

# Examples of INFRA Projects Creating Workforce Training Programs and Good-Paying Jobs with The Free And Fair Choice To Join A Union

**Background:** USDOT announced \$1.5 billion in funding for 26 projects under the INFRA program September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The full list of grantees can be seen [here](#). A number of the grantees responded to the request in the Notice of Funding Opportunity for applicants to address how they are creating workforce development programs and good-paying jobs with the free and fair choice to join a union. Below are additional details on the workforce and labor components of some applications that illustrate a diverse collection of approaches.

## **Otay Mesa East Port of Entry Project**

INFRA Award: \$150,000,000

San Diego County, California

**Applicant:** California Department of Transportation

**Urban or Rural:** Urban

**Project Description:** The project will construct a new toll road (State Route 11) and Port of Entry (POE) facility at Otay Mesa. It also includes inspection equipment for U.S. Customs and Border Protection, zero-emission chargers for staff vehicles, a Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Facility to be used by the California Highway Patrol and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), and deployment of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) throughout the Port of Entry.

**Project Benefits:** The project will bring positive economic benefits by facilitating freight movement and spurring job creation. The new Port of Entry will provide an alternative for nearly 3,600 trucks that cross the existing Otay Mesa and Tecate Ports of Entry daily, which are operating at capacity. The project facilitates freight movement across borders with destinations at nearby distribution centers and warehouses, the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, and the Inland Empire's mega-distribution centers in Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

**Creating Workforce Training Programs and Good-Paying Jobs With The Free And Fair Choice To Join A Union:** This project is expected to create thousands of jobs, with a total of 9,700 job years of employment, over the construction period. The San Diego Association of Governments has an existing Community Benefits Agreement, which includes registered apprenticeship utilization requirements, and hiring goals for individuals from economically disadvantaged communities and for those who have historically experienced significant barriers to employment. The Workforce Opportunities for Rising Careers pre-apprenticeship program provides priority to Disadvantaged and Targeted Workers to receive first consideration for hiring on projects as part of the Community Benefits Agreement. In total of over 100 graduates, twenty percent were women and 76 percent were people of color. The State of California's High Road Construction Careers program is providing funding to the San Diego Workforce Partnership, the local workforce development board, for the pre-apprenticeship program.

## **CREATE WA-1 Segment: Ogden Junction**

INFRA Award: \$70,000,000

Chicago, Illinois

**Applicant:** Illinois Department of Transportation

**Urban or Rural:** Urban

**Project Description:** The project will rehabilitate railroad track, upgrade signaling, and replace, remove, or rehabilitate 18 viaduct structures on an approximately 1.9-mile-long segment of the Western Avenue Rail corridor from Kedzie to 16th street. Approximately 10,000 feet of new track will be constructed and approximately 31,000 feet of track will be shifted. New power turnouts and crossovers will enable an automated path to be controlled by the dispatcher and new friction management equipment will be installed.

**Project Benefits:** The project will improve an elevated, multi-track, high-density freight rail corridor running through central Chicago that is more than 100 years old and in need of modernization. Disruptions to this route would have rippling effects on freight and passenger rail movement in the region. After this project, the track class designation will be upgraded – allowing for faster freight speeds and more efficient supply chain. Additionally, project sponsors have engaged with labor unions and community members in the area to ensure that the project design meets local needs and ensures community connectivity, despite the closure of certain viaducts.

**Creating Workforce Training Programs and Good-Paying Jobs With The Free And Fair Choice To Join A Union:** The CREATE Ogden Junction project has engaged with labor unions and underserved communities in the area. All railroad jobs and contracted jobs will be unionized. This project is expected to create 260 full-time equivalent jobs between 2023 and 2028. The estimated \$100 million in construction, outside of the laying of rail and building of bridges can bring new resources and economic opportunity to this under-resourced part of the city. The project sponsors are working with Hire360 on the CREATE Program Community to Career Pipeline. Through this program, they will recruit and train a diverse workforce and at the same time reach out to a more diverse set of contractors.

## **Rockport Bridge Rehabilitation Freight Rail Project**

INFRA Award: \$17,331,850

Ohio and Muhlenberg Counties, Kentucky

**Applicant:** Green River Area Development District

**Urban or Rural:** Rural

**Project Description:** This project will rehabilitate the Rockport Railroad Bridge by replacing the deck, filling in portions of the existing approach with rockfill and culvert pipes, and upgrading the electrical and mechanical components that allow the bridge to be raised to accommodate river traffic.

**Project Benefits:** This project makes important investments in the 100-year-old existing freight rail line bridge, allowing it to operate at a full level of performance. The bridge is a vital link for the transportation of commodities such as chemicals, grain, coal, lumber, steel, and petroleum on the 280-mile railway, which would be diverted to truck if the bridge were to be closed. Additionally, the project is being delivered through an innovative public-private partnership with Paducah & Louisville Railway, Inc., a Class II short-line railroad operator.

**Creating Workforce Training Programs and Good-Paying Jobs With The Free And Fair Choice To Join A Union** The Rockport Bridge Rehabilitation Freight Rail Project would bring new employment opportunities to the region, which would increase access to good-paying job opportunities. The construction portion of the Project will generate 20-40 high-paying construction and engineering jobs. Bidders will be required to address how they will promote workforce opportunities for historically underrepresented groups. The Project will create five additional employment opportunities at the railroad. The railroad jobs are high-quality operational and maintenance jobs that allow employees to join a union, with established labor standards that are based on labor agreements, which include various labor-management programs.

## **US-395 & Virginia Street North Valleys**

INFRA Award: \$88,917,130

Washoe County, Nevada

**Applicant:** Nevada Department of Transportation

**Urban or Rural:** Urban

**Project Description:** The project has two components. The first component will add two lanes along approximately three miles of US-395 with improved traffic control, interchange lighting upgrades, sound walls, and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) elements. The second component will create a complete street along a separate 2.5-mile stretch of North Virginia Street with added sidewalks and buffered bike lanes and/or shared-use path, pedestrian crossings with rectangular rapid flashing beacons, and improved transit stops.

**Project Benefits:** The project reconstructs deteriorating pavement in an area with high truck volumes accessing nearby industrial areas and distribution facilities, making the area safer, efficient, and more attractive for developments such as the planned Reno AirLogistics Park. The addition of new northbound and southbound lanes on US 395 will alleviate the current congestion for drivers during peak periods. Additionally, the project will reduce crashes at interchanges with lighting and ITS elements and make pedestrian improvements in an area that has experienced multiple vehicle-pedestrian crashes in recent years.

**Creating Workforce Training Programs and Good-Paying Jobs With The Free And Fair Choice To Join A Union:** The US-395 & Virginia Street North Valleys Project will have a project labor agreement (PLA). The PLA includes registered apprenticeship requirements. Local union swill be partnering with the Nevada department of Transportation and Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe plan to provide worker training.

## **Hunts Point Terminal Produce Market Intermodal Facility**

INFRA Award: \$110,000,000

New York, New York

**Applicant:** City of New York

**Urban or Rural:** Urban

**Project Description:** This project will redevelop the Hunts Point Terminal Produce Market intermodal facility with expanded refrigerated warehouse space and electric vehicle charging stations for trucks and cars. The new Produce Market will be an approximately 1,000,000-square-foot state-of-the-art intermodal facility with approximately 824,600 square feet of refrigerated warehouse space with solar panels or a green roof.

**Project Benefits:** The project will boost the economy by improving one of the largest food distribution centers in the country by widening and separating vehicular, truck, rail, and pedestrian circulation and clearly establishing and expanding truck queuing and parking areas within the facility. The improvements are focused on areas where data shows most safety issues currently occur. With the new facility, diesel-powered truck refrigeration units will no longer idle on site, resulting in emissions reductions.

**Creating Workforce Training Programs and Good-Paying Jobs With The Free And Fair Choice To Join A Union:** The project will create about 1,000 new jobs. These jobs will be filled through the City's workforce development efforts, as outlined in Hunts Point Forward plan. NYCEDC, local stakeholders, and other City agencies are working together to expand outreach by hosting regular jobs fairs in the neighborhood where local employers are invited to promote opportunities and recruit candidates to connect residents to local jobs. Local and economic hiring preferences will be implemented through the HireNYC program which, through project labor agreements, encourages the hiring of residents from neighborhoods with high poverty levels and individuals who live in public housing. Through HireNYC, workforce programs that focus on specific underrepresented populations can have graduates considered for jobs. For example, 15 percent of apprenticeship slots are reserved for women trained through Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) and 10 percent are reserved for programs that focus on public housing residents.

## **Tioga Marine Terminal Access and Capacity Enhancements Project**

INFRA Award: \$20,341,494

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Applicant:** Philadelphia Regional Port Authority

**Urban or Rural:** Urban

**Project Description:** The project will construct an approximately 100,000-square-foot warehouse with rail access, employee parking, and loading docks at the Tioga Marine Terminal. The project will also relocate and construct a new modernized gate complex and relocate an existing maintenance facility.

**Project Benefits:** The project addresses the lack of capacity available at the Port of Philadelphia and avoids lengthy re-routing of cargo to other East coast ports. The project reduces truck congestion and idling at the port, which will facilitate the movement of goods, improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the nearby underserved communities.

**Creating Workforce Training Programs and Good-Paying Jobs With The Free And Fair Choice To Join A Union** The Tioga Marine Terminal (TMT) Access and Capacity Enhancements Project is anticipated to create 10 new, direct, full-time, union jobs at TMT. The Project will also create indirect jobs throughout its entirety, such as transportation providers and construction process. TMT is located in close proximity to areas in Philadelphia that qualify as an Area of Persistent Poverty, Opportunity Zone, Empowerment Zone, Promise Zone, Choice Neighborhood, or Historically Disadvantaged Community. The terminal will draw employees in from these surrounding communities and contribute to good-paying jobs in these disadvantaged areas.

## **PR-2 Improvement Project**

INFRA Award: \$90,000,000

Mayagüez, Puerto Rico

**Applicant:** Autoridad de Carreteras y Transportación

**Urban or Rural:** Rural

**Project Description:** The project will improve a 1.4-mile segment along PR-2 in Mayaguez, including: the elimination of traffic lights in six intersections, the elimination of direct access, and the construction of side streets for local transit, pedestrians, and cyclists. The project will also build two overpass bridges and eliminate traffic signals at the San Juan Street intersection and the PR-3108 intersection.

**Project Benefits:** The project reconfigures the roadway and intersections to minimize conflict points and protect transit users, pedestrians, and cyclists by separating them from the highway. The project sponsor has already held multiple community engagement meetings which informed six targeted areas of improvement in Historically Disadvantaged Communities. The project sponsor also commits to supporting union labor and apprenticeship in project construction, in accordance with Puerto Rico's Executive Order mandate related to construction job salaries.

**Creating Workforce Training Programs and Good-Paying Jobs With The Free And Fair Choice To Join A Union:** This road improvement project will result in job creation by supporting good-paying jobs with a free and fair choice to join a union in project construction and in on-going operations and maintenance. An Executive order signed by the Puerto Rico governor will ensure the project creates strong labor standards, such as through the use of project labor agreements, registered apprenticeship programs, and other joint labor-management training programs.



## **Newport Pell Bridge Rehabilitation Project**

INFRA Award: \$25,000,000

Newport County, Rhode Island

**Applicant:** Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority

**Urban or Rural:** Urban

**Project Description:** The project will rehabilitate the Newport Pell Bridge, a 4-lane suspension bridge that carries Route 138 over the Narragansett Bay, connecting Jamestown and Newport. Components include a partial-depth reconstruction of the bridge deck and the west approach spans, installation of a dehumidification system to the main cables and anchorages, and repairs to the tower elevators. The project also includes an acoustic monitoring system and intelligent transportation system (ITS) enhancements.

**Project Benefits:** The project will fix the deterioration of a bridge that is a designated Critical Urban Freight Corridor that connects mainland Rhode Island to Newport, a major tourism destination. The project will add dehumidification to the cables and anchorages which will prevent corrosion and preserve the cables and anchorages for the balance of the bridge's useful life. This will prevent the closure of the bridge from disrepair. The project will also preserve a multimodal route used by approximately 300,000 Rhode Island Public Transit Authority bus travelers per year, maintaining an affordable and efficient travel option for residents of the island to reach the mainland.

**Creating Workforce Training Programs and Good-Paying Jobs With The Free And Fair Choice To Join A Union:** The Newport Bridge dehumidification project will generate jobs in the building trades, including jobs for steel workers, carpenters, electrical workers, HVAC technicians, welders, painters, equipment operators, and workers in the many allied trades who will be needed to do this labor intensive project. RITBA plans to include project labor agreements and community workforce agreements with trades and many union partners supported this project including the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades. The project sponsors will work with Building Futures, a pre-apprenticeship program in Rhode Island which has a track record of diversity and getting people into good-paying jobs. The project sponsors are also working to recruit the next generation of infrastructure workers and will partner with Introducing Youth to American Infrastructure, Inc. (Iyai+), to familiarize youth from kindergarten through graduate school with infrastructure career opportunities. There is a specific focus on historically underrepresented group including women, people of color, the disability community and others.

## **Newport Pell Bridge Rehabilitation Project**

INFRA Award: \$25,000,000

Seattle, Washington

**Applicant:** Washington State Department of Transportation

**Urban or Rural:** Urban

**Project Description:** The project will rehabilitate the movable span of the Salmon Bay Bridge by replacing the counterweight, the counterweight truss, six of the eight bearings, and the counterweight links with steel members with a high resistance to fatigue.

**Project Benefits:** This project will extend the life of the bridge's moveable span by 50 years, while addressing design flaws that have caused stress on the existing infrastructure. The project will maintain a critical multimodal north-south connection, avoiding hundreds of miles of detour on this vital freight rail corridor that serves passenger and commuter rail lines. The project has strong public-private partnership and will also utilize an innovative approach to bridge replacement, which minimizes disruptions during construction and allows spans to be replaced in 24 hours.

**Creating Workforce Training Programs and Good-Paying Jobs With The Free And Fair Choice To Join A Union** Executing the Salmon Bay Bridge project involves a number of high-skill, high-paying jobs. These include machinists, riggers, welders, steel workers, electricians, and others. Apprenticeship is the main route for individuals to attain these skills. The project is expected to create 85 of these skilled craft jobs and about 50 more general laborer and office jobs. The project also preserves high-paying railroad union jobs for the Sound Transit and Amtrak Cascade intercity passenger rail services using the bridge.