside for small project. We don't have final appropriations yet is subject to them. Participation - - our anticipation is that will be between $81 million and $85 million. That will be available under this particular iteration of the INFRA project. Under the first question, we will likely make small and large projects selections for INFRA at the same time. We will send all of that to Congress at the same time. The clock should be the same for large and small. For FASTLANE that clock has not yet started. We haven't made the selections for FY 17 project. That clock will start once we send the proposed selections to Congress.

>> FASTLANE required a benefit to freight. Will the INFRA projects not necessarily need to show a freight benefit. Will the INFRA projects not necessarily need to show a freight benefit.

>> So FASTLANE did not require them to show a freight benefit. Highway projects were eligible and provided they had economical safety benefits. Obviously freight projects were - - the intermodal freight rail projects had to be freight specific. The highway projects were not. That did not change We still as part of the criterion for the support for vitality, we are interested in projects that show benefits. We have notices that eliminate freight bottlenecks and projects that increase economic development opportunities in areas where that would be of use. Yes I think the program emphasis on freight is the same as it was. It's important for economic vitality just as it was important for economic outcomes and mobility outcomes in the FASTLANE project. Eligibility for freight corridors remains the same as part of being on the national Highway freight network.

>> Our alternative mode projects eligible if they are on the system will have an impact on the system?

>> I think we addressed this already. Transit projects are not available with the exception of grade separation projects those can accommodate trains or vehicles. But the project has to be either highway on the freight network or on the highway system or freight rail, intermodal.

>> We have a question asking for clarification on how an applicant status as a regular recipient of federal funding would be scored as beneficial or detrimental.

>>For projects that are regular recipients of federal funding, we are allowing you to - - if you have a policy of getting federal dollars in as few projects as possible. You can use that to explain why your leverage ratio is what it is. That would not apply to you if you are not a regular recipient of federal dollars. That is an option we are providing to those recipients if they want to have 80 percent federal match in their projects. If they are doing that because they have that policy then the achieve otherwise . Otherwise we are looking for all the projects to minimize the amount of federal funding associated with them or at least to the extent that the applicant is capable of doing that.

>> The NOFO states that application needs more than one component. What would be appropriate to break a project into more than one component?

>> I think we have offered flexibility to applicants in the past. Who maybe have a broader vision that would require and deliver transformative benefits. But they would require more funding to do so. To explain if there are separate components within that project that could be funded and that have independent benefits and utilities but still meet the requirements of the program to explain that so it gives us the flexibility to go with your full network or series of components or to go with one specific component if that is easier for us to fit into the portfolio. We think it has benefited applicants in terms of competitiveness because ultimately the more options we have to fit your project in and to assess different pieces there may be one piece that we are interested in from a benefits perspective and another piece that may not meet specific requirements. If we can separate those two it helps your competitiveness. We would mostly ask for the applicant to define that themselves, if they think they can deliver separate pieces, all of those pieces it's important to point out, they must meet all of the relevant requirements. As long as they do that they can describe them as being either separate pieces or also explain how doing them at the same time is advantageous which is why they are applying in one application.

>> With a question about scalability. So if this question wasn't addressed please ask it in the chat and we will discuss it.

>> This NOFO puts a stronger emphasis on agency coordination and submittals. Will they seek more collaboration across sponsors and offer more incentive toward applications submitted by [Indiscernible] >> We don't plan to provide a weight so's - - so that state D. O nonstate. We want them delivered quickly and efficiently and to the extent you are local project sponsor who is perhaps able to do that but you can work with your state D. O partner with you to deliver let's say you want to participate in review and permitting approach I think it would be nothing to your benefit to talk to us about that relationship with the state D. O D. O willing to assist with those project.

>> If we submit an application under the last round of FASTLANE can U. S provide criteria for that as well as the new selection criteria ?

>> For previous applications the FASTLANE FY 17 was not completed. The department's ability to give feedback will be more limited. Additionally the selection criteria will change between FASTLANE FY 17 and INFRA. If you have questions about how the project would relate under INFRA we can address those. I think to the extent that large projects under FY 17 evaluations we would not have - - there would be a limited amount of information to share about that.

>>We have a question on behalf of the state Department of Transportation. What a project using tolls to support financing be evaluated differently under the leveraging of federal funding if that financing was private financing as opposed to a public or state municipal issuance ?

>> I think the answer in brief is no. I think we would - - the leverage criterion would be very interested in how you want achieving that leverage whether it is through borrowing from the private sector or using revenue or borrowing from other public entities. I think it would be indifferent to that. We would be very interested in either approach. The idea you are using user fees to support financing infrastructure and reducing your dependence on formula dollars is something that would reflect well on your application.

>> Relating to the match provided by tribes can tribes use their federal money for the match and if so is this considered federal in relation to the funding That 80 percent?

>> I have to follow up. It's something that's always confused me to be frank. We will make sure to post an FAQ on the website.

>> And a plug for our next webinar in July 18 it will be targeted toward rural and tribal applicants.

>> That's a great segue.

>> Is there a size limitation with respect to the attachments submitted on grants. gov?

>> If you go to the FAQ there are instructions. They should provide any information listed there. We will note that in previous rounds, we have had applicants have issues receiving larger files. We encourage you to limit the size of the files to make sure they get to us without a problem.

>> You mentioned we encourage folks to not wait to the last minute for these issues. Large download or upload problems. Can we talk about what happens if someone were to submit an application a month before the deadline and then decide that they want to update it. How do we handle that to share an explanation about going online and making sure if we have a data file getting that up located - - uploaded to make sure there's no problem.

>> When we - - after the application passes, we go in and download the most recent submission from every applicant. In that circumstance if you submit a month or two weeks early but you want to up - - update your documents you would be submitting a second time. We take the most recent submission that the applicant has been provided. Hopefully it will submit your information early knowing you can resubmit later if something changes. We will not pick out of date information if we can avoid it. That is the first know. I think in both individual attachment memory limits, there is a limit on all of the attachments together. I think we will follow up with what that is and post an FAQ on the website. In the meantime check grants. gov because I think it's there as well. One thing available to project sponsors is if you can post links online interapplication that if you have a particularly large file let's say you want to provide it to the whole EIS just so we can see it in case we want to consider it. That would be the kind of thing rather than trying to submit it as 150 gig file [Indiscernible]

>> We have a question. To clarify a point about inland ports are roadway projects and active port areas outside of marine terminals considered poor projects and soft - - subject to the $326 million remaining in port funny?

>> It's hard to give you a specific blanket role. We would look at your project and where it is located and if you are claiming to be a port project we would assess is this a port project or a road project near a port. We would make a determination based on the information you provide. Obviously the closer you are to the port operations and even if it is outside the terminal but part of the port area in some specific way, we may be able to consider that a port project. It would be dependent on the information we have as to whether or not that is eligible. If you are worried you won't qualify because maybe you are outside and away from the water. Another potential avenue is becoming a part of the national Highway freight network by becoming designated as a critical urban or rural freight corridor. These are designations that state - - states and NPOs get to make. That if you are in the process of securing that designation you don't need to be designated. If you can provide credible evidence you will be designated such that you will be designated before we obligate dollars, we can consider that as well and evaluate the project. If you are looking at doing roadway work near a port but you are not quite on the port that is what I would consider. Focus your attention on making the argument you are part of the system in some meaningful way, or look at becoming a critical urban or critical rural freight corridor by having your NPO designate US such. That's another path pick

>> There is guidance on that on the website as far as critical freight corridors. That designation process is there. I would encourage you to go to the new website for more information on that.

>> One last point. If you are a port, thus - - you would be subject to the $326 million restriction. If you manage to become a critical rural or urban freight cord or you would not be subject to it. That makes a difference as to whether or not you are subject to that limit on the INFRA dollars.

>> Just to clarify you are talking about the road elements. Our only [Indiscernible] infrastructures or also infrastructures in the waterway back >> I think it would depend on what you are referring to. We have made awards that involve things like birth construction. That involves work that goes on in the waterway. If it were something along the lines of - - if it's inland waterway we have done things like [Indiscernible] and the kinds of structures that barges and things tie up to. We have done that as port infrastructure. If you are asking for navigational markers or something associated with dredging the channel that would normally be the responsibility of another agency, that is almost uniformly not eligible. We can't use our dollars to supplement what should be coming out of the budget of another agency. That is a good question to ask yourself. Is this thing something is my responsibility as a local project sponsor or is it the responsibility of the federal government. And I am trying to get D. O the Army Corps won't pay for it. It's your responsibility it might be okay as part of the port infrastructure.

>> One point on all the port infrastructure, you have to show your project demonstrates benefits to the national Highway freight network. It doesn't mean it needs to be a road project but you need to make sure the infrastructure you are building has an impact on the national Highway freight network.

>> Does streamlining approaches include [ Indiscernible-low audio.]

>> Yes. We are going to be as part of a broader effort to streamline the infrastructure, planning to work with those agencies that if your project requires permits from those agencies and review from those agencies and is not yet completed and you think you would be a good candidate for the new approach we outline, let us know and we will consider that. We are not - - we are interested in coordinating a cross our sister agencies to deliver infrastructure more smoothly and efficiently.

>> A question on who decides the project recipient. The NOFO said that the secretary can you please describe the process and who in Congress is reviewing the applications for the final approval ?

>> What the NOFO says is this program falls on the secretary to make the selection. That's what the statute says. We obviously will have an evaluation process that assesses how the applications address the selection criteria and provide that information to leadership in the department and the secretary so the department will ultimately make those selections. But then what happens is we propose selections to Congress. I believe that means to the authorizing committee members. Those members of Congress are the ones that sit on the transportation infrastructure committee as well as the Senate and Public Works committee and the Senate commerce committee. Those are committees of jurisdiction. Those members receive that list of proposed projects. They have a 60 day window to pass a joint resolution through both houses that was signed by the president which could disapprove one of our selection. That is the process by which one of our projects would possibly be not awarded or overturned is if those members of Congress who received the notification persuade their colleagues to pass this joint resolution member - - and the president changes the selections. The likelihood that something like that would happen is not likely but they certainly do have a lot of interest in this program. They are eager to receive it when we announced to them are propose selections. Ultimately, they could decide and it could happen that one could be overturned and we would not award the process.

>> Once a project is awarded are their performance metrics that grant recipients need to address at certain intervals?

>> Only if a recipient has a proposed to measure their performance in some way as part of their performing criterion. It doesn't necessarily need to be on the project being built but it could be on similar projects or initiatives that applicants are pursuing. If we make such a proposal then we would likely require them to follow through on doing that measurement. We are not expecting to apply performance metrics to all of these projects in terms of their outcomes.

>> There's a couple of additional freight related question. The first one is how important will it be for the INFRA grant criteria to tie back to the national freight strategy? And a related question - - let's tackle that first.

>> For INFRA criteria particularly support vitality criteria really is about applicants making their best case for why their projects support the national or regional economic vitality. The strategies a great document to consult if thinking about that criteria because obviously how the project improves freight movements could have a big benefit on our national or regional economic vitality. In that sense, if you feel like you a project that is important, for those outcomes and those freight related outcomes for the national economy, you should articulate that in the criteria.

>> Would a group of local agencies have projects along the specified free quarters submitted by one NPO estate agency receive a higher rating than if the project was submitted by the local agency?

>> I think we have made it clear in the NOFO that that network approach where a group of projects are bundled together to really provide substantial benefits would be very competitive. Particularly along the national or regional economic vitality. That is unchanged if you are someone who pursued a similar approach in FY 17. We think it is a very strong approach. We would be interested in applications that do something along those lines.

>> Is an NPO endorsement needed or important?

>> It's not needed. We realize there's a lot of different priorities and transportation needs from different jurisdictions and levels of government. That said, obviously we will be more interested in projects that enjoy broad support versus narrow support. It cannot hurt to have it. It's not a requirement.

>>We've had questions on the review process. Will the INFRA review process be the same as described for FASTLANE and can you re-summarize the schedule of applications and project selection and congressional review.

>> We are still working on the evaluation process and working with our new senior leadership team to sort out how that process will work. What we said in the notice is all projects will receive a technical evaluation that will describe how the projects address the selection criteria and selections will be made by the department based on how those projects address the selection criteria. In terms of timing, right now the applications are due November 2. Our expectation will be we will get to work evaluating them as soon as we can. We don't have an anticipated timeline for how long that will take. Part of it if there is uncertainty about how many applications we will receive and how complex they may be given the new criteria. I can't commit to specific timelines. After we made selections, and I think it's fair to say it's not going to be in three weeks, it will take a few months at a minimum. It may take into late spring or the summer of 2018. I think that is a reasonable window to consider. After we make selections, we make our proposed announcements to Congress. Congress has 50 days to review those before obligation. At a minimum there is a 60 day window after the announcements. By the way, although they are not required to do this our experience is that when we made the proposed selections, that information becomes public quickly. They roll that out and they let people know what those selections are. Usually at that point it becomes public quickly. We have a 60 day window before we can make awards. Once that window has passed we start to work with you on actually getting to obligation which allows you to start drawing on funds once you have construction costs. All of that can amount to a reasonable amount of time. I would say in my wildest scenarios I would not expect any of these projects to be underway until next summer at the earliest. It's possible it could be longer depending on how the evaluation perceives it. It depends how we select. It could be some have a longer lead time associated. It's tough to give a specific date.

>> Can INFRA funds be used for proposed projects with executed contracts that have some federal funds? Does it make a difference if the projects apply for previous claim ?

>> I think would be difficult to make an argument from a competitive standpoint you need the dollars if you already committed towards spending the funding on a specific project. I think one of the large project requirements as the project require additional federal assistance in order to be completed. If you have got a project underway it will be hard to argue the INFRA dollars are necessary to get that if it makes sense. That said, if there are separate pieces of the project or expanding the contract or you are modifying it, the dollars are achieving some sort of benefit, that may be something we can look at. If it really is the same project that will be done either way, I think it would be hard to be competitive in that context. If you applied before that is not going to hurt you for INFRA dollars. Provided your project isn't underway or you have contracts executed. If you are looking for federal dollars, we are anticipating we will get a lot of projects and I'm hoping for projects that may be see more of themselves in this new criteria than the old one. Otherwise, because it's the same program from an eligibility sampling, we are expecting projects that previously applied.

>> We have a question about whether applying for performance metrics will [Indiscernible] we will provide benefit priority or some kind of preference as how projects address that. Commit themselves to some kind of performance standard. It could be a delivery performance and it could be a policy change or could be something we haven't thought of. A year from now we will be able to go and say because we made these dollars available this project sponsored is undertaking this action that goes beyond what these dollars are doing. It shows and proves you can hold them accountable to the promises as a condition of funding. I think that is one of the selection criteria.

>> If you're participating in the 559 program. Are those projects eligible for INFRA as part of the court funding dollars?

>> If you are port of entry is participating in the 559 program are those projects eligible for INFRA as port dollars?

>> I am not familiar with that source of funding. I think maybe that is a good question for us to be sent to the INFRA grants box so we can provide you with a researched answer on that question.

>> If you are not selected and interested in applying for what will be FY $18, but under this notice you should feel free to go ahead and reapply for your project.

>> You should make clear you do address the new selection criteria.

>> [ Event has exceeded scheduled time. Captioner must proceed to captioner's next scheduled event. Disconnecting at 4:01ET ]

>> [ Event Concluded ]