RAISE Grants
Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity

How to Compete Webinar – New Applicants

January 12, 2023

Webinar Information

Audio

- To listen via computer:
  - Select "Computer Audio"

- To listen via phone:
  - Call: 669-254-5252
  - Webinar ID: 161 489 4620
  - Passcode: 146535

- All participants automatically join on mute, with cameras off

Closed Captioning

- Available during the webinar

Technical Support

- Email
  - corey.martin.ctr@dot.gov
  - webconference@dot.gov

Questions for Presenters

- Please type your questions in the Q&A box

More Information

- This webinar is being recorded and will be posted on the RAISE Grants website at https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants

Informal Poll Questions

1. Have you applied to the RAISE (BUILD/TIGER) program before?
   - Yes
   - No

2. Did you attend the RAISE How to Compete webinar on January 5?
   - Yes
   - No
   - I watched a recording

Agenda

- RAISE Team
- RAISE Grant Program and NOFO Overview
- How to Apply
- Technical Assistance and Resources
- How to Compete
- Q&A

RAISE Team Introductions

Presenters

Andrea Jacobson

Kim Bathrick

Aubrei Barton

Assisting Behind the Scenes
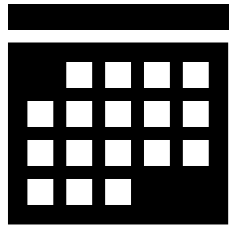
Linsey Callaghan

Logan Dredske

Sequoia Garlington

Danny Kozub
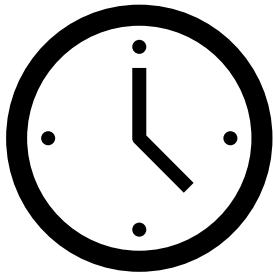
RAISE NOFO Is Now Open!

Notice of Funding Opportunity is **OPEN**

Grants.gov Opportunity Number: DTOS59-23-RA-RAISE

Assistance Listing: 20.933

APPLY by **February 28, 2023**, at 11:59 pm Eastern

Submit on grants.gov

No late applications accepted

Additional resources at www.transportation.gov/raisegrants

NEW Subscribe for email updates!

Upcoming RAISE Webinars

2 **How to Apply for RAISE Grants: Rural and Tribal Applicants**

1. This webinar will offer a general overview of the RAISE program, the grant application process, and will address issues unique to rural and tribal applicants
2. **Tuesday, January 24, 2023 2:00 – 4:00 pm Eastern**

3 **How to Apply for RAISE Grants: RAISE Mapping Tool**

1. This webinar will demonstrate how to determine location designations for proposed projects
2. **Wednesday, February 1, 2023 1:00 – 2:00 pm Eastern**

RAISE Grant Program and NOFO Overview

RAISE Program Overview

Multimodal, merit-based, competitive grant program for surface transportation infrastructure

Improve safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, mobility and community connectivity, economic competitiveness, state of good repair, partnership, and innovation

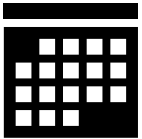Awards must demonstrate modal and geographic diversity

FY 2023 RAISE Program Overview

Capital Grants

- Surface transportation infrastructure capital construction or vehicle and equipment procurement
- Projects that include right-of-way acquisition

Planning Grants

- Planning, preparation, or design of surface transportation infrastructure projects
- Examples include: environmental analysis, equity analysis, community engagement, feasibility studies, benefit-cost analysis, and other pre-construction activities

See RAISE NOFO page 14

Eligible Applicants

States
DC

Territories or Possession of the United States

Unit of Local Government

Public agency or publicly chartered authority established by 1+ states

Federally recognized Tribe or consortium of Tribes

Special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, such as a port authority

Transit Agency

A multi-State or multijurisdictional group of entities that are separately eligible

Questions? Use the Q&A box.

Informal Poll Questions

- What type of organization do you represent?
  - State or Territory of the United States
  - Local Government
  - Tribal Government
  - Metropolitan Planning Organization
  - Transit Agency
  - Transportation Authority (port, rail, airport, or other)
  - Federal Government
  - Consultant
  - Other

Eligible Projects

Highway, Bridge, or Road

Public Transportation

Passenger and Freight Rail

Intermodal Projects

Transportation Projects on Tribal Lands

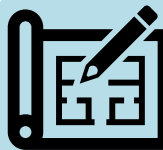**Surface Transportation Components of an Airport**

Eligible under part B of subtitle VII of title 49 USC

Port Infrastructure

Including Inland Ports and Land Points of Entry

Culvert Replacement and Rehabilitation

to Prevent Stormwater Runoff to Improve the Habitat for Aquatic Species

Planning and Pre-Construction Activities

FY 2023 RAISE NOFO

Funding

- $2.3 billion available
  - $1.5 billion Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)
  - $800 million FY 2023 Appropriation Act

Minimum Award Size

- Capital Projects - $1 million Rural / $5 million Urban
- Planning Projects – No Minimum Award Size

Maximum Award Size

- $25 million BIL
- $45 million FY 2023 Appropriation Act

Questions? Use the Q&A box.

FY 2023 RAISE NOFO

Planning Grant Set Aside

- The Department must award at least $115 million in planning grants

APP / HDC Set Aside

- The Department must award at least $35 million to projects located in Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP) and/or Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC)

Urban / Rural

- The Department must award 50 percent of funds to projects located in rural areas and 50 percent to projects located in urban areas

Maximum Federal Cost Share for RAISE Projects Located in **Urban Areas is 80%** *unless the project is located in an APP or HDC.*

There is no maximum Federal share for projects located in:
- *Rural Areas*
- *Areas of Persistent Poverty*
- *Historically Disadvantaged Communities*

Projects in these areas may (but are not required to) request up to 100% grant funding.

Cost share is **NOT** used as a competitive selection factor

Maximum Federal Cost Share of Total Project Cost

■ Federal Share   ■ Non-Federal Share

	Urban Project	Rural Project
Non-Federal Share	20%	
Federal Share	80%	100%
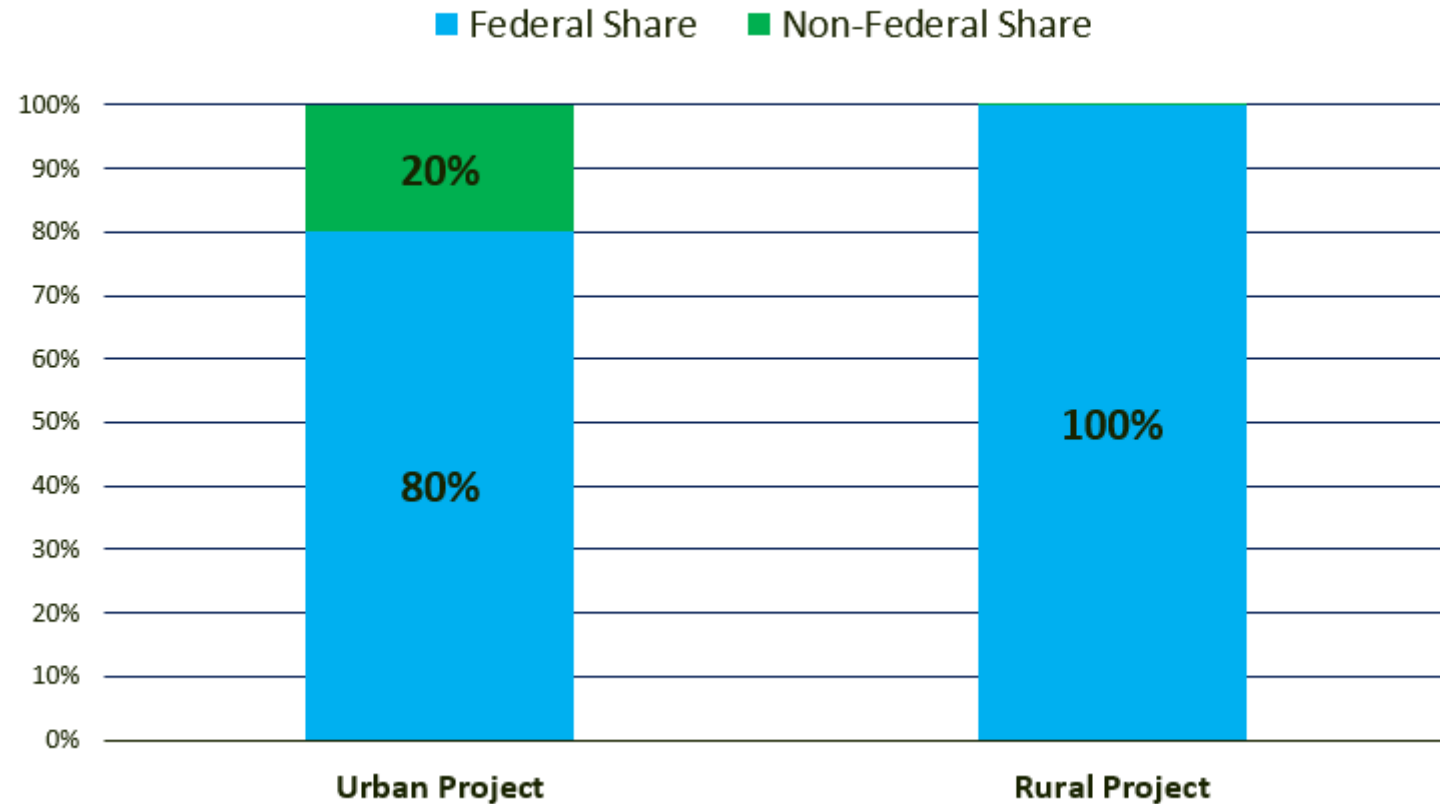
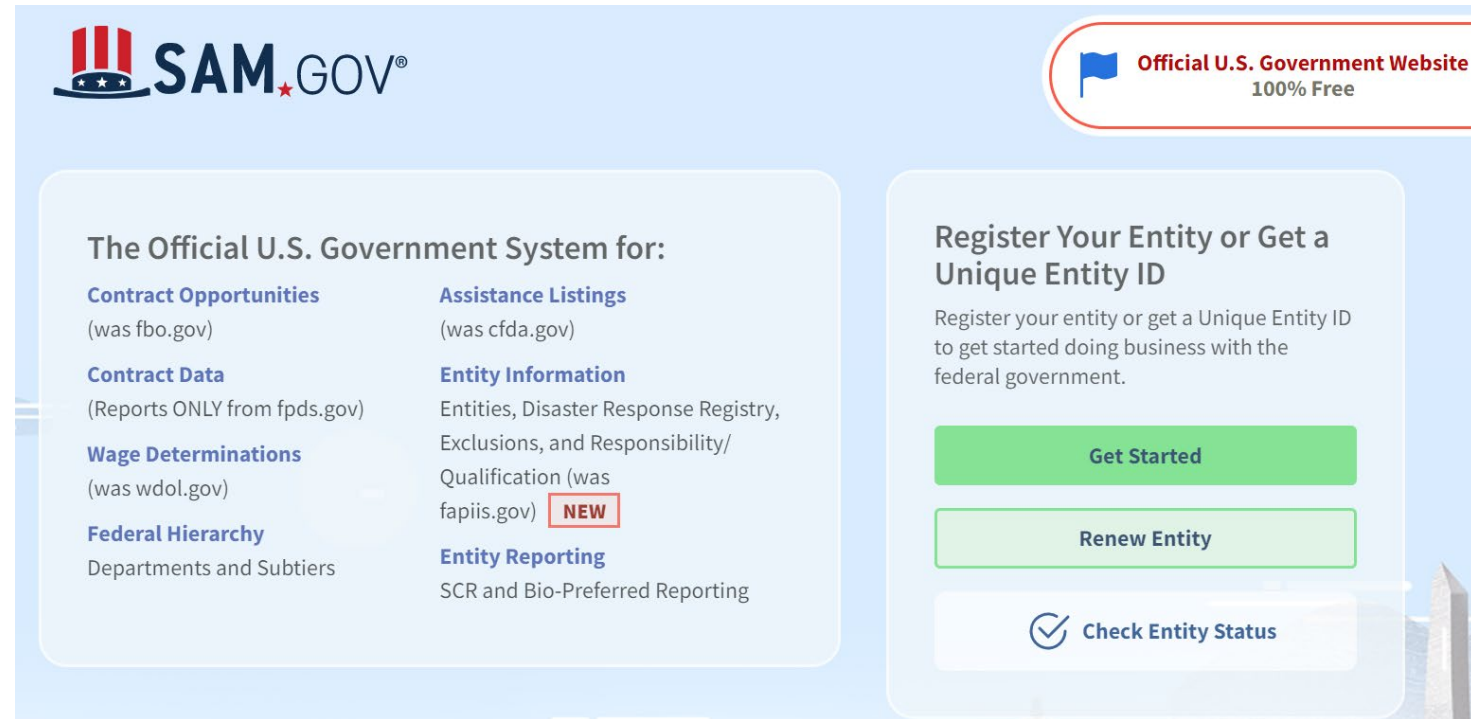See RAISE NOFO page 12

How to Apply

Getting Ready to Apply: SAM.gov

- Register your entity

- Obtain a Unique Entity ID (UEI)

- Check your entity's status

- Renew your entity's registration

- www.sam.gov

SAM.GOV®

The Official U.S. Government System for:

Contract Opportunities
(was fbo.gov)

Contract Data
(Reports ONLY from fpds.gov)

Wage Determinations
(was wdol.gov)

Federal Hierarchy
Departments and Subtiers

Assistance Listings
(was cfda.gov)

Entity Information
Entities, Disaster Response Registry, Exclusions, and Responsibility/ Qualification (was fapiis.gov) NEW

Entity Reporting
SCR and Bio-Preferred Reporting

Official U.S. Government Website
100% Free

Register Your Entity or Get a Unique Entity ID

Register your entity or get a Unique Entity ID to get started doing business with the federal government.

Get Started

Renew Entity

Check Entity Status

Getting Ready to Apply: Grants.gov

- Register or confirm your registration

- Update the Authorized Representative

- Confirm contact information is correct

- www.grants.gov
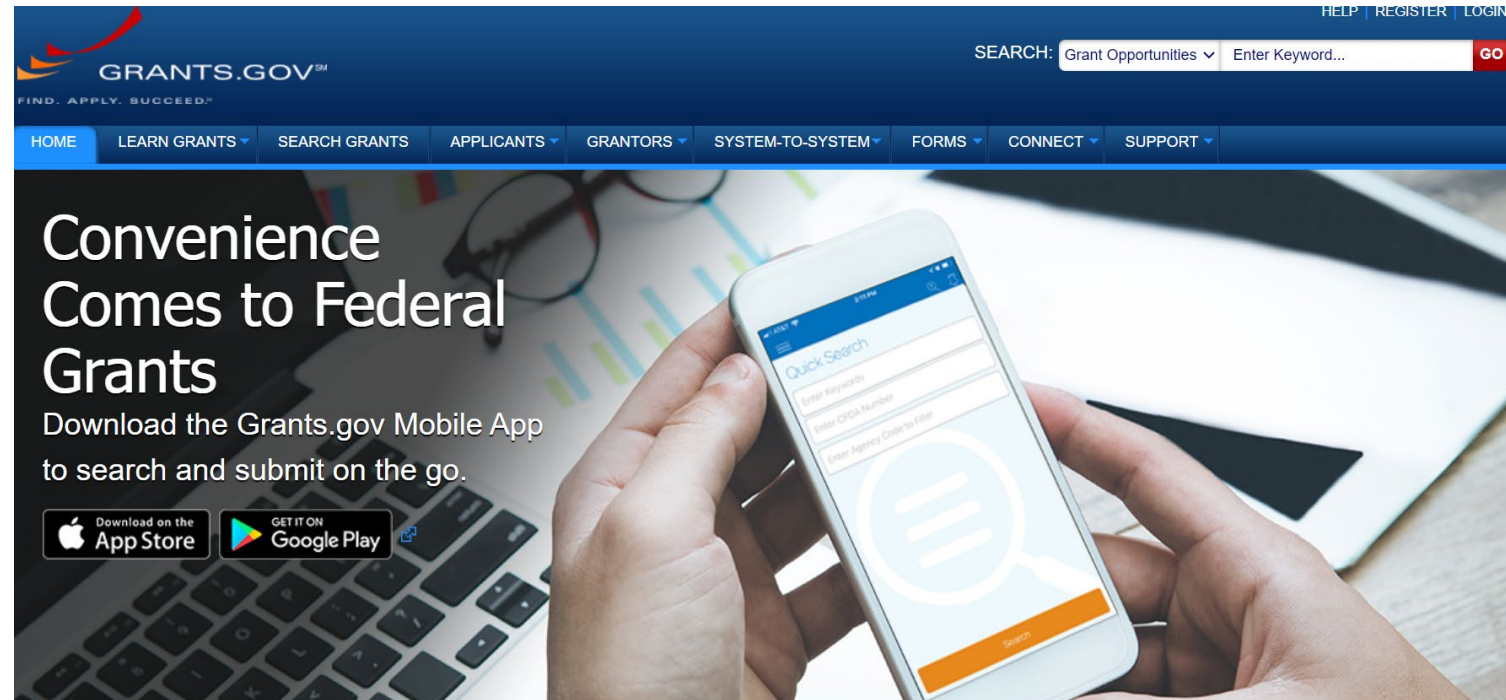
Applying: Application Limit and Deadline

- An applicant may submit up to **3** applications

- **You <u>must</u> complete the Grants.gov registration process before submitting your application(s). This can take 2-4 weeks to complete. Start the registration process <u>now</u>.**

- Applications are due by **11:59 PM Eastern on February 28, 2023** and **<u>must</u> be submitted through Grants.gov**

- DOT will **<u>not</u>** accept late applications. DOT will use the time stamp given by Grants.gov to determine whether applications are late.

Questions? Use the Q&A box.

Applying: Application Deadline

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to **make submissions well in advance of the deadline.**

- Give yourself time **to receive the Grants.gov confirmation email** with the grant tracking number

- Confirm you can open and view all files uploaded to Grants.gov and not corrupt or damaged

- Take a screen capture of the files open in Grants.gov to show they are readable

Technical Assistance and Resources

Technical Assistance

RAISE FAQ

- Check out the FAQ on the [RAISE website](#)

RAISE Inbox

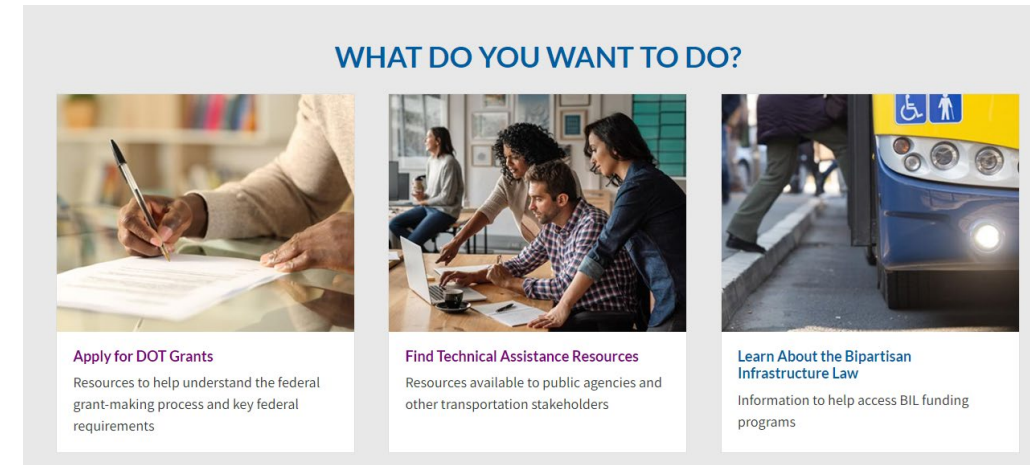- Email us with questions at raisegrants@dot.gov

RAISE Webinars

- Attend or watch [RAISE webinars](#)

DOT Navigator

- Check the new DOT Navigator!

- The DOT Navigator is a new resource to help communities understand the best ways to apply for grants, and to plan for and deliver transformative infrastructure projects

  - [Understanding Cost Share](#)
  - [Checklist for a Strong Workforce and Labor Plan](#)
  - [FY 2023 DOT Discretionary Grant Check List](#)

- https://www.transportation.gov/dot-navigator

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

Apply for DOT Grants
Resources to help understand the federal grant-making process and key federal requirements

Find Technical Assistance Resources
Resources available to public agencies and other transportation stakeholders

Learn About the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
Information to help access BIL funding programs

How to Compete

What Projects Compete Well?

Projects that clearly define the transportation problem and describe how your project is the solution to that problem.

Projects that presents a clear story walking through the transportation challenges and detailing what the local, regional, or national impacts will be.

Projects that align with the Merit Criteria and include data-driven, reasonable and justifiable outcomes.

Projects that emphasize improved access to safe, reliable, and affordable transportation, particularly for underserved communities

Projects that explicitly consider climate change and racial equity throughout the project life cycle.

Project demonstrates a reasonable schedule and timeline, relative to the statutory deadlines in the NOFO.

RAISE Application Content

	Information	File Name	NOFO Section	Page Limit
☐	SF-424	SF-424	D.2	N/A
☐	Project Information Form (in Excel)	FY 2023 RAISE Project Information Form	D.2	N/A
☐	Project Description	Project Description	D.2.i	5 pages
☐	Project Location File	Project Location File	D.2.ii	N/A
☐	Project Budget	Project Budget	D.2.iii	5 pages
☐	Funding Commitment Documentation	Funding Commitments	D.2.iii.e	N/A
☐	Merit Criteria	Merit Criteria Narrative	D.2.iv and E.1.i	15 pages
☐	Project Readiness	Project Readiness	D.2.v and E.1.ii	5 pages
☐	Benefit-Cost Analysis Narrative (capital projects only)	BCA Narrative	D.2.vi and E.1.iii	N/A
☐	Benefit-Cost Analysis Calculations (capital projects only, could be in unlocked spreadsheet form)	BCA Calculations	D.2.vi. and E.1.iii	N/A
☐	Letters of Support (Optional)	Letters Of Support	D2.iv and E.1.i	N/A
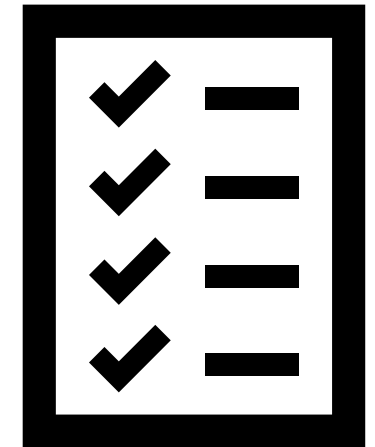
See RAISE NOFO page 20

RAISE Evaluation Process

ALL ELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS

Tier 1: Merit Review

Overall Rating Options:
Highly Recommended
Recommended
Acceptable
Unacceptable

SRT Deliberates →

COMPETITIVE SUBSET OF APPLICATIONS (BASED ON MERIT RATINGS AND SRT REVIEW)

Tier 2:
- Economic BCA Review (capital only)
- Environmental Risk Review (capital only)
- Financial Completeness Review
- Technical Capacity Review

SRT Deliberates →

COMPETITIVE SUBSET OF APPLICATIONS THAT RECEIVED TIER 2 ANALYSIS

Highly Rated List

Secretary makes awards from the Highly Rated List

- The Senior Review Team (SRT) consists of Department Leadership.
- SRT considers the Tier 1 and Tier 2 ratings with the goal of advancing a Highly Rated List of applications to the Secretary for award consideration.

See RAISE NOFO page 57

RAISE Merit Criteria

- Applications should address each criterion, or expressly state that the project does not align with a criterion.

Safety
Environmental Sustainability
Quality of Life
Mobility and Community Connectivity
Economic Competitiveness
State of Good Repair
Partnership and Collaboration
Innovation

RAISE Merit Criteria Rating Rubric

For **each** merit criterion, the Department will consider whether the anticipated benefits are clear, direct, data-driven, and significant, which will result in a rating of "high", "medium", "low", or "non-responsive", as described in the rubric in the NOFO.

Primary Project Purpose (high) vs. Ancillary (medium)

Activities listed in the High column are different than activities listed in the Medium column

Projects do NOT need to address all elements in the high column to get a high; One is sufficient.

Data-driven, well justified assumptions about what the project will accomplish

See RAISE NOFO page 38

RAISE Merit Criteria Rating Rubric Cont'd

The combination of individual criterion ratings will inform <u>one overall rating</u>:

Highly Recommended = at least 6/8 merit criteria ratings are "high" and none of the merit criteria ratings are "non-responsive."

Recommended = 1-5 merit criteria ratings are "high", no more than 3 of the merit criteria ratings are "low", and none are "non-responsive."

Acceptable = combination of "high," "medium," "low," or "non-responsive" ratings that do not fit within the definitions of Highly Recommended, Recommended, or Unacceptable.

**Unacceptable** = three or more are "non-responsive".

Example:
If a project received a "High" rating in Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Quality of Life, Mobility and Community Connectivity, State of Good Repair, and Partnership; and a "Medium" rating in Economic Competitiveness and Innovation, the Overall Merit Rating would be Highly Recommended (6/8 high and no non-responsive).

Merit Criterion: Safety
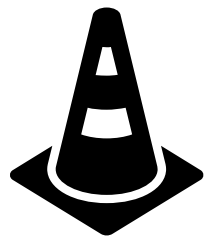
Protect motorized or non-motorized travelers from safety risks
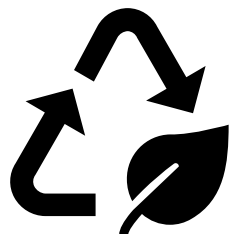
Reduce fatalities or injuries to bring them below the statewide average

National Roadway Safety Strategy

See RAISE NOFO pages 40 and 46

Merit Criterion: Environmental Sustainability

Reduce transportation-related air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in underserved communities

Reduce vehicle miles traveled specifically through modal shift to transit or active transportation

Improve the resilience of at-risk infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events and natural disasters caused by climate change
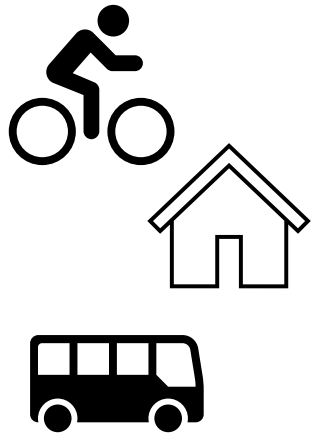
Using best-available climate data sets and incorporating best practices identified by the Department

• Department's Nature-Based Solutions for Coastal Highway Resilience Implementation Guide

See RAISE NOFO pages 40-41 and 46-47

Merit Criterion: Quality of Life

Increase affordable transportation choices by improving and expanding active transportation

Reduce transportation and housing cost burdens by integrating mixed-use development and housing with multimodal transportation infrastructure

Coordinate and integrate land use, affordable housing, and transportation planning in order to create more livable communities and expand travel choices

Improve access to daily destinations like jobs, healthcare, grocery stores, schools, places of worship, recreation, or parks through transit and active transportation

See RAISE NOFO pages 41-42 and 48

Merit Criterion: Mobility and Community Connectivity
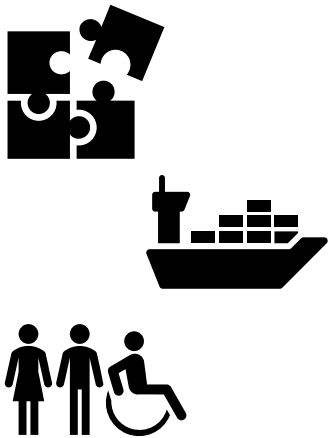
Improve system-wide connectivity with access to transit, micro-mobility, and mobility on-demand

Remove physical barriers for individuals by reconnecting communities to direct, affordable transportation options

Incorporate Universal Design including details of how the improvements go beyond ADA requirements

Directly increasing intermodal and multimodal freight movement

Consider last-mile freight plans in a Complete Streets and multimodal approach

See RAISE NOFO pages 42 and 48-49

Merit Criterion: Economic Competitiveness
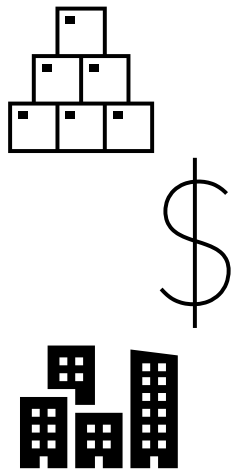
Improve freight supply chain bottlenecks

Utilization of Minority Owned Businesses

Promote robust job creation by supporting good-paying jobs directly related to the project with free and fair choice to join a union

Promote greater public and private investments in land-use development

Rural main street revitalization or locally driven density decisions that support equitable commercial and mixed-income residential development

See RAISE NOFO pages 43 and 49

Merit Criterion: State of Good Repair

Restore and modernize core infrastructure assets that have met the useful life

Create new infrastructure in remote communities that will be maintained in a state of good repair

Address current or projected system vulnerabilities for underserved communities

Prioritize improvement of existing transportation infrastructure within the <u>existing</u> footprint

See RAISE NOFO pages 43-44 and 50

Merit Criterion: Partnership and Collaboration

Engage residents and community-based organizations to ensure equity is being considered throughout the project's lifecycle

- Department's Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making Guide

Coordinate with other types of projects such as economic development, commercial or residential development near public transportation, power/electric infrastructure projects, or broadband deployment

Partner with Minority Owned Businesses, workforce development programs, or unions

Establish formal public-private partnerships or joint ventures to expand or create new infrastructure

Federal capacity-building program

- Department of Housing and Urban Development's Thriving Communities Technical Assistance
- Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers Program

See RAISE NOFO pages 44-45 and 50-52

Merit Criterion: Innovation

Innovative Technologies

- Electric, connected, and automated transportation
- Low-carbon materials

Innovative Project Delivery

- Accelerated project delivery:
  - Single contractor design-build arrangements, congestion management, asset management, long-term operations and maintenance

Innovative Financing

- Secure TIFIA, RRIF, or private activity bond financing
- Use congestion pricing or other demand management strategies

See RAISE NOFO pages 45 and 52-54

Project Readiness

1. Environmental- capital applications only, please include narrative for review
2. Technical- all applications, include narrative for review
3. Financial- all applications, review based on budget section of application

- Project Readiness reviews assess:
  - overall reasonable schedule and plan to deliver the project
  - ability to meet the obligation deadline of **September 30, 2027**
  - ability to complete the project by the expenditure deadline of **September 30, 2032**
  - clear plan to mitigate risks of project delivery.

See RAISE NOFO pages 27-34

Project Readiness: Environmental Risk Review

- Capital applications only
- Ratings: High, Medium, or Low Risk rating based on the project's ability to complete all environmental requirements/permits and meet the obligation deadline of **September 30, 2027**.
- Project schedule identifies all major project milestones and these are reasonable.
- Clear plan to complete required approvals and permits such as NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) and other State or local environmental and planning approvals.
- Risks identified with mitigation plan. Provide any completed environmental documents to support.
- Meaningful public involvement, particularly for disadvantaged communities where applicable.
- If applicable, right-of-way acquisition plans, with detailed schedule and compensation plan.

Project Readiness: Technical Capacity Review

- Ratings: Certain, Somewhat Certain, Uncertain based on applicant's capacity to successfully deliver the project

Sample characteristics of a strong application for Technical Capacity:
- Experience completing projects with similar scope and scale;
- Feasibility/constructability of specific project;
- Sufficient resources to deliver the project;
- Minimal or no ROW acquisition;
- Demonstrated understanding and plan to comply with all applicable Federal requirements including but not limited to Buy America, Civil Rights, ADA, etc.

Project Readiness: Financial Completeness Review

- Ratings: Complete, Partially Complete, or Incomplete financial package
- Detailed project budget identifies all sources of funding, including RAISE funds, other Federal funds, and non-Federal funds.
- Indicate the basis for the funding estimates (e.g. 30% design), and whether contingency is included.
- Describe a plan to address potential cost overruns (even if seeking 100% grant funding).
- Demonstrate through letters of support, STIP/TIP documents, or other means, that the funding arrangement is certain to meet the deadline for obligation of **September 30, 2027**.
- The Department does not consider the amount of non-Federal contribution as a selection criterion or a competitiveness factor. But any/all non-RAISE funding sources included in a project budget should be secured to receive a rating of "Complete".

Benefit-Cost Analysis

- Capital applications only
- Ratings: costs exceed benefits or benefits exceed costs
- Identify, quantify, and compare expected benefits and costs relative to a "no-build" baseline. See example table in NOFO to get started.
- BCA Narrative describes method and assumptions, BCA Calculation file supports the BCA narrative and should be unlocked/transparent.
- Projects with costs exceeding benefits will not be selected for an award unless it is determined that the project has unquantified benefits for underserved communities

- Further guidance on BCA for DOT Discretionary Grant Programs- www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/additional-guidance
- BCA Webinars will be provided. Please monitor this site for updates: https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/outreach
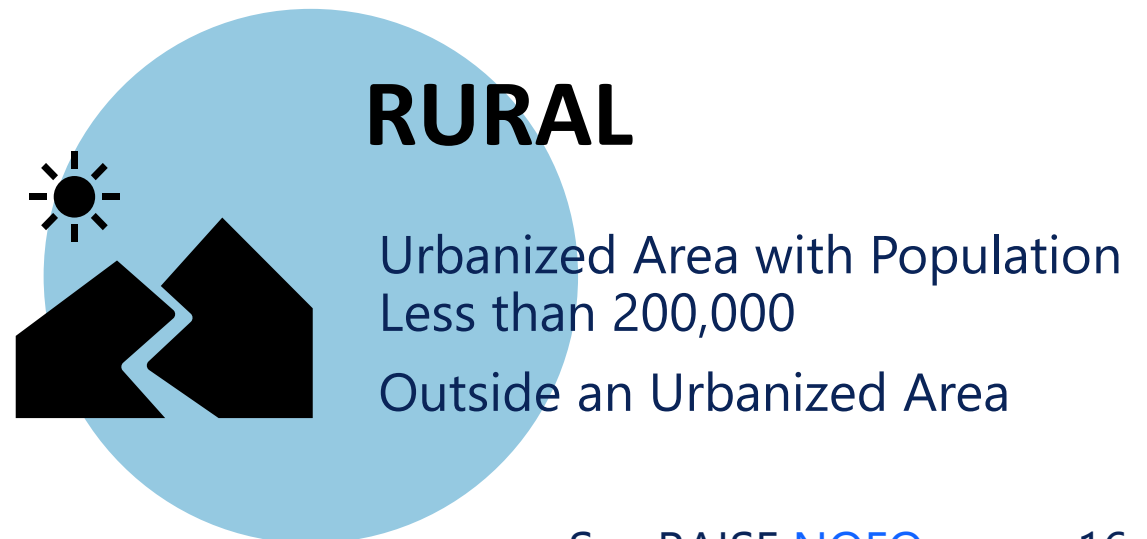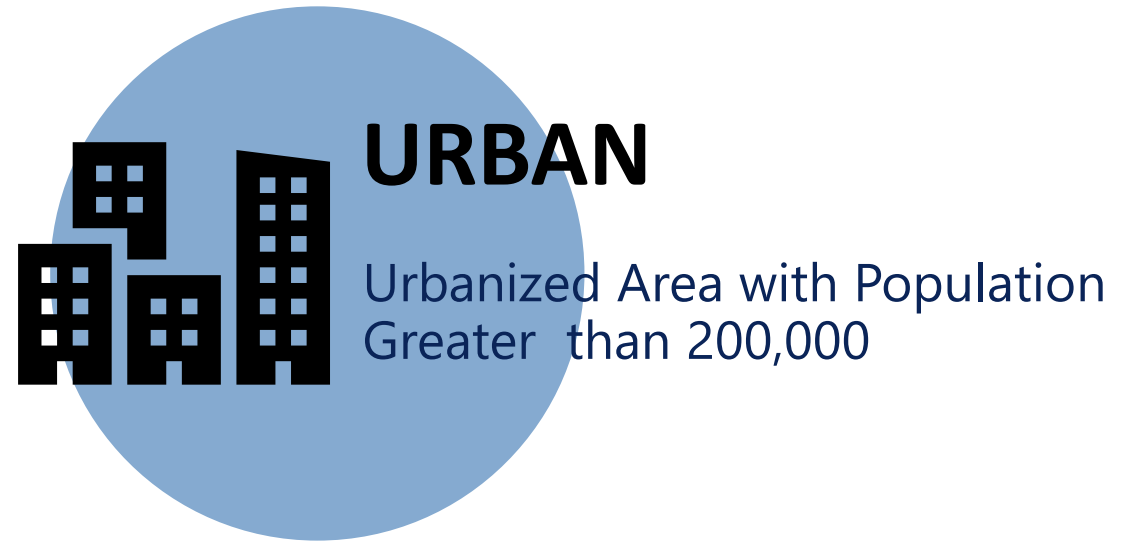
See RAISE NOFO pages 34-35

Designating Project Location

- Three Important Location Designations:
    - **Urban/Rural:** affects set-aside, minimum award, and cost share
    - **Area of Persistent Poverty (APP):** affects set-aside and cost share
    - **Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC):** affects set-aside and cost share

- It is ESSENTIAL to identify the correct project location designations. Applications that request 100% grant funds or request below the relevant minimum grant amount, but are not eligible to do so based on location will be considered **ineligible**. There will not be follow up.

- Projects located exactly on the border of any of these areas (urbanized, APP, or HDC) are considered as within that area.

- Projects that cross multiple areas with differing designations (urban and rural, or APP and non-APP, or HDC and non-HDC) will have the designation based on where the majority of costs are incurred. See Table 2 in Section D.2 of the NOFO.

Urban and Rural Definitions

- Based on 2010 Census Information
  - 2020 Census Urbanized Area information is not yet published, so the RAISE 2023 competition is utilizing the 2010 data.

- Population based on Census Urbanized Area, not any other geographic boundary

- List of Urbanized Areas provided: https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/urbanized-areas

- Map tool provided! Grant Project Location Verification (dot.gov)

URBAN

Urbanized Area with Population Greater than 200,000

RURAL

Urbanized Area with Population Less than 200,000

Outside an Urbanized Area

See RAISE NOFO pages 16-17

APP and HDC Definitions

Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP)

- Areas of Persistent Poverty is based on **Census Tract or County** level poverty data and includes all **US territories**. See NOFO for full definition.

Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC)

- Historically Disadvantaged Community is based on **Census Tract** indicators, includes all **US territories,** and **Tribal land**.

APP and HDC List

- DOT lists all Counties and Census Tracts that meet these definitions: https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-app-hdc
- The list of APP Counties was updated in January 2023 based on most recent data from the Census Bureau.

See RAISE NOFO pages 17-18

Project Location: Mapping Tools

- Urban/Rural List and Instructions: www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/urbanized-areas

- APP/HDC List and Instructions: www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-app-hdc
  *APP Counties will be updated in January 2023. APP Census Tracts remain the same as 2022.

- **New in 2023** Preparing the location file to be submitted with the application:
    1. Open a publicly available online mapping tool for example, (Google Earth or GEOJSON).
    2. Identify your project location. Use the tools to draw a line or make a point to represent the project area. The project area should include only the direct physical location of the infrastructure project; it should NOT include a broad service area or area of project impact.
    3. Export, save, and attach to your application one of the acceptable formats (Shapefile, GEOJSON, KML/KMZ, CSV)

- **New in 2023** One-stop web-based tool for RAISE project location verification.

RAISE Application Pitfalls

Ineligible project types or applicants	Unclear scope of work	Incorrect file format and content – See New Checklist!
Inconsistent project budget, or inclusion of previously incurred costs in the budget	Incorrect location designation that affects eligible minimum project size or cost share and results in ineligibility	Unrelated scopes of work combined within one application
Misalignment with the program criteria (frequently due to reusing prior year or other program applications without referencing the RAISE 2023 merit criteria rubric)	Late applications (frequently due to lack of registration or lack of coordination with the Authorized Representative)	Insufficient supporting information or evidence for merit criteria or project readiness

Project Delivery: What Should Successful Applicants Expect?

- **RAISE 2023 Award Announcement by June 28, 2023**
- Kick-off Meeting with Operating Administration overseeing the project
- Administrative requirements are addressed (funding secured, permits received, etc.)
- Grant Agreement is executed/obligated
- Reporting requirements and project modifications
- Project completion and performance monitoring

- Any costs incurred prior to DOT's obligation of funds are ineligible for reimbursement unless authorized by DOT in writing after the announcement of FY 2023 RAISE awards.
- This is **not** a lump sum award. This is a reimbursement program.

Q & A

Please type your questions in the **Q&A box**

- Email future questions to us at raisegrants@dot.gov
- See the frequently asked questions on our website for more answers