



US Department of Transportation



# RAISE Grants

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity

## How to Compete Webinar

December 19, 2023



# Webinar Information

**All participants automatically join on mute, with cameras off**

## Audio

- Select “Computer Audio” or
- Call: 669 254 5252
  - Webinar ID: 161 631 9129
  - Passcode: 289949

## Technical Support

- Email:
  - [Sharon.Hurst.CTR@dot.gov](mailto:Sharon.Hurst.CTR@dot.gov)
  - [webconference@dot.gov](mailto:webconference@dot.gov)

## Closed Captioning

- Available during the webinar

## Questions for Presenters

- Please type your questions in the Q&A box

## ASL Interpreter

- Available during the webinar

## More Information

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



# Agenda

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



# RAISE Team Introductions



Andrea Jacobson



Linsey Callaghan



Kim Bathrick



Logan Dredske



Jennifer Berkich



Danny Kozub

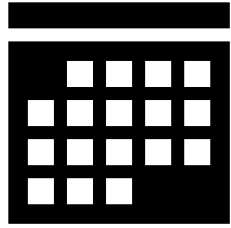


## Informal Poll Questions

1. Have you applied to the RAISE (BUILD/TIGER) program before?
  - YES
  - NO
  
2. Have you applied to other Department of Transportation competitive grant programs before?
  - YES
  - NO



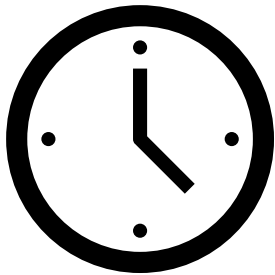
# RAISE NOFO Is Now Open!



Notice of Funding Opportunity is **OPEN**

**Grants.gov Opportunity Number:** [DTOS59-24-RA-RAISE](#)

**Assistance Listing:** 20.933



**APPLY** by **February 28, 2024**, at 11:59 pm Eastern

[Submit on grants.gov](#)

**No late applications accepted**



Additional resources at [www.transportation.gov/raisegrants](http://www.transportation.gov/raisegrants)

[Subscribe](#) for email updates!



## Upcoming RAISE Webinars

2

RAISE Location Designations

January 4, 2024

3

Completing the SF 424 and Project Information Form

January 8, 2024

4

How to Draft Merit Criteria Narrative

January 18, 2024

5

How to Compete for RAISE Grants: Rural and Tribal Applicants

January 23, 2024

6

What Happens After Being Selected for Award?

February 1, 2024



# 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 2024 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 10



# 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



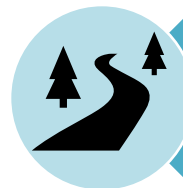
Public Transportation



Passenger and Freight  
Rail



Intermodal Projects

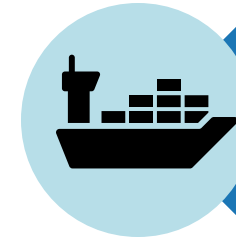


Transportation Projects  
on Tribal Lands

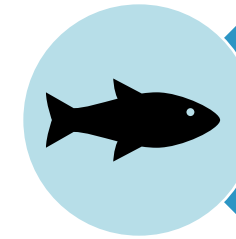


Surface Transportation  
Components of an Airport

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 2024 RAISE NOFO

## Funding

- \$1.5 billion Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

## Minimum Award Size

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

## Maximum Award Size

- \$25 million BIL

Questions? Use the Q&A box.



# FY 2024 RAISE NOFO

## Planning Grant Set Aside

- The Department must award at least \$75 million (5%) in planning grants

## APP / HDC Set Aside

- The Department must award at least \$15 million (1%) 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.



# 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](https://www.sam.gov)



Official U.S. Government Website  
100% Free

## The Official U.S. Government System for:

### Contract Opportunities

#### Contract Data

(Reports ONLY from fpds.gov)

#### Wage Determinations

#### Federal Hierarchy

Departments and Subtiers

### Assistance Listings

#### Entity Information

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

#### Entity Reporting

SCR and Bio-Preferred Reporting

Are you searching for Federal Acquisition Supply Chain  
Security Act (FASCSA) orders?

[View FASCSA Orders](#)

## 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](https://www.grants.gov)



[Help](#) | [Register](#) | [Login](#)

[Home](#) [Learn Grants](#) [Search Grants](#) [Applicants](#) [Grantors](#) [System-To-System](#) [Forms](#) [Connect](#) [Support](#)

[GRANTS.GOV](#) > [Applicants](#) > Workspace Overview





## Applying: Application Limit and Deadline

- An applicant may submit up to **3** applications
- **You must complete the SAM.gov and Grants.gov registration process before submitting your application(s). The SAM.gov registration process can take 2-4 weeks to complete. Start the registration process now.**
- Applications are due by **11:59 PM Eastern on February 28, 2024** and **must be submitted through Grants.gov**
- DOT will **not** accept late RAISE 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



- Do **not** wait until the application deadline to submit your application
- 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



# 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](mailto:raisegrants@dot.gov)

## RAISE Webinars

- Attend or watch [RAISE webinars](#)



- [Utilizing DOT Data for Stronger Grant Applications](#)
- [Benefit Cost Analysis for DOT Discretionary Grant Applications](#)
- [Rural Grant Applicant Toolkit](#)

The screenshot displays the DOT Navigator website interface. At the top, the U.S. Department of Transportation logo is on the left, and navigation links for 'ABOUT DOT', 'PRIORITIES', and 'CONNECT' are on the right, along with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube. The main heading is 'Spotlight on Technical Assistance Resources'. Below this, a text prompt encourages users to check out featured resources and view a 'searchable list of technical assistance resources'. Three featured resource cards are shown: 1) 'Funding Safety for All through Complete Streets Networks' with a street scene image and a description to explore federal funding opportunities. 2) 'Rural Grant Applicant Toolkit for Federal Transportation Funding' with a rural landscape icon and a description to get help navigating grants. 3) 'Grant Preparation Checklist for Prospective Applicants' with a checklist icon and a description to chart a strategic path for historic infrastructure funding.

U.S. Department of Transportation

ABOUT DOT ▾ PRIORITIES ▾ CONNECT ▾

Spotlight on Technical Assistance Resources

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

**Funding Safety for All through Complete Streets Networks**  
Explore federal funding opportunities for your Complete Streets Network

**Rural Grant Applicant Toolkit for Federal Transportation Funding**  
Get help navigating grants for rural transportation projects

**Grant Preparation Checklist for Prospective Applicants**  
Chart a strategic path to take advantage of historic infrastructure funding

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



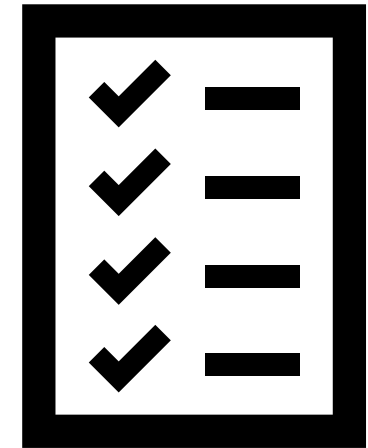
# How to Compete





# RAISE Application Content

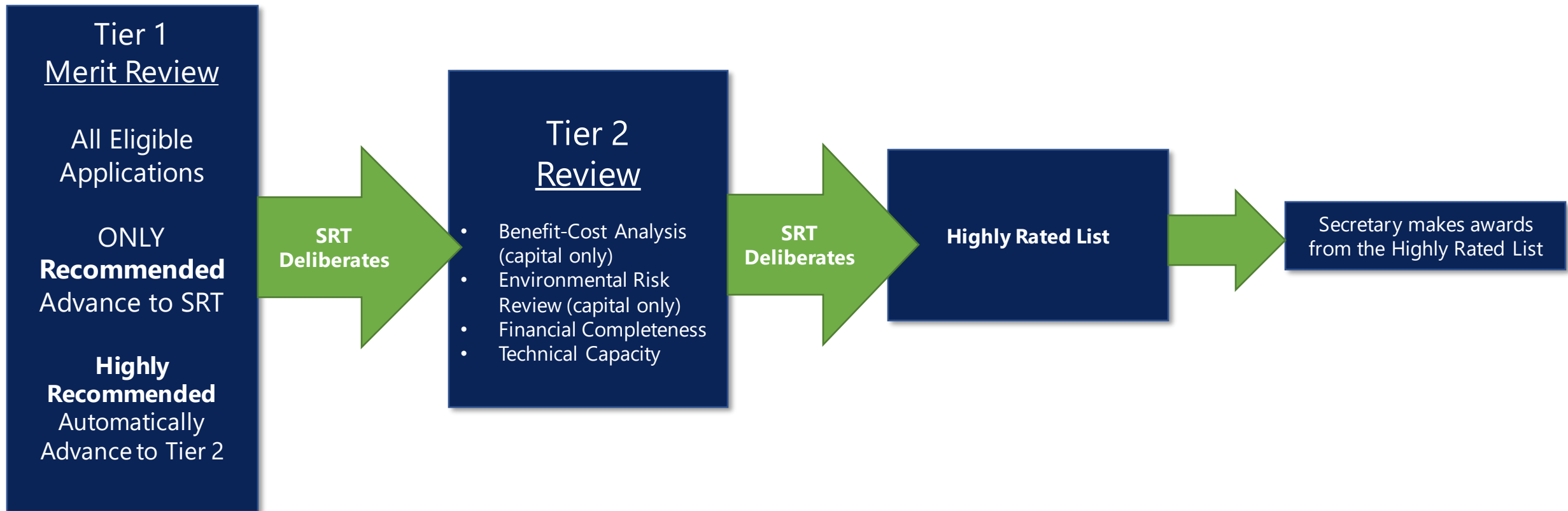
Information	File Name	Page Limit
SF-424	SF-424	NA
Project Information Form (Excel)	FY 2024 RAISE Project Information Form	NA
Project Description	Project Description	5 pages
Project Location File	Project Location File	NA
Project Budget	Project Budget	5 pages
Funding Commitment Documentation	Funding Commitments	NA
Merit Criteria	Merit Criteria Narrative	15 pages
Project Readiness	Project Readiness	5 pages
Benefit-Cost Analysis Narrative	BCA Narrative	NA
Benefit-Cost Analysis Calculations (Excel)	BCA Calculations	NA
Letters of Support (Optional)	Letters of Support	NA



See RAISE [NOFO](#) page 14



# RAISE Evaluation Process



- 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.



# What Projects Compete Well?

Application clearly defines transportation **problem** and why your project is the **solution**

Application **tells a story** about the transportation challenges and details local, regional, or national **impacts**

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 to **start and complete** the project



Statutorily required **8 merit criteria** are:

Four Priority Criteria

- 
- 1. Safety**
  - 2. Environmental Sustainability**
  - 3. Quality of Life**
  - 4. Mobility and Community Connectivity**
  5. Economic Competitiveness
  6. State of Good Repair
  7. Partnership and Collaboration
  8. 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 28



# RAISE Merit Criteria Rating Rubric

The combination of individual criterion ratings will inform one overall rating:

---

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

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**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.

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

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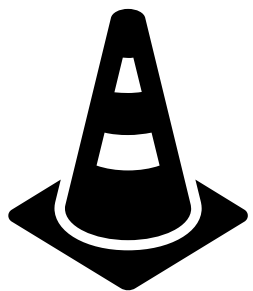


## Merit Criterion: Safety

Protect motorized or  
non-motorized  
travelers from safety  
risks

Reduce fatalities or  
injuries to bring  
them below the  
statewide average

National Roadway  
Safety Strategy



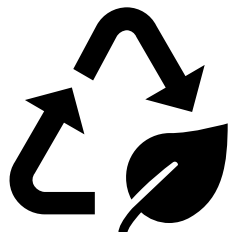
Improving Safety for  
Pedestrians and  
Bicyclists Accessing  
Transit

FTA's Safety Advisory  
23-1: Bus-to-Person  
Collisions

See RAISE [NOFO](#) pages 30 and 37



# Merit Criterion: Environmental Sustainability



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

Improve the resilience of at-risk infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events and natural disasters caused by climate change

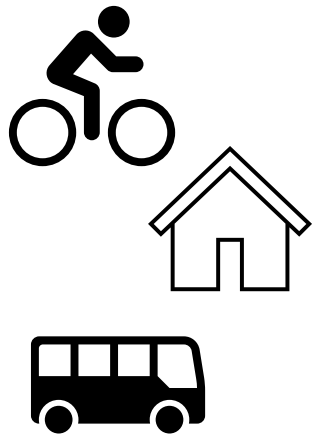
Incorporate lower-carbon materials as described in the Environmental Protection Agency's interim guidance on low-carbon materials or align with the principles/objectives outlined the U.S. National Blueprint for Transportation Decarbonization.

See RAISE [NOFO](#) pages 30-31 and 37-38





# Merit Criterion: Quality of Life



Increase affordable transportation choices by improving and expanding active transportation

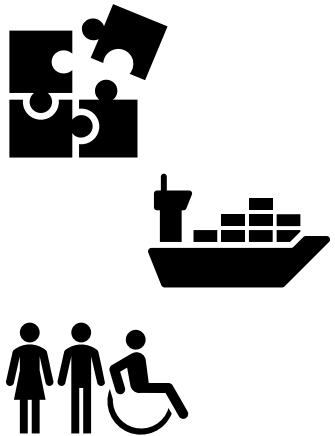
Reduce transportation and housing cost burdens by integrating mixed-use development and housing with multimodal transportation infrastructure

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



# 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

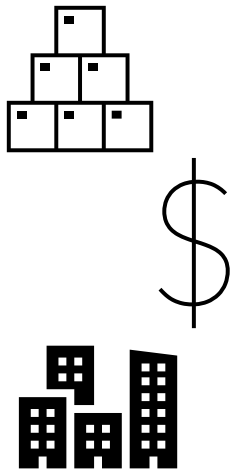
Incorporate Universal Design including details of how the improvements go beyond ADA requirements

Directly increasing intermodal and multimodal freight movement

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



# Merit Criterion: Economic Competitiveness



Improve freight supply chain bottlenecks

Utilize Disadvantaged Business Enterprises or 8(a) firms

Create good-paying jobs with free and fair choice to join a union including using project labor agreements

Promote greater public and private investments in land-use development

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



# 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 existing footprint

See RAISE [NOFO](#) pages 34 and 39



# Merit Criterion: Partnership and Collaboration



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

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 high-quality workforce development programs to help train, place, and retain people in good-paying jobs or registered apprenticeships

Participate in the Thriving Communities Network

See RAISE [NOFO](#) pages 34 and 39



# Merit Criterion: Innovation



## Innovative Technologies

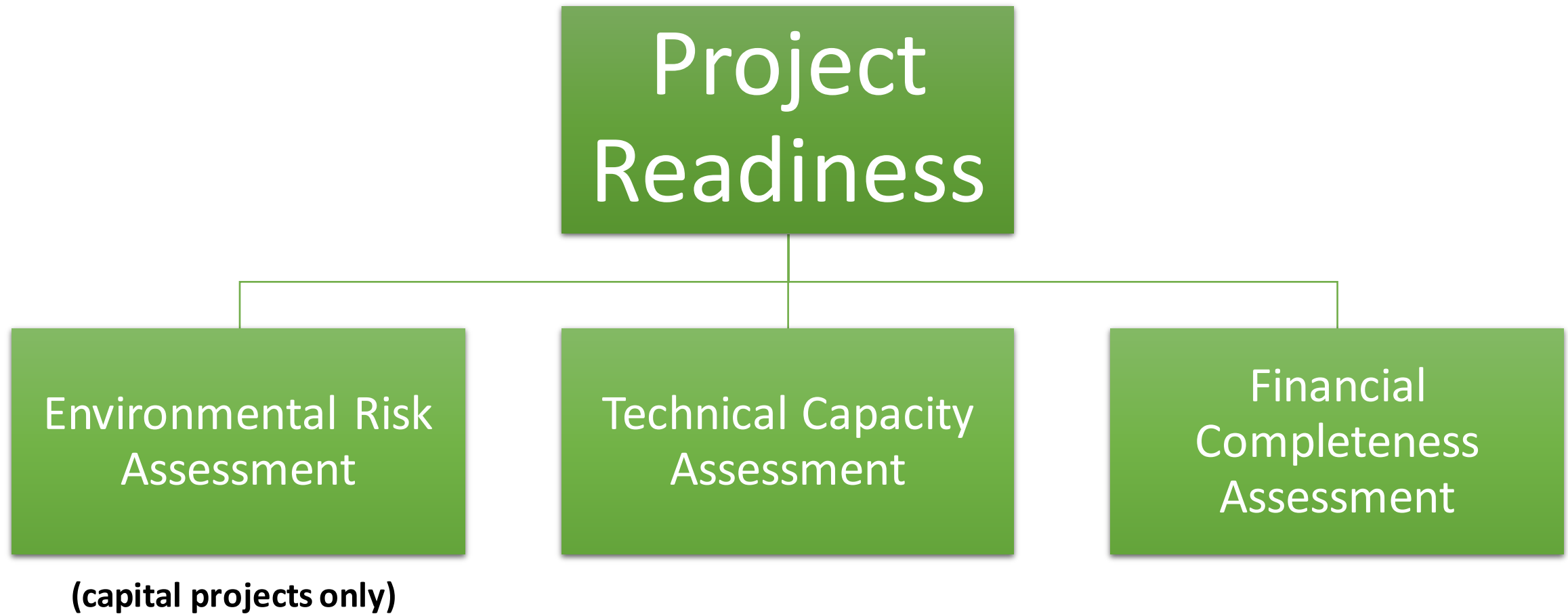
- Enhanced environment for electric vehicles to mitigate safety risks
- Low-carbon materials

## Innovative Project Delivery

- Accelerated project delivery:
  - Single contractor design-build arrangements, advanced digital construction management, accelerated bridge construction

## Innovative Financing

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





# Project Readiness: Environmental Risk Assessment

- **Project Schedule** - Identify all major project milestones
- **Required Approvals** - Provide status and timeline to complete required approvals and permits such as National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other State or local approvals
- **Right-of-Way Acquisition Plans** – Detail schedule and compensation plan
- **Meaningful Public Engagement** – Describe the public engagement
- **Risk Mitigation Plan** - Assess the greatest risks to the project and identify how you will mitigate those risks
- **Ratings:** Low, Moderate, or High Risk

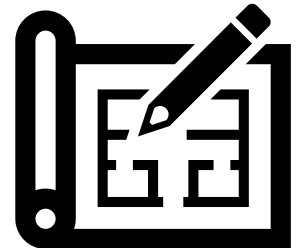






# Project Readiness: Technical Capacity Assessment

- **Project Planning** – Practice incorporating projects into long-range development plans or adding projects to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) or Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- **Project Delivery** - Experience completing projects with similar scope and scale
- **Federal Funding** – Experience implementing federally funded transportation projects
- **Federal Regulations** – Demonstrate understanding of federal contract and procurement requirements, Buy America, Americans with Disabilities Act, Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act, etc.
- **Ratings:** Certain, Somewhat Certain, Uncertain





# Project Readiness: Financial Completeness Assessment

- **Project Budget Table** – Identify funding sources by major project activity or cost classification and present those amounts in dollars and percentages. Funding sources should be grouped into three categories: (1) RAISE funding request; (2) other Federal funds; and (3) non-Federal Funds. Show that the project satisfies the statutory non-federal funds matching requirements
- **Sources, Uses, and Availability** – Document funding commitments
- **Contingency Amount** – Indicate the contingency amount
- **Level of Design** – Indicate the degree of design completion
- **Cost Estimates** – Indicate how, when, and by whom project costs were estimated
- **Non-Federal Funding Match** – Explain how the project budget satisfies the statutory non-federal funds matching requirements
- **Ratings:** Complete, Partially Complete, or Incomplete





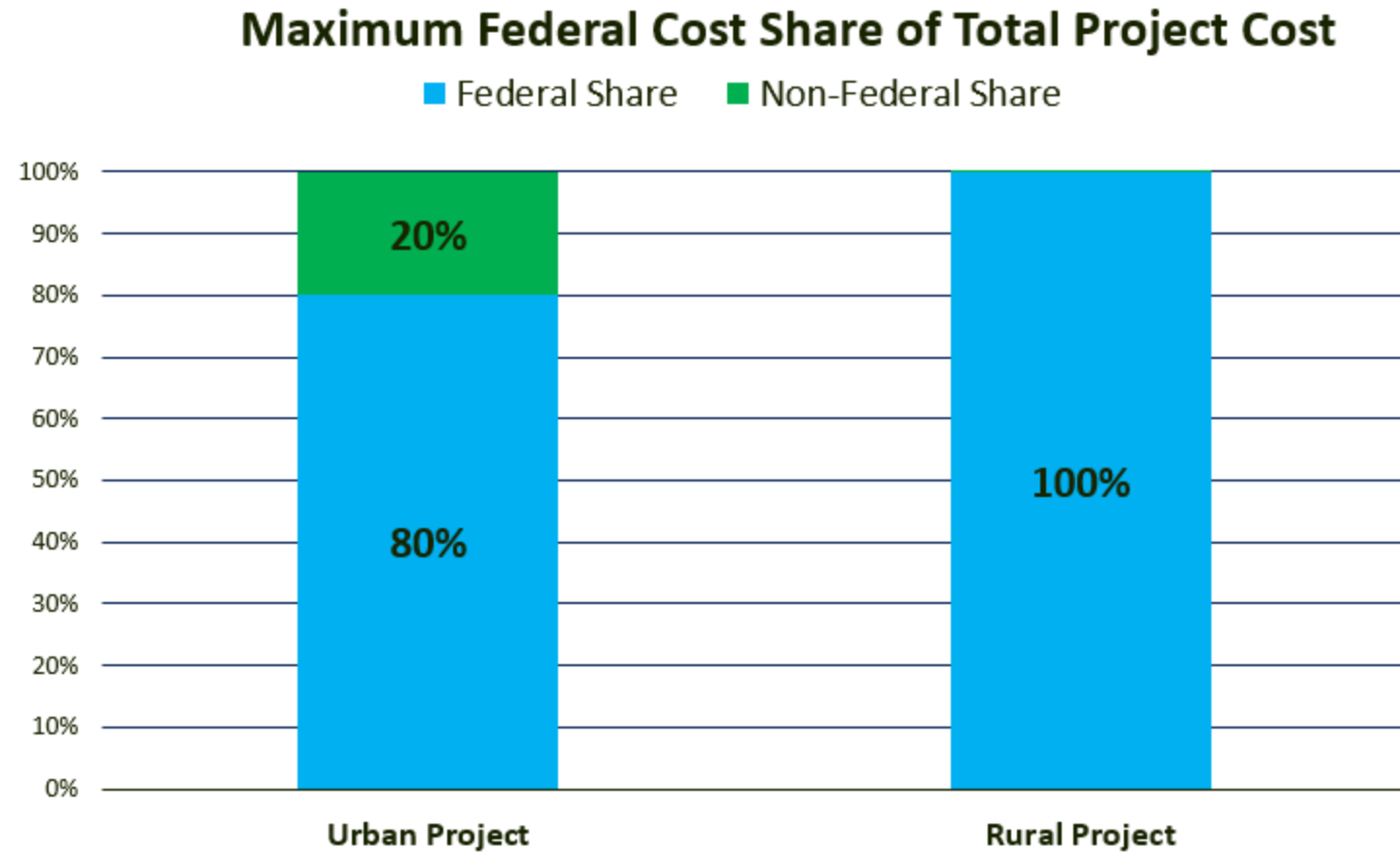
# Federal Cost Share and Non-Federal Match Requirements

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

**Projects located in the following areas are eligible to request up to 100% Federal Funding:**

- ***Rural Areas***
- ***Areas of Persistent Poverty***
- ***Historically Disadvantaged Communities***

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



See RAISE [NOFO](#) page 12



# Benefit-Cost Analysis

The purpose of the Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) is to enable the Department to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the proposed project by comparing its expected benefits to its expected costs relative to the current transportation problem.

- **BCA Narrative** - Describe the current baseline, the sources of data used to estimate the benefits of the project, document assumptions
- **BCA Calculations** - Present the calculations in detail to allow the analysis to be reproduced by Department evaluators
  - **NEW BCA spreadsheet template**
- **Ratings:** "Negative" in which costs estimated to exceed benefits or "Positive" in which benefits are estimated to exceed costs

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



# RAISE Location Designations

## Urban or Rural

- Urban projects have a Federal share limit of 80 percent
- Rural projects are eligible for greater than 80 percent Federal share

## Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities

- Areas of Persistent Poverty = APP      Historically Disadvantaged Communities = HDC
- Urban projects located in an APP or HDC are eligible for greater than 80 percent Federal share

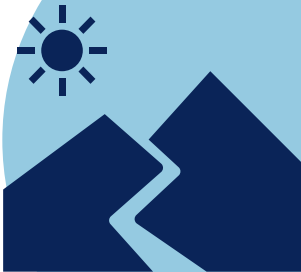


# Urban and Rural Definitions



## URBAN

Urban Area with Population  
Greater than 200,000



## Rural

Urban Area with Population  
Less than 200,000  
Outside an Urbanized Area

- Urban area boundaries and population are based on the **2020 Census**
  - **Not based on other geographic boundary** (city, county, etc.)
- List of qualifying urban areas:
  - <https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/urbanized-areas>
- Display of qualifying urban areas:
  - <https://maps.dot.gov/BTS/GrantProjectLocationVerification/>



# APP and HDC Definitions

## Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP)

- Based on **Census Tract or County** level poverty data and includes all **US territories**. See NOFO for full definition.

## Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC)

- Based on **Census Tract** indicators determined by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).
- Any Federally Recognized Tribe or Tribal entity, whether or not they have land.

- Definition of APP and HDC areas:
  - <https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-app-hdc>
- Display of APP and HDC areas:
  - <https://maps.dot.gov/BTS/GrantProjectLocationVerification/>



# RAISE Location Designations

## Tips to Remember:

- ✓ 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 urban, APP, or HDC areas are considered within that area.
- ✓ Projects that cross multiple areas with differing designations (urban and rural, APP and non-APP, or HDC and non-HDC) will have their **designation based on where the majority of costs are incurred**.
  - Page 17-18 in the NOFO shows three tables that all applicants must use to report cost by location.





# Spatial File for Application

- Spatial files will be used to verify urban/rural and APP/HDC designations. Applicants must submit one of the following files to display their project location:
  - Shapefile (compressed to a .zip file containing at least the .shp, .shx, .dbf, and .prj components of the Shapefile)
  - GeoJSON
  - KML or KMZ
- **Spatial files should include only the direct physical location of the project, and not a broad service area or area of impact.**
- Please see our January 4, 2024 webinar for an overview of how to prepare a spatial file using Google Earth and additional tips for determining location designations.





# 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?

- **FY 2024 RAISE Award Announcement by June 27, 2024**
- Attend Welcome Webinar
- Draft and Execute a Grant Agreement / Obligate Funds
- Any costs incurred prior to DOT's obligation of funds are **ineligible** for reimbursement and match for cost share requirements unless authorized by DOT in writing after the announcement of FY 2024 RAISE awards.
- This is **not** a lump sum award. This is a reimbursement program.



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



- Email future questions to us at [raisegrants@dot.gov](mailto:raisegrants@dot.gov)
- See the frequently asked questions on our [website](#) for more answers