



Rural Opportunities to
Use Transportation for
Economic Success

ROUTES



Rural Grant Applicant Toolkit for Competitive
Federal Transportation Funding

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U.S. Department of Transportation

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Section 1

TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) developed the *Rural Grant Applicant Toolkit for Competitive Federal Transportation Funding* to guide potential applicants in identifying and navigating these competitive opportunities for rural transportation projects.



USDOT developed this toolkit to provide guidance as part of the [Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success \(ROUTES\)](#) Initiative.

Although the focus of the Grant Applicant Toolkit is rural transportation projects, many of the grant funding resources contained throughout also apply more broadly to other types of transportation projects.

The *Grant Applicant Toolkit* is designed for all levels of grant applicant experience. It illustrates key applicant activities for the competitive grants process, covers USDOT and non-USDOT grant programs, and provides resources to maximize the potential for award success.

This toolkit provides resources on competitive grant funding in the following sections:



The [DOT Grants Dashboard](#) provides a searchable database of federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs. Users can filter opportunities by eligible applicants, eligible project activities, transportation type, and administering agency. Users can also search for opportunities with rural and Tribal set-asides and available match waivers.



[Federal Funding and Financing](#) explains what a federal grant is and how it differs from other common types of government funding and financing, including cooperative agreements, loans, contracts, and non-competitive opportunities such as formula grants.



[The Grant Application Process](#) describes the grant application process for USDOT and other federal agencies and provides an applicant roadmap.



[Maximizing Award Success](#) provides a broad overview of how to put together an effective grant application.



[USDOT Competitive Grant Programs](#) provides information about each of the competitive grant programs that USDOT offers, organized by USDOT's operating administrations (OAs or "modes").



[Non-USDOT Competitive Grants: Agency Descriptions and Programs](#) provides information about a selection of competitive grant programs offered by federal agencies outside of USDOT. The selected competitive grant programs were identified as relevant to rural transportation projects.



[Who Is Eligible to Apply for Competitive Grants?](#) provides an overview of the applicant categories that are eligible for federal competitive grant opportunities.



[The Critical Role of Rural Communities in the U.S. Transportation System](#) discusses the critical linkages that rural communities provide, the importance of investing in transportation, and the role that USDOT plays in supporting rural communities through grant funding.

Section 2

THE CRITICAL ROLE OF RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THE U.S. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Overview

Rural communities provide key linkages in America's transportation system, connecting travelers to economic and recreational opportunities, as well as distributing freight from distribution centers and bedrock American industries such as agriculture, mining, forestry, and manufacturing to consumer points across the U.S.

[Sixty-eight percent](#) of America's road miles are in rural areas (over 6 million miles), yet rural America faces significant safety and mobility challenges, such as high motor vehicle fatalities rates and poor transportation infrastructure condition and maintenance. Rural residents have limited transportation options; only [36 percent](#) have the choice between airline, rail, and bus transportation services. However, the demand for regionally focused, connected, accessible, and equitable public transit solutions is rising.

The U.S. system of airports, defined by the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), is a critical part of the national network of transportation systems and provides 99 percent of the U.S. population with access to air transportation. Approximately [71 percent](#) of rural Americans have access to airline service. For some rural residents, air service is the sole intercity transportation service available.

Investment in transportation provides access to recreation, community amenities, and employment, and can facilitate public safety, the movement of goods and services, transportation network efficiency, and accessibility and equity.

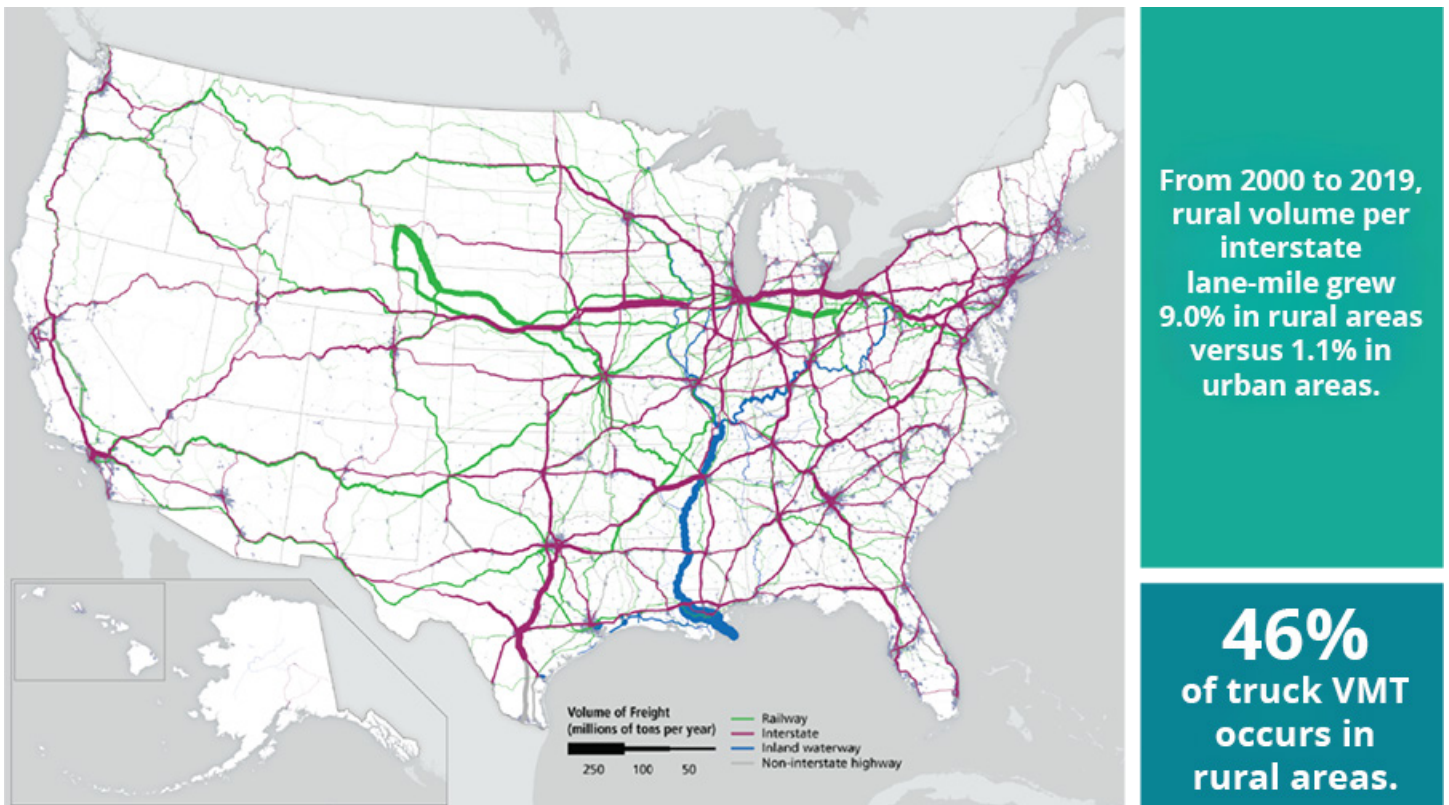


Safety

Relative to roads in more densely populated areas, rural roadways have a disproportionately high number of fatalities. While only 19 percent of Americans live in rural areas, [47 percent of motor vehicle fatalities occur on rural roads](#).

Application of a [Safe System Approach](#) targeting infrastructure, human behavior, and other safety factors may reduce serious injuries and death on rural roads. The Safe System Approach works by building and reinforcing multiple layers of protection to prevent crashes from happening and minimize the harm caused to those involved when crashes do occur.

USDOT has adopted a Safe System Approach, through the [National Roadway Safety Strategy \(NRSS\)](#), as its guiding paradigm to address roadway safety. Competitive grants can help support rural communities' implementation of the Safe System Approach, consistent with its principle of shared responsibility.



Movement of Goods and Services

Rural transportation infrastructure is important for the movement of goods and connectivity to commercial markets. A recent publication from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, [Rural Transportation Issues: Research Roadmap](#), found freight to be a major concern of rural communities as resource based economies need efficient ways to transport goods to consumer markets. Large volumes of freight either originate in rural areas or are transported through rural areas on the nation's highways, railways,

and inland waterways. Two-thirds of rail freight originates in rural areas, and nearly half of all truck vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) occur on [rural roads](#). Today's economy and the increase in size and weight of modern vehicles and equipment has led to higher demand for moving larger volumes of products across the country.

Transportation Network Efficiency

The [Bureau of Transportation Statistics](#) found that between 2000 and 2019, the volume of freight (in millions of tons) per year per interstate lane-mile grew 9 percent in rural areas versus 1.1 percent in urban areas and that 46 percent of truck vehicle miles traveled occurred in rural areas (Figure 1).

Infrastructure investments may assist suppliers in meeting this demand and maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing transportation network.

Accessibility

Reliable transportation infrastructure enhances quality of life, particularly in rural areas, by improving connectivity, mobility, and access to services like education and healthcare. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately [one third of adults in rural communities live with a disability](#), impacting their ability to travel freely to the places they want and need to go.

USDOT is taking a comprehensive approach to advance accessibility, including individuals with disabilities living in rural communities. Federal funding and financing provide opportunities to expand transportation alternatives for people with disabilities living in rural communities and for infrastructure investment in rural and Tribal communities, where roadways, sidewalks, and street crossings may need to be repaired or built.

USDOT's Role in Rural Communities

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) is a multidisciplinary organization that conducts work in all modes of transportation, such as aviation, highway, rail, and transit, with the overarching goal of delivering an efficient and reliable transportation system.

Supporting Rural Communities through Competitive Grant Funding

In support of its overall mission and strategic goals, the Department administers a large portfolio of funding and financial assistance programs to maintain and improve the nation's transportation network. The Department awards billions of dollars in competitive grants each year to fund mobility and safety improvements and innovative transportation solutions across the United States.

USDOT is committed to improving infrastructure and addressing other challenges to improve safety outcomes in rural communities, increase quality of life for rural residents, and fuel American economic competitiveness.

With this goal in mind, USDOT's Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) seeks to address disparities in rural transportation infrastructure by developing user-friendly tools and

information, aggregating USDOT resources, and providing technical assistance. Specifically, it aims to help the Department enhance competitive grant funding opportunity processes, with a focus on supporting the transportation needs of rural applicants and communities. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act codified the ROUTES initiative into law in November 2021.

Other Federal Agencies' Roles in Rural Communities

Along with USDOT, other federal agencies have made it their goal to contribute to the well-being and safety of rural communities through transportation planning and infrastructure. The [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#), [U.S. Department of Commerce \(DOC\)](#), and [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#), most prominently, offer unique competitive grants that aim to support the rural landscape through the following:

- Investing in roadways
- Addressing vehicle fleet maintenance, upgrade, and turnover
- Supporting essential community facilities
- Providing financial resources and support for rural communities, including those impacted by the coronavirus pandemic
- Collaborating to identify resources, create jobs, and develop infrastructure

In addition to these federal agencies, the Rural Partners Network (RPN) is an all-of-government program that helps rural communities find resources and funding to create jobs, build infrastructure, and support long-term economic stability on their own terms. USDOT is also a leading partner of the newly formed interagency [Thriving Communities Network](#), designed to coordinate technical assistance efforts across the whole of government, including a specific focus to support rural, Tribal, and other under-resourced communities.

Section 3



FEDERAL FUNDING AND FINANCING: GRANTS



This section of the *Grant Applicant Toolkit* defines what a federal grant is.

The following linked sections also explain how a grant differs from several other common types of Federal Government funding and financing:

- How Grants Differ from Other Federal Funding and Financing
 - Cooperative Agreements
 - Loans
 - Contracts (including public-private partnerships)
- Avoiding Government Grant Scams

What Is a Grant?

A grant is one of many different forms of financial assistance. A grant is a way the government funds projects to provide public services and stimulate the economy. In the case of USDOT grants or construction grants, federal grants provide funding that is awarded through reimbursable payments.

Grants support critical recovery initiatives, innovative research, and many other programs listed in the [Federal assistance listings](#). The intent of most grants is to fund projects that will benefit specific parts of the population or the community as a whole.

Advantages of Grant Funding

- Grant funding is generally non-repayable once awarded, and project sponsors thus avoid incurring debt or interest expenses if completed successfully.
- In some cases, grants may be a lower-risk way of obtaining assistance compared to loan financing, without potentially impacting credit ratings and assets.

What Makes a Grant “Competitive”?

Competitive grants are grants that USDOT awards to eligible applicants usually through a competitive selection process. Eligible applicants vary based on the specific grant program but may include state, Tribal and local governments, transit providers, universities, research institutions, law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations, and others.

USDOT administers its competitive grant programs through its operating administrations (OAs or “modes”). Each mode solicits applications and selects projects based on program and applicant eligibility, evaluation criteria, and Departmental or program priorities, therefore making it “competitive.”

Learn more about [USDOT Competitive Grant Programs, by Mode](#).

Competitive grants also differ from **block grants** and **categorical grants**, which are usually distributed as a “pot” to recipients for specific services (the latter type with many restrictions).

Formula grants, block grants, and categorical grants are all considered **non-competitive** funding sources. Since competitive grants are not awarded to every applicant, they are considered competitive compared to these other types of federal grants.

This toolkit focuses on competitive grant programs only but also provides resources for applicants to explore other funding sources, both within and outside of USDOT.

Grants

A grant is one of many different forms of financial assistance. A grant is a way the government funds projects to provide public services and stimulate the economy.

If completed in compliance with award terms, grants do not have to be repaid to the government.

Non-Competitive Funding Opportunities: Formula Grants

The most common non-competitive opportunities offered by federal agencies are **formula grants**, which distribute funds to every recipient in a group (such as all 50 states) to accomplish the same purpose. These may also be known as **federal-aid funds** or **formula funds**.

Formula grants are not competitive because the funding amount for each recipient is calculated based on specific parameters set by Congress, such as state population.

USDOT distributes these formula funds to states, federally recognized Tribal recipients, and transit agencies as primary recipients. When the funds are further allocated to local entities, the primary grant recipient acts as a **pass-through entity** for the local entity, who becomes a **subrecipient** for the grant.

Formula Grant Examples

Examples of formula grants include the [Formula Grants for Rural Areas](#) (Section 5311), [Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities](#) (Section 5310), and [Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program](#) (Section 5339[a]) issued by the USDOT Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

For More Information on Formula Grants, Contact Your State DOT

Contact your state DOT for more information about available highway-related formula grant funding programs and opportunities for formula grant subrecipients.

[Access a list of all state Departments of Transportation](#), provided by FHWA.

How Federal Grants Are Announced

Federal grant opportunities are announced during different phases of the grant cycle via a publicly available document that goes by one of the following names:

- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
- Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)
- Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)

Opportunities are frequently announced via [USDOT Press Releases](#), can often be found on the [Federal Register under the USDOT Notices](#), are posted on agency websites, and are made available for access on [Grants.gov](#).

Formula Grants

Formula grants distribute funds to every recipient in a group (such as all 50 states) to accomplish the same purpose.

Formula grants are not competitive because the funding amount for each recipient is calculated based on specific parameters set by Congress, such as state population.

Where Does Grant Money Come From?

Congress, the Legislative Branch of government (elected by citizens), proposes appropriations of taxpayer funds for government functions, including for federal agencies in the Executive Branch of government (like USDOT). The President (chosen through the electors of the electoral college voted by the citizens) must then sign these appropriations bills into law (effectively agreeing with Congress) before these funds are made available to agencies. Agencies then distribute funding through grant programs.

[See a full list of federal agencies that provide grant funding](#) (also called “grant-making agencies”).

In 2021, members from both major Congressional parties came together to pass the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), more commonly called the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\)](#), signed by President Biden, which provided \$1.2 trillion for transportation and infrastructure. Of that total, \$550 billion is going toward new federal investments in America’s infrastructure.

This new funding has allowed USDOT and other federal agencies to award new competitive grants for funding transportation infrastructure improvements, many of which are outlined here in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit*.

Learn More and Get Help Applying

Grants.gov

To learn more about federal grants—including grant eligibility, grant writing, and applications—please visit Grants.gov’s [Community Blog](#) and [Grants 101](#) pages.

DOT Navigator

Within USDOT, the [DOT Navigator](#) can help individuals and organizations apply for grants, and plan for and deliver transformative infrastructure projects and services.

The online site provides:

- General information for developing grant applications and understanding frequently required documents.
- Contacts to USDOT regional and field offices.
- A searchable menu of technical assistance resources available to help new and repeat grant recipients realize their communities’ vision for moving goods and people safely, efficiently, sustainably, and equitably.

Many of the Navigator resources are available in Spanish.

Applicants of all grant experience levels can find best practices and other guidance on the DOT Navigator that will help them get started.

How Grants Differ from Other Federal Funding and Financing

Cooperative Agreements vs. Grants

Both grants and cooperative agreements provide financial assistance to applicants.

Grant proposals often require explicit details about goals, projects, staffing, capacity, and completion timeframes; this allows a granting agency to approve and fund awards with minimal oversight.

Under a cooperative agreement, on the other hand, **a federal granting agency or a pass-through entity is substantially involved** in the participation, performance, or implementation of the funded project. Working side-by-side—in contrast to working in separate roles as “funder” and “awardee”—makes this kind of funding mechanism “cooperative.”

The specific ways this involvement is integrated varies by agency. These differences are explained in [31 U.S.C. 6301-6308](#).

Loans vs. Grants

In contrast with grants, **loans need to be paid back** to the government (reimbursement or repayment).

Loans provide funds in the form of up-front funds—which are helpful for urgent projects that need a lot of money quickly—through credit assistance programs that must be paid back on a future date(s) agreed upon by all involved parties, usually with a percentage of interest charged on the original loan amount.

Loans leverage federal funds to attract private and other non-federal co-investment for transportation projects. This can take the form of **secured (direct) loans**, **loan guarantees**, and **lines of credit**.

The Build America Bureau manages [USDOT’s financing programs](#) and [Build America Bonds \(BABs\)](#).

Advantages of Loan Financing

- Depending on the agreement, some loans offer more investment opportunities and allow more flexibility to obtain investment at any time.
- Loans do not have an investment ceiling, in some cases allowing borrowers to obtain as much credit as repayment abilities allow.
- Loans may provide increased opportunities to undertake larger and longer-term capital investment over time than would otherwise be possible for certain projects.

Contracts vs. Grants

While grants provide applicants with financial support to achieve certain program or policy objectives of their own concept (reviewed using a proposal system), **contracts are used to procure property or provide services directly to or for the government itself** (such as performing a public service on behalf of a government agency) and are usually awarded through a bidding system.

For example, many highway and bridge construction projects are funded with money from USDOT and are typically implemented by grant recipients. The contractors performing the work including the cement masons, carpenters, and heavy equipment operators seen working, who are not employed directly by USDOT: they are employees of a private business contracted through a city, county, Tribe, transit agency, state, or the Federal Government.

For contracting opportunities and information or instruction on government contracting, please visit [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) and [USA.gov](https://usa.gov).

Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships ("P3s" or "PPP") are a popular type of contractual agreement between a public governmental agency and a private entity that allow for greater private participation in the delivery of projects.

In transportation projects, this participation typically involves the private sector taking on additional project risks such as design, construction, finance, long-term operation, and traffic revenue.

Learn more about P3s at [FHWA's Center for Innovative Finance Support](https://www.fhwa.gov/innovation/finance).

Avoiding Government Grant Scams

Federal grant advertisement, application, and administration processes are available via the internet.

Although moving online has made applying for grants more accessible to citizens, it can also open up the process to scammers looking to collect your personal information, steal funds, or do other harm to you or your organization.

No Registration Fees for Required Systems

There is no financial fee to register for required systems, like [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov), commonly used in submitting grant applications or for federal procurements.

Watch for These Warning Signs

Be on the lookout for grants or grant personnel that:

- Charge a fee for services that are free, such as using and registering for [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov).
- Offer to fund things that federal competitive grants do not support, such as paying for applicants' credit card debt, home repairs, or other personal needs.
- Ask you or your organization to wire money, send cash, or use gift cards or cryptocurrency.
- Ask for your or your organization's personally identifiable information (PII), like a social security number or tax ID number.
- Ask for you or your organizations' payment card industry (PCI) information, like a credit card number.
- Look "official" by using or spoofing Washington, D.C., phone numbers or email addresses, or use a lookalike government email address.
- Use fake government agency names like the "Federal Grants Administration" or "Federal Sweepstakes Bureau"—neither of which exist.

Helpful Tips

Helpful tips to avoid government grant scammers are available on the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) [Consumer Advice](https://www.ftc.gov/consumer) site and illustrated guide to detecting [Government Imposters](#).

Report a Scam

If you think you may be the victim of a grant scam, help is available! Please [file a complaint with the FTC](#).

Section 4

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR COMPETITIVE GRANTS?



There are many types of organizations eligible to apply for the competitive grant opportunities outlined in the *Rural Grant Applicant Toolkit for Competitive Federal Transportation Funding*. Not all applicants will be eligible for each grant program.

There is not a single official standard for classifying categories of eligible applicants to a grant, and grants differ in how broadly or narrowly they define their requirements for eligible applicants. Therefore, to help readers more easily identify grants that their organization may be eligible for, this Toolkit groups different types of applicants into a few larger categories.

Much like how grants differ in who they define as eligible applicants, they may also differ in how they define rural applicants. All competitive grants included in this Toolkit were selected for their relevance to rural projects. However, if a grant opportunity is targeted at rural projects, applicants should verify that their project meets the specific [definition of rural](#) used by the grant program to which they are applying.

The applicant categories below are not exhaustive, nor do they contain explicit detail. Nor are the applicant categories mutually exclusive; the same applicant may fall under more than one category. Underserved communities, small or disadvantaged businesses, women, and minorities are also encouraged to apply. Please consult the program descriptions or contact the agency providing the grant to confirm eligibility.

State Governments

State governments as a category encompasses a broad array of transportation-related departments, agencies, and divisions under the authority of U.S. states.

The relevant entities may differ depending on state laws, but eligible entities may include the following:

- All 50 states (including Washington, D.C.) and state governments, including:
 - State departments of transportation (DOTs), state highway agencies, or equivalent
 - State agencies that are authorized to conduct pipeline safety inspections
 - State authorities responsible for protecting underground pipeline facilities from excavation damage
 - States that operate fixed route bus services
 - States in which a ferry service operated
 - State governments sponsored by an eligible federal land management agency or Tribe
 - State government subdivisions
 - States in areas with highways designated as National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, America's Byways®, state scenic byways, or Indian Tribe scenic byways
 - Publicly chartered authorities established by one or more states
 - Commuter authorities
- In some cases, Puerto Rico is considered a state for the purposes of eligibility
- (FAA grants only) The Secretary of the Interior for Midway Island Airport; and the Freely Associated States including the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau
- Federal land management agencies, alone or applying jointly with a state(s)

Local Governments

Local governments encompass far more than city and county administrations. Federal granting agencies consider applicants in any of the following categories to be under the umbrella of "local governments": any unit of government within a state, including a county, borough, municipality, city, town, township, parish, local public authority (e.g., a public housing agency), special district, school district, intrastate district, councils of governments, and any other agency or instrumentality of a multi-, regional, or intra-state or local government.

Specific local entities may include the following:

- Local governments that operate public transportation services
- Local governments when applying through a state DOT as subrecipients

- Local government subdivisions (e.g., towns, villages, counties, parishes, townships)
- Local authorities responsible for protecting underground pipeline facilities from excavation damage (including municipalities)
- Local governments sponsored by an eligible federal land management agency or Tribe
- Municipality- or community-owned utilities (not including for-profit entities)
- Political subdivisions of a state (i.e., cities, towns, counties, special districts, and similar units of local government under state law)

U.S. Territories

U.S. territories as a category encompasses transportation-related departments, agencies, and divisions under the authority of U.S. territories. Eligible entities may include the following:

- The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
- American Samoa
- Guam
- The U.S. Virgin Islands

Some, but not all, grants will identify whether U.S. territories are a unique eligible applicant separate from U.S. states. This applicant category will be used whenever a grant program specifically identifies U.S. territories as eligible; however, the absence of this category does not guarantee that U.S. territories are ineligible.

Refer to the details of the specific funding opportunity to determine whether U.S. territories are considered separate from U.S. states for the purposes of eligibility. Puerto Rico, in particular, may sometimes be considered a state for eligibility purposes.

Federally Recognized Tribes and Affiliated Groups

The federally funded competitive grant opportunities provided in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit* are predominately available to [federally recognized Tribes](#). Therefore, opportunities in the Toolkit should be interpreted as limited to only federally recognized Tribes unless otherwise specified.

Program eligibility was recently expanded to include opportunities specifically available to Alaska Native communities and Pueblo-owned airport facilities.

Eligible applicants may include the following:

- Federally recognized Tribes
- Tribal governments or consortia of Tribal governments
- Tribal organizations
- Federally Recognized Alaska Native Villages/Tribes
- Pueblo-owning public-use airports in the National Plan of Integrated Airport System (NPIAS)
- Tribal groups or communities as identified by the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) as providing service in a rural area with a population of less than 50,000
- Tribes in areas with highways designated as National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, America's Byways, state scenic byways, or Indian Tribe scenic byways

Planning and Project Organizations

Some federally funded competitive grant opportunities assist with transportation planning activities.

Regional transportation planning organizations are generally responsible for coordinating with the State and local governments in non-metropolitan areas to manage the transportation planning process.

Similarly, **metropolitan planning organizations** (MPOs) are required for urban areas with populations over 50,000, but a variety of other organizations may also engage in transportation planning activities.

Eligible applicants may include the following:

- MPOs, including those that serve a Transportation Management Area (TMA), which is an urbanized area with a population over 200,000, as determined by the U.S. Census.
- Regional transportation planning organizations (RTPO) or regional transportation commissions (RTC)
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations (does not apply to 501(c)(4) organizations)
- Entities with land use planning authority in transit capital project corridors
- Owner(s) of the eligible facility proposed in the project for which all necessary feasibility studies and other planning activities have been completed; applications must be submitted jointly between owners and partners
- Project sponsor of an eligible transit capital project

Transportation Providers and Operators

Some federally funded competitive grant opportunities provide funding to the organizations responsible for the oversight and operation of transportation systems.

Eligible applicants may include the following:

- Operators of transportation (such as employee shuttle services, airport connector services, or university transportation systems)
- Public entities engaged in providing public transportation passenger ferry service
- Public transportation systems and transit agencies
- Entities operating ferry services that serve the state
- Entity with land use planning authority in eligible transit capital project corridor
- Port authorities, port authority commissions, or port authority subdivisions/agents under existing authorities
- Public toll agencies or authorities
- [5307 \(Urban Area Formula Grants\)-designated](#) or direct recipients
- [5310 \(Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Formula Grants\)-designated](#) or direct recipients
- [5311 \(Rural Formula Grants\)-designated](#) or direct recipients States or Indian Tribes
- Public entities designated as recipients which allocate funds to fixed route bus operators
- Nonprofit organizations designated as recipients which allocate funds to fixed route bus operators
- Local communities or groups of individuals
- Operating companies of shipyard facilities
- Amtrak (when acting on its own behalf or in cooperation with one or more states)
- Nonprofit labor organizations representing:
 - A class or craft of employees of rail carriers or rail carrier contractors
 - Aircraft pilots, aircraft users, aircraft owners, or aircraft pilots
 - Regional public-private partnerships
 - Industry

Academic and Research Institutions

Some federally funded competitive grant opportunities provide funding to academic and research institutions. These grants are intended to support research projects with a transportation focus.

Eligible applicants may include the following:

- Accredited institutions of higher education and U.S. nonprofit institutions of higher education (including 2-year institutions that meet requirements) as defined in [20 U.S.C. 1001](#)
- Nonprofit institutions of higher education located either in the U.S. or a U.S. territory or possession
- Public (state-owned) or private colleges and universities
- University Transportation Centers (UTC)

- Public or private high schools or secondary schools (as defined in [20 U.S.C. 7801](#))
- Independent school districts
- Minority Serving Institutions ([2020 list](#))
- The Transportation Research Board (TRB) together with any entity with which it contracts or performs cooperatively in the development of rail-related research
- Education-focused 501(c)(3) entities, such as independent museums, observatories, research laboratories, hospitals, research consortia, or professional or scientific educational associations or societies
- Eligible higher education institutions in partnership with other eligible recipients

Job Training Applicants

Some federally funded competitive grant opportunities provide funding to organizations that furnish transportation-related training and education. These are distinct from academic institutions in that they provide job training to the *operators* of transportation systems (for example, trucking schools and flight schools).

Eligible applicants may include the following:

- Trainers within state, local, and Tribal governments, post-secondary educational institutions, and nonprofit organizations
- Nonprofit organizations capable of providing direct or web-based training
- Flight schools providing flight training ([14 CFR part 61](#)) or holding a pilot school certificate ([14 CFR part 141](#))
- Trucking schools
- Nonprofit labor organizations representing:
 - A class or craft of employees of rail carriers or rail carrier contractors
 - Aircraft pilots, aircraft users, aircraft owners, or aircraft pilots
 - Regional public-private partnerships
 - Industry

Nonprofit Applicants

Nonprofit applicants may include any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that is not organized primarily for profit; uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operations of the organization; and is exempt from taxation under [26 U.S.C. 501](#). Many grants limit eligible applicants to those under 501(c)(3), that is organizations operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest.

Read grant descriptions carefully to make sure a particular nonprofit organization meets the eligibility requirements.

Nonprofit is not a mutually exclusive category. Applicants may also fall under other categories of eligible applicants. For example, nonprofit designated labor organizations may also be eligible as transportation providers and operators, or nonprofit institutions of higher education may also be eligible as academic and research institutions.

The types of nonprofit organizations that may be eligible depend on the purpose of each grant. Some broad examples of nonprofit applicants that may be eligible for grants include the following:

- Labor organizations
- Professional or scientific educational associations or societies
- Research laboratories
- Hospitals
- Job training organizations
- Community organizations
- Transportation providers

Private-Sector Applicants

Private-sector organizations are critical to sustaining transportation growth: both physically through infrastructure development and financially through their economic performance and job creation.

Because the competitive grants in the Toolkit are primarily awarded to public- and nonprofit-sector applicants, many private entities are encouraged (or, in some cases, required) to apply jointly with another eligible entity, most often a state government.

Read grant descriptions carefully for instances in which a private-sector partner can receive only a certain percentage of the grant funding (e.g., 40 percent).

In lieu of grants, contracting opportunities are available at [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov), which assists private vendors in conducting additional business with the Federal Government.

Examples of private-sector applicants that may be eligible for grants include the following:

- Small businesses
- Private organizations designated as recipients that allocate funds to fixed route bus operators
- Air carriers (as defined in [49 U.S.C. 40102](#))
- Rail carrier or rail equipment manufacturer in partnership with at least one of the entities described above
- Operating companies of shipyard facilities
- Certain pipeline operators

- Operators of transportation (such as employee shuttle services, airport connector services, or university transportation systems)
- Private entities working on an eligible transit capital project with a public sponsor
- Class II railroads or Class III railroads or a holding company of Class II or Class III railroads

A Note on Partnerships



Partnerships are expected and encouraged in order to leverage the skills and abilities of multiple sectors at once, especially in rural areas with scarce organizational resources.

But grants awarded to partnerships may have requirements that must “flow down” to subrecipients as they “pass through” one organization to get to another, similar to the relationship between prime and subcontractors.

Examples of partnerships that may be eligible to apply for grants include the following:

- Consortia, defined as associations of two or more public, private, or nonprofit organizations in any combination with the objective of participating in a common activity or pooling their resources for achieving a common goal
- Multistate groups (more than one state applying together)
- Interstate compacts (contractual arrangements made between two or more states in which the parties agree on a specific issue or task)
- Multijurisdictional groups (more than one governed area, such as a city and a county, applying together)
- Multistate or multijurisdictional groups of entities that are separately eligible.
- Transportation focus coalitions

Eligible entities may request guidance from federal program administrators or an agency in their state with jurisdiction over the grant program’s focus, also known as a subject matter expert (SME). Working alongside their interagency cohort, the U.S. Department of Transportation will provide program support to rural grant applicants and their communities.



THE COMPETITIVE GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

Overview

Grants are one way of providing federal financial assistance, or reallocated resources, to eligible participants. Federal grants give recipients the opportunity to fund planning, research, infrastructure, and other project ideas.

Potential recipients must apply for competitive grants, and projects are selected by USDOT based on eligibility, evaluation criteria, and agency priorities.

This section describes the grant application process for USDOT and other federal agencies on the following linked pages:

Getting Started

Getting Started (below, on page) offers information on the first steps in the grant process of finding opportunities, registering in a required federal funding portal, and accessing resources.

Grant Applicant Roadmap

The Grant Applicant Roadmap helps applicants navigate general activities during the USDOT competitive grant funding process, through the pre-award, award, and post-award stages of funding.

Other Federal Agencies' Grant Funding Process

[Other Federal Agencies' Grant Funding Process](#) provides links to the funding opportunity pages of federal agencies outside of USDOT that offer federal rural transportation grants.

Getting Started

Finding Opportunities

All federal opportunities can be found through [Grants.gov](#), the centralized resource for federal grant funding. The [USDOT Navigator](#) may also be used to identify applicable resources.

Getting a Unique Entity Identifier

In order to apply for and receive federal grants, applicants must first receive a Unique Entity Identifier (formerly a DUNS Number) by registering with the System for Award Management (SAM) through [SAM.gov](#), a portal for creating federal contracts and receiving federal funds.

There is **no registration fee**, but **this process takes time**. It can take many weeks to be finalized so potential applicants are encouraged to start this process as soon as possible.

Accessing Resources

For more information on the grants funding process and supporting resources, see:

- [Grants 101](#) (Grants.gov)
- [Grant Lifecycle Timeline](#) (Grants.gov)
- [How to Navigate Grants.gov to Submit Applications](#) (USDOT)

Competitive Grants

Competitive grants are grants that USDOT awards to eligible applicants through a competitive selection process. Eligible applicants vary based on the specific grant program but may include state and local governments, transit providers, universities, research institutions, law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations, and others.

Grant Applicant Roadmap

USDOT Competitive Grant Funding Process

The competitive grant funding process begins with Congressional legislation and concludes with the closeout of the awarded project.

The grant lifecycle is broken down into three stages:

- Pre-Award
- Award
- Post-Award

Use the numbered steps below to navigate general applicant activities during the USDOT competitive grant funding process. USDOT activities are also included for reference. Note that specific steps may differ by program.

Stage 1: Pre-Award

- **Step 1: Applicant registers** on [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#) well in advance of application. Registration may take some period of time to complete; it is not immediate.
- **Step 2: Applicant searches** for [USDOT grants](#) on Grants.gov. All USDOT competitive grants must be posted here with a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) outlining program eligibility criteria and requirements.



Grant Applicant Roadmap

PRE-AWARD

- 1** **Applicant** registers on [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#) in advance* of application. *registration is not immediate
- 2** **Applicant** searches for [USDOT grants](#) on Grants.gov where all USDOT grants are posted with a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) outlining program eligibility criteria and requirements.
- 3** **Applicant** applies for funding for a project that meets program requirements before the end of the application window.
- 4** **USDOT** reviews submitted applications and selects programs to award funding based on the stated criteria in the NOFO.

AWARD

- 5** **USDOT** notifies all applicants of the final award decisions, including application not selected for award.
Those not select may receive a letter of encouragement to apply in future application opportunities or seek alternative grant opportunities.
- 6** **USDOT** and **Applicant** negotiate and sign a grant project agreement and **USDOT** disburses funds.
- 7** **Grantee** implements the awarded project and adheres to all necessary conditions of the award.

POST-AWARD

- 8** **USDOT** monitors the project's progress and provides technical assistance and customer support to **grantees** as needed.
- 9** **Grantee** reports progress to **USDOT** throughout the project lifecycle through applicable Project Progress Reports (PPRs) and Federal Financial Reports (SF-425s) as required by **USDOT**.
- 10** **Grantee** completes all closeout requirements and submits final financial and technical reports.

- **Step 3: Applicant applies** for funding for a project that meets program requirements. Your application must be submitted before the end of the application window.
- **Step 4: USDOT reviews** all submitted applications and selects projects to award funding. Applications are evaluated based on the criteria stated in the NOFO.

Stage 2: Award

- **Step 5: USDOT notifies** all applicants of the final award decisions, generally by posting information about selected projects on USDOT's website, including any applications not selected for award. Those applicants not selected may receive a debrief or a letter and can be encouraged to apply to future application opportunities or seek alternative grant opportunities.
- **Step 6: Recipient signs agreement.** If selected, the applicant confirms, or updates project SOW and details of project based on awarded grant, and signs a grant or project agreement with USDOT.

Stage 3: Post-Award

- **Step 7: USDOT disburses** funds. USDOT may disburse funds as an advance payment or as reimbursement for eligible expenses occurred. Reimbursement may require the recipient to provide invoices.
- **Step 8: Recipient implements** the awarded project and adheres to all necessary conditions of the award, including reimbursement requests with proper supporting documentation.
- **Step 9: USDOT monitors the project's progress** and provides technical assistance and customer support to grant recipients as needed.
- **Step 10: Recipient reports** progress to USDOT throughout the project lifecycle through applicable Project Progress Reports (PPRs) and Federal Financial Reports (SF-425s) as required by USDOT.
- **Step 11: Recipient completes** all closeout requirements and submits final financial and technical reports. If applicable, recipient provides project performance reporting to USDOT.
- **Step 12: USDOT closes out** the project and ends the agreement between the government and the recipient.

Other Federal Agencies' Grant Funding Process

While each federal agency's grant opportunities can be found through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), their individual requirements may vary. Links to the individual agencies are provided below.

Please note that the **agencies listed** are the main sources of federal rural transportation grants but may not be the only agencies providing grant opportunities.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Learn about the [USDA grants process](#).

U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC)

Learn about [DOC grants and contract opportunities](#).

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Learn about finding and applying for [HUD grants](#).

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

Learn about the [DOL's grants](#).

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Learn about the [VA's grant funding process](#).

U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)

View [EDA funding opportunities](#) and [EDA's partnership planning webinar for grantees](#).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Access [EPA's grants overview](#) and [EPA's grants management training](#).



MAXIMIZING AWARD SUCCESS



Overview

This section provides applicants with a broad overview of how to put together an effective grant application.

As discussed in The Grant Application Process, all USDOT grants must be posted on Grants.gov with a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) outlining program eligibility, criteria, and requirements. Competitive grants have a competitive selection process, so in order to maximize its chances of being successfully selected, an applicant should make sure its application meets the eligibility requirements, addresses the specified evaluation criteria, and aligns with the priorities of the grant-giving agency.

This section contains advice that broadly applies to most competitive grants but cannot address all specific questions you might have as you start putting together your grant application. If you have questions about a specific funding opportunity that is not addressed here, contact the program point of contact listed in the NOFO.

This section is divided into the following topics:

Navigating Grant Program Applications explains the structure of a NOFO and where these crucial pieces of information can be found.

USDOT Grant Evaluation Criteria gives some examples of the types of criteria by which applications are typically evaluated.

USDOT Grant Application Considerations describes some of the unique considerations specific to USDOT grants.

Navigating Federal Grant Applications

Finding Funding Opportunities

All federal competitive grant opportunities must be posted through Grants.gov. Get tips and guidance on [How to Navigate Grants.gov to Submit Applications](#).

Understanding Program NOFOs

Searching for funding opportunities on Grants.gov will allow you to find open grants that meet the criteria you specify. Once a funding opportunity has been found, viewing it will provide a summary of the grant. A more detailed NOFO can be found within the tab containing related documents. NOFO structure is standardized.

A NOFO must include the following, as per [2 CFR 200.204](#):

- Summary Information
 - Federal Awarding Agency Name
 - Funding Opportunity Title
 - Announcement Type
 - Funding Opportunity Number
 - Assistance Listings Number(s)
 - Key Dates
- Availability Period
- Description of the Funding Opportunity
 - Full programmatic description of the funding opportunity
 - Federal award information: including sufficient information to help an applicant make an informed deci-

9 Tips for Writing a Grant Application

Some more general guidance for writing a grant application includes:

1. Make sure you are eligible before applying.
2. Submit all required completed attachments with your application.
3. Write a compelling story while adhering to formatting and section requirements.
4. Research any applicable local, state, and federal regulations that would be required if awarded, such as internal controls, procurement, National Environmental Policy Act, and/or property acquisition requirements.
5. Communicate impact.
6. Demonstrate commitment and accountability including scheduling with deadlines that may be defined under law.
7. Prepare for potential solicitations.
8. Demonstrate stewardship of federal funds.
9. Make sure the project can be obligated and delivered in the specified timeframe.

sion about whether to submit an application (For example, total funding amount, anticipated number and size of awards, and period of performance)

- Specific eligibility information: including any factors or priorities that affect an applicant's or its application's eligibility for selection (May also include cost-sharing requirements)
- Application Preparation and Submission Information: including the applicable submission dates and time (May also include format requirements, funding restrictions)
- Application Review Information: including the criteria and process to be used to evaluate applications (May also include anticipated award announcement dates)
- Federal Award Administration Information (For example, award notice and reporting requirements)
- Applicable terms and conditions for resulting awards

Grants.gov has training resources and videos to learn more about the details of navigating their website and application systems: [Applicant Training | GRANTS.GOV](#).

In addition to the below general guidance for writing a grant application, see [USDOT Grant Evaluation Criteria](#) and [USDOT Grant Application Considerations](#) for information on the requirements specific to USDOT grants and [Other Federal Agencies' Grant Funding Process](#) for links to resources to learn more about requirements for grants outside of USDOT.

Verify Eligibility

Before beginning an application, make sure you review the eligibility information from the NOFO to verify that your organization meets the requirements to be considered for the grant. Similarly, make sure the project you are hoping to fund falls within the requirements of the program.

In addition, make sure to review the match requirements to ensure that if there is a cost-sharing requirement, your organization can meet it. Specific eligibility requirements vary by grant.

Submit All Required Materials

It is important to double check that all the required materials and/or attachments are included as part of your application package.

Write a Compelling Narrative

Some grant programs will require the applicant to submit a narrative with their application. This is a written description of why there is a funding need, how the proposed project will address this need, and what positive impact the project is expected to have on the community.

If the NOFO specifies contents and format for the narrative, verify that you have followed the formatting specified in these requirements and included all the required information.

Describe how your proposed project will support the priorities of the grant program as stated in the NOFO, as well as the priorities of the agency and Department funding the grant.

You may wish to include letters of support from the community to help demonstrate the need for the project.

Comply with Regulations

Compliance with local, state, and federal regulations throughout the application process and after award is required and critically important to project award and implementation. For example, certain programs require environmental reviews, special permits, performance and status reports, and other standards in accordance with federal policies.

Applicants will also need to comply with OMB's Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards as provided by [2 CFR part 200](#). Carefully review requirements and clearly articulate compliance in this regard.

Communicate Impact

Some programs may require an applicant to articulate the potential impact of the proposed project. Consider quantifying statements as much as possible or providing [data points](#) specific to the project area and/or community.

Demonstrate Commitment and Accountability

Some programs may require an applicant to demonstrate that it can collect, house, analyze, and return any needed data on the project throughout its lifecycle. Consider setting the project up for success by clearly outlining processes and procedures for tracking and monitoring project activities throughout the lifecycle. This may include performance measures, financial plans, or staffing models.

Prepare for Potential Solicitations

Depending on the program, applicants may have to solicit a Request for Proposal for partners and providers as a step in the application process. Consider program-specific criteria in determining the most cost-effective bidder. Contact your designated program point of contact for more information on solicitations.

Demonstrate Stewardship of Federal Funds

Demonstrating the capacity and internal controls to effectively manage awarded funds may bolster an applicant's appearance as a strong candidate for federal investment. Applicants may need to demonstrate their organization has sound procurement policies and procedures in place, some of which will need to be in adherence with federal acquisition requirements.

The following activities may help applicants to draft better applications:

- Engage with subject matter experts to provide any technical or nuanced inputs and information (e.g., financial, engineering) to the application.
- Attend any financial management trainings provided for new potential applicants.
- Connect with state and local resources as needed to assist with financial planning, permitting, and other approvals.
- Identify and reach out to a program's point of contact with specific questions as they arise.

These activities are not considered by DOT as part of their grant selection process but can help applicants draft more competitive applications.

Ensure Feasibility of Project Delivery

Each operating administration with responsibility for obligating USDOT grant funds has its own regulations, policies, and procedures that may apply to projects selected. For example, projects may require applicants to complete environmental review and permitting, right-of-way acquisition, public engagement, and/or feasibility studies.

It is important that applicants ensure that their project can be obligated and delivered in the specified timeframe, as set forth in the NOFO and in consideration of any statutory deadlines.

USDOT Grant Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation criteria give insight into what a grant program is looking for when making a decision to award funds. Clear and specific evaluation criteria are provided to help applicants understand if their project would be a good fit for a particular grant program and assist program managers in making informed decisions about high-value projects based on that funding cycle's criteria.

This section outlines common evaluation criteria used by USDOT competitive grant programs, including the following:

- Project Planning and Scope
- Staffing
- Past Performance
- Project Performance and Execution
- Funding Indicators
- Project Impact

USDOT TIP

The key to an “attractive” application is crafting an effective, compelling, and comprehensive story that demonstrates funding need, commitment, and impact.

However, each program is unique, and program-specific evaluation criteria should be reviewed prior to application. For the exact evaluation criteria used by a particular program in its application review process, refer to the program's current Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) or visit the program's webpage.

The [DOT Navigator](#) also contains links to a number of resources for applicants; see specifically the sections [Grant Application Resources](#) and the [DOT Competitive Grants Dashboard](#).

Project Planning and Scope

Project planning and scope criteria evaluate whether the applicant has the ability to complete the project they have proposed. The program evaluates whether there is a need for a project; whether the project can be implemented; whether the organization submitting the application has the financial, legal, and technical capacity and expertise to implement the project; and whether the proposed plan can effectively address this need.

Project Need

Some programs assess the gaps that can be addressed through federal funding of a project by reviewing applicants' detailed needs assessments, including quantitative figures and qualitative narrative.

Before an applicant can explain how their proposed project will make a positive impact, they must first demonstrate that there is some need for improvement that must be addressed. This project need should directly align with the goals of the grant program, as described in its NOFO. This project need should also tie into the other grant evaluation criteria and USDOT goals.

For example, a project need could be a demonstrated safety risk, an inequity in transportation access, or a poor state of repair for important transportation infrastructure.

Applicants should also take care that the rest of their application ties back to the need indicated, describing how the proposed project is able to effectively address this need and how the project impact will close the identified gap(s).

Project Readiness and Feasibility

Indicators of Project Readiness and Feasibility

Some programs may use a variety of indicators to assess project readiness and the ability to begin and complete construction, if applicable.

Applicants can demonstrate project readiness and feasibility through:

- Readiness to proceed into construction (if applicable),
- Capacity to carry out the proposed project (e.g., legal, financial, and technical capacity),
- Consistency with USDOT planning guidance and regulations,
- Project activity work plan, schedule, and process,
- Project implementation strategy, and
- Signed and submitted certifications and permits (including environmental approvals).

Other indicators may include the clear articulation of a project's goals and objectives for the funding, or the extent to which the applicant's project plan clearly establishes resources, milestones, and estimated project costs that align with the project goals and objectives.

Obligation

As applicants develop their applications, there are some guidelines on project readiness and obligation timing they should consider.

Obligation occurs when a selected applicant enters a written, project-specific agreement with the Department and is generally after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements, including transportation planning and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. Applicants should be aware that they must complete NEPA review first before they can proceed to final design and acquire real property.

It is important that the application package include sufficient evidence of **project milestones** (including planning, NEPA, and permitting milestones) achieved and those still remaining, as well as **financial capacity** and **commitment** in order to support project readiness.

Furthermore, applicants may be required to sign a **grant agreement** before incurring costs intended to count as federal participation or match on a project.

Timeline for Obligating Funds

Applicants should be aware that each operating administration with the responsibility for obligating the USDOT grant funds has its own **regulations, policies, and procedures** that may apply to projects selected. In some cases, an operating administration may obligate a portion of the overall award amount for the purpose of completing eligible pre-construction activities, delaying the balance of the obligation of funds until all pre-construction requirements have been completed. Generally, USDOT may not obligate for construction until all planning and environmental approvals are obtained and right-of-way acquisitions and final design are complete.

If a project is selected for a USDOT grant and the grant funding will be used to complete these activities, USDOT may obligate the funding in phases, in accordance with the laws, regulations, and policies of the operating administration that is administering the grant.

Applicants should demonstrate that they can reasonably expect to complete certain activities and pre-construction so that all grant funds are obligated in advance of any **statutory deadline**. The applicant should be able to demonstrate that any unexpected delays will not put USDOT grant funds at risk of expiring before they can be fully obligated.

With regard to the permitting approach, the applicant should provide adequate information for USDOT to assess whether the remaining **environmental review and permitting** milestones can be achieved through this approach in order for obligation within the statutory timeframe.

Applicants that are unfamiliar with, or have questions about, the requirements that a proposed project or projects may need to complete in order for the operating administration to obligate grant funds should reach out to the point of contact provided in the grant's NOFO with questions.

Staffing

Some programs may assess the degree to which an application includes a project management structure that would successfully oversee the execution of the proposed project. This could include organizational capacity as well as the expertise or qualifications of key personnel.

Past Performance

Some programs take into consideration an applicant's experience and previous record of project delivery and/or grant management. Applicants who can demonstrate experience and past performance in project and/or grant management may have a higher likelihood of demonstrating that they can be effective stewards of federal funds.

Training

Depending on the program and project type, the inclusion and components of training plans may be considered in the application evaluation process. This could include demonstration of existing capacity to train state and local personnel, train personnel in rural areas, establish curricula to support safety standards, provide comprehensive needs assessments, or articulate prior training experience.

Technical Merit

Depending on the program and project type, an applicant's technical merit may be assessed. Factors could include alignment with program requirements and objectives, likelihood of project implementation success, scalability, or commitment to evaluate the effectiveness of proposed activities.

Project Performance and Execution

Project performance and execution criteria evaluate whether the applicant has an effective plan for tracking the progress of their project as they implement it and for reporting back progress to the granting agency as required.

Performance Goals and Measures

Some programs evaluate the comprehensiveness and completeness of the information provided in the application—for example, the listing of clear project goals, objectives, and outputs. Other indicators may include measurable project outcomes, time horizons for calculating measures, bases for comparison, or before and after customer satisfaction determinations, as applicable.

Monitoring and Oversight

Some programs may require general oversight or participation in regular project tracking and monitoring activities. Application evaluators may look for an application to include a detailed project evaluation and monitoring plan and/or strategy to determine if the applicant is able to follow through with the planned activities.

Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Some programs may evaluate the identification of anticipated risks and potential mitigation strategies. Applicants may choose to include a risk assessment in their application and highlight mitigation planning in their proposed project activities.

Funding Indicators

Funding indicator criteria evaluate whether the proposed project is financially necessary and viable.

Funding Need

Some programs may consider a project's funding need in the evaluation process, weighing the availability of funding with an applicant's ability to fund the project in a timely manner using other funding sources.

Cost and Funding Availability

Some programs may consider the following:

- Total project budget
- Cost estimates directly supporting the requested funding amount

- Ability to provide matching local funds to meet the proposed federal share requirement
- Life-cycle costs and state of good repair
- Strength of the project budget
- Demonstration of financial investment from both non-federal and private sources
- Local financial commitment

Note that most USDOT grants funds are done through **reimbursable payments**—not as an up-front lump payment.

Applicants are advised to refer to the program NOFO to make sure their planned expenditures count as “eligible costs.” The NOFO may state what specific activities are eligible or not eligible for reimbursement as part of the grant award.

Applicants may be required to sign a grant agreement before incurring eligible costs intended to count as federal participation or match on a project.

Benefit-Cost Analysis

Some programs may use [benefit-cost analysis](#) (BCA) to assess potential investments. BCA is a systematic process for identifying, quantifying, and comparing expected benefits and costs of a potential project. A BCA provides estimates of the anticipated benefits that are expected to accrue from a project over a specified period and compares them to the anticipated costs of the project.

Benefits quantify the economic value of outcomes that are reasonably expected to result from the implementation of a project on both users of the facility and non-users, valued in monetary terms.

Costs would include both the resources required to develop the project and the costs of maintaining the new or improved asset over time. These costs are usually measured by their market values, as they are directly incurred by developers and owners of transportation assets.

Benefits may include:

- Safety benefits
- Travel time savings
- Operational cost savings
- Emissions reduction benefits
- Facility and vehicle amenity benefits
- Health benefits

Costs may include:

- Capital expenditures
- Operating and maintenance expenditures
- Residual value and remaining service life
- Innovative technologies and techniques

USDOT expects applicants to provide analyses that are consistent with the methodology outlined in the [Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs](#) as part of their application seeking competitive federal support, where required. Additionally, USDOT encourages applicants to incorporate this methodology into any relevant planning activities, regardless of whether the project sponsor seeks federal funding.

Resources:

- USDOT's [Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs](#)
- DOT Navigator [Benefit-Cost Analysis overview](#)

Project Impact

The final set of criteria evaluate how and to what extent the project will benefit the public. There are a wide variety of ways in which a project can make a positive impact, and many of these cannot be captured effectively by the financial benefits covered in the benefit-cost analysis.

Rural Community and/or Tribal Government Focus

Some programs clearly specify evaluation criteria related to rural communities and/or Tribal nations. This could include highlighting a project's impact on these communities—for example, enhancing the state of good repair, driving economic competitiveness, improving quality of life, supporting broadband deployment or other innovations, expanding E-911 access, or training and engaging with emergency responders in rural areas.

Project Benefits and Impact

Some programs may assess an application based on the benefits associated with or attributed to the proposed project, which could include serving a variety of communities (e.g., urban, suburban, and rural environments) or transportation markets (e.g., freight, personal mobility, and public transportation).

This could also include factors such as enhancing safety, encouraging investments in other near-term transportation projects, enhancing service coverage, fostering economic development (particularly in rural communities and for disadvantaged populations), showing consideration for the environment, demonstrating cost effectiveness, or reducing inequality.

Partnership and Coordination

Some programs may assess partnerships and coordination discussed or proposed in a project application. This could include the following:

- Jointly submitting an application with multiple entities
- Proposing multiple funding sources for the non-federal cost share to demonstrate broad participation by affected stakeholders
- Highlighting public-private partnerships
- Coordinating with local and regional entities, including written statements of intent from potential customers
- Demonstrating outreach and inputs captured from communities and industry groups

Innovation and Technology

Some programs may evaluate an application on its ability to promote technology and innovation. This could include demonstrating technology readiness, illustrating project pilots, accelerating the implementation and delivery of new technologies, or using innovative approaches to improve safety and expedite project delivery.

Some programs may also assess how a project includes or enables innovation through the accelerated deployment of innovative technology or expanded access to broadband.

USDOT Grant Application Considerations

In addition to the [USDOT Grant Evaluation Criteria](#), there are a few other considerations that applicants should keep in mind as they develop an application for USDOT competitive grants. Apart from the evaluation criteria, they are also expected to abide by relevant regulations and acquire appropriate approvals for their projects, including the following:

- Applicants may need to coordinate with **state Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and regional metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs)**.
- Applications may be subject to **environmental reviews and approvals**.
- **Technical assistance** from USDOT may be available to applicants.
- Applications are required to comply with **civil rights** and **nondiscrimination** requirements.
- Applications may have requirements for **right-of-way** and **design** activities.

State and Local Coordination

To access most federal transportation funds, state and regional planning authorities are required to develop transportation plans describing their upcoming transportation projects over a specific timeframe.

For example, states are required to develop State Planning and Research Programs (SP&R) and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). MPOs are required to develop Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWP) each year outlining planning studies and evaluations, as well as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Projects included in the TIP must also be in the STIP.

There may be other transportation-related plans that an applicant needs to align their application with the requirements of a given grant; the applicant should defer to the NOFO for specific requirements.

Applicants should coordinate with the relevant planning authority to make sure the project is included in the appropriate plan, if this is required before federal funding can be obligated. This could include coordination with the appropriate state department of transportation, metropolitan planning organization, regional transportation planning organization, public transportation authority, transit agency, or other state or local planning entity.

Relationships with state entities, in particular, can be critically important to application submission, success, and post-award project completion.

For example, some USDOT competitive grant programs require applications to be submitted by the appropriate state department of transportation rather than local or other state agencies. Failure to coordinate with the state DOT before submitting the application may cause the program to view the applicant as higher risk.

Applicant eligibility and submission information can be found on the program website and/or NOFO.

Resources:

- USDOT contacts for each state and territory: [DOT State Contacts](#)
- The [State Department of Transportation website](#) for each U.S. state.
- Connect with your regional [metropolitan planning organization \(MPO\)](#)
- [Connect with your state's Regional Transportation Planning Organization](#)

Environmental Reviews and Approvals

As applicable to the program and project type, applicants should consider how to articulate project readiness in an application, particularly as it relates to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other environmental requirements. NEPA requires federal agencies to disclose the environmental impacts of a project and any measures that might avoid, minimize, or mitigate those impacts, and make this information available to decisionmakers and the public before final funding decisions are made.

Prior to the submission of applications, USDOT staff or state delegates will work with applicants to determine the appropriate level of NEPA review for the project and to identify any other environmental reviews, permits, or approvals that may be required for the project. The applicant should also provide any environmental studies or other documentation that describes in detail known project impacts and possible mitigation for these impacts. Applicants, USDOT, and all other potentially involved federal and state resources and/or regulatory agencies and Tribes will then collaborate to develop an environmental review and permitting schedule that identifies target dates for all required environmental actions. All required approvals and permits must be obtained prior to the initiation of project construction activities. The resources at the end of this section include additional guidance on meeting USDOT's environmental requirements.

Applicants should demonstrate, through their project schedule, application narrative, and supporting documents, that they can reasonably expect to obtain any necessary environmental approvals and permits without delaying the anticipated start of construction of a new infrastructure project. The applicant is also responsible for creating and providing a budget for the completion of all required reviews and permits. If applicable, the budget should demonstrate how costs to complete the required environmental approvals factor into the overall cost to complete the project.

Resources:

- A [USDOT presentation on NEPA](#) from a National Association of Development Organizations conference
- FTA's [Environmental Programs](#), including Environmental Resource Information
- An [Environmental Review Toolkit](#) published by FHWA
- Additional guidance on [project readiness](#) from the recent RAISE grants
- Right-of-way acquisition should be coordinated with USDOT and may vary by mode:
 - FTA's guidance and information on [Real Property Acquisition](#)
 - FHWA's guidance and information on [Real Estate](#)

Technical Assistance

The Department provides varying levels of technical assistance during the application process, by operating administration and specific program. Program-specific technical assistance resources can be found on the program websites in the USDOT Modes and Resources section of this document. A searchable database of all USDOT technical assistance programs can be found on the DOT Navigator.

Civil Rights and Nondiscrimination

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects people from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Similarly, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. And the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 prohibits discrimination against people on the basis of age in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires certain vehicles, facilities and services to be accessible to individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs.

After receiving a federal award, the applicant and/or recipient contractually agrees to provide equal access to the programs or activities being funded and should be ready to demonstrate compliance with civil rights obligations and nondiscrimination laws.

Resources:

- DOT's Title VI requirements for grantees: [49 CFR Part 21](#)
- Additional information on the [Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)
- Additional information on the [Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)
- [Additional information on the Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

Right-of-Way and Design

The obligation of DOT grant funds for construction or other activities by an operating administration may be contingent on completion of right-of-way acquisition and final design approval, and/or additional approvals contingent on completion of right-of-way acquisition and design.

All federally funded projects that involve the acquisition of real property and the relocation of persons displaced by the acquisition of such property are required to comply with the Uniform Act ([40 U.S.C. 4601 et seq](#); [49 CFR Part 24](#)). For Title 23 programs, a right-of-way certification is required ([23 CFR Part 710](#)).

Therefore, applicants should demonstrate, through their project schedule, that they reasonably expect to have right-of-way acquisition and design completed, as well as any other required approvals or pre-construction steps. Applicants should submit a reasonable schedule of when right-of-way (if applicable), design, and any other required approvals are expected to be obtained.

Applicants may expect that DOT may obligate funds for right-of-way acquisition and design completion only after planning and environmental approvals are obtained.

Section 7

USDOT COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAMS, BY MODE



The pages that follow provide information about each of the competitive grant programs that USDOT offers, organized by USDOT's operating administrations (OAs or "modes").

Descriptions of these grant programs are also available in the [DOT Grants Dashboard](#).



Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

Agency Description

The [Federal Aviation Administration's](#) mission is to provide the safest, most efficient aerospace system in the world. The FAA provides funding opportunities that assist participants in meeting the administration's nationwide goals.

The agency strives to reach the next level of safety by enforcing standards for the

manufacture, operation, certification, and maintenance of aircraft and the ratings and certifications of their pilots, carriers, and hazardous cargo. The FAA's regulation of airport towers, air route traffic control centers, and flight service stations—aligned with rules for air traffic, the use of airspace, and security controls meeting national defense requirements—keep the nation's air travel systems efficient and effective.

Other responsibilities include the construction or installation of visual and electronic aids to air navigation, the promotion of aviation safety internationally, and more recently, the regulation and licensure of public and private U.S. commercial space transportation industry launches and facilities.

The FAA seeks to uphold environmental responsibility, global leadership, equity, safety, excellence, integrity, people, and innovation in all of its awarding programs.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of FAA grant programs.

For more information, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Aircraft Pilots Workforce Development Program

The Aircraft Pilots Workforce Development Program supports pilot and aeronautics career training curricula development, recruitment, and deployment.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Aircraft Pilots Workforce Development Program](#) page.

Airport Improvement Program

The Airport Improvement Program (AIP) supports planning and capital projects for more than 3,300 public-use and rural airports.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Airport Improvement Program](#) page.

Airport Terminals Program

The Airport Terminals Program (ATP) supports terminal modernization and restoration projects at non-hub and small, medium, and large hub airports.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Airport Terminals Program](#) page.

Aviation Maintenance Technical Workers Workforce Development Program

The Aviation Maintenance Technical Workers Workforce Development Program funds new and existing educational programs and program support for careers in aviation maintenance.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Aviation Maintenance Technical Workers Workforce Development Program](#) page.

Aviation Research Grants Program

The Aviation Research Grants Program funds independent research on a range of topics related to the long-term growth of civil aviation.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Aviation Research Grants Program](#) page.

FAA Contract Tower Program

The Federal Contract Tower (FCT) Program funds construction, installation, and equipment for new and existing FAA-certified Airport Traffic Control Towers (ATCT) and related facilities.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Federal Contract Tower](#) page.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Agency Description

The [Federal Highway Administration](#) (FHWA) seeks to deliver a world-class system that advances safe, efficient, equitable, and sustainable mobility choices for all while strengthening the Nation's economy. Through financial and technical assistance to state, Tribal, and local governments, industry, and citizens, the Federal Highway Administration is responsible for ensuring that America's roads and highways continue to be among the safest and most technologically sound in the world.

Grant Programs

The FHWA has a variety of competitive grant programs used to fund various types of transportation projects and activities. The [FHWA competitive grant program website](#) details these programs broadly organized by applicant type.

Highlights of some of these FHWA competitive grants that are applicable to rural roadway owners include the programs that are described briefly below.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration Program

The Accelerated Innovation Deployment (AID) Demonstration program supports the implementation of proven operational and material innovations in surface transportation.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration](#) page.

Advanced Transportation Technologies and Innovative Mobility Deployment

The Advanced Transportation Technologies and Innovative Mobility Deployment (ATTIMD) program supports the implementation and operation of various mobility-focused transportation technologies.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Advanced Transportation Technologies and Innovative Mobility Deployment](#) page.

Bridge Investment Program

The Bridge Investment Program (BIP) funds planning and construction projects that replace or protect aging and at-risk bridges.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Bridge Investment Program](#) page.

Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Competitive Grant Program

The Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Grant Program funds the strategic deployment of publicly-accessible electric vehicle charging infrastructure and other alternative fueling infrastructure.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant Program](#) page.

Commuter Authority Rail Safety Improvement Grants

The Commuter Authority Rail Safety Improvement (CARSI) program funds projects which will eliminate hazards and improve safety at public railway-highway crossings.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Commuter Authority Rail Safety Improvement](#) page.

National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant program

The National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant funds projects that replace, remove, and/or repair culverts or weirs.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant](#) page.

National Scenic Byways Program

The National Scenic Byways Program funds roadside safety and accessibility improvements on the program's 184 designated roads in the U.S.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [National Scenic Byways Program](#) page.

Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects Program

The Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) funds the construction and rehabilitation of nationally significant projects within, adjacent to, or accessing Federal and Tribal lands.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects](#) page.

Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation Grants

The Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Grant program supports planning and construction projects which improve surface transportation and community resilience to natural disasters.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [PROTECT Grant](#) page.

Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities

The Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities program supports projects which test, evaluate, and deploy advancements that reduce port-related truck emissions.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities](#) page.

Tribal High Priority Projects Program

The Tribal High Priority Projects Program (THPP) provides funding for construction expenses not covered by the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) formula grant or Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads (ERFO).

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Tribal High Priority Projects Program](#) page.

Tribal Transportation Facility Bridge Program

The Tribal Transportation Facility Bridge Program (TTFBP) will fund improvements to the condition, safety, efficiency, and reliability of bridges on the National Bridge Inventory.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Tribal Transportation Facility Bridge Program](#) page.

Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund

The Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund (TTPSF) supports the development and modernization of data-driven transportation safety plan objectives.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund](#) page.

Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program

The Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program supports construction projects which improve habitat connectivity and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program](#) page.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)

Agency Description

The [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration](#)'s mission is to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving vehicles used for commerce, including large trucks and buses. FMCSA supports programs and grants that improve commercial vehicle and driver safety, safety information systems and commercial motor vehicle technologies, and safety awareness in motor carrier operations, including vehicle equipment and operating standards.



FMCSA partners with industry, safety advocates, and state and local governments to keep the nation's roadways safe and improve Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) safety through the strong enforcement of regulations, developments in research and technology, and educational opportunities for high-risk carriers and Commercial Driver's License (CDL) holders.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of FMCSA grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant

opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

You can also visit the [FMCSA Grants Resource Center](#) for more information.

Commercial Driver's License Program Implementation (CDLPI)

The Commercial Driver's License Program Implementation (CDLPI) awards funding to state commercial driver's license (CDL) programs to achieve compliance with federal licensing and programmatic standards.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Commercial Driver's License Program Implementation](#) page.

Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Operator Safety Training Grant

The Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Operator Safety Training Program supports enhanced CMV (non-CDL) operator safety training, prioritizing current and former members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [CMV Operator Safety Training Grant](#) page.

High Priority Commercial Motor Vehicle (HP-CMV) Program

The HP-CMV Program funds program enhancements and innovations that will positively impact commercial motor vehicle (CMV) safety.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [High Priority Commercial Motor Vehicle Program](#) page.

High Priority Innovative Technology Deployment (HP-ITD) Program

The HP-ITD Program supports the deployment of commercial motor vehicle (CMV) and driver safety technology, including the implementation and maintenance of intelligent transportation system applications or CVIEW.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [High Priority Innovative Technology Deployment Program](#) page.

High Priority Safety Enforcement Training (HP-SET) Program

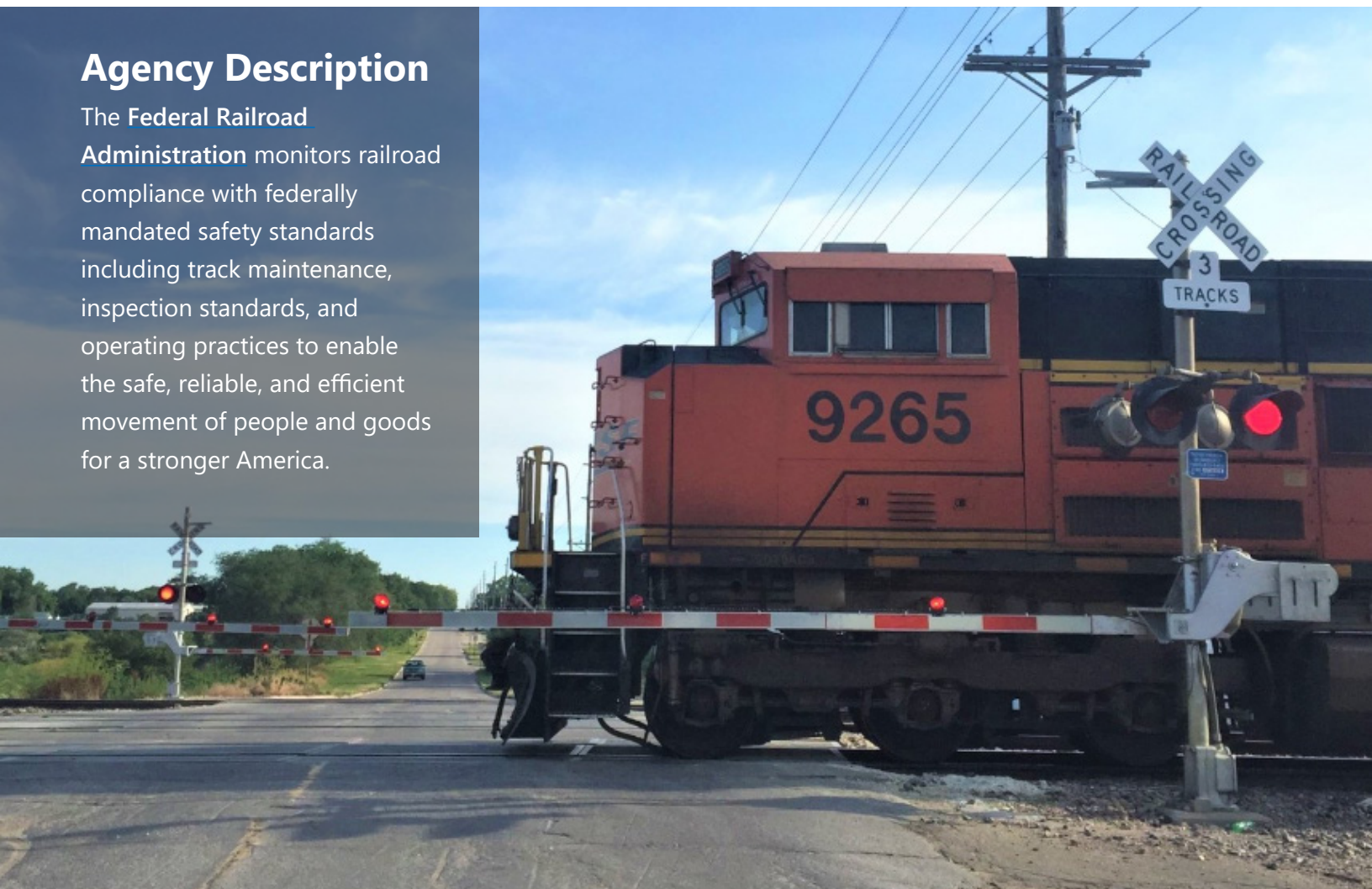
The HP-SET Program funds the development and delivery of motor carrier safety training to non-Federal employees enforcing Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR), Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR), or the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance's (CVSA) Out-of-Service criteria.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [High Priority Safety Enforcement Training](#) page.

Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)

Agency Description

The [Federal Railroad Administration](#) monitors railroad compliance with federally mandated safety standards including track maintenance, inspection standards, and operating practices to enable the safe, reliable, and efficient movement of people and goods for a stronger America.



FRA supports programs that promote safe and environmentally sound rail transportation, including research and development testing to evaluate projects in support of its safety mission and to enhance the railroad system as a national transportation resource.

From its safety inspectors to its public education campaign staff advising of the danger of highway-rail grade crossings and rail trespassing, the operating administration adheres to its principles of integrity, safety, engagement, innovation, transparency, accountability, and excellence.

FRA Grant Applicant Resources

FRA encourages prospective applicants of competitive grant programs to utilize the resources on its website. The [FRA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\) page](#) provides:

- Information and direct links to existing and future grant programs
- Access to webinars related to FRA's programs
- Information on other elements of grant funding (e.g., NEPA)
- FRA's new [discretionary grant program tool](#), which provides stakeholders with a consolidated listing of FRA competitive grant programs and their respective eligibilities, by both project sponsor and activity type

FRA also provides additional non-grant funding opportunities to support planning activities, such as the Corridor Identification and Development Program; see [Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs](#) for more details.

Lastly, prospective applicants can also find a link to subscribe to [FRA's mailing list](#) to learn about future notice of funding opportunities (NOFOs) and webinars as they become available.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of FRA grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grant Program

The Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grant Program funds projects that improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of intercity passenger rail, freight rail, and rail infrastructure.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements Program](#) page.

Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program

The Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program supports capital projects that reduce the state of good repair backlog, improve performance, and begin or maintain public- or privately-operated intercity passenger rail service.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program](#) page.

Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Grant Program

The Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Grant Program funds safety-focused highway-rail or pathway-rail grade improvement, relocation, and installation projects.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program](#) page.

Restoration and Enhancement Grant Program

The Restoration and Enhancement Grant Program supports projects and programs that begin, maintain, improve, or restore intercity passenger rail services.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Restoration and Enhancement Grant Program](#) page.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

Agency Description

The [Federal Transit Administration](#) supports programs and activities that plan, build, and operate transit systems.

FTA makes public transit on buses, trains, and even ferryboats safer through program implementation and oversight, policy development, hazard investigation, data collection, risk analysis, and information sharing through resources such as the National Transit Database (NTD).

FTA invests in supporting existing public transit services and expanding services into rural areas, providing financial, technical, and planning assistance that helps local and regional transportation systems create safe and technologically advanced transit that is equity- and environmentally conscious.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of FTA grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP)

The All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP) provides funds for projects to make inaccessible legacy rail stations meet or exceed the construction standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [All Stations Accessibility Program](#) page.

Areas of Persistent Poverty Program

The Areas of Persistent Poverty (AoPP) Program supports planning, engineering, technical studies, or financial planning in project development to better serve areas of persistent poverty.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Areas of Persistent Poverty Program](#) page.

Capital Investment Grants

The Capital Investment Grants (CIG) program supports fixed guideway investments, including new or expanded rapid, commuter, and light rail, streetcars, bus rapid transit or corridor-based busing, and ferries.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Capital Investment Grants](#) page.

Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program

The Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot (or "Low-No Ferry") program provides funds to existing Section 5307 and Section 5311 recipients for the purchase of electric or low-emitting ferry vessels which use alternative fuels or on-board energy storage systems and related charging infrastructure.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program](#) page.

Ferry Service for Rural Communities

The Ferry Service for Rural Communities (or "Rural Ferry") program provides funding for capital, operating, and planning expenses for basic ferry service to eligible rural areas.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program](#) page.

Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program

The Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Grant Program funds capital projects which replace, rehabilitate, or modify bus facilities, as well as the purchase of buses, vans, and related equipment.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Grant Program](#) page.

Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility (ICAM) Grants

The Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility (ICAM) grant program funds innovative capital projects that improve the coordination of non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) services and mobility management purchases.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants](#) page.

Low- or No-Emission Grant Program

The Low- or No-Emission Grant Program supports the purchasing or leasing of low- or no-emission buses, their power source(s), and related equipment, as well as the construction, leasing, or rehabilitation of new or existing public transportation facilities for low- or no-emission buses.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Low- or No-Emission Grant Program](#) page.

Mobility, Access, & Transportation Insecurity: Creating Links to Opportunity Demonstration Research Program

The Mobility, Access, & Transportation Insecurity: Creating Links to Opportunity Demonstration Research Program funds the planning, deployment, and impact evaluation of strategies which mitigate transportation insecurity among communities.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Mobility, Access, & Transportation Insecurity](#) page.

Passenger Ferry Grant Program

The Passenger Ferry Grant Program (49 U.S.C. 5307[h]) provides competitive funding for projects that support passenger ferry systems in urbanized areas and those urban areas that also have service to rural areas.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Passenger Ferry Grant Program](#) page.

Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning

The Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning funds the integration of land use and transportation planning, economic development, accessibility, and multimodal connectivity, and mixed-use development in new capital projects.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development Planning](#) page.

Public Transportation Emergency Relief Program

The Public Transportation Emergency Relief Program provides funds to existing Section 5307 and Section 5311 recipients for disaster response and projects that protect, repair or replace equipment and facilities that may suffer or have suffered serious damage as a result of an emergency, including natural disasters.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Public Transportation Emergency Relief Program](#) page.

Public Transportation on Indian Reservations (Tribal Transit) Program

The Tribal Transit Program (TTP) funds capital investment, operating expenses, and public transportation planning projects that enhance safety, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from public transportation, improve equity, and connect communities.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Tribal Transit Program](#) page.

Rail Vehicle Replacement Program

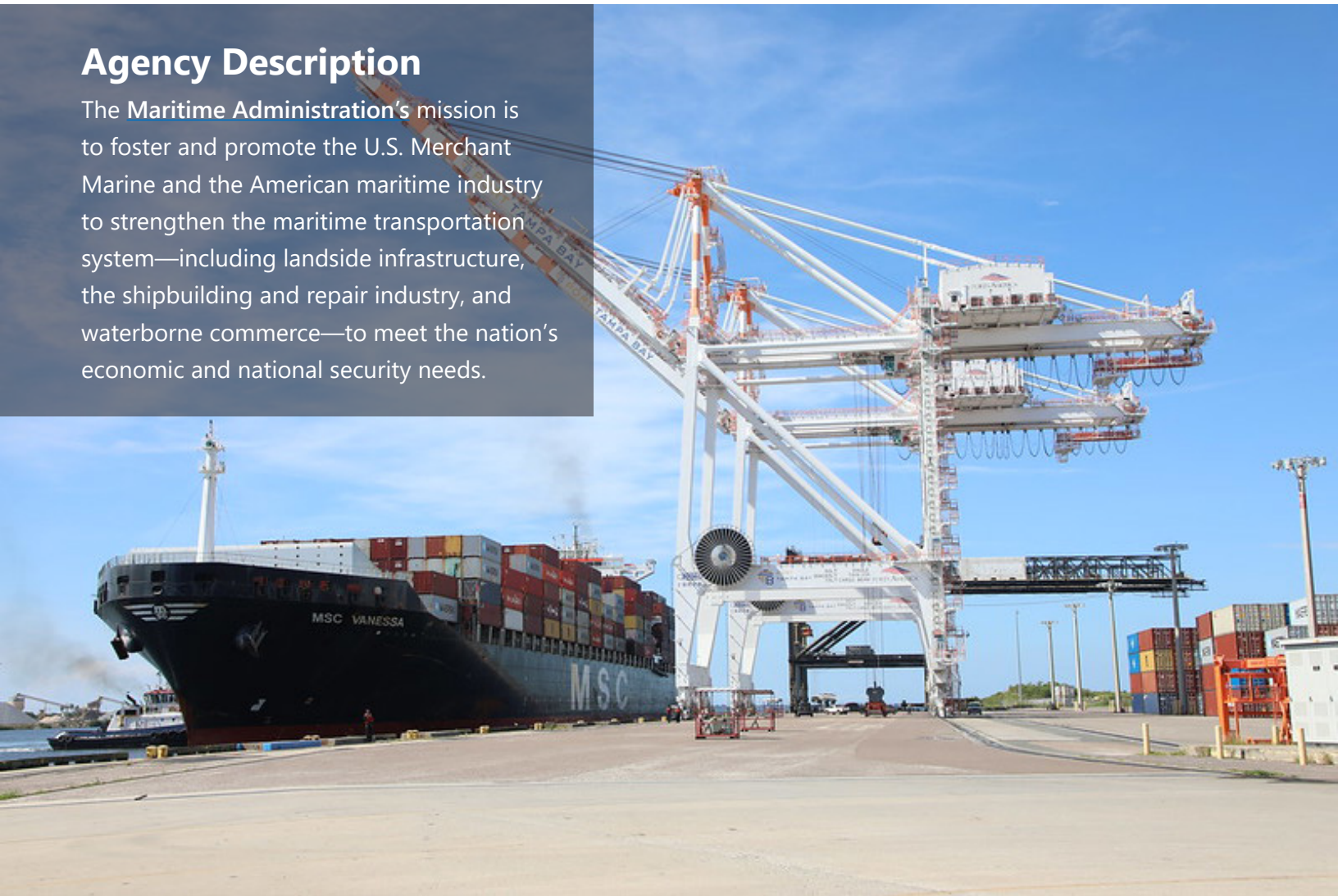
Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the Rail Vehicle Replacement Program provides funding for competitive rail vehicle replacement, specifically to replace rail rolling stock that is past its useful life.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Rail Vehicle Replacement Program](#) page.

Maritime Administration (MARAD)

Agency Description

The **Maritime Administration's** mission is to foster and promote the U.S. Merchant Marine and the American maritime industry to strengthen the maritime transportation system—including landside infrastructure, the shipbuilding and repair industry, and waterborne commerce—to meet the nation's economic and national security needs.



MARAD supports programs that make ports and intermodal water and land transportation systems safe, efficient, and effective.

The agency prioritizes seamless integration with other methods of transportation, support for supply chains and freight, and preparedness—such as maintaining reserve shipping capacity in time of national emergency.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of MARAD grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) Grants

The Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) funds projects that improve the safety, efficiency, or reliability of loading and unloading goods and operating around or within ports, as well as environmental and emissions mitigation measures.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Port Infrastructure Development Program](#) page.

Small Shipyard Grants

The Small Shipyards Grant Program funds capital projects fostering more efficient and quality ship construction, repair, and reconfiguration, as well as worker training in shipbuilding and associated industries.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Small Shipyards Grant Program](#) page.

United States Marine Highway Program

The United States Marine Highway Program supports previously designated Marine Highway Projects to develop and expand documented vessels or port and landside infrastructure, strengthening American supply chains.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [United States Marine Highway Program](#) page.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)



Agency Description

The [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#)'s mission is to save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce economic costs due to road traffic crashes through education, research, safety standards, and enforcement.

NHTSA works with State Highway Safety Offices (SHSOs) to implement data-driven highway safety programs that address the individual needs of each jurisdiction, including rural regions of the country. Following careful analysis of their highway safety and other data, SHSOs in these jurisdictions identify communities that can benefit from the funding available under these programs, which can be used to address occupant protection, impaired driving, speed, and other issues relevant to rural communities.

Grant Programs

NHTSA does not have any competitive grants that fit the criteria for inclusion in the Grant Applicant Toolkit. NHTSA provides funding opportunities for SHSOs to implement highway safety programs through non-competitive formula grants:

The State and Community Safety Grants Program (Section 402)

The State and Community Safety Grants Program (Section 402) supports multifaceted state highway safety programs designed to reduce traffic crashes and the resulting deaths and injuries.

The National Priority Safety Programs (Section 405)

The National Priority Safety Programs (Section 405) allow the Agency to make grant awards to states in the areas of occupant protection, state traffic safety information system improvements, impaired driving countermeasures (including ignition interlock and 24-7 sobriety program), distracted driving, motorcyclist safety, nonmotorized safety, officer safety, and the prevention of roadside deaths.

These formula grants are distributed based on statutory parameters based on population and road miles (the “formula”) to 57 jurisdictions, including the 50 states, the District of Columbia (D.C.), Puerto Rico, four U.S. Territories or “insular areas” (i.e., the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

To learn more about the difference between competitive and formula grants, please visit the Grant Applicant Toolkit section [Federal Funding and Financing](#).

Section 402 and Section 405 funding is awarded only to SHSOs responsible for planning and implementing the programs, based on formulas as authorized by Congress. These offices are responsible for making awards to sub-recipients, the amounts of which vary by state.

For help identifying your SHSO, visit the [NHTSA “About” page](#) and scroll to the bottom to type in the name of your state.

For more information on NHTSA’s highway safety grants, please visit [Highway Safety Grant Programs](#) or the [NHTSA Resources Guide](#).

Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST)

Agency Description

The [Office of the Secretary of Transportation](#) oversees the formulation of national transportation policy and promotes intermodal transportation through programs and grants which support the USDOT's mission to deliver the world's leading transportation system, serving the American people and economy through the safe, efficient, sustainable, and equitable movement of people and goods.

Other responsibilities include negotiating and implementing international transportation agreements; assuring the fitness of U.S. airlines; enforcing airline consumer protection regulations; issuing regulations to prevent alcohol and illegal drug misuse in transportation systems; and preparing transportation legislation.

OST champions the priorities shared by all the USDOT's modes: to make our transportation system safer for all people, to grow an inclusive and sustainable economy, to reduce inequalities across our transportation systems and the communities they affect, to tackle the climate crisis by ensuring that transportation plays a central role in the solution, to design for the future, and to strengthen our world class organization.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of OST grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant Program

The Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant Program supports freight and highway projects of national or regional significance to improve multimodal safety, efficiency, and reliability.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Grant Program](#) page.

National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) Program

The National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) Program provides funding for large, complex projects that are difficult to fund by other means and likely to generate national or regional economic, mobility, or safety benefits.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [National Infrastructure Project Assistance Program](#) page.

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)

The Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (or RAISE) program funds capital investments in surface transportation that will have a significant local or regional impact, especially in areas of persistent poverty or historically disadvantaged, overburdened, or underserved communities.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity](#) page.

Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program

The Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program (RCP) funds planning and construction to remove, retrofit, or mitigate transportation facilities such as highways and rail lines that create mobility, access, or economic barriers to community connectivity.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program](#) page.

Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program

The Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program aims to advance transportation infrastructure projects in rural and Tribal communities by providing early planning financial, technical, and legal advisory services and direct grants to eligible project sponsors.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program](#) page.

Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (Rural)

The Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (Rural) supports projects to improve and expand the surface transportation infrastructure in rural areas, improving connectivity, safety, and economic vitality.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program](#) page.

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program

The Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Program funds a range of initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on multimodal roads and streets involving all roadway users.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Safe Streets and Roads for All Program](#) page.

Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP)

The Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP) provides funding to help small communities address air service and airfare issues in the form of grants that are disbursed on a reimbursable basis.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Small Community Air Service Development Program](#) page.

Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grants

The Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) program supports public sector agencies to conduct planning and prototyping demonstration projects focused on advanced smart community technologies and systems.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation](#) page.

Thriving Communities Program (TCP)

The Thriving Communities Program (TCP) facilitates the planning and development of transportation and community revitalization activities and provides tools to ensure that under-resourced communities can access the historic funding provided in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

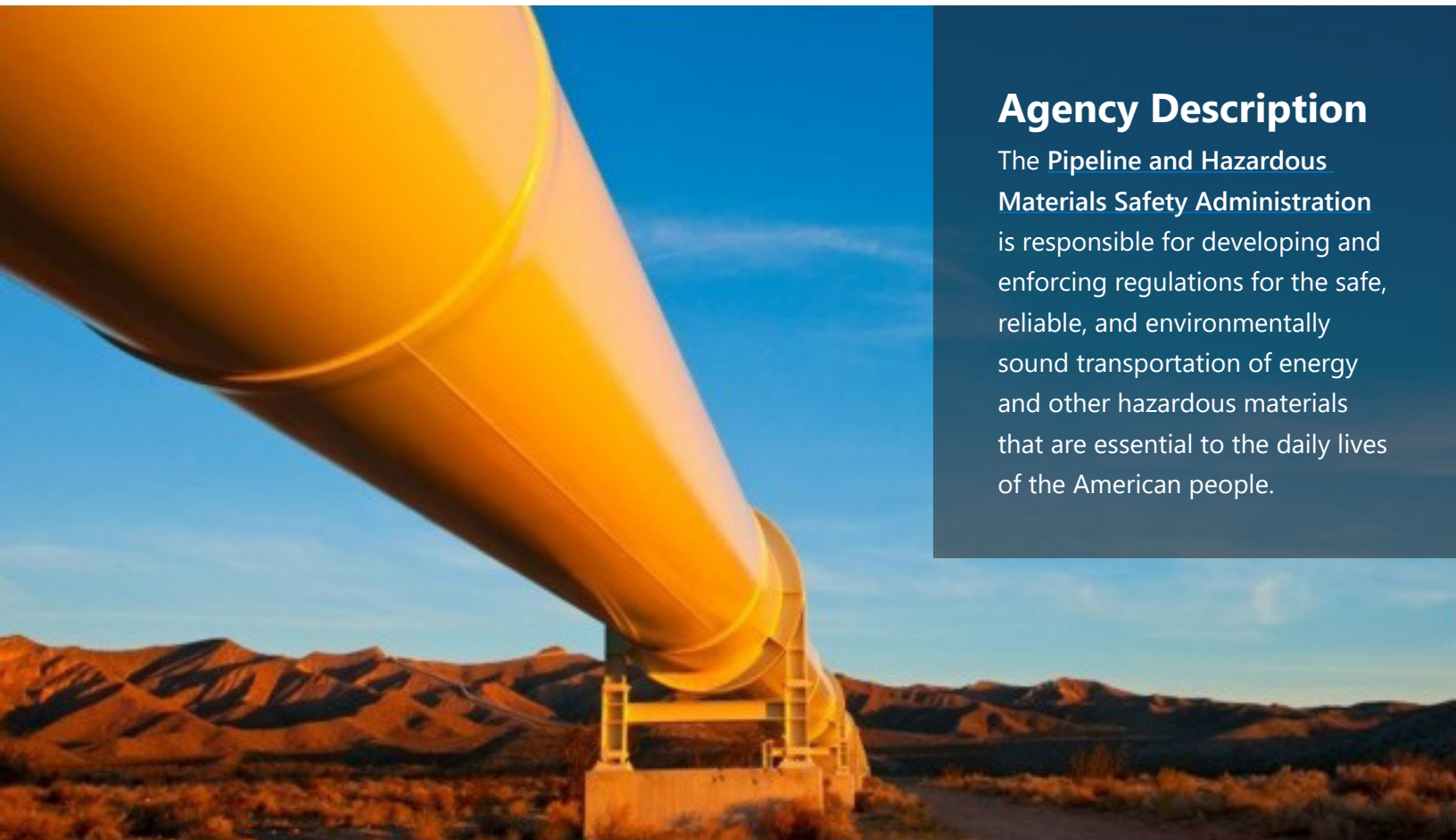
Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Thriving Communities Program](#) page.

University Transportation Center (UTC) Program 2022-2026 Grants

The University Transportation Center (UTC) Program supports nonprofit institutes of higher education to operate Tier 1, regional, or national University Transportation Centers.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [University Transportation Center Program](#) page.

Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)



Agency Description

The [Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration](#) is responsible for developing and enforcing regulations for the safe, reliable, and environmentally sound transportation of energy and other hazardous materials that are essential to the daily lives of the American people.

It is in charge of overseeing the nation's approximately 3.4 million miles of pipelines—accounting for 65 percent of the energy consumed in the U.S.—and regulating the nearly 1 million daily shipments of hazardous materials by land, sea, and air.

To accomplish this, PHMSA establishes national policy, sets and enforces standards, educates, conducts research to prevent transportation-related deaths and injuries, and prepares first responders to safely handle consequences should an incident occur.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of PHMSA grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Assistance for Local Emergency Response Training (ALERT)

The Assistance for Local Emergency Response Training (ALERT) program funds training for emergency responders to handle accidents or incidents involving the transportation of hazardous materials, particularly flammable liquids moved by rail.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Assistance for Local Emergency Response Training Program](#) page.

Community Safety Grant (CSG)

The Community Safety Grant (CSG) program funds non-profits to conduct national outreach to communities in the preparation for and response to accidents and incidents involving the transportation of hazardous materials.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Community Safety Grant](#) page.

Competitive Academic Agreement Program (CAAP)

The Competitive Academic Agreement Program (CAAP) funds research pursuing innovative equitable in several pipeline safety and integrity challenge areas.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Competitive Academic Agreement Program](#) page.

Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant for States and Territories

The Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant for States and Territories supports planning and training activities which advance the safe transport of hazardous materials.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant](#) page.

Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Tribal Grant

The Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Tribal Grant program funds planning and training activities which advance the safe transport of hazardous materials on Tribal lands.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Tribal Grant](#) page.

Hazardous Materials Instructor Training Grants (HMIT)

The Hazardous Materials Instructor Training (HMIT) program funds both training and assistance to external organizations for the purposes of training HAZMAT employers and employees on the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR), especially in underserved communities.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Hazardous Materials Instructor Training Program](#) page.

Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant

The Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization (NGDISM) program supports mitigating the risk profile of existing pipeline systems with pipes prone to leakage of methane, creating good-paying jobs.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Program](#) page.

One Call Notification System Grants

The One-Call Notification System Grant program supports state agencies to increase damage prevention efforts, train and collect annual pipeline data, change state underground damage prevention laws, and educate the public to assist in reducing damages to underground pipelines ("do not dig").

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [One Call Notification System Grants](#) page.

Pipeline Emergency Response Grant

The Pipeline Emergency Response Grant (PERG) program supports planning and training activities for pipeline emergency responders and their communities, especially in high consequence areas.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Pipeline Emergency Response Grant](#) page.

State Damage Prevention Program Grants

The State Damage Prevention (SDP) Program provides funding to establish, improve, or enforce state new or existing policies and programs which focus on stakeholder education and protecting underground pipeline facilities from excavation damage (“do not dig”).

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard’s [State Damage Prevention Program](#) page.

Supplemental Public Sector Training Grant

The Supplemental Public Sector Training (SPST) program extends the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) grant by funding national nonprofit fire service organizations, which then train instructors to provide training to public-sector hazmat responders or those tasked with responding to accidents and incidents involving hazardous material.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard’s [Supplemental Public Sector Training](#) page.

Technical Assistance Grants

The Technical Assistance Grants (TAGs) program supports local communities and groups of individuals to receive and provide technical assistance in pipeline safety, along with opportunities that strengthen the depth and quality of public participation in the safe operation of pipelines in and around communities.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard’s [Technical Assistance Grants](#) page.

Section 8

NON-USDOT COMPETITIVE GRANTS: AGENCY DESCRIPTIONS AND PROGRAMS



The pages that follow provide information about competitive grant programs offered by federal agencies outside of USDOT that provide funding that can be used for rural transportation infrastructure.

Descriptions of most of these grant programs are also available in the [DOT Grants Dashboard](#).

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Agency Description

Rural productivity, prosperity, and quality of life are all priorities of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). To better support the 19 percent of Americans living in rural areas, collaborative investments in modernized critical infrastructure must take precedence to meet these priorities.



Through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the U.S. Departments of Transportation and Agriculture are sharing their commitment to the historic revitalization of rural transportation systems' accessibility, safety, and efficiency.

USDA's offices of Rural Development (RD) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have provided opportunities to fund capital projects that showcase the sustainability of multimodal goods and services, promoting the endurance of our rural transportation systems—as well as the people who use them.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of USDA grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Community Facilities Grant Program

The Community Facilities Grant Program supports the development of non-commercial facilities providing essential services to primarily rural areas.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Community Facilities Grant Program](#) page.

Economic Impact Initiative Grant Program

The Economic Impact Initiative Grant Program funds the development of essential community facilities in financially distressed, high-unemployment rural areas and may be combined with other grants.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Economic Impact Initiative Grant Program](#) page.

Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIIP)

The Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIIP) funds capital improvements and equipment purchases which help the fuel industry provide environmentally safe availability of renewable and alternative fuels.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program](#) page.

Tribal College Initiative Grants Program

The Tribal College Initiative Grants Program funds capital improvements and related equipment among the 35 NIFA 1994 Land Grant Tribal Colleges.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Tribal College Initiative Grants Program](#) page.

U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration



Agency Description

Adverse economic impacts such as natural disasters, national health emergencies, plant closures, changing trade and employment patterns, and other events that disrupt a community's economic base can significantly hinder rural prosperity. The U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) seeks to assist rural communities by creating conditions that stimulate economic growth. Together with the USDOT, this agency keeps citizens connected—both technologically and physically.

Through the Economic Development Administration (EDA), the DOC funds projects that expand public works and infrastructures to alleviate times of hardship among rural communities and revitalize their economic prosperity.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of DOC EDA grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Economic Adjustment Assistance Program

The EDA's Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) Program funds the creation and implementation of activities in an applicant's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) intended to mitigate the financial impacts of adverse events.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Economic Adjustment Assistance Program](#) page.

Public Works Program

The EDA's Public Works Program funds the capital improvements to infrastructure and technology aligned with an applicant's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Public Works Program](#) page.

U.S. Department of Energy

Agency Description

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) recognizes that rural areas face unique barriers to accessing and creating cost-effective and efficient clean energy.

Together, the U.S. Departments of Energy and Transportation are investing in rural energy infrastructure for clean transportation in the remote and low-population areas that stand to benefit from it most. Through partnerships that create jobs and relationships in rural America, DOE funds opportunities ranging from pilots of mobility technologies supporting entire regions, down to individual drivers' lower-cost access to electric vehicles or alternative fuels.



Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of DOE grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Grants for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Improvements at Public School Facilities Program

The Grants for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Improvements at Public School Facilities Program funds improvements, renovation, and equipment which reduce energy costs and improve health outcomes.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Grants for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Improvements at Public School Facilities Program](#) page.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Agency Description

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) identifies transportation systems as one of its 16 sectors of critical infrastructure. The U.S. Departments of Homeland Security and Transportation assist each other to bolster the resiliency of rural areas by improving community and industry preparedness, mitigating risk susceptibility, and creating defenses against natural or human-caused disasters and threats.

DHS and its operational and support components such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administer funding to rural stakeholders that emphasizes the protection and enhancement of transportation infrastructure, keeping the traveling public safe and preventing interruptions to the rural supply chains that clothe, feed, and provide goods to American citizens.



Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of DHS grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program

The Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program supports proactive capability and capacity building (C&CB) projects which protect community lifelines from hazards and disasters.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities](#) page.

Port Security Grant Program

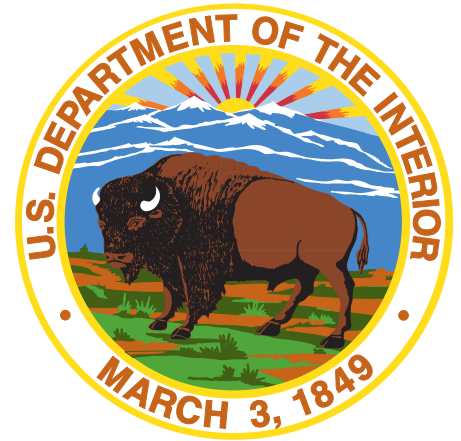
The Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) funds the development and implementation of security mitigation protocols at ports covered by Area Maritime Security Plans (AMSP).

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Port Security Grant Program](#) page.

U.S. Department of the Interior

Agency Description

The mission of the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) includes protecting, managing, and studying the nation's natural resources and cultural heritage, as well as honoring its trust responsibilities to Tribes, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and affiliated island communities. Together, the U.S. Department of Transportation and U.S. Department of the Interior work as a team of stewards to balance the protection of natural, environmental, and cultural resources with public access.



The DOI grants featured here not only fund innovative solutions to transportation problems but also demonstrate program support of both the history and safety of traveling occupants. Transportation infrastructure makes it possible for rural communities—along with 500 million visitors per year—to conduct business, provide education, and enjoy recreation on Interior-managed lands.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of DOI grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Indian Highway Safety Law Enforcement Grants

The Indian Highway Safety Law Enforcement Grant program supplements traffic safety activities to address and prevent impaired driving on Tribal lands.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Indian Highway Safety Law Enforcement Grants](#) page.

Indian Highway Safety Occupant Protection Grant

The Indian Highway Safety Occupant Protection Grant program supports initiatives which inform the public of seatbelt and child restraint usage to improve their use and enforcement in Tribal communities.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Indian Highway Safety Occupant Protection Grant](#) page.

National Maritime Heritage Grant Program - Education Grants

The National Maritime Heritage Education Grant Program funds a variety of activities which will inform or engage the public in maritime history and culture.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [National Maritime Heritage Education Grant](#) page.

National Maritime Heritage Grant Program - Preservation Grants

The National Maritime Heritage Preservation Grant Program supports the identification, acquisition, maintenance, and recordation of historic marine resources for the purposes of preservation.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [National Maritime Heritage Preservation Grant](#) page.

U.S. Department of Labor

Agency Description

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) seeks to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights.

Working people in rural America face comparatively high rates of long-term unemployment and often lack access to training opportunities to develop skills aligned with critical industry sectors. The Department of Labor's rural investments are helping rural Americans find good jobs and training in the communities they call home.



Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of DOL grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs H-1B Skills Training Grant

The DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs H-1B Skills Training Grant Program represents a down payment for the future skilled workforce needs that are being developed through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) investments by investing in the development and expansion of the workforce partnerships that will be needed to build equitable pathways to good infrastructure jobs.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs H-1B Skills Training Grant](#) page.

Critical Sector Job Quality Grants

The purpose of the Critical Sector Job Quality Grants demonstration program is to support transformative efforts to improve job quality and availability of good jobs, particularly for the benefit of historically marginalized populations and communities that have experienced barriers to employment in good jobs.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Critical Sector Job Quality Grants](#) page.

Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO)

The purpose of the Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) program is to provide technical assistance (TA) to employers (which may include public sector entities) and labor unions in the United States and its territories to encourage employment of women in Registered Apprenticeship and nontraditional occupations (A/NTO).

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations](#) page.

Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC) Round 5: A Grant Initiative for the Appalachian, Delta, and Northern Border Regions

The WORC Initiative provides grant funds to enable impacted communities to develop local and regional workforce development solutions aligned with existing economic development strategies and community partnerships to promote new, sustainable job opportunities and long-term economic vitality.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities Round 5](#) page.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Agency Description

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) honors current and former members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families by providing them with lifelong benefits, such as healthcare services.

Today, nearly a quarter of U.S. veterans return from active military careers to reside in rural communities, which may be physically distanced from their nearest VA resources. This creates serious problems for veterans seeking care, including barriers to where they choose to reside as civilians.

With the help of dedicated nonprofit partners, the U.S. Departments of Veterans Affairs and Transportation collaborate to expand multimodal networks to provide supportive, inclusive, equitable, and accessible services to America's rural veterans.



Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of VA grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Highly Rural Transportation Grant

The Highly Rural Transportation Grant (HRTG) program funds transit for veterans to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), VA Medical Centers (VAMC), or other VA-authorized health care facilities in highly rural areas.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Highly Rural Transportation Grant](#) page.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Agency Description

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) understands that distinct rural character is often connected to stewardship for a community's natural resources, which can be protected by design as rural areas grow.

USDOT partners with EPA to design practicable solutions to the problem of transportation systems' environmental impact, including sustainable planning, transit-oriented development (TOD), and improvements in fuel efficiency and economy.

EPA funds unique air-quality transportation opportunities for diesel-dependent rural communities to replace legacy transit vehicles with low- or zero-emission alternatives, including school buses.



Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of EPA grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Clean School Bus Rebates Program (CSB)

The Clean School Bus Rebates Program (CSB) supports the replacement of up to 25 existing school buses with clean and zero-emission (ZE) models, including electric vehicles (EV).

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Clean School Bus Rebates Program \(CSB\)](#) page.

DERA National Grants

DERA National Grants support the replacement of many high-emission vehicles with energy efficient transportation and technologies, especially fleets operating in poor air quality or goods movement facilities and areas.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [DERA National Grants](#) page.

DERA Tribal and Insular Area Grants

The DERA Tribal and Insular Area Grants funds the replacement of high-emission diesel vehicles and engines among Tribal and Alaska Native communities.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [DERA Tribal and Insular Area Grants](#) page.

Appalachian Regional Commission

Agency Description

The [Appalachian Regional Commission](#) (ARC) is an economic development partnership agency of the

federal government and 13 state governments focusing on 423 counties across the Appalachian Region. ARC's mission is to innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia. Since 1965, ARC has invested with local, regional, and state partners to transform Appalachian communities, create jobs, and strengthen the regional economy.

ARC uses congressionally appropriated funds to invest in the Region's economic and community development through grants. In Fiscal Year 2021, Congress appropriated a record \$180 million for the Appalachian Regional Commission.

As part of a federal-state partnership, ARC's grant application process begins at the state government level. All ARC grants align with the investment priorities outlined in their current [Strategic Plan](#) and reflect [state plans and strategies](#).

All [ARC grants](#) need state concurrence, which is coordinated through the [State Program Managers](#). Applicants to ARC grants will need to coordinate with their state program manager.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of Appalachian Regional Commission grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies

The [Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies Grant](#) (Arise) is a new ARC initiative that aims to drive large-scale, regional economic transformation through multi-state collaborative economic development projects across Appalachia. With the additional funding provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), ARC launched ARISE to strengthen Appalachian business and industry, and to grow and support the development of new opportunities across multiple states.

ARISE encourages the region's 13 states to think beyond local and state lines and to spearhead initiatives that encourage states to work together as one, united Appalachia to advance ARC's [strategic investment priorities](#).



Appalachian
Regional
Commission

ARISE anticipates awarding approximately \$73.5 million in funding per year.

For Planning Grants, individual awards are up to \$500,000.

For Implementation Grants, individual awards are up to \$10 million (ARC reserves the right to award grants in larger amounts on a case-by-case basis and when substantially compelling circumstances are present).

For questions about the ARISE Grant, contact ARISE@arc.gov.

Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization

The [Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization](#) (POWER) Initiative funds economic development projects that help communities and regions that have been affected by job losses in coal mining, coal power plant operations, and coal-related supply chain industries due to the changing economics of America's energy production.

ARC announced its largest POWER grant package to date in October 2022, awarding nearly \$47 million for projects that will leverage entrepreneurship, workforce development, and infrastructure to bolster re-employment opportunities, create jobs in existing or new industries, and attract new sources of investment.

POWER anticipates awarding approximately \$65 million in funds per year.

For Planning Grants, individual awards are up to \$50,000.

For Implementation Grants, individual awards are between \$400,000 and \$1,500,000 (Broadband deployment projects are between \$400,000 and \$2,500,000).

For questions about the POWER Initiative, contact power@arc.gov.

Delta Regional Authority

Agency Description

The [Delta Regional Authority](#) (DRA) works to improve regional economic opportunity by helping to create jobs, build communities, and improve the lives of the 10 million people who reside in the [252 counties and parishes](#) of the eight-state Delta region.

Led by the [Delta Regional Authority Board](#)—comprised of the Federal Co-Chairman, appointed by the President, and confirmed by the U.S. Senate and the governors of the eight states—the DRA fosters local and regional partnerships that address economic and social challenges to ultimately strengthen the Delta economy and the quality of life for Delta residents.

Established in 2000 by Congress, the DRA makes strategic investments of federal appropriations into the physical and human infrastructure of Delta communities. Through the [States' Economic Development Assistance Program](#), these investments help to improve transportation and basic public infrastructure and to strengthen workforce development system and local business environments.

The Delta Regional Authority supports job creation and economic development through innovative approaches to growing local and regional leadership, increasing access to quality healthcare, and boosting opportunities for entrepreneurs to obtain affordable capital.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of Delta Regional Authority grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Community Infrastructure Fund

The Community Infrastructure Fund grant funds projects that address flood control, basic public infrastructure development, and transportation infrastructure improvements.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Community Infrastructure Fund](#) page.



Delta Workforce Grant Program

The Delta Workforce Grant Program supports projects that expand job training and re-employment opportunities, align workforce and economic development strategies, create sustainable talent pipelines, establish or enhance locally/regionally significant public-private partnerships, and support enhanced workforce productivity through investments in innovative programming.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Delta Workforce Grant Program](#) page.

Local Development Districts Community Support Pilot Program

The Local Development Districts Community Support Pilot Program is intended to build the capacity of the 45 Local Development Districts in the Mississippi River Delta Region and Alabama Black Belt.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Local Development Districts Community Support Pilot Program](#) page.

States' Economic Development Assistance Program

The States' Economic Development Assistance Program grant funds projects in Basic Public Infrastructure, Transportation Infrastructure, Business Development, and Workforce Development.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [States' Economic Development Assistance Program](#) page.

Strategic Planning Grant Program

The Strategic Planning Grant Program funds planning activities for delta regional communities.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Strategic Planning Grant Program](#) page.

Denali Commission

Agency Description

Established in 1998, the [Denali Commission](#) is an independent federal agency based in Anchorage, Alaska, that provides critical utilities, infrastructure, and economic inter-agency support to Alaska's remote communities in America's largest state.



The Denali Commission and the U.S. Department of Transportation share a vision for preserved and expanded surface transportation solutions for Alaskan citizens and Alaska Native peoples who traverse the state's system of predominately rural, local roads every day.

Competitive Grant Programs

The Denali Commission provides [grant funding](#) to Tribal, federal, state, and local government partners for projects which improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government services, develop a well-trained labor force employed in a diversified and sustainable economy, and ensure the operation and maintenance of Alaska's basic infrastructure.

Grant proposals use the [Standard Application for Federal Assistance \(SF-424\)](#), and there is no stated deadline to apply. As a small agency, funding varies and is subject to availability.

To obtain supplemental funding, the Denali Commission encourages applicants to check for other available [Federal grants](#) as well as grants awarded by the [State of Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development](#).

Please contact lmack@denali.gov for more information.

Northern Border Regional Commission

Agency Description

The [Northern Border Regional Commission](#) (NBRC) is a federal-state partnership for economic and community development throughout designated counties in its four-state service area within Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York. Each year, the NBRC provides federal funds for critical economic and community development projects throughout northern New England and New York.

The mission of the NBRC is to catalyze regional, collaborative, and transformative community economic development approaches that alleviate economic distress and position the region for economic growth.

Created by the U.S. Congress in 2008, the NBRC partnership is based on the successful [Appalachian Regional Commission](#) model and is part of a group of [new regional commissions](#) created by Congress within the last twenty years. The NBRC has been funded by Congress since 2010.

NBRC investment funds originate from the Federal Government but are approved by the Federal Government's NBRC representative (Federal Co-Chair) and the Governors of the four States.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of Northern Border Regional Commission grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Catalyst Program (IIJA and SEID) (Competitive)

In 2023, NBRC debuted an expanded investment program at approximately \$44 million, which includes both core appropriation funds together with a portion of \$150 million in funding from the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) in carrying out activities authorized by subtitle V of title 40, United States Code.

This program will prioritize funding for projects that demonstrate direct impacts on the region's economy and communities across its 7 core funding areas. This program has a mandated focus on infrastructure, with 40 percent of available funds to be allocated to infrastructure projects.

This program will help Northern Border communities build the next generation of infrastructure with an historic investment in revitalization of transportation, water and wastewater, alternative energy, and telecommunications.



Infrastructure projects will have an award size ranging up to \$1 million with consideration of awards up to \$3 million for projects that demonstrate their ability to meet the eligibility criteria and address priorities identified by NBRC and member states. To be eligible for the higher maximum, projects must either include multiple infrastructure categories or serve multiple jurisdictions. Eligibility will be determined in the LOI review process conducted by both NBRC and the member States (New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine).

Non-infrastructure projects will have an award size up to \$500,000.

Multi-state or Multi-jurisdictional projects will have an award size up to \$3 million for construction in support of infrastructure projects and \$500,000 for non-infrastructure projects.

Questions regarding NBRC's Catalyst Program should be directed to Program Manager Adrienne Harrison aharrison@nbrc.gov or Program Director Andrea Smith asmith@nbrc.gov.

Forest Economy Program (Competitive)

In 2023, NBRC will make \$7 million available to support the forest-based economy and to assist in the industry's evolution to include new technologies and viable business models across the four-state NBRC region.

This program is different from NBRC's core investment program (referenced above) in that FEP emphasizes the potential for impact across the entire NBRC region while infrastructure projects must directly support the forest industry.

Investment priorities for these dollars include development and commercialization of technologies that create new markets for forest product residuals; workforce recruitment, development, and training to increase job placement across the forest product continuum; support eligible entities to sustain and grow existing forest industry business and operations; revitalization of rural communities through the diversified use of northern border forest for economic activity; and encourage projects that leverage existing (or, in some cases, new) partnerships to impact or have potential to impact multiple counties, states and/or the entire NBRC region.

Questions regarding NBRC's Forest Economy Program should be directed to Program Manager Marina Bowie mbowie@nbrc.gov.

State Capacity Grant Program (Non-Competitive and Available to Member States Only)

NBRC utilizes these funds to assist Member States to develop comprehensive economic and infrastructure development plans for their NBRC counties. Plans are to reflect the goals, objectives, and priorities within NBRC's economic and infrastructure plan.

Questions regarding the State Capacity Grant Program should be directed to Program Director Andrea Smith asmith@nbrc.gov.

Southeast Crescent Regional Commission

Agency Description

The [Southeast Crescent Regional Commission](#) (SCRC) is an economic development partnership agency of the federal government and seven state governments. SCRC's mission is to invest in building sustainable communities and strengthening economic growth across the Southeast Crescent region.



Authorized in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 ("The Farm Bill"), SCRC's focus is on addressing issues related to economic development and poverty in its 426 counties across Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.

Activated in January 2022, SCRC operates from annual appropriations from Congress. It is expected that in FY23, \$11 million will be disbursed directly into communities through two grant programs. SCRC is on schedule to launch both grant programs in late spring 2023 to support economic and infrastructure development.

The SCRC will allocate at least 40 percent of grant funds to projects that support transportation and basic public and telecommunications infrastructure in the region. The Commission may contribute up to 50 percent of project costs. Counties designated as distressed may receive an allocation of up to 80 percent of project costs. Under a special rule, the level of contribution may increase to 60 percent and 90 percent respectively for regional projects which involve three or more counties or two or more states.

Competitive Grant Programs

Below are brief descriptions of Southeast Crescent Regional Commission grant programs.

For more information on these opportunities, follow the links in each description, which lead to individual grant program pages in the *Grant Applicant Toolkit's* [DOT Grants Dashboard](#), where you can search federal grant opportunities at USDOT and other federal agencies that can aid communities in meeting their transportation infrastructure needs.

Local Development Districts Capacity Building Program

The Local Development Districts Capacity Building Program funds Local Development Districts to assist with planning, technical assistance, and capacity building activities in their communities.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Local Development Districts Capacity Building Program](#) page.

Program for Economic and Infrastructure Development Assistance

The Program for Economic and Infrastructure Development Assistance is a competitive grant program designed to encourage and support economic and infrastructure development activities across the Southeast Crescent region.

Learn more about this grant opportunity on the DOT Grants Dashboard's [Program for Economic and Infrastructure Development Assistance](#) page.

Section 9

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following terms and abbreviations are used in the *Rural Grant Applicant Toolkit for Competitive Federal Transportation Funding*. For an exhaustive list of grant terms and their definitions, please visit the [Grant Terminology](#) resource on Grants.gov.

Terms

| Term | Definition |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Applicant | A person applying for a grant opportunity, either as an individual applicant submitting on their own behalf or as an organizational applicant submitting applications on behalf of an organization, such as a state government, nonprofit organization, private business, or any other type of institution. |
| Award | Financial assistance provided to an eligible recipient providing support or stimulation to accomplish a public purpose, including grants and other agreements. |
| Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) | Also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), Pub. L. 117-58 (Nov. 15, 2021). provides an investment of \$1.2 trillion into United States infrastructure, competitiveness, and communities. BIL was signed into law on November 15, 2021. |
| Competitive Grant | Competitive grant (also referred to as a discretionary grant) means a grant in which the Federal granting agency , in keeping with specific statutory authority that enables the agency to exercise judgment ("discretion"), selects the recipient and/or the amount of Federal funding awarded through a competitive process or based on merit of proposals. A competitive grant may be selected on a non-competitive basis, as appropriate. |
| Formula Grant | Formula grant programs are a type of non-discretionary award based on a predetermined formula. |
| Grant Agreement | A legal instrument of financial assistance between a Federal awarding agency and a grant recipient, consistent with 31 U.S.C. 6302 , 6304 . Defines agreement between the two, such as roles of granting agency and grant recipient, award amount, statement of work, schedule, reporting requirements, etc. |

| Term | Definition |
|--|---|
| Local Government | An umbrella term encompassing the governments of counties and cities, as well as boroughs, municipalities, towns, townships, parishes, local public authorities (e.g., public housing agencies), special districts, school districts, intrastate districts, and any other agency or instrumentality of a multi-, regional, or intra-state or local government, not to include state or federal entities. |
| Match | Cost sharing or matching means the portion of project costs not paid by Federal funds or contributions (unless otherwise authorized by Federal statute), as per 2 CFR Part 200 . See also § 200.306 . Typically the grant recipient would be required to provide their own funds or funds from another source to cover this portion of the project costs. |
| Mode | A way of moving people or goods, including air, highway, transit, rail, pipeline, and marine. Highway, transit, and rail are often referred to as surface transportation modes. |
| Non-Competitive Award | <i>Non-competitive award</i> means an award made by the Federal awarding agency to specific recipients in accordance with statutory, eligibility and compliance requirements, such that in keeping with specific statutory authority the agency has no ability to exercise judgement ("discretion"). A non-competitive award amount could be determined specifically or by formula. |
| Nonprofit entity | Any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization such as a 501(c)(3) that is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest, is not organized primarily for profit, and uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operations of the organization. |
| Operating Administration | A unit of the U.S. Department of Transportation with its own management and organizational structure generally focused on a mode of transportation. |
| Pass-Through Entity | A non-federal entity (e.g., a state government) that provides a subaward to a subrecipient to carry out part of a federal program. |
| Recipient | A non-federal entity that receives a federal award directly from a federal awarding agency to carry out an activity under a federal program (i.e., a grant awardee). The term recipient does not include subrecipients. |
| Subaward | The financial award provided by a pass-through entity to a subrecipient for the subrecipient to carry out part of a federal award received by the pass-through entity. |
| Subrecipient | A non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal program (i.e., an entity receiving grant funds from a direct, "pass-through" recipient). |
| Third-Party In-Kind Contributions | The value of non-cash contributions (i.e. property and services) contributed by non-federal third parties, without charge, to a non-federal entity under a federal award to benefit a federally assisted project or program. |

| Term | Definition |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Unique Entity Identifier | A Unique Entity Identifier is a form of required government-wide identification for single business entities applying for and receiving federal awards through the System for Award Management (SAM). |

Abbreviations

Federal Agencies

| Abbreviation | Meaning |
|--------------|---|
| ARC | Appalachian Regional Commission |
| BIA | Bureau of Indian Affairs |
| BTS | Bureau of Transportation Statistics |
| DHS | U.S. Department of Homeland Security |
| DOC | U.S. Department of Commerce |
| DOE | U.S. Department of Energy |
| DOI | U.S. Department of Interior |
| DOT | U.S. Department of Transportation |
| DRA | Delta Regional Authority |
| EDA | Economic Development Administration |
| EPA | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency |
| FAA | Federal Aviation Administration |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| FHWA | Federal Highway Administration |
| FMCSA | Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration |
| FRA | Federal Railroad Administration |
| FTA | Federal Transit Administration |
| GLS | Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation |
| MARAD | Maritime Administration |
| NBRC | Northern Border Regional Commission |
| NHTSA | National Highway Traffic Safety Administration |
| NRCS | Natural Resources Conservation Service |

| Abbreviation | Meaning |
|--------------|--|
| NPS | National Park Service |
| OA | Operating Administration |
| OIG | Office of the Inspector General |
| OST | Office of the Secretary of Transportation |
| PHMSA | Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration |
| RD | Rural Development (USDA) |
| SCRC | Southeast Crescent Regional Commission |
| USDA | U.S. Department of Agriculture |
| USDOT | U.S. Department of Transportation |
| VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs |

Other Abbreviations

| Abbreviation | Meaning |
|---------------|--|
| BCA | Benefit-Cost Analysis |
| BIL | Bipartisan Infrastructure Law |
| CFR | Code of Federal Regulations |
| FOA | Funding Opportunity Announcement |
| IHE | Institute of Higher Education |
| NEPA | National Environmental Policy Act |
| NOFA | Notice of Funds Availability |
| NOFO | Notice of Funding Opportunity |
| ROUTES | Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success |
| TIFIA | Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act |
| UEI | Unique Entity Identifier |
| U.S.C. | United States Code |

CONTACTING ROUTES

The USDOT ROUTES Initiative welcomes
any feedback on this toolkit.

Stakeholders can get in contact by
email (rural@dot.gov) or

phone (202-366-4544 or

TTY / Assistive Device 800-877-8339).

<https://www.transportation.gov/rural/grant-toolkit>



U.S. Department of Transportation