



Summary of U.S Department of Transportation Competitive Grant Programs Available to Local Governments

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Notes on USDOT Competitive Grant Programs

- Funding for these federal transportation grant programs has been authorized annually over the next five years as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act / Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The Congressional appropriations process will determine actual funding levels from year to year.
- The list of grant programs is current as of November 15, 2022. Not all USDOT grant programs have been released.
- This broad-level summary should be treated as a starting point in understanding the specifics of each competitive grant program. The Notice of Funding Opportunity – available following the link for each program below – provides details on project eligibilities and evaluation criteria. Application dates, eligibility requirements, and other requirements may change from year to year.
- Local governments apply directly to USDOT for funding.
- Grant programs are very competitive with many funding only 6%-10% of applications. Persistence will be needed, including applying under different programs.
- Many programs include Planning as an eligible activity to assist applicants with developing their projects.

U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

Bridge Investment Program

Total Program Funding: \$2,380,000,000

Program Open: July for Planning Grants, September for Capital Grants (dates subject to change)

Program Description

Grants to be awarded on a competitive basis to rehabilitate or replace bridges to improve the condition, safety, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of people and freight over bridges. Three categories of highway Bridge Investment Program (BIP) funding opportunities: (1) Planning; (2) Bridge Projects (projects with eligible costs less than \$100 million); and (3) Large Bridge Projects (projects with eligible costs greater than \$100 million). Eligible uses for these funds include the:

- **Construction**
- **Planning, feasibility analysis, and revenue forecasting associated with the development of a project that would subsequently be eligible to apply for BIP funding.**

Construction grant funding can only be provided for projects reasonably expected to begin construction not later than 18 months after the date on which BIP funds are obligated for the project and preliminary engineering is complete for the project.

Application requirements include project narrative, benefit-cost analysis, and supporting documentation.

Award Size

Minimum award size: \$2,500,000 for construction grants (no minimum for Planning grants).

Minimum matching fund requirements: 20% for Planning grants, 20% for Construction grants (10% if bridges are located off the federal-aid system)

Program Webpage:

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/bip/>

Program Contact(s):

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U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program

Total Program Funding: \$1,427,462,902

Program Open: December (date subject to change annually)

Program Description

Grants to invest in a wide range of projects within the United States to improve railroad safety, efficiency, and reliability; mitigate congestion at both intercity passenger and freight rail chokepoints to support more efficient travel and goods movement; enhance multi-modal connections; and lead to new or substantially improved intercity passenger rail transportation corridors. Eligible uses for these funds include the:

- Capital projects in support of freight rail or intercity passenger rail, rolling stock.
- Preparation of regional rail and corridor service development plans and corresponding environmental analyses.
- Development and implementation of a safety program.
- Development and implementation of measures to prevent trespassing and reduce associated injuries and fatalities (including projects, enforcement activities, and outreach campaigns).
- Research, workforce development and training activities.
- Preparation of emergency plans for communities through which hazardous materials are transported by rail.

Minimum matching fund requirements: 20%. Preference provided to applications which provide 50% or more in matching funds.

Application requirements include project narrative, benefit-cost analysis, and supporting documentation.

Award Size

No minimum or maximum award size.

Program Webpage:

<https://railroads.dot.gov/grants-loans/competitive-discretionary-grant-programs/consolidated-rail-infrastructure-and-safety-2>

Program Contact(s):

Douglas Gascon, FRA Program Manager
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Costa Pappis, VTrans Federal Policy Director
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U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

INFRA Program

Total Program Funding: \$1,550,000,000

Program Open: May (date subject to change annually)

Program Description

Grants to be awarded on a competitive basis for surface transportation infrastructure projects that improve freight movements. Eligible uses for these funds include the:

- Highway freight projects carried out on the National Highway Freight Network.
- Highway or bridge projects carried out on the National Highway System, including projects that add capacity on the Interstate System to improve mobility or projects in a national scenic area.
- Railway-highway grade crossing or grade separation projects; or a freight project that is 1) an intermodal or rail project, or 2) within the boundaries of a public or private freight rail, water (including ports), or intermodal facility,
- A wildlife crossing project.
- A surface transportation project within the boundaries of, or functionally connected to, an international border crossing that improves a facility owned by a Federal, State, or local government and increases throughput efficiency.
- A highway, bridge, or freight project on the National Multimodal Freight Network.

Minimum matching fund requirements: 40%.

Application requirements include project narrative, benefit-cost analysis, and supporting documentation.

Award Size

Minimum award size. \$5 million

Program Webpage:

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/infra-grants-program>

Program Contact(s):

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Costa Pappis, VTrans Federal Policy Director
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U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

Mega Program

Total Program Funding: \$1,000,000,000

Program Open: May (date subject to change annually)

Program Description

Grants to be awarded on a competitive basis for surface transportation infrastructure projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. Eligible uses for these funds include the:

- A highway or bridge project on the National Multimodal Freight Network.
- A highway or bridge project on the National Highway Freight Network.
- A highway or bridge project on the National Highway System.
- A freight intermodal (including public ports) or freight rail project that provides public benefit.
- A railway-highway grade separation or elimination project.
- An intercity passenger rail project.
- A public transportation project that is eligible under assistance under Chapter 53 of title 49 U.S.C.

Minimum matching fund requirements: 40%.

Application requirements include project narrative, benefit-cost analysis, and supporting documentation.

Award Size

Minimum award size. \$100 million

Program Webpage:

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/mega-grant-program>

Program Contact(s):

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Costa Pappis, VTrans Federal Policy Director
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U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program

Total Program Funding: \$196,000,000

Program Open: February (date subject to change annually)

Program Description

Grants to be awarded on a competitive basis for the replacement, removal, repair, and improvement of culverts or weirs that would meaningfully improve or restore fish passage for anadromous fish. The grant program prioritizes projects that would improve fish passage for:

- Anadromous fish stocks listed as an endangered species or a threatened species under section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. § 1533).
- Anadromous fish stocks identified by the NMFS or the USFWS that could reasonably become listed as an endangered species or a threatened species under that section.
- Anadromous fish stocks identified by the NMFS or the USFWS as prey for endangered species, threatened species, or protected species, including southern resident orcas (*Orcinus orca*).
- Anadromous fish stocks identified by the NMFS or the USFWS as climate resilient stocks (49 U.S.C. § 6703(e)(1)).
- Projects that would open up more than 200 meters of upstream (anadromous) habitat before the end of the natural habitat (49 U.S.C. § 6703(e)(2)).

Minimum matching fund requirements: 20%.

Application requirements include project narrative and supporting documentation.

Award Size

No minimum or maximum award size. However, DOT anticipates awarding hundreds of grants with anticipated awards ranging from \$100,000 to \$2,000,000.

Program Webpage:

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/engineering/hydraulics/culverthyd/aquatic/culvertaop.cfm>

Program Contact(s):

Rick Murray, FHWA Agreement Officer
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Costa Pappis, VTrans Federal Policy Director
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U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

Railroad Crossing Elimination Program

Total Program Funding: \$573,264,000

Program Open: October (date subject to change annually)

Program Description

Grants to fund highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods. Eligible uses for these funds include the:

- Grade separation or closure, including through the use of a bridge, embankment, tunnel, or combination thereof.
- Track relocation.
- The improvement or installation of protective devices, signals, signs, or other measures to improve safety, provided that such activities are related to a separation or relocation project.
- Other means to improve the safety and mobility of people and goods at highway-rail grade crossings (including technological solutions).
- A group of related projects described above that would collectively improve the mobility of people and goods.
- The planning, environmental review, and design of an eligible project described above.

Minimum matching fund requirements: 20%.

Application requirements include project narrative, benefit-cost analysis, and supporting documentation.

Award Size

Construction grants \$1 million minimum (no minimum for Planning grants).

Program Webpage:

<https://railroads.dot.gov/grants-loans/competitive-discretionary-grant-programs/railroad-crossing-elimination-grant-program>

Program Contact(s):

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Costa Pappis, VTrans Federal Policy Director
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U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Program

Total Program Funding: \$1,500,000,000

Program Open: December (date subject to change annually)

Program Description

Grants to be awarded on a competitive basis for surface transportation infrastructure projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. Eligible uses for these funds include the:

- **Construction:** highways (including culverts and stormwater projects), bridges, rail (freight and passenger), public transit, intermodal, multimodal, and the surface transportation components of an airport project.
- **Planning:** master plans, comprehensive plans, integrated land use and transportation plans, or corridor plans, environmental analysis, equity analysis, community engagement, feasibility studies, and other pre-construction activities.

Minimum matching fund requirements: 20% for urban areas, 0% for rural areas or historically disadvantaged communities, or areas of persistent poverty. (These are minimums and does not guarantee that applications at 100% federal will be successful).

Application requirements include project narrative, benefit-cost analysis, and supporting documentation.

Award Size

None specified.

Program Webpage:

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

Program Contact(s):

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Costa Pappis, VTrans Federal Policy Director
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U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

Reconnecting Communities Program

Total Program Funding: \$195,000,000

Program Open: October (date subject to change annually)

Program Description

Grants for planning and capital projects to be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that reconnect communities by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity, including to mobility, access, or economic development. Eligible uses for these funds include the:

- **Planning Grants** - public engagement activities, planning and feasibility studies, conceptual and preliminary engineering, design studies that support the environmental review for a construction project, and associated needs such as locally driven land use and zoning reform, transit-oriented development, housing supply, etc.
- **Capital Grants** - preliminary and detailed design activities and associated environmental studies; predevelopment / preconstruction; permitting activities including the completion of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process; the removal, retrofit, or mitigation of an eligible facility; the replacement of an eligible facility with a new facility that restores community connectivity; delivering community benefits and the mitigation of impacts identified through the NEPA process or other planning and project development for the capital construction project.

Minimum matching fund requirements: 50% for Capital grants, 20% for Planning grants.

Application requirements include project narrative, benefit-cost analysis, and supporting documentation.

Award Size

Planning Grants - minimum \$100,000, maximum \$2 million.

Capital Grants - minimum \$5 million, maximum \$100 million.

Program Webpage:

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/reconnecting-communities>

Program Contact(s):

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Costa Pappis, VTrans Federal Policy Director
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U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program

Total Program Funding: \$300,000,000

Program Open: May (date subject to change annually)

Program Description

Grants to be awarded on a competitive basis for rural surface transportation infrastructure projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. Eligible uses for these funds include the:

- A highway, bridge, or tunnel project eligible under National Highway Performance Program (23 U.S.C.119).
- A highway, bridge, or tunnel project eligible under Surface Transportation Block Grant (23 U.S.C. 133).
- A highway, bridge, or tunnel project eligible under Tribal Transportation Program (23 U.S.C. 202).
- A highway freight project eligible under National Highway Freight Program (23 U.S.C.167).
- A highway safety improvement project, including a project to improve a high risk rural road as defined by the Highway Safety Improvement Program (23 U.S.C. 148).
- A project on a publicly-owned highway or bridge that provides or increases access to an agricultural, commercial, energy, or intermodal facility that supports the economy of a rural area.
- A project to develop, establish, or maintain an integrated mobility management system.
- A transportation demand management system, or on-demand mobility services.

Minimum matching fund requirements: 20%.

Application requirements include project narrative, benefit-cost analysis, and supporting documentation.

Award Size

At least 90 percent of Rural grant amounts must be at least \$25 million, and up to 10 percent of Rural grants may be for grant amounts of less than \$25 million.

Program Webpage:

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

Program Contact(s):

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Costa Pappis, VTrans Federal Policy Director
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U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

Safe Streets and Roads for All Program

Total Program Funding: \$1,000,000,000

Program Open: September (date subject to change annually)

Program Description

Grants to be awarded on a competitive basis to support planning, infrastructure, behavioral, and operational initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets involving all roadway users, including pedestrians; bicyclists; public transportation, personal conveyance, and micromobility users; motorists; and commercial vehicle operators. Eligible uses for these funds include the:

- **Action Plan Grants (for comprehensive safety action plans).** Used to develop, complete, or supplement a comprehensive safety action plan.
- **Implementation Grants.** Available to implement strategies or projects that are consistent with an existing Action Plan (must have a qualifying Action Plan in place).

Minimum matching fund requirements: 20%.

Application requirements include project narrative and supporting documentation.

Award Size

Action Plan Grants - minimum of \$200,000 for all applicants, maximum \$1,000,000 for a political subdivision of a State and \$5,000,000 for a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) or a joint application comprised of a multijurisdictional group of entities that is regional in scope (e.g., a multijurisdictional group of counties, a council of governments and cities within the same region, etc.).

Implementation Grants - Rural areas: \$3 million minimum and \$30 million maximum; MPOs or multijurisdictional: \$5 million minimum and \$50 million maximum.

Program Webpage:

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>

Program Contact(s):

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U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation Program

Total Program Funding: \$100,000,000

Program Open: November (date subject to change annually)

Program Description

Grants to be awarded on a competitive basis to conduct demonstration projects focused on advanced smart city or community technologies to improve transportation efficiency and safety. Eligible uses for these funds include the:

- **Use of advanced data, technology, and applications to provide significant benefits to a local area, state, region, or the United States in the following categories:**
 - **Safety and reliability:** Improve the safety of systems for pedestrians, bicyclists, and the broader traveling public. Improve emergency response.
 - **Resiliency:** Increase the reliability and resilience of the transportation system, including cybersecurity and resilience to climate change effects.
 - **Equity and access:** Connect or expand access for underserved or disadvantaged populations. Improve access to jobs, education, and essential services.
 - **Climate:** Reduce congestion and / or air pollution, greenhouse gases, and energy efficiency.
 - **Partnerships:** Contribute to economic competitiveness and incentivize private sector investments or partnerships, including technical and financial commitments. Demonstrate committed leadership and capacity from the applicant, partners, and community.
 - **Integration:** Improve integration of systems and promote connectivity of infrastructure, connected vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and the broader traveling public.
 - **Data sharing, cybersecurity, and privacy:** Promote public and private sharing of data and best practices and the use of open platforms, technology-neutral, and interoperability.
 - **Workforce development:** Promote a skilled and inclusive workforce.

Minimum matching fund requirements: 0% for Stage I: Planning and Prototyping Grants. Unspecified for State II: Implementation Grants.

Application requirements include project narrative and supporting documentation.

Award Size

Stage I: Planning and Prototyping Grants (up to \$2 million in award size); Stage II: Implementation Grants (up to \$15 million in award size)

Program Webpage: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SMART>

Program Contact(s):

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Costa Pappis, VTrans Federal Policy Director
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U.S. Department of Transportation Grant Programs

Thriving Communities Grant Program

Total Program Funding: \$25,000,000

Program Open: May (date subject to change annually)

Program Description

Grants to establish a national technical assistance program that will drive innovation, advance equity outcomes, and build a national pipeline of community-driven infrastructure projects. This solicitation seeks eligible technical service providers (Capacity Building Teams) to assist communities who file letters of interest to receive technical assistance. Each CBT will provide individualized deep-dive support to 10-15 communities selected by DOT. Eligible uses for these funds include the:

- Capacity Builders will provide short-term technical assistance necessary to recipient communities to develop integrated plans, advance projects, conduct pre-development activities and to build longer-term organizational and community capacity. this could include but is not limited to:
 - Identifying and responding to funding opportunities including Federal discretionary grant applications.
 - Conducting project scoping, planning, and pre-engineering studies, market, and other technical analysis.
 - Supplementing local staffing and workforce development capacity.
 - Establishing leadership, fellowship, pre-apprenticeship, and apprenticeships programs.
 - Developing systems or structures that improve compliance with Federal grant management, including but not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and procurement requirements.
 - Supporting comprehensive community planning that better coordinate transportation with other land use, housing, and infrastructure development.
 - Implementing innovative public engagement strategies, particularly to involve traditionally underrepresented voices in the project identification, planning, and prioritization process.
 - Sub-granting to local technical assistance and capacity building partners who bring local expertise and capacity.
 - Evaluating and establishing emerging transportation and planning technologies, data systems and software.
- Capacity Builders will develop processes to engage with the selected recipients and their Community Partnerships to co-design a tailored scope of work and set of equitable development outcomes to be achieved over a two-year period of performance.
- DOT has identified three different Communities of Practice ("cohorts") to organize communities and their technical assistance, planning, and capacity building needs in relation to shared demographics, transportation challenges, and programmatic opportunities. The three cohorts are:
 - Main Streets – Focused on Tribal and rural communities and the interconnected transportation, community, housing, and economic development issues they face.
 - Complete Neighborhoods – Focused on urban and suburban communities located within Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) planning areas working to better coordinate transportation with land use, housing, and economic development.
 - Networked Communities – Focused on those communities located near ports, airports, freight, and rail facilities to address mobility, access, housing, environmental justice, and economic issues including leveraging their proximity to these facilities for wealth-building and economic development opportunities.

Minimum matching fund requirements: 0%.

Application requirements include project narrative and supporting documentation.

Award Size

\$3,500,000 to \$6,000,000 (anticipated)

Program Webpage:

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/thriving-communities>

Program Contact(s):

No federal contact included in the funding notice

ThrivingCommunities@dot.gov

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