

# Housekeeping

## Session Details

Today's session is being recorded

All participants automatically join on mute, with cameras off

## Questions for Presenters

Type questions in the Q&A box

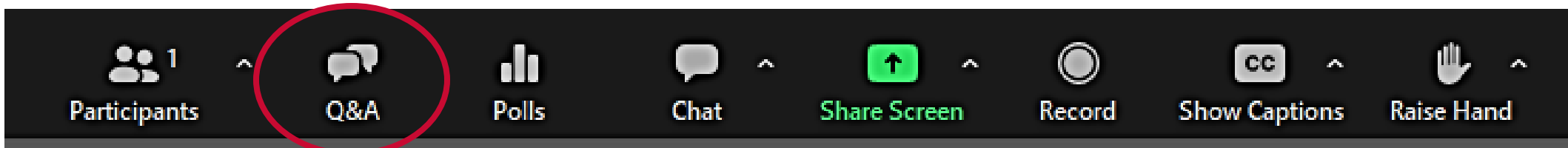
## Technical Support

Email: [Webconferencing@dot.gov](mailto:Webconferencing@dot.gov)

## More Information

The presentation and recording will be posted to the Bureau's RTA page

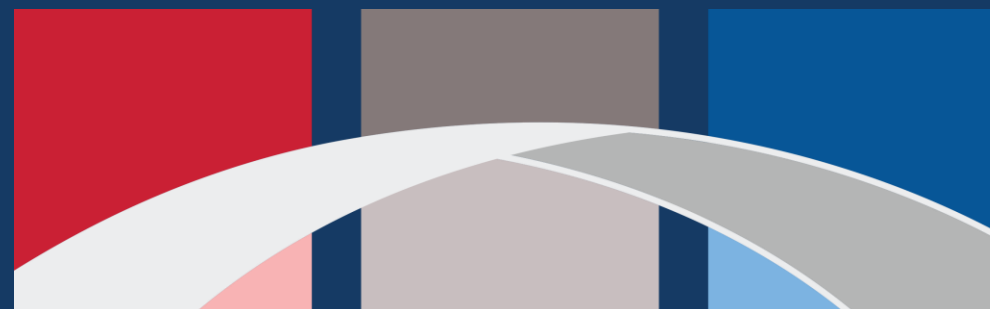
<https://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/RuralandTribalGrants>



Submit questions for panelists using the Q&A tool. Questions will be answered in Q&A tool or during Q&A time after the presentation



**U.S. Department  
of Transportation**



**BUILD AMERICA BUREAU**

**Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program  
Webinar  
January 14, 2025**

# Agenda

---

- Meeting logistics and welcome
- Remarks from speakers
- Background on Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program
- Notice of Funding Opportunity overview
- Application process and review
- Discussion / Question and Answers
- Closing / Wrap up\*

\*The slides and a link (with code) to the recorded meeting will be posted on the website within one week of the webinar

# Housekeeping

## Session Details

Today's session is being recorded

All participants automatically join on mute, with cameras off

## Questions for Presenters

Type questions in the Q&A box

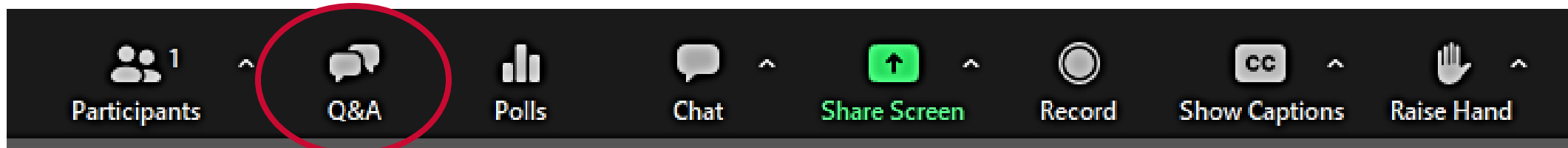
## Technical Support

Email: [Webconferencing@dot.gov](mailto:Webconferencing@dot.gov)

## More Information

The presentation and recording will be posted to the Bureau's RTA page

<https://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/RuralandTribalGrants>



Submit questions for panelists using the Q&A tool. Questions will be answered in Q&A tool or during Q&A time after the presentation

# Speakers

---



Milo Booth  
Director of Office of Tribal Government Affairs



Robert Hyman  
ROUTES Initiative Program Manager



RURAL OPPORTUNITIES TO  
USE TRANSPORTATION FOR  
ECONOMIC SUCCESS

# ROUTES

***Rob Hyman – US DOT***  
*January 14, 2025*

***Contact Us!***  
***Rural@dot.gov***  
***www.transportation.gov/rural***



# About the ROUTES Initiative

*The Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) Initiative aims to address disparities in rural transportation infrastructure and improve safety, mobility, and economic competitiveness nationwide.*

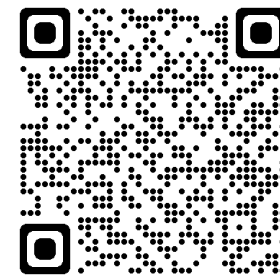


The ROUTES Office seeks to:

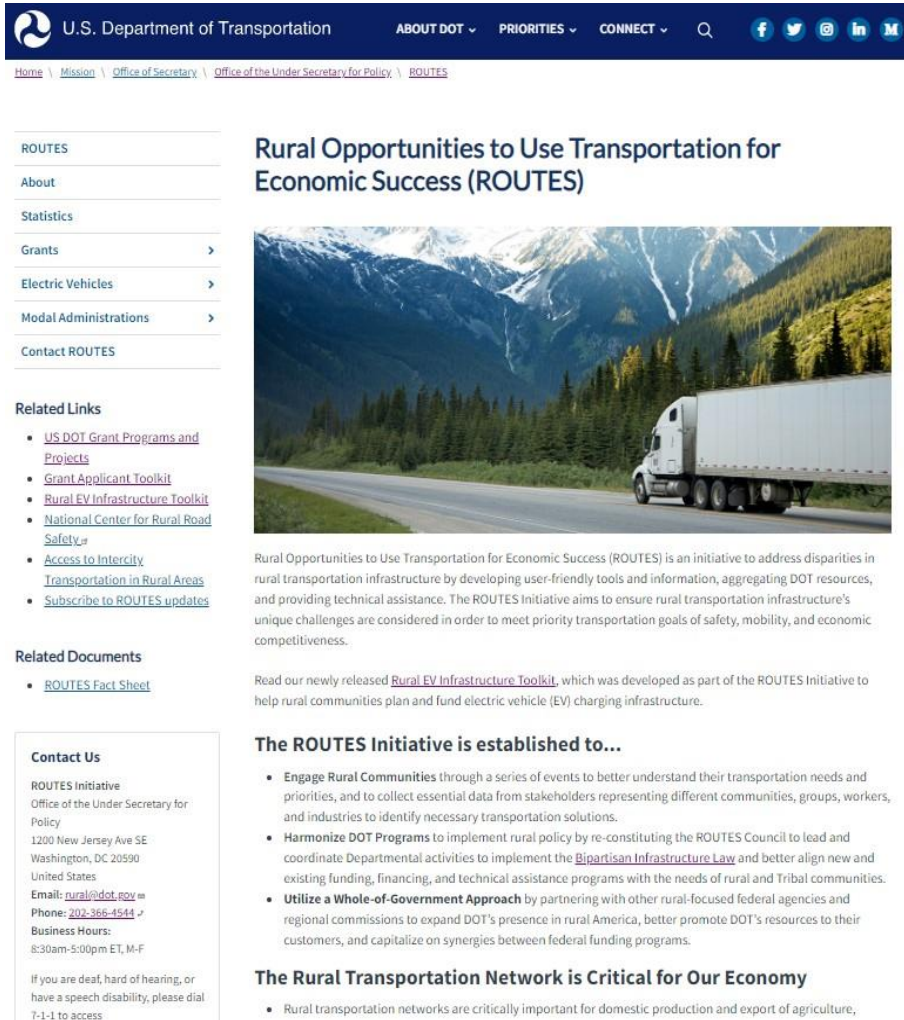
**Engage Rural Communities** through a series of events to better understand the needs and priorities of rural communities and collect essential data from stakeholders representing different communities, groups, workers, and industries to identify solutions.

**Harmonize DOT Programs** to implement rural policy by establishing the ROUTES Council to lead and coordinate Departmental activities to implement the *Bipartisan Infrastructure Law* and better align new and existing funding, financing, and technical assistance programs with the needs of rural and Tribal communities.

**Utilize a Whole-of-Government Approach** by partnering with other rural-focused federal agencies to expand DOT's presence in rural America, better promote Departmental resources to their customers, and capitalize on synergies between federal funding programs.



# One-Stop-Shop for Rural Resources



The screenshot shows the U.S. Department of Transportation website. The top navigation bar includes the DOT logo, the text "U.S. Department of Transportation", and menu items for "ABOUT DOT", "PRIORITIES", and "CONNECT". Below the navigation bar is a breadcrumb trail: "Home \ Mission \ Office of Secretary \ Office of the Under Secretary for Policy \ ROUTES". On the left side, there is a vertical menu with items: "ROUTES", "About", "Statistics", "Grants", "Electric Vehicles", "Modal Administrations", and "Contact ROUTES". Below this menu is a "Related Links" section with several links: "US DOT Grant Programs and Projects", "Grant Applicant Toolkit", "Rural EV Infrastructure Toolkit", "National Center for Rural Road Safety", "Access to Intercity Transportation in Rural Areas", and "Subscribe to ROUTES updates". Below that is a "Related Documents" section with a link to "ROUTES Fact Sheet". At the bottom left, there is a "Contact Us" box with contact information for the ROUTES Initiative, including the address (1200 New Jersey Ave SE, Washington, DC 20590), email (rural@dot.gov), phone (202-366-4544), and business hours (8:30am-5:00pm ET, M-F). A note at the bottom of the contact box says: "If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, please dial 7-1-1 to access".

## Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES)



Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) is an initiative to address disparities in rural transportation infrastructure by developing user-friendly tools and information, aggregating DOT resources, and providing technical assistance. The ROUTES Initiative aims to ensure rural transportation infrastructure's unique challenges are considered in order to meet priority transportation goals of safety, mobility, and economic competitiveness.

Read our newly released [Rural EV Infrastructure Toolkit](#), which was developed as part of the ROUTES Initiative to help rural communities plan and fund electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.

### The ROUTES Initiative is established to...

- **Engage Rural Communities** through a series of events to better understand their transportation needs and priorities, and to collect essential data from stakeholders representing different communities, groups, workers, and industries to identify necessary transportation solutions.
- **Harmonize DOT Programs** to implement rural policy by re-constituting the ROUTES Council to lead and coordinate Departmental activities to implement the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) and better align new and existing funding, financing, and technical assistance programs with the needs of rural and Tribal communities.
- **Utilize a Whole-of-Government Approach** by partnering with other rural-focused federal agencies and regional commissions to expand DOT's presence in rural America, better promote DOT's resources to their customers, and capitalize on synergies between federal funding programs.

### The Rural Transportation Network is Critical for Our Economy

- Rural transportation networks are critically important for domestic production and export of agriculture,

## Webinars

- Benefit Cost Analyses for Rural Projects
- TIFIA Rural Projects Initiative
- Transit Resources
- National Roadway Safety Strategy

## Tools and Toolkits

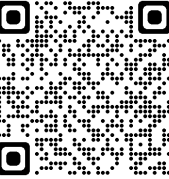
- Rural Eligibility Map
- Point of Contact Map
- Grant Applicant Toolkit
- Rural EV Infrastructure Toolkit

## Funding Opportunities

- Active & Upcoming NOFOs
- Links to Past Awards

## Modal Specific Landing Pages

## Monthly Newsletters

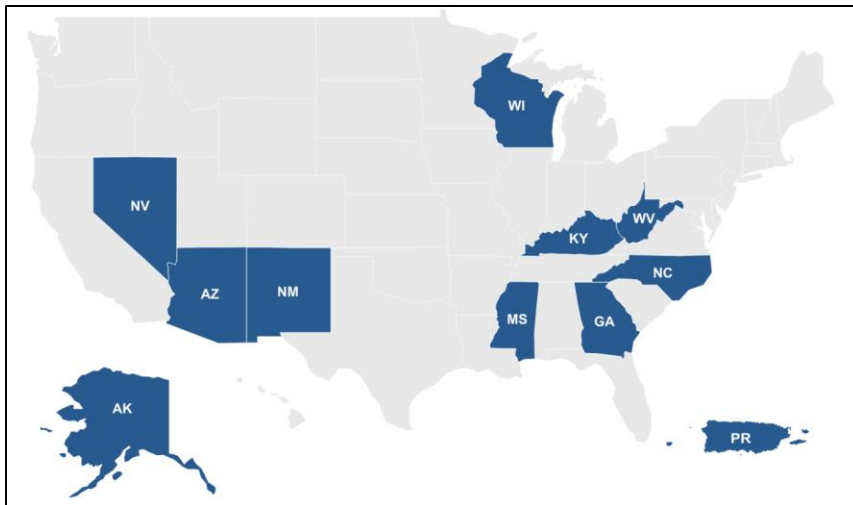
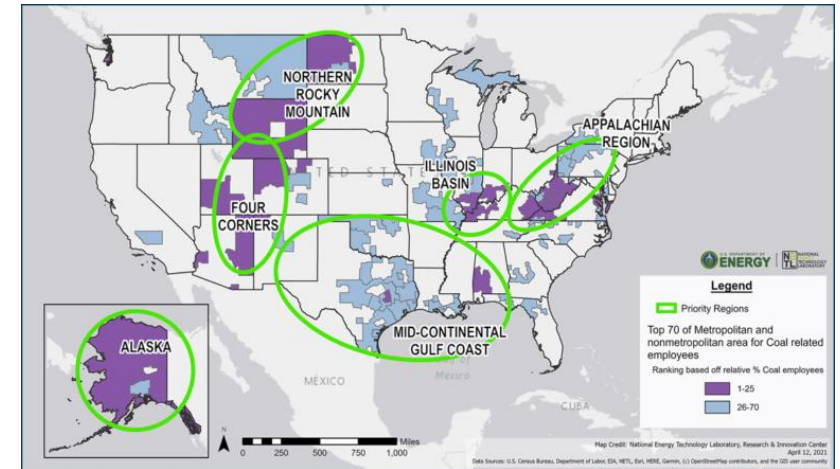




Supporting a whole-of-government approach, ROUTES serves as DOT's liaison for several interagency place-based technical assistance efforts.

[DOE's Interagency Working Group \(IWG\) on Coal & Power Plant Communities & Economic Revitalization](#) helps communities dependent on coal, oil, gas, and power plants revitalize their economies and support energy workers.

- IWG designates **25 priority energy communities**.
- ROUTES is directly involved in **6 Rapid Response Teams**.



[USDA's Rural Partners Network \(RPN\)](#) helps rural communities find resources and funding to create jobs, build infrastructure, and support long-term economic stability on their own terms.

- USDA designates **36 RPN community networks** across 11 states/territories.
- ROUTES is directly involved in **most community networks** and leads **3 Signature Projects**.



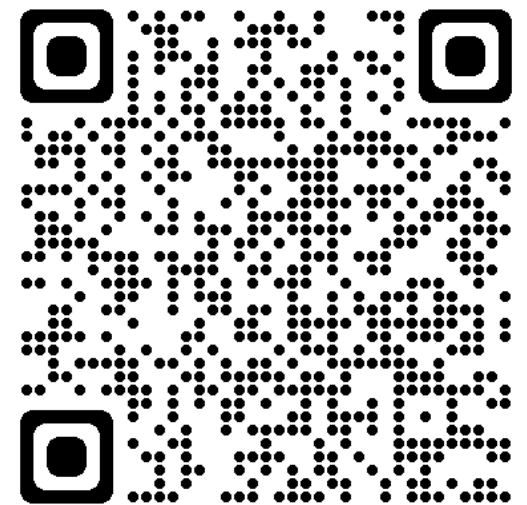
**Subscribe to the ROUTES Newsletter --->**

**OR**

**Contact Us!**

[Rural@dot.gov](mailto:Rural@dot.gov)

[www.transportation.gov/rural](http://www.transportation.gov/rural)



# Build America Bureau

## Helping Communities Accelerate Infrastructure

Point of contact and coordination for federal credit programs, transportation expertise, and strategies to access private capital

### Financial Assistance

Credit assistance for a wide range of projects

Tax-exempt bonds for public-private partnerships

### Technical Assistance

Grants for project planning and development, and community solutions

Education on innovative project planning, financing tools, and delivery models

# U.S. Department of Transportation

Office of the Under Secretary of Transportation

## Build America Bureau

- Outreach
- Technical Assistance
- Project Development
- Risk Management
- Underwriting
- Portfolio Management

## Operating Administrations

- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Transit Administration
- Federal Railroad Administration
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Maritime Administration

- Regional staff, liaisons
- Grant money
- Planning, environment, construction experts

# Technical Assistance/Capacity Building Grant Programs

## Thriving Communities Program

- \$25 million in FYs 2022 and 2023 (\$50 million total)
- Support disadvantaged and lower-capacity communities across project planning and scoping, development and design, and delivery

## Regional Infrastructure Accelerators

- 24 Accelerator teams; more awards mid-2025
- Build capacity to incubate good projects and accelerate delivery through innovative approaches
- Assistance in project planning, preliminary engineering and design, and regulatory compliance analyses

## Rural and Tribal Assistance

- 5-year pilot program
- \$3.4 million awarded to 13 communities, including 7 Tribes
- Advance project planning and development by funding technical, legal and financial activities
- \$27 million grant cycle opened Dec. 19, 2024

## Innovative Finance and Asset Concessions

- 5-year program
- Help project sponsors identify underutilized assets with potential to generate economic development
- Increase capacity for innovative financing and project delivery and form partnerships with the private sector

# Technical Assistance Resources

## Direct Technical Assistance and Strategic Partnerships

- Customer focused, place-based with local leaders, decisionmakers, and stakeholders
- Innovative project delivery, financing and funding

## Project Initiation Accelerator

- Provide hands-on, targeted technical assistance to accelerate completion of grant agreements.

## Build America Center

- Mobilize use of innovative finance, funding, and project delivery for transportation infrastructure projects. Lead cutting-edge research, innovative training, and customized technical assistance

## Reconnecting Communities Institute

- DOT's center for learning to reconnect communities harmed, isolated, and cut off from opportunity by transportation infrastructure (\$27 M contract)

## Thriving Communities Network

- Knowledge sharing network of Thriving Communities recipients and Capacity Builders

## DOT Navigator

- Internet resources to help communities find and understand how to apply for grants and plan for and deliver transformative infrastructure projects and services

# DOT Navigator

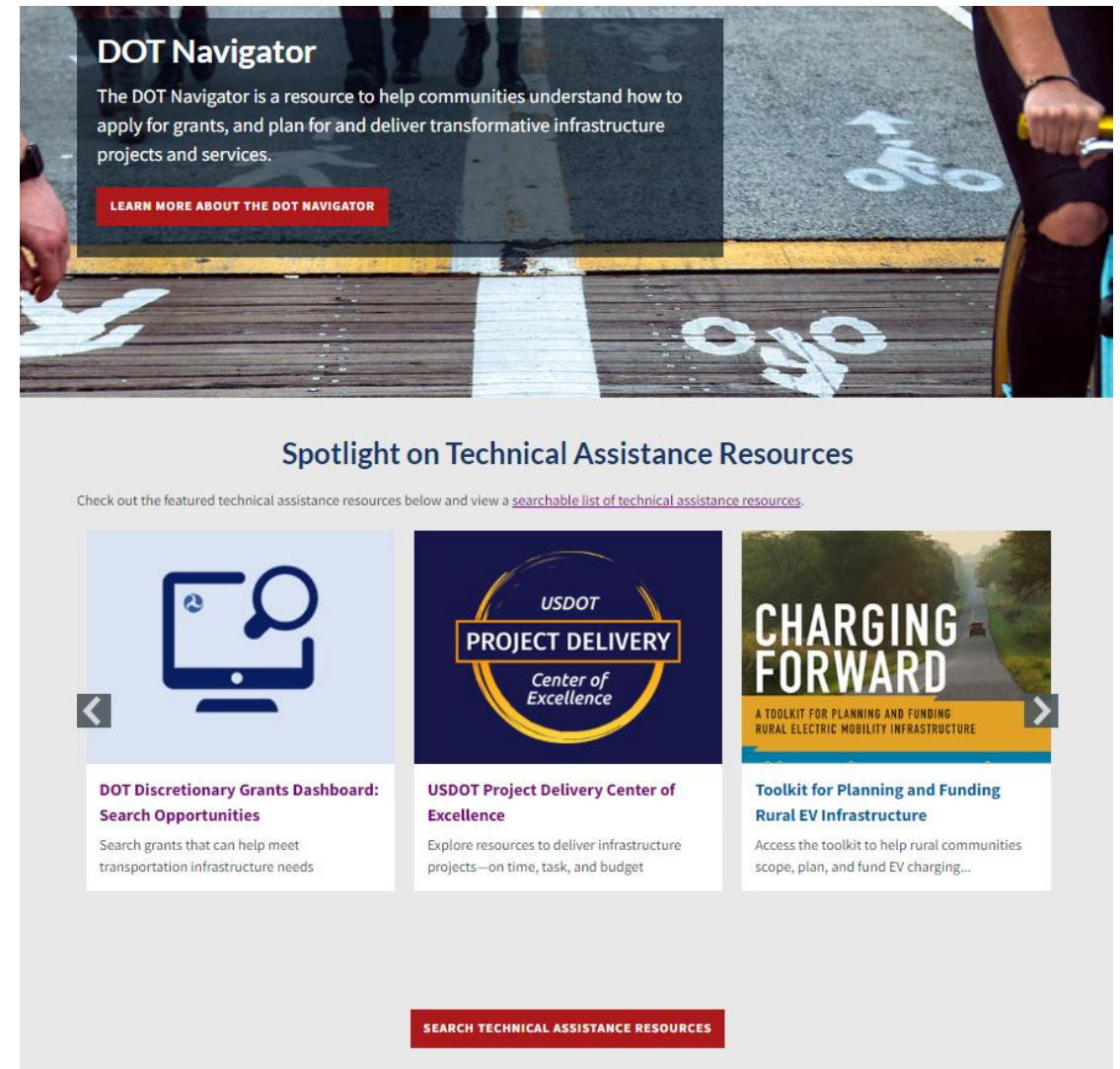
## Coordinating and improving access to the wide range of available USDOT Technical Assistance Resources

<https://transportation.gov/dot-navigator>



### Sample Grant Application Resources

- Overview of DOT Funding and Financing
- USDOT Discretionary Grant Process
- Maximizing Award Success
- Is Federal Funding the Right Fit for My Organization?




**DOT Navigator**  
The DOT Navigator is a resource to help communities understand how to apply for grants, and plan for and deliver transformative infrastructure projects and services.


[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DOT NAVIGATOR](#)

### Spotlight on Technical Assistance Resources

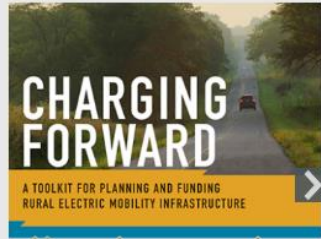
Check out the featured technical assistance resources below and view a [searchable list of technical assistance resources](#).



**DOT Discretionary Grants Dashboard: Search Opportunities**  
Search grants that can help meet transportation infrastructure needs



**USDOT Project Delivery Center of Excellence**  
Explore resources to deliver infrastructure projects—on time, task, and budget



**Charging Forward**  
A TOOLKIT FOR PLANNING AND FUNDING RURAL ELECTRIC MOBILITY INFRASTRUCTURE  
**Toolkit for Planning and Funding Rural EV Infrastructure**  
Access the toolkit to help rural communities scope, plan, and fund EV charging...

[SEARCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES](#)

# The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (also known as IIJA)

Public Law 117-58 – Section 21205 of Division B  
'Rural and Tribal Infrastructure Advancement'

- grants to fund financial, technical, and legal assistance to states and rural and tribal communities
- augment organizational capacity to evaluate and develop projects that qualify for federal funding and financing programs





# Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program



**Five-year Pilot**

**2025 - \$27 million for Round 2**

**\$10 million set aside for tribal applicants**

**No local match!**

# RTA eligible activities

## Technical

- Feasibility studies
- Project planning
- Preliminary engineering/design
- Environmental review
- Property development and land use feasibility analysis
- Public outreach
- Cost estimation
- Public benefit studies

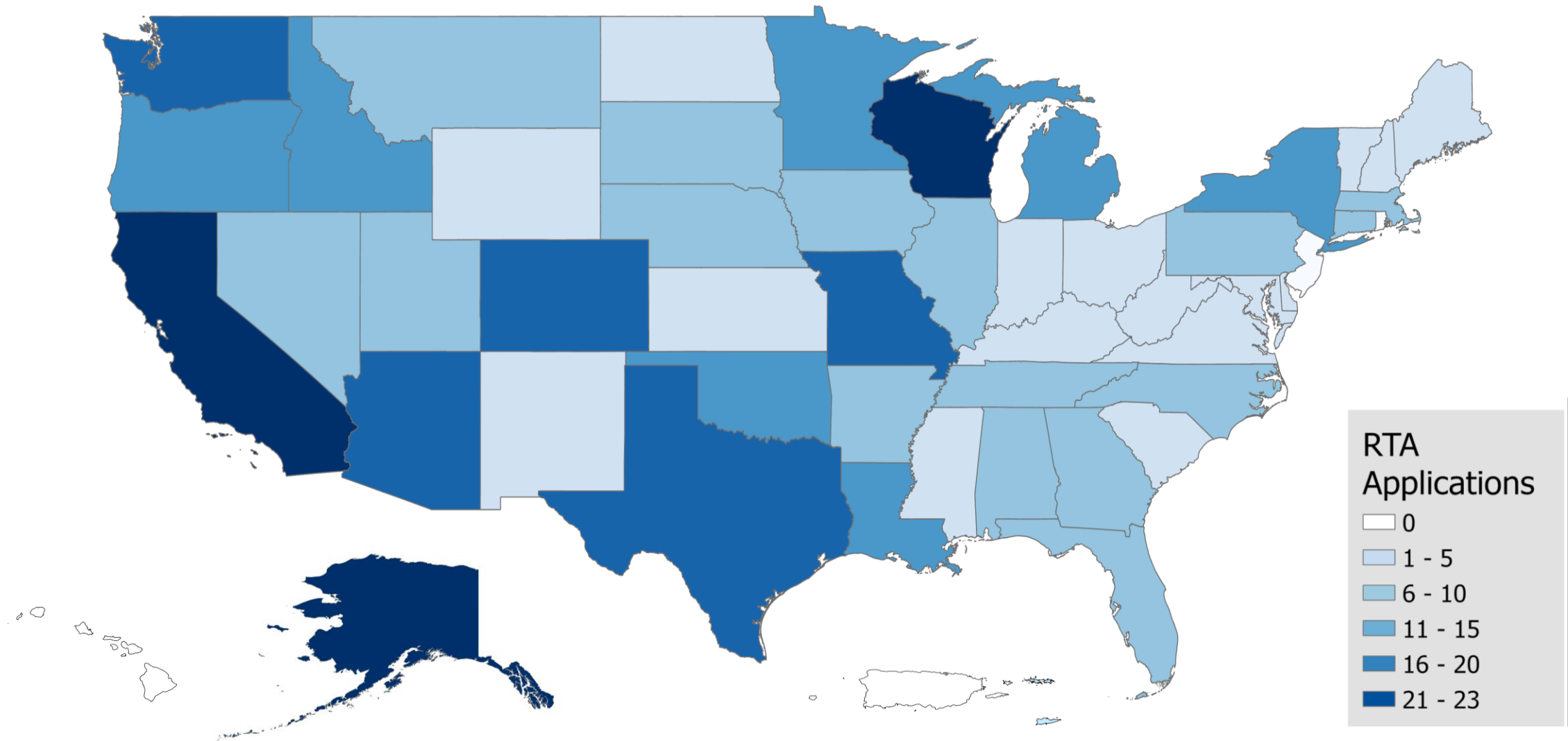
## Financial

- Revenue forecasting
- Economic assessments and cost-benefit analyses
- Value for money analysis and procurement options
- Evaluating opportunities for private financing and project bundling
- Financial feasibility analysis; funding/financing options analysis
- Evaluation of costs to sustain project (such as operations and maintenance costs)

## Legal

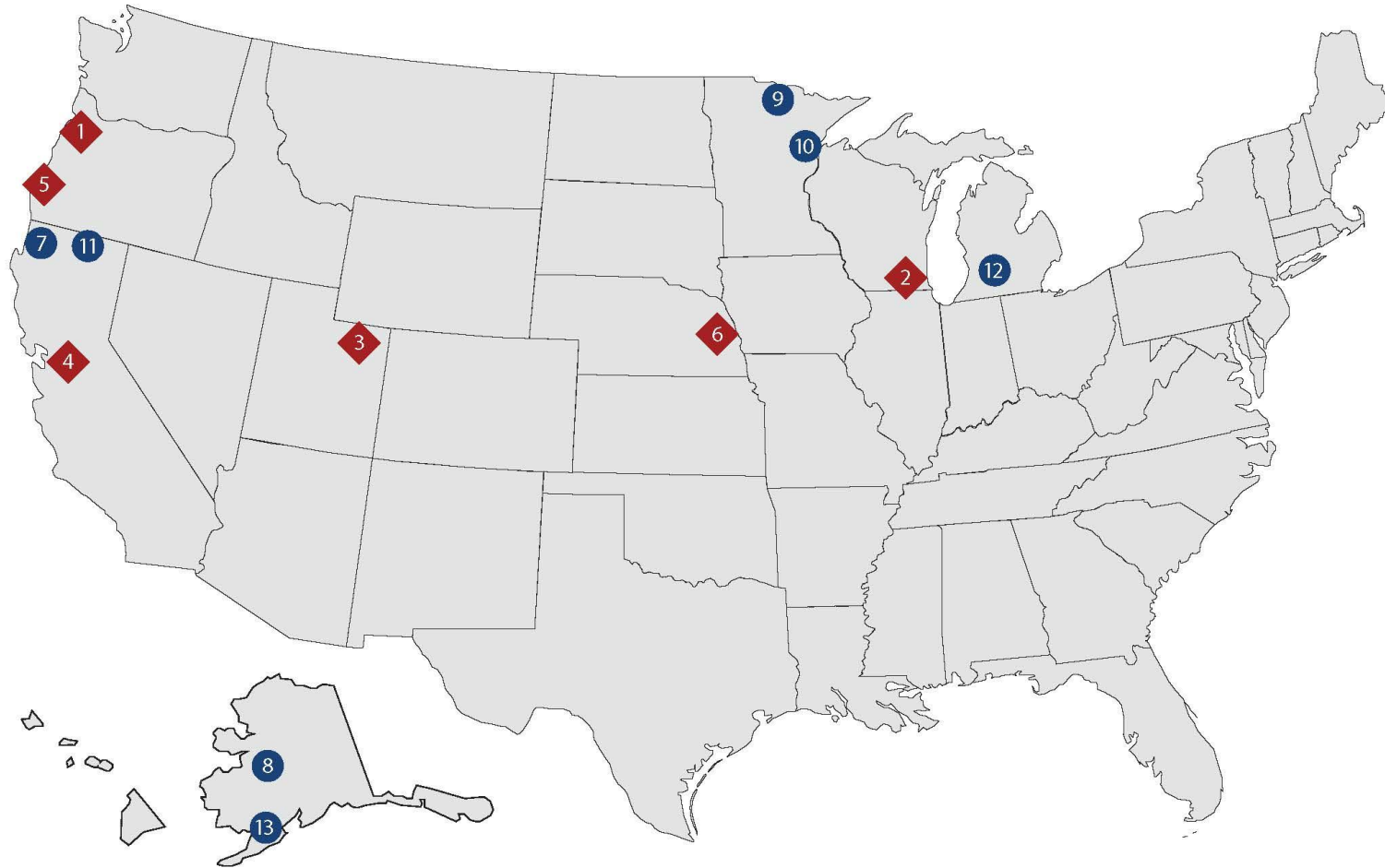
- Statutory and regulatory analysis
- Drafting and negotiation of concession agreements
- Drafting and negotiation of interagency agreements
- Procurement support

# Round 1 Applications



# Round 1 Awardees

## Rural and Tribal Technical Assistance Pilot Program Selected Communities



1	City of Independence, OR
2	City of Elkhorn, WI
3	Roosevelt City, UT
4	Contra Costa County, CA
5	Douglas County, OR
6	City of Blair, NE
7	Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation, CA
8	Nulato Village, AK
9	Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Government, MN
10	Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, MN
11	Karuk Tribe, CA
12	Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians, MI
13	Igiugig Village Council, AK

◆	RURAL SELECTED COMMUNITIES
●	TRIBAL SELECTED COMMUNITIES

# RTA grant eligibility

## Eligible applicant with an eligible project

### Applicant


- Local government with or State government on behalf of a project:
  - **Not** in a Census Bureau 2020 designated urban area.
  - OR – In a Census Bureau 2020 designated urban area with a population of 150,000 or less.
- Federally recognized Indian tribe
- Department of Hawaiian Home Lands

### Project

Must be reasonably expected to be eligible for one or more of the following funding programs:

- TIFIA
- RRIF
- INFRA
- Mega
- RAISE
- National Culvert Removal, Replacement & Restoration

# Eligibility- Local governments

- **Local governments** or **political subdivisions** located outside of an urbanized area with a population less than 150,000 residents
  - State governments applying on behalf of a project in an area outside an urbanized area less than 150,000 residents
  - Federally recognized Indian Tribes
  - Department of Hawaiian Home Lands
- 
- Town/ Township/ Parish/ City/ Borough/ County
  - Local public authority (including transit agency)
  - Special district
  - School district
  - Council of governments/ Planning district commission/ Metropolitan planning organization/ Rural planning organization

# Eligibility- States

- Local governments or political subdivisions located outside of an urbanized area with a population less than 150,000 residents
- **State governments** applying on behalf of a project in an area outside an urbanized area less than 150,000 residents
- Federally recognized Indian Tribes
- Department of Hawaiian Home Lands



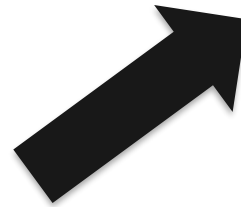
In addition to the 50 states, also includes:

- Puerto Rico
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- Guam
- American Samoa
- Northern Mariana Islands

# Eligibility- Indian tribes

---

- Local governments or political subdivisions located outside of an urbanized area with a population less than 150,000 residents
- State governments applying on behalf of a project in an area outside an urbanized area less than 150,000 residents
- Federally recognized Indian Tribes
- Department of Hawaiian Home Lands



Check eligibility:

[www.usa.gov/tribes](http://www.usa.gov/tribes)



# Rural Eligibility Map: [www.transportation.gov/rural/eligibility](http://www.transportation.gov/rural/eligibility)

BTS Rural Funding Eligibility Tool

Open layer list

- America (INFRA)
- Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)
- Rural Surface Transportation Grant (RSTG)
- Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program (RTAPP)**
- Safe Streets and Roads for All (SSR4A)
- SMART Grant program

Tulsa

Broken Arrow

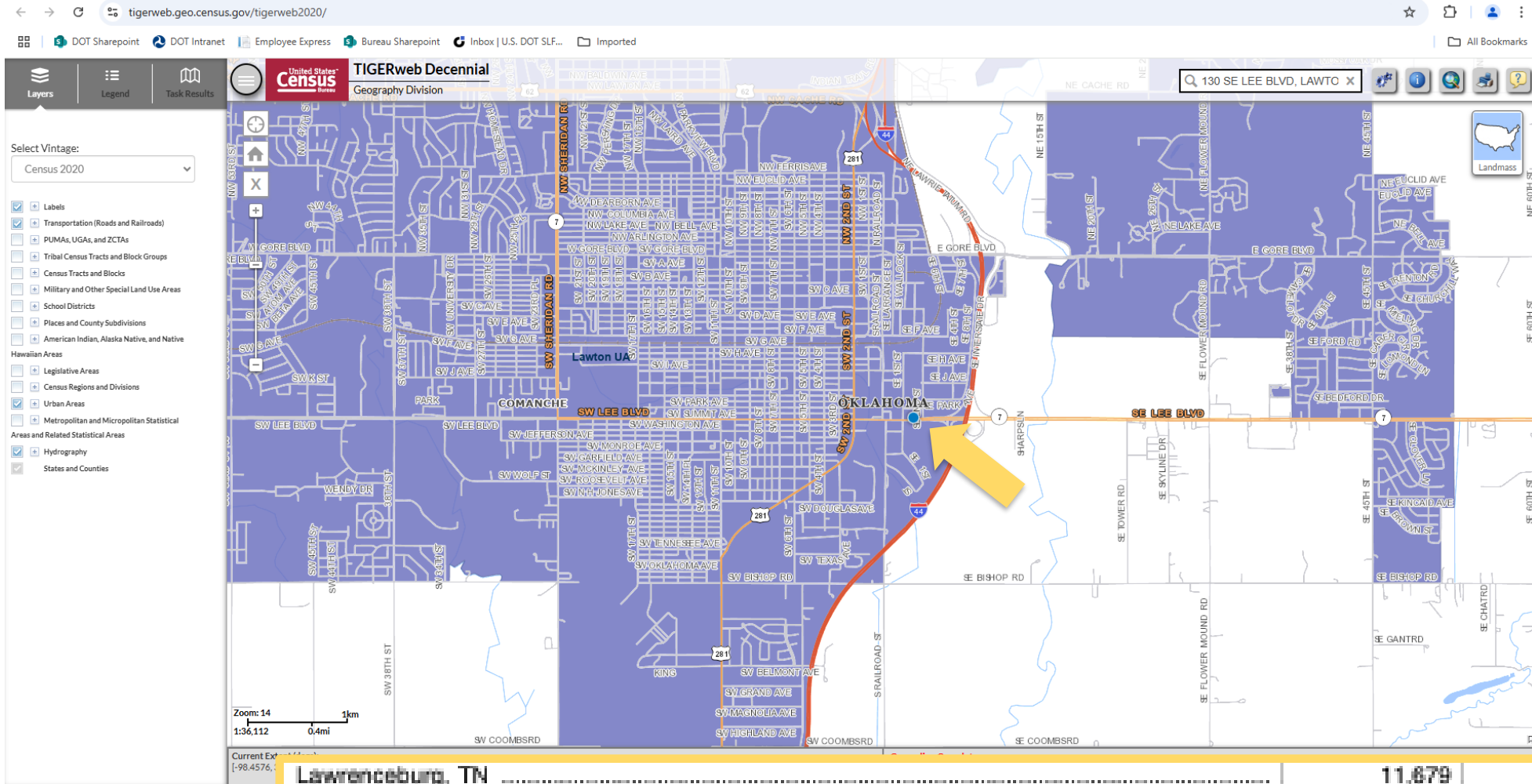
Muskogee

Okmulgee

20 mi

Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, EPA, NPS | Acknowledgment of the U.S. Department of C... Powered by Esri

# TIGERweb: [tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerweb2020/](https://tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerweb2020/)



# RTA grant eligibility

## Eligible applicant with an eligible project

### Applicant

- Local government with or State government on behalf of a project:
  - **Not** in a Census Bureau 2020 designated urban area.
  - OR – In a Census Bureau 2020 designated urban area with a population of 150,000 or less.
- Federally recognized Indian tribe
- Department of Hawaiian Home Lands

### Project

Must be reasonably expected to be eligible for one or more of the following funding programs:

- TIFIA
- RRIF
- INFRA
- Mega
- RAISE
- National Culvert Removal, Replacement & Restoration



# Sample Categories of Projects

- Highway projects, bridges, and tunnels
- Public transportation projects
- Freight rail projects
- Airport projects
- Wildlife crossing projects
- Highway-railway grade crossing or grade separation
- Surface transportation project within the boundaries/ functionally-connected to an international border crossing that improves a facility owned by Federal/ State/ local government



# Round 1 Awardees

## Roadway

- Street reconstruction with added bike lane
- New road alignment (2)
- Roadway safety improvements
- Traffic impact analysis
- Secondary evacuation route

## Bridge

- New bridge

## Bike/Ped

- Separated pedestrian pathway and lighting
- Trail connection

## Transit

- Transit feasibility study

## Maritime

- Port development (3)



# RTA NOFO Highlights

---

- \$27 million total available
- \$10 million Tribal set aside
- Two Grant Types:
  - **Type 1: Single Project**
    - Total available: \$10 million
    - Amount per grantee: min. \$200,000 and max. \$750,000
  - **Type 2: Multi-Community**
    - Total available: \$17 million
    - Amount per grantee: min. \$500,000 and max. \$2.25 million
    - Must support at least three (3) communities with one project each
- Grants awarded **first-come, first-serve** (upon eligibility confirmation)

# Application

---

- Application questions available as pdf on website and [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)
  - Suggestion: draft answers in advance to copy and paste into the application when portal opens
- Single Project applicants: 17 total questions with 3 criteria questions
- Multi-Community applicants: 18 total questions with 4 criteria questions
- Apply through RTA Program webpage, beginning 2 p.m. ET March 4<sup>th</sup>:  
<https://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/RuralandTribalGrants>
- Make sure UEI is correct and valid
- Be sure to refresh browser if waiting for portal to open

# Application (cont.)

---

- Web-based application form
- Format of application:
  - No graphics
  - No attachments
  - No links
- Word limits for most narrative questions
- Letters of Support only accepted for Multi-Community grants via email within 14 days of application submission. Please include project name in subject line.

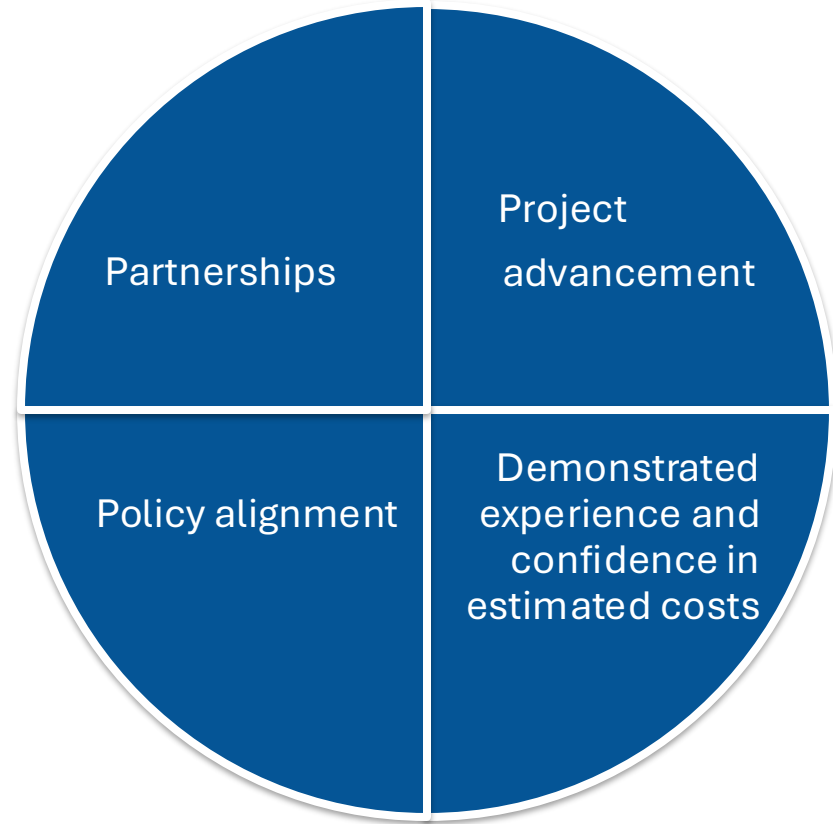


# Merit Criteria

## Single Project



## Multi-Community



# Where to apply

[www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/RuralandTribalGrants](http://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/RuralandTribalGrants)

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/RuralandTribalGrants](http://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/RuralandTribalGrants). The page header includes the United States Department of Transportation logo and navigation menus for FINANCING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, PROJECTS, and ABOUT THE BUREAU. A search bar and a "TODAY'S INTEREST RATE 4.99%" badge are also visible. The main content area features a sidebar with a list of links: Technical Assistance, Public-Private Partnerships (P3), Environmental Review and Permitting, Thriving Communities Program, Regional Infrastructure Accelerators, Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program, Rural and Tribal Resources, Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant Program, Emerging Projects Agreement, and Build America Center. The main heading is "Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program" with a sub-heading "Notice of Funding Opportunity Released!". The text below states that a NOFO for up to \$27 million in no-match grants was issued on December 19, 2024, with applications accepted starting March 4, 2025. It provides a link to the NOFO and a list of related links: NOFO, Multi-community Application Questions, and Single Project Application Questions. A webinar announcement follows, stating it will be held on January 14, 2025, at 3 p.m. ET, with a link to register. A section titled "Not sure if your project is rural?" provides eligibility criteria based on Census Bureau 2020 designated urban area status and population.

Home / [Technical Assistance](#)

- Technical Assistance
- Public-Private Partnerships (P3)
- Environmental Review and Permitting
- Thriving Communities Program
- Regional Infrastructure Accelerators
- Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program
- Rural and Tribal Resources
- Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant Program
- Emerging Projects Agreement
- Build America Center

Tags

- [Rural](#)
- [Tribal](#)

## Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program

### Notice of Funding Opportunity Released!

Visit Grants.gov: <https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/357673>

On December 19, 2024, the Bureau issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for up to \$27 million in no-match grants on a first-come, first-served basis, with applications accepted beginning March 4, 2025, at 2 p.m. ET. Interested entities may access copies of the NOFO and application questions below to review and draft responses in advance. The application portal will close on April 3, 2025, at 4:59 p.m. ET. [Read the release.](#)

- [NOFO](#)
- [Multi-community Application Questions](#)
- [Single Project Application Questions](#)

The Bureau will host a free webinar on January 14, 2025, at 3 p.m. ET about the application process and what activities can be funded through the program. Participation in the webinar is not mandatory to receive funding. A copy of the webinar recording and presentation will be posted to the website afterward. To provide an inclusive experience, the Bureau will arrange accommodations for requests received at [RuralAndTribalTA@dot.gov](mailto:RuralAndTribalTA@dot.gov) up to five business days prior to the webinar. [Register for the webinar.](#)

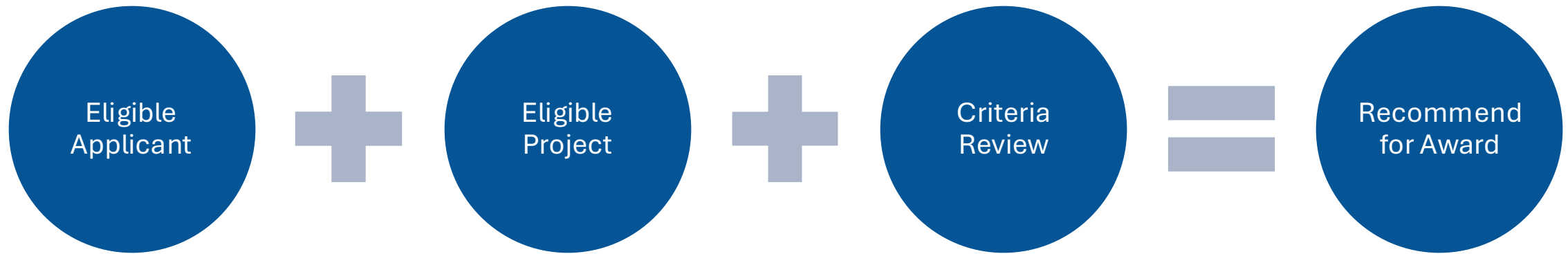
#### Not sure if your project is rural?

Your project is eligible if:

The project is **not** in a Census Bureau 2020 designated urban area.  
OR - The project is in a Census Bureau 2020 designated urban area with a population of 150,000 or less.

Your project is **not** eligible if it is in a Census Bureau 2020 designated urban area that has a population of more than 150,000 people.

# Application Review & Awards



- Reviewed in order received
- State cap of 20% of available funding

# Important Dates

- Application Portal opens:  
**March 4<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. ET**
- Application Portal closes:  
**April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4:59 p.m. ET**
- For Multi-Community applicants only:  
Support letters due via email to  
[RuralandTribalTA@dot.gov](mailto:RuralandTribalTA@dot.gov) within 14  
days after application is submitted



<https://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/RuralandTribalGrants>

# Q&A

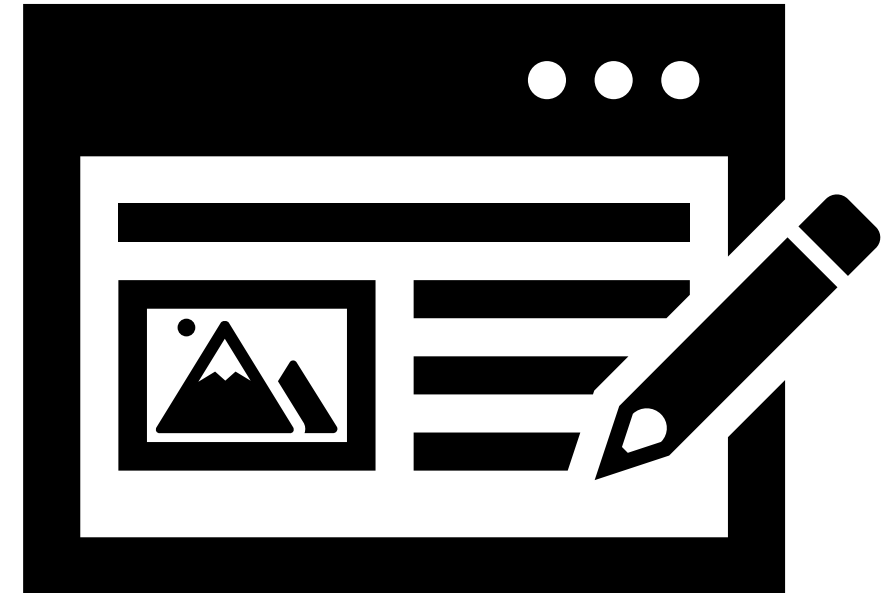


Submit questions for panelists using the Q&A tool. Questions will be answered in Q&A tool or during Q&A time after the presentation

- Please do not submit questions anonymously; in case we do not address your question, we will try to answer you directly via email in the next week.
- Questions may also be emailed to: [RuralandTribalTA@dot.gov](mailto:RuralandTribalTA@dot.gov)

# Important Dates

- Application Portal opens:  
**March 4<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. ET**
- Application Portal closes:  
**April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4:59 p.m. ET**
- For Multi-Community applicants only:  
Support letters due via email to  
[RuralandTribalTA@dot.gov](mailto:RuralandTribalTA@dot.gov) within 14  
days after application is submitted



<https://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/RuralandTribalGrants>

# Contact us!

[RuralandTribalTA@dot.gov](mailto:RuralandTribalTA@dot.gov)

Build America Bureau

202.366.2300

[BuildAmerica@dot.gov](mailto:BuildAmerica@dot.gov)

<https://www.transportation.gov/BuildAmerica>