# Joint Resolution

City of Kotzebue Resolution No. 22-07
Northwest Arctic Borough Resolution No. 22-01

**A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KOTZEBUE AND THE NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING THE CITY OF KOTZEBUE'S APPLICATION FOR A REBUILDING AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE WITH SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY ("RAISE") GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF NINE MILLION AND THIRTY-SEVEN THOUSAND DOLLARS ($9,037,000) AS PART OF THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL PROJECT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WITHIN THE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT ("BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW") FOR CAPE BLOSSOM PORT SITE DEVELOPMENT AND TO SHARE EQUALLY THE COST OF DEVELOPING AND SUBMITTING THIS GRANT APPLICATION IN THE AMOUNT OF TWENTY-SEVEN THOUSAND, NINE HUNDRED DOLLARS ($27,900).**

**WHEREAS,** the development of a Regional Port at Cape Blossom has been a priority of the City of Kotzebue and the Northwest Arctic Borough for several decades;

**WHEREAS**, the City of Kotzebue over the past decade has secured funding for Phase I of the Road to Cape Blossom and working with the State of Alaska, Department of Transportation/Public Facilities, that Project has started construction at this time;

**WHEREAS**, funding may be available through the RAISE Grant Program for the development of a Regional Port at Cape Blossom and time is of the essence for applying for these funds as set forth in Exhibit "A" attached hereto;

**WHEREAS**, the City of Kotzebue will take the lead in applying for this grant, the City will work closely with the Northwest Arctic Borough if these funds are awarded to effectively and efficiently expend the funds awarded to start the development process for the Regional Port at Cape Blossom;

**WHEREAS**, although the City of Kotzebue and Northwest Arctic Borough are united in their joint efforts on this most important Project, it is necessary for one

entity, the City of Kotzebue, to develop and submit this RAISE Grant application; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost of developing and submitting this RAISE Grant application is estimated to be $27,900 and the City of Kotzebue and Northwest Arctic Borough have agreed to share this cost equally.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the City of Kotzebue shall take the lead in applying for a $9,037,000 RAISE Grant for the Cape Blossom Port Site Development and the costs of developing and submitting the RAISE Grant application shall be shared equally between the City and the Borough.

Passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the Northwest Arctic Borough Assembly this 23rd day of February, 2022.

Nathan Hadley, Jr., President
Northwest Arctic Borough Assembly [SEAL]

Passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the City Council of the City of Kotzebue this 23rd day of February, 2022.

Sandra Shroyer-Beaver, Mayor
City of Kotzebue [SEAL]

Exhibit "A": USDOT RAISE Grant Notice – G4910-9X [35 pages/two pages per sheet]

G4910-9X

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Office of the Secretary of Transportation**

**Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Department of Transportation's National Infrastructure Investments (i.e., the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program) under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act ("Bipartisan Infrastructure Law")**

**AGENCY:** Office of the Secretary of Transportation, DOT

**ACTION:** Notice of Funding Opportunity

**SUMMARY:** The purpose of this notice is to solicit applications for Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grants. Funds for the FY 2022 RAISE grant program are to be awarded on a competitive basis for surface transportation infrastructure projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. This program is referred to as the Local and Regional Project Assistance Program in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act ("Bipartisan Infrastructure Law").

**DATES:** Applications must be submitted by 5:00 PM Eastern on April 14, 2022.

**ADDRESSES:** Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information concerning this notice, please contact the RAISE grant program staff via e-mail at RAISEgrants@dot.gov, or call Howard Hill at 202-366-0301. A TDD is available for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing at 202-366-3993. In addition, DOT will regularly post answers to questions and requests for clarifications as well as information about webinars for further guidance on DOT's website at www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants.



**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Each section of this notice contains information and instructions relevant to the application process for these RAISE grants, and all applicants should read this notice in its entirety so that they have the information they need to submit eligible and competitive applications.

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**A. Program Description**

**1. Overview**

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58, November 15, 2021, "Bipartisan Infrastructure Law," or "BIL") authorized and appropriated $1.5 billion to be awarded by the Department of Transportation ("DOT") for FY 2022 for Local and Regional Project Assistance Program Grants under National Infrastructure Investments. This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) solicits applications for projects to be funded under the Local and Regional Project Assistance Program, known as the RAISE Grants program, including any additional funding appropriated for the RAISE Grants program under the FY 2022 Appropriations Act. If the FY 2022 Appropriations Act significantly alters requirements for the RAISE Grant program, the Department will amend this Notice with guidance on additional requirements.



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RAISE Grants are for capital investments in surface transportation that will have a significant local or regional impact. Per the BIL, in addition to capital awards, DOT will award at least $75 million for eligible planning, preparation or design of projects eligible for RAISE Grants that do not result in construction with FY2022 RAISE funding. In addition, DOT will award at least $15 million for projects located in areas of persistent poverty or historically disadvantaged communities. If either of these amounts are changed by the FY 2022 Appropriations Act, DOT will amend this Notice.

Since 2009, $9.9 billion has been awarded under National Infrastructure Investments for capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure over 13 rounds of competitive grants. Throughout the program, these discretionary grant awards have supported projects that improve safety, economic strength and global competitiveness, equity, and climate and sustainability consistent with DOT's strategic goals.[1] FY 2022 RAISE grants continue to align with these strategic goals. The FY 2022 RAISE round will be implemented, as appropriate and consistent with law, in alignment with the priorities in Executive Order 14052, *Implementation of the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act* (86 FR 64355), which are to invest efficiently and equitably, promote the competitiveness of the U.S. economy, improve job opportunities by focusing on high labor standards, strengthen infrastructure resilience to all hazards including climate change, and to effectively coordinate with State, local, Tribal, and territorial government partners.

The Department seeks to fund projects under the RAISE Program that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and are designed with specific elements to address climate change impacts. Specifically, the Department is looking to award projects that align with the President's

[1] See U.S. Department of Transportation Strategic Framework FY 2022–2026 (Dec. 2021) at https://www.transportation.gov/administrations/office-policy/fy2022-2026-strategic-framework



greenhouse gas reduction goals, promote energy efficiency, support fiscally responsible land use and transportation efficient design, increase use of lower-carbon travel modes such as transit and active transportation, incorporate electrification or zero emission vehicle infrastructure, increase climate resilience, support domestic manufacturing, incorporate lower-carbon pavement and construction materials, reduce pollution, and recycle or redevelop brownfield sites.

The Department also seeks to award projects under the RAISE Program that address environmental justice, particularly for communities that disproportionally experience climate change-related consequences. Environmental justice, as defined by the Environmental Protection Agency, is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. As part of the Department's implementation of Executive Order 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad* (86 FR 7619), the Department seeks to fund projects that, to the extent possible, target at least 40 percent of resources and benefits towards low-income communities, disadvantaged communities, communities underserved by affordable transportation, or overburdened[2] communities. Projects that have not sufficiently considered climate change and environmental justice in their planning, as determined by the Department, will be required to before receiving funds for construction. See Section F.2 of this NOFO for program requirements.

The Department also seeks to award projects under the RAISE Program that proactively address racial equity and barriers to opportunity, including automobile dependence as a form of

[2] Overburdened Community: Minority, low-income, tribal, or indigenous populations or geographic locations in the United States that potentially experience disproportionate environmental harms and risks. This disproportionality can be as a result of greater vulnerability to environmental hazards, lack of opportunity for public participation, or other factors. Increased vulnerability may be attributable to an accumulation of negative or lack of positive environmental, health, economic, or social conditions within these populations or places. The term describes situations where multiple factors, including both environmental and socio-economic stressors, may act cumulatively to affect health and the environment and contribute to persistent environmental health disparities.



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barrier, or redress prior inequities and barriers to opportunity. Section E describes racial equity considerations that an applicant can undertake and the Department will consider during the review of applications. Projects that have not sufficiently considered racial equity in their planning, as determined by the Department, will be required to do so before receiving funds for construction. See Section F.2 of this NOFO for program requirements.

In addition to prioritizing projects that address climate change, proactively address racial equity, and reduce barriers to opportunity, the Department intends to use the RAISE program to support the creation of good-paying jobs with the free and fair choice to join a union and the incorporation of strong labor standards and training and placement programs, especially registered apprenticeships and Local Hire agreements, in project planning stages. Projects that incorporate such planning considerations are expected to support a strong economy and labor market. Section E describes job creation and labor considerations an applicant can undertake and the Department will consider during the review of applications. Projects that have not sufficiently considered job creation and labor considerations in their planning, as determined by the Department, will be required to do so to the full extent possible under the law before receiving funds for construction. See Section F.2 of this NOFO for program requirements

Section E of this NOFO, which outlines FY 2022 RAISE grant selection criteria, describes the process for selecting projects that further these goals. Section F.3 describes progress and performance reporting requirements for selected projects, including the relationship between that reporting and the program's selection criteria.

**2. Additional Information**

The RAISE grant program is described in the Federal Assistance Listings under the assistance listing program title "National Infrastructure Investments" and assistance listing number 20.933.



**3. Changes from the FY 2021 NOFO**

The Local and Regional Project Assistance Program was authorized in the BIL and is known as the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grants program (formerly TIGER and BUILD Transportation Grants).[3] This FY 2022 RAISE Notice updates the FY 2021 RAISE NOFO based on provisions specified in the BIL. For example, the BIL revised the list of eligible applicants to specify that the District of Columbia, Tribal governments, US Territories, units of local government, and public agencies or publicly chartered authorities established by one or more States are eligible applicants (Section C.1 of this NOFO). The BIL also expanded the eligible project list to include the surface transportation components of an airport project eligible for assistance under part B of subtitle VII title 49, United States Code, and projects to replace or rehabilitate a culvert or prevent stormwater runoff for the purpose of improving habitat for aquatic species while advancing the goals of the RAISE program (Section C.3 of this NOFO).

DOT will evaluate applications based on statutory primary selection criteria: safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, economic competitiveness and opportunity, state of good repair, and mobility and community connectivity. Statutory additional considerations include partnership and collaboration, innovation, demonstrated project readiness, and cost effectiveness. The Department evaluates safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, mobility and community connectivity, economic competitiveness and opportunity, state of good repair, partnership and collaboration, innovation as "merit criteria." The Department evaluates "project readiness" in three areas: technical assessment, environmental risk, and

[3] Section 21202 of the BIL codified this program at 49 U.S.C. 6702 as the Local and Regional Project Assistance Program, referred to in this NOFO as RAISE.



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financial completeness. The Department evaluates "cost effectiveness" through the economic benefit-cost analysis.

The RAISE FY 2022 review and selection process has been revised from prior rounds and is described in detail in Section E. The merit criteria review will now include ratings for each merit criterion that, in the aggregate, will determine which projects are reviewed by the Senior Review Team and advance to the Secretary for potential selection. Please see the merit criteria rating rubric in Section E.1.i. for more details. The safety, environmental sustainability, mobility and community connectivity, and quality of life merit criteria have greater priority in the process to advance projects for further analysis. Section E.2 of this Notice also provides more detail on the way selection criteria ratings will be used in the decision-making process to advance projects to the Secretary for potential selection.

The BIL directs that at least 5 percent of available funding, or $75 million, to be awarded for the planning, preparation or design of projects eligible for RAISE Grants. The BIL also directs that at least 1 percent of available funding, or $15 million, be awarded to projects located in historically disadvantaged communities or areas of persistent poverty. Areas of persistent poverty and historically disadvantaged communities are defined in Section C.3.iii.

Unlike FY 2021, all projects, including planning projects, have minimum award amounts; the minimum award for urban projects is $5 million and the minimum award for rural projects is $1 million (see Section B.2).

The BIL prohibits more than 15 percent of the available funds, or $225 million, from being awarded to eligible projects in a single State in FY 2022.

Applicants who are planning to re-apply using materials prepared for prior competitions should ensure that their FY 2022 application fully addresses the criteria and considerations described in this Notice and that all relevant information is up to date.



**B. Federal Award Information**

**1. Amount Available**

The BIL authorized and appropriated $1.5 billion to be awarded by DOT for RAISE grants under the Local and Regional Project Assistance Program for FY 2022. This Notice will be amended if additional amounts become available for this program under the FY 2022 Appropriations Act. FY 2022 RAISE grants are for capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure and are to be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant local or regional impact and improve transportation infrastructure. DOT will award at least 5 percent of available funds, or $75 million (of the $1.5 billion) for the planning, preparation or design of eligible projects. DOT refers to awards for the planning, preparation or design of eligible projects that do not result in construction with RAISE FY 2022 funding as planning grants. DOT will award at least 1 percent of available funds, or $15 million, for projects located in historically disadvantaged communities or areas of persistent poverty. The BIL allows DOT to retain up to 2 percent, or $30 million, of the $1.5 billion for oversight and administration of grants and credit assistance made under the program.

The Department does not anticipate awarding additional funding from prior rounds; however, if unobligated program funds are made available from prior rounds, they may be awarded under this solicitation to projects that can be obligated before the obligation deadline associated with the respective prior year funds. If this solicitation does not result in the award and obligation of all available funds, DOT may publish additional solicitations.

The BIL allows up to 20 percent of available funds (or $300 million) to be used by DOT to pay the subsidy and administrative costs of a project receiving credit assistance under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 1998 (TIFIA) or Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) programs.



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**2. Award Size**

The BIL specifies that the minimum RAISE grant award is $5 million, except that for projects located in rural areas (as defined in Section C.3.ii) the minimum award size is $1 million. Grants may not be greater than $25 million. Under the RAISE FY 2022 program, minimum and maximum award sizes are the same for capital and planning projects. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications only for eligible award amounts.

**3. Restrictions on Funding**

Pursuant to the BIL, no more than 15 percent of the funds made available for RAISE grants (or $225 million) may be awarded to projects in a single State. The BIL also directs that not more than 50 percent of the funds provided for RAISE grants (or $750 million) shall be awarded to rural projects (as defined in section C.3.ii) and directs that not more than 50 percent of the funds provided for RAISE grants (or $750 million) shall be awarded to urban projects (as defined in section C.3.ii). If these amounts are changed by the FY 2022 Appropriations Act, DOT will amend this Notice. Further, DOT must consider geographical and modal diversity.

**4. Availability of Funds**

The BIL requires that FY 2022 RAISE grant funds are available for obligation only through September 30, 2026. Obligation occurs when a selected applicant and DOT enter into a written grant agreement after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements, including transportation planning and environmental review requirements. Unless authorized by DOT in writing after DOT's announcement of FY 2022 RAISE awards, any costs incurred prior to DOT's obligation of funds for a project ("pre-award costs") are ineligible for reimbursement.[4]

[4] Pre-award costs are only costs incurred directly pursuant to the negotiation and anticipation of the RAISE award where such costs are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the scope of work, as determined by DOT. Costs incurred under an advance construction (23 U.S.C. 115) authorization before the DOT announces that a project is selected for a FY 2022 RAISE award cannot be charged to FY 2022 RAISE funds. Likewise, costs



All FY 2022 RAISE funds must be expended (the grant obligation must be liquidated or paid out to the grant recipient) by September 30, 2031. After this date, unliquidated funds are no longer available to the project. As part of the review and selection process described in Section E.2., DOT will consider a project's likelihood of being ready to proceed with an obligation of RAISE grant funds within the statutory timeline. No waiver is possible for these deadlines.

**5. Previous RAISE/BUILD/TIGER Awards**

Recipients of RAISE/BUILD/TIGER grants may apply for funding to support additional phases of a project previously awarded funds in the RAISE/BUILD/TIGER program. However, to be competitive, the applicant should demonstrate the extent to which the previously funded project phase has met estimated project schedules and budget, as well as the ability to realize the benefits expected for the project. A previous RAISE/BUILD/TIGER award, or application, does not affect competitiveness under the FY 2022 RAISE competition.

**C. Eligibility Information**

To be selected for a RAISE grant, an applicant must be an Eligible Applicant and the project must be an Eligible Project.

**1. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible Applicants for RAISE grants are: States and the District of Columbia; any territory or possession of the United States; a unit of local government; a public agency or publicly chartered authority established by one or more States; a special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, including a port authority; a federally recognized Indian Tribe or a consortium of such Indian Tribes; a transit agency; and a multi-State or

incurred under an FTA Letter of No Prejudice under Chapter 53 of title 49 U.S.C. before the DOT announces that a project is selected for a FY 2022 RAISE award, cannot be charged to FY 2022 RAISE funds.



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multijurisdictional group of entities that are separately eligible. Federal agencies are not eligible applicants for the RAISE FY 2022 program.

Multiple States or jurisdictions may submit a joint application and should identify a lead applicant as the primary point of contact and also identify the primary recipient of the award. Joint applications should include a description of the roles and responsibilities of each applicant.

DOT expects that the eligible applicant that submits the application will administer and deliver the project. If the applicant seeks a transfer of the award to another agency, that intention should be made clear in the application and a letter of support from the otherwise eligible, designated entity should be included in the application.

**2. Cost Sharing or Matching**

Per the BIL, the Federal share of project costs for which an expenditure is made under the RAISE grant program may not exceed 80 percent unless the project is located in a rural area, a historically disadvantaged community, or an area of persistent poverty.[5] Urban area and rural area are defined in Section C.3.ii of this notice. Historically Disadvantaged Communities and Areas of persistent poverty are defined in Section C.3.iii.

Non-Federal sources include State funds originating from programs funded by State revenue, local funds originating from State or local revenue-funded programs, or private funds. The BIL also allows for the following Federal funds to be considered "non-Federal" for the purpose of the RAISE program: (A) tribal transportation program funds under section 202 of title 23; (B) Federal lands transportation program funds under section 203 of title 23; (C) TIFIA program funds (as defined in section 601(a) of title 23); and (D) Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program under chapter 224. Toll credits under 23 U.S.C. 120(i) are considered a

[5] To meet match requirements, the minimum total project cost for a project located in an urban area must be $6.25 million.



Federal source under the RAISE program and, therefore, cannot be used to satisfy the statutory cost sharing requirement of a RAISE award. Unless otherwise authorized by statute, non-Federal cost-share may not be counted as the non-Federal share for both the RAISE grant and another Federal grant program. DOT will not consider previously incurred costs or previously expended or encumbered funds towards the matching requirement for any project. Matching funds are subject to the same Federal requirements described in Section F.2. as awarded funds. If repaid from non-Federal sources, Federal credit assistance is considered non-Federal share.

See Section D.2.iii for information about documenting cost sharing in the application.

For each project that receives a RAISE grant award, the terms of the award will require the recipient to complete the project using at least the level of non-Federal funding that was specified in the application. If the actual costs of the project are greater than the costs estimated in the application, the recipient will be responsible for increasing the non-Federal contribution. If the actual costs of the project are less than the costs estimated in the application, DOT will generally reduce the Federal contribution.

**3. Other**

i. Eligible Projects

(a) Capital Projects

Eligible projects for RAISE grants are surface transportation capital projects within the United States or any territory or possession of the United States that are: (1) highway, bridge, or other road projects eligible under title 23, United States Code; (2) public transportation projects eligible under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code; (3) passenger and freight rail transportation projects; (4) port infrastructure investments (including inland port infrastructure and land ports of entry); (5) the surface transportation components of an airport project eligible



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for assistance under part B of subtitle VII of title 49, United States Code;[6] (6) intermodal projects; (7) projects to replace or rehabilitate a culvert or prevent stormwater runoff for the purpose of improving habitat for aquatic species while advancing the goals of the RAISE program; (8) projects investing in surface transportation facilities that are located on Tribal land and for which title or maintenance responsibility is vested in the Federal Government; and (9) any other surface transportation infrastructure project that the Secretary considers to be necessary to advance the goals of the program.[7]

The Secretary considers the following projects necessary to advance the goals of the program, and therefore eligible: public road and non-motorized projects that are not otherwise eligible under title 23, United States Code, and intermodal projects. Research, demonstration, or pilot projects are eligible only if they will result in long-term, permanent surface transportation infrastructure that has independent utility as defined in Section C.3.iv. The following projects are not considered necessary to advance the goals of the program, and, therefore, they are ineligible: school bus electrification and broadband deployment as a standalone project. Improvements to Federally owned facilities are ineligible under the FY 2022 RAISE program, unless they are projects investing in surface transportation facilities that are located on Tribal land and for which title or maintenance responsibility is vested in the Federal Government. If a project type is not described as explicitly eligible or ineligible above, then applicants should explain in their application why the project is necessary to advance the goals of the program, and the Department will determine eligibility on a case-by-case basis.

[6] Eligible surface transportation components of eligible airport projects are those projects listed in "Appendix P: Road and Surface Transportation Projects" of the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) handbook, available at https://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/aip_handbook/?Chapter=Appendix#PP00. For more details on airport project eligibility, please see the Frequently Asked Questions at https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants.

[7] Please note that DOT may award a RAISE grant to pay for the surface transportation components of a broader project that has non-surface transportation components, and applicants are encouraged to apply for RAISE grants to pay for the surface transportation components of these projects.



(b) Planning Projects

Activities eligible for funding under RAISE planning grants are related to the planning, preparation, or design— for example environmental analysis, equity analysis, community engagement, feasibility studies, and other pre-construction activities—of eligible surface transportation capital projects described in Section C.3.i.(a) and may not result in construction with RAISE FY 2022 funding.

Under the RAISE FY 2022 program, if an application includes right-of-way acquisition, the project will be considered a capital project. Projects that include right-of-way acquisition should include a timeline for construction.

In addition, activities eligible for RAISE planning grants include those related to multidisciplinary projects or regional planning, such as: (1) development of master plans, comprehensive plans, integrated land use and transportation plans, or corridor plans; (2) planning activities related to the development of a multimodal freight corridor, including those that seek to reduce conflicts with residential areas and with passenger and non-motorized traffic; (3) development of port and regional port planning grants, including State-wide or multi-port planning within a single jurisdiction or region; or (4) risk assessments and planning to identify vulnerabilities and address the transportation system's ability to withstand probable occurrence or recurrence of an emergency or major disaster.

ii. Rural/Urban Definition

For purposes of this notice, a project is designated as urban if it is located within (or on the boundary of) a Census-designated urbanized area[8] that had a population greater than 200,000 in

[8] Lists of 2010 UAs as defined by the Census Bureau are available on the Census Bureau website at https://www.census.gov/geographies/reference-maps/2010/geo/2010-census-urban-areas.html.



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the 2010 Census.[9] If a project is located outside a Census-designated urbanized area with a population greater than 200,000, it is designated as a rural project. Rural and urban definitions differ in some other DOT programs, including TIFIA.

A project located in both an urban and a rural area will be designated as *urban* if the majority of the project's costs will be spent in urban areas. Conversely, a project located in both an urban area and a rural area will be designated as *rural* if the majority of the project's costs will be spent in rural areas. For RAISE planning grants, the location of the project being planned, prepared, or designed will be used for the urban or rural designation.

This definition affects four aspects of the program: (1) not more than 50 percent (or $750 million) of the funds provided for RAISE grants are to be used for projects in rural areas; (2) not more than 50 percent (or $750 million) of the funds provided for RAISE grants are to be used for projects in urban areas; (3) for a project in a rural area, the minimum award is $1 million, while the minimum award for urban areas is $5 million; and (4) the Secretary may increase the Federal share above 80 percent to pay for the eligible costs of a project in a rural area.

iii. Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities

The Secretary may increase the Federal cost share above 80 percent for projects located in an Area of Persistent Poverty or a Historically Disadvantaged Community. Additionally, DOT must award at least one percent of available funds, or $15 million, for projects located in historically disadvantaged communities or areas of persistent poverty.

(a) Areas of Persistent Poverty means: (1) any county that has consistently had greater than or equal to 20 percent of the population living in poverty during the 30-year period preceding November 15, 2021, as measured by the 1990 and 2000[10] decennial census and the most recent annual Small Area Income Poverty Estimates as estimated by the Bureau of the census[11]; (2) any census tract with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent as measured by the 2014-2018 5-year data series available from the American Community Survey of the Bureau of the Census[12]; or (3) any territory or possession of the United States. A county satisfies this definition only if 20 percent of its population was living in poverty in all three of the listed datasets: (a) the 1990 decennial census; (b) the 2000 decennial census; and (c) the 2020 Small Area Income Poverty Estimates. DOT will list all counties and census tracts that meet this definition for Areas of Persistent Poverty on the RAISE website at www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-app-hdc.

(b) Historically Disadvantaged Communities – DOT has been developing a definition of Historically Disadvantaged Communities as part of its implementation of the Justice40 Initiative and will use that definition for the purpose of this Notice of Funding Opportunity. Consistent with OMB's Interim Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative[13], Historically Disadvantaged Communities include (a) certain qualifying census tracts, (b) any Tribal land, or (c) any territory or possession of the United States. DOT is providing a list of census tracts that meet the definition of Historically Disadvantaged Communities, as well as a mapping tool to assist applicants in identifying whether a project is located in a Historically Disadvantaged Community, available at www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-app-hdc.

[9] For the purpose of this NOFO, the definition of urban and rural is based on the 2010 Census-designated urbanized areas. The Department is required by the BIL to use the most recent decennial census information; however urbanized areas have not been designated for the 2020 Census at the time of this NOFO publication. See www.transportation.gov/RAISEBUILDgrants for a list of 2010 Census-designated UAs.



[10] See https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/dec/census-poverty.html for county dataset.
[11] See https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/2020/demo/saipe/2020-state-and-county.html for December 2020 Small Area Income Poverty Dataset
[12] See https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=ACSST1Y2018.S1701&tid=ACSST5Y2018.S1701&hidePreview=false for 2014-2018 five year data series from the American Community Survey
[13] https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/M-21-28.pdf



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iv. Project Components

An application may describe a project that contains more than one component, and may describe components that may be carried out by parties other than the applicant. DOT expects, and will impose requirements on fund recipients to ensure, that all components included in an application will be delivered as part of the RAISE project, regardless of whether a component includes Federal funding. The status of each component should be clearly described (for example, in the project schedule). DOT may award funds for a component, instead of the larger project, if that component: (1) independently meets minimum award amounts described in Section B and all eligibility requirements described in Section C; (2) independently aligns well with the selection criteria specified in Section E.1; and (3) meets National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements with respect to independent utility. Independent utility means that the component will represent a transportation improvement that is usable and represents a reasonable expenditure of DOT funds even if no other improvements are made in the area, and will be ready for intended use upon completion of that component's construction. All project components that are presented together in a single application must demonstrate a relationship or connection between them. See Section D.2. for Required Approvals.

Applicants should be aware that, depending upon the relationship between project components and applicable Federal law, DOT funding of only some project components may make other project components subject to Federal requirements as described in Section F.2.

DOT strongly encourages applicants to identify in their applications the project components that have independent utility and separately detail costs and requested RAISE grant funding for those components. If the application identifies one or more independent project components, the application should clearly identify how each independent component addresses



selection criteria and produces benefits on its own, in addition to describing how the full proposal of which the independent component is a part addresses selection criteria.

v. Application Limit

Each lead applicant may submit no more than three applications. Unrelated project components should not be bundled in a single application for the purpose of adhering to the limit. If a lead applicant submits more than three applications as the lead applicant, only the first three received will be considered.

**D. Application and Submission Information**

**1. Address to Request Application Package**

Instructions for submitting applications can be found at www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants along with specific instructions for the forms and attachments required for submission.

**2. Content and Form of Application Submission**

The application must include the Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance), cover page, and the Project Narrative. Applicants are encouraged to complete the SF-424C and attach to their application the "RAISE 2022 Project Information Form" available at www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-info

DOT recommends that the project narrative follow the basic outline below to address the program requirements and assist evaluators in locating relevant information.

| | |
|---|---|
| I. Project Description | See D.2.i |
| II. Project Location | See D.2.ii |
| III. Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of all Project Funding | See D.2.iii |
| IV. Merit Criteria | See D.2. iv. and E.1 |
| V. Project Readiness: Environmental Risk | See D.2. v. and E.1.ii |
| VI. Benefit Cost Analysis | See D.2.vi. and E.1. iii. |



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The project narrative should include the information necessary for DOT to determine that the project satisfies project requirements described in Sections B and C and to assess the selection criteria specified in Section E.1. To the extent practicable, applicants should provide supporting data and documentation in a form that is directly verifiable by DOT. DOT expects applications to be complete upon submission and will evaluate the application based on information submitted. DOT may ask any applicant to supplement data in its application but is not required to do so. Lack of supporting information provided with the application negatively affects competitiveness of the application, as described in Section E.2.

In addition to a detailed statement of work, detailed project schedule, and detailed project budget, the project narrative should include a table of contents, maps and graphics, as appropriate, to make the information easier to review. DOT recommends that the project narrative be prepared with standard formatting preferences (a single-spaced document, using a standard 12-point font such as Times New Roman, with 1-inch margins). The project narrative may not exceed 30 pages in length, excluding cover pages and table of contents. The only substantive portions that may exceed the 30-page limit are documents supporting assertions or conclusions made in the 30-page project narrative, but evaluators are not required to review supporting documents as part of the merit review described in Section E. If possible, website links to supporting documentation should be provided rather than copies of these supporting materials. If supporting documents are submitted, applicants should clearly reference these in the respective section of the project narrative. DOT recommends using appropriately descriptive file names (e.g., "Project Narrative," "Maps," "Memoranda of Understanding and Letters of Support,") for all attachments. DOT recommends applications include the following sections:



i. Project Description

The first section of the application should provide a description of the project, the transportation challenges that it is intended to address, and how it will address those challenges. This section should discuss the project's history, including a description of any previously completed components. The applicant may use this section to place the project into a broader context of other transportation infrastructure investments being pursued by the project sponsor. Applicants should include a detailed statement of work that focuses on the technical and engineering aspects of the project, the current design status of the project, and describes in detail the project to be constructed.

ii. Project Location

This section of the application should describe the project location, including a detailed geographical description of the proposed project, a map of the project's location, and description of connections to existing transportation infrastructure. The application should also identify:

(a) whether the project is located in an Area of Persistent Poverty, including the relevant County and/or census tract(s);

(b) whether the project is located in a historically disadvantaged community, including the relevant census tract(s);

(c) the Census-designated urbanized area in which the project is located, if relevant; and

(d) whether the project is located in one of four Federally designated community development zones (Opportunity Zones, Empowerment Zones, Promise Zones, or Choice Neighborhoods)

Information under (d) may be used for internal data tracking.



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iii. Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of Project Funds

This section of the application should describe the budget for the RAISE project (i.e. the project scope that includes RAISE funding) including information about the degree of design completion on which the cost was estimated. This budget should **not** include any previously incurred expenses. The budget should show how each source of funds will be spent. The budget should also show how each funding source will share in each major construction activity, and present that data in dollars and percentages. If applicable, the budget should identify Federal funds that have been previously authorized by a Federal agency. Funding sources should be grouped into three categories: non-Federal, RAISE, and other Federal with specific amounts from each funding source. If the project contains individual components, the budget should separate the costs of each project component. If the project will be completed in phases, the budget should separate the costs of each phase. The budget should clearly identify any expenses expected to be incurred between time of award and obligation because these expenses are not eligible for reimbursement, as described in Section B.4, or for cost sharing, as described in Section C.2. The budget details should sufficiently demonstrate that the project satisfies the statutory cost-sharing requirements described in Section C.2. At a minimum, the project budget should include:

(a) Costs for the FY 2022 RAISE project;

(b) For all funds to be used for eligible project costs, the source and amount of those funds;

(c) For non-Federal funds to be used for eligible project costs, documentation of funding commitments. Documentation should also be included as an appendix to the application. If the applicant is not a State DOT and matching contributions from a State DOT are included as non-Federal match, a supporting letter from the



State indicating the source of the funds; and

(d) For Federal funds to be used for eligible project costs, the amount, nature, and source of any required non-Federal match for those funds.

In addition to the information enumerated above, this section should provide complete information on how all project funds may be used. For example, if a particular source of funds is available only after a condition is satisfied, the application should identify that condition and describe the applicant's control over whether it is satisfied. Similarly, if a particular source of funds is available for expenditure only during a fixed time period, the application should describe that restriction. Complete information about project funds will ensure that DOT's expectations for award execution align with any funding restrictions unrelated to DOT, even if an award differs from the applicant's request.

iv. Merit Criteria

This section of the application should demonstrate how the project aligns with the criteria described in Section E.1 of this notice. DOT encourages applicants to address each criterion. Insufficient information to assess any criterion will negatively impact the project rating. Applicants are not required to follow a specific format, but the outline suggested addresses each criterion separately and promotes a clear discussion that assists project evaluators. To minimize redundant information in the application, DOT encourages applicants to cross-reference from this section of their application to relevant substantive information in other sections of the application. The guidance in this section is about how the applicant should organize their application. Guidance describing how DOT will evaluate projects against the Selection Criteria is in Section E.1 of this notice. Applicants also should review that section before considering how to organize their application.

(a) Safety

This section of the application should describe the anticipated outcomes of the project that support the Safety criterion (described in Section E.1.i.(a) of this notice). The applicant should include information on, and to the extent possible, quantify, how the project will target known, documented safety problems within the project area or wider transportation network, and demonstrate how the project will protect motorized and non-motorized travelers or communities from health and safety risks. The application should provide evidence to support the claimed level of effectiveness of the project in protecting motorized and non-motorized travelers from health and safety risks, such as the number or rate of reduced crashes, serious injuries, and/or fatalities.

(b) Environmental Sustainability

This section of the application should describe how the project addresses the Environmental Sustainability criterion (described in Section E.1.i.(b) of this notice). Applicants are encouraged to include information demonstrating how the project will reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, increase use of lower-carbon travel modes such as transit active transportation, improve resiliency of at-risk infrastructure,[14] be constructed consistent with the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard, to the extent consistent with current law, incorporate lower-carbon pavement and construction materials, or address the disproportionate negative environmental impacts of transportation on disadvantaged communities. Additional information for how this criterion will be evaluated is in Section E.1.i. of this notice.

(c) Quality of Life

[14] For the RAISE program, at-risk infrastructure is defined as infrastructure that is subject to, or faces increased long-term future risks of, a weather event, a natural disaster, or changing conditions, such as coastal flooding, coastal erosion, wave action, storm surge, or sea level rise, in order to improve transportation and public safety and to reduce costs by avoiding larger future maintenance or rebuilding costs.



This section should describe how the project improves quality of life by increasing equity and accessibility for travelers, reducing transportation and housing cost burdens, including by facilitating greater public and private investments in commercial and mixed-income residential development near public transportation, along rural main streets or other walkable neighborhoods, removing physical barriers for individuals and communities; proactively addressing racial equity and barriers to opportunity, including automobile dependence as a form of barrier, or redress prior inequities and barriers to opportunity; or enhancing the unique characteristics of the community (described in Section E.1.i.(c) of this notice).

(d) Improves Mobility and Community Connectivity

This section of the application should describe how the project will increase mobility and expand connectivity for all users of a project, particularly non-motorized travelers (those walking, cycling, rolling, or using transit). The application should include details on how the project encourages individuals and communities to move around freely with or without a car, and create neighborhoods where people can live, work, and play. If applicable, this section should describe how the project will meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements and be accessible to people with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs. Projects that increase mobility for freight movement and improve supply chains should describe the details and impacts of those outcomes. Additional information for how this criterion will be evaluated is in Section E.1.i. of this notice.

(e) Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity

This section of the application should describe how the project will support the Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity criterion (described in Section E.1.i.(d) of this notice). The applicant should include information about expected improvements to system operations to increase travel time reliability and manage travel demand for goods movement, especially for



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supply chain bottle necks, thereby increasing velocity and improving local and regional freight connectivity to the national and global economy. The application should include information on how the project increases affordable transportation options and system connectivity to revitalize communities, increase access to location-efficient affordable housing, reduces burdens of commuting, increases tourism opportunities, or improves overall well-being. Applicants should also describe whether and how project delivery and implementation create good-paying jobs with the free and fair choice to join a union to the greatest extent possible, the use of demonstrated strong labor standards, practices and policies (including for direct employees, contractors, and sub-contractors); use of project labor agreements, and distribution of workplace rights notices; the use of Local Hire provisions;[15] registered apprenticeships; or other similar standards or practices. Applicants should describe how planned methods of project delivery and implementation (for example, use of Project Labor Agreements and/or Local Hire provisions,[16] training and placement programs for underrepresented workers) provides opportunities for all workers, including workers underrepresented in construction jobs to be trained and placed in good-paying jobs directly related to the project. The applicant should describe the extent to which the project and local and regional policies related to the project will contribute to the functioning and growth of the economy, including the extent to which the project addresses congestion or freight connectivity, bridges service gaps in rural areas, or promotes greater public and private investments in land-use productivity, including rural main street revitalization or locally-driven density decisions that support equitable commercial and mixed-income residential development.

[15] IIJA div. B § 25019 provides authority to use geographical and economic hiring preferences, including local hire, for construction jobs, subject to any applicable State and local laws, policies, and procedures.
[16] Project labor agreement should be consistent with the definition and standards outlined in Executive Order 13502.



(f) State of Good Repair

This section of the application should describe how the project will contribute to a state of good repair by restoring and modernizing core infrastructure assets, and/or addressing current or projected system vulnerabilities (described in Section E.1.i.(e) of this notice). The application should include information on the current condition of all assets that will be affected by the project, how the proposed project will improve asset condition, plans to ensure the ongoing state of good repair of new assets constructed as part of the project, and any estimates of impacts on long-term cost structures or overall life-cycle costs.

(g) Partnership and Collaboration

This section of the application should include information to assess the partnership criterion (described in Section E.1.ii.(a) of this notice) including how the project has or will engage communities affected by the project, and demonstrates that equity considerations for disadvantaged communities are meaningfully integrated into planning, development, and implementation of transportation investments, particularly Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs). The application should describe any public involvement plan or targeted outreach, demonstrating engagement of diverse input during project planning. This section should note if the applicant is participating in a non-DOT Federal capacity-building program for the area served by the project. The application should include a list of all project parties and details about the proposed grant recipient and other public and private parties who are involved in delivering the project. If applicable, this section should describe a right-of-way acquisition plan that minimally disrupts communities and maintains community cohesion.

Applications for projects involving other Federal agencies, or requiring action from other Federal agencies, should demonstrate commitment and involvement of those agencies. For



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example, relevant port projects should demonstrate alignment with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers investment strategies.

(b) Innovation

This section of the application should describe innovative strategies used and the anticipated benefits of using those strategies, including those corresponding to three categories (described in Section E.1.ii.(b) of this notice): (i) Innovative Technologies, (ii) Innovative Project Delivery, and (iii) Innovative Financing.

(i) Innovative Technologies

If an applicant is proposing to adopt innovative technology or other innovative practices, the application should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to implement those innovations, the applicant's understanding of applicable Federal requirements and whether the innovations may require extraordinary permitting, approvals, exemptions, waivers, or other procedural actions, and the effects of those innovations on the project delivery timeline. The applicant should describe how the technologies or practices drive safety, equity, climate and resilience, or economic outcomes, and will be incorporated into the project and broader supply chains to enhance data collection, digital connectivity, and augment workers.

If an applicant is proposing to deploy autonomous vehicles or other innovative motor vehicle technology, the application should demonstrate that all vehicles will comply with applicable safety requirements, including those administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). Specifically, the application should show that vehicles acquired for the proposed project will comply with applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR). If the vehicles may not comply, the application should either (1) show that the vehicles and their proposed operations are within the scope of an



exemption or waiver that has already been granted by NHTSA, FMCSA, or both agencies or (2) directly address whether the project will require exemptions or waivers from the FMVSS, FMCSR, or any other regulation and, if the project will require exemptions or waivers, present a plan for obtaining them.

(ii) Innovative Project Delivery

If an applicant plans to use innovative approaches to project delivery, such as a public-private partnership, applicants should describe those project delivery methods and how they are expected to improve the efficiency of the project development or expedite project delivery.

(iii) Innovative Financing

If an applicant plans to incorporate innovative funding or financing, the applicant should describe the funding or financing approach, including a description of all activities undertaken to pursue private funding or financing for the project and the outcomes of those activities.

v. Project Readiness

Project Readiness will be assessed based on a Technical Assessment, Financial Completeness Assessment, and Environmental Risk Assessment. The application should contain a section that explicitly addresses Environmental Risk. The Technical Assessment and Financial Completeness Assessment will be based on information contained throughout the application.

a. Environmental Risk

This section of the application should include sufficient information for DOT to evaluate whether the project is reasonably expected to begin construction in a timely manner consistent with all applicable local, State, and Federal requirements. To assist DOT's project environmental risk review, the applicant should provide the information requested on project schedule, required approvals and permits, NEPA class of action and status, public involvement, right-of-way acquisition plans, risk and mitigation strategies, each of which is described in



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greater detail in the following sections. Applicants are not required to follow the specific format described here, but this organization, which addresses each relevant aspect of environmental risk, promotes a clear discussion that assists project evaluators. To minimize redundant information in the application, DOT encourages applicants to cross-reference from this section of their application to relevant substantive information in other sections of the application.

The guidance here is about what information applicants should provide and how the applicant should organize their application. Guidance describing how DOT will evaluate environmental risk is described in Section E.1.ii of this notice. Applicants should review that section when considering how to organize their application.

(a) Project Schedule

The applicant should include a detailed project schedule that identifies all major project milestones. Examples of such milestones include State and local planning approvals (e.g., programming on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program); start and completion of NEPA and other Federal environmental reviews and approvals including permitting; design completion; right of way acquisition; approval of plans, specifications and estimates; procurement; State and local approvals; public involvement; project partnership and implementation agreements, including agreements with railroads; and construction. The project schedule should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate that:

1) all necessary activities will be complete to allow RAISE grant funds to be obligated sufficiently in advance of the statutory deadline (June 30, 2026),[17] and

[17] The statutory obligation deadline is September 30, 2026. The Department assesses risk against an earlier deadline of June 30, 2026 to allow time to complete administrative processing and address challenges before the statutory deadline.



that any unexpected delays will not put the funds at risk of expiring before they are obligated;

2) the project can begin construction upon obligation of grant funds and that those funds will be spent expeditiously once construction starts, with all funds expended by September 30, 2031; and

3) all real property and right-of-way acquisition will be completed in a timely manner in accordance with 49 CFR part 24, 23 CFR part 710, and other applicable legal requirements or a statement that no right-of-way acquisition is necessary.

4) the applicant has meaningfully sought community input through public involvement, particularly engaging environmental justice communities or disadvantaged communities that may be affected by the project where applicable.

(b) Required Approvals

1. Environmental Permits and Reviews. The application should demonstrate receipt (or reasonably anticipated receipt) of all environmental approvals and permits necessary for the project to proceed to construction on the timeline specified in the project schedule and necessary to meet the statutory obligation deadline, including satisfaction of all Federal, State and local requirements and completion of the NEPA process. Specifically, the application should include:

   i. Information about the NEPA status of the project. If the NEPA process is complete, an applicant should indicate the date of completion, and provide a website link or other reference to the final Categorical Exclusion, Finding of No Significant Impact, Record of Decision, and any other NEPA documents prepared. If the NEPA process is underway, but not complete, the



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application should detail the type of NEPA review underway, where the project is in the process, and indicate the anticipated date of completion of all milestones and of the final NEPA determination. If the last agency action with respect to NEPA documents occurred more than three years before the application date, the applicant should describe why the project has been delayed and include a proposed approach for verifying and, if necessary, updating this material in accordance with applicable NEPA requirements.

ii. Information on reviews, approvals, and permits by other agencies. An application should indicate whether the proposed project requires reviews or approval actions by other agencies,[18] indicate the status of such actions, and provide detailed information about the status of those reviews or approvals and should demonstrate compliance with any other applicable Federal, State or local requirements, and when such approvals are expected. Applicants should provide a website link or other reference to copies of any reviews, approvals, and permits prepared.

iii. Environmental studies or other documents, preferably through a website link, that describe in detail known project impacts, and possible mitigation for those impacts.

iv. A description of discussions with the appropriate DOT operating administration field or headquarters office regarding the project's compliance with NEPA and other applicable Federal environmental reviews and approvals.

[18] Projects that may impact protected resources such as wetlands, species habitat, cultural or historic resources require review and approval by Federal and State agencies with jurisdiction over those resources.



v. If applicable, right-of-way acquisition plans, with detailed schedule and compensation plan.

vi. A description of public engagement about the project that has occurred, proactively inclusive of historically disadvantaged communities, including details on compliance with environmental justice requirements and the degree to which public comments and commitments have been integrated into project development and design. Right-of-Way acquisition plans should be provided if applicable.

2. State and Local Approvals. The applicant should demonstrate receipt of State and local approvals on which the project depends, such as State and local environmental and planning approvals and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) or Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding. For projects acquiring State DOT-owned right of way, applicants should demonstrate they have coordinated the project with the State DOT or transportation facility owner. Additional support from relevant State and local officials is not required; however, an applicant should demonstrate that the project has broad public support.

3. Federal Transportation Requirements Affecting State and Local Planning. The planning requirements applicable to the relevant operating administration apply to



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all RAISE grant projects,[19] including projects located at airport facilities.[20] Applicants should demonstrate that a project that is required to be included in the relevant State, metropolitan, and local planning documents has been or will be included in such documents. If the project is not included in a relevant planning document at the time the application is submitted, the applicant should submit a statement from the appropriate planning agency that actions are underway to include the project in the relevant planning document. To the extent possible, freight projects should be included in a State Freight Plan and supported by a State Freight Advisory Committee (49 U.S.C. 70201, 70202), if these exist. Applicants should provide links or other documentation supporting this consideration such as letters of support from the State DOT if the project is

[19] Under 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135, all projects requiring an action by FHWA must be in the applicable plan and programming documents (e.g., metropolitan transportation plan, transportation improvement program (TIP) and statewide transportation improvement program (STIP)). Further, in air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas, all regionally significant projects, regardless of the funding source, must be included in the conforming metropolitan transportation plan and TIP. Inclusion in the STIP is required under certain circumstances. To the extent a project is required to be on a metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, and/or STIP, it will not receive a RAISE grant until it is included in such plans. Plans that do not currently include the awarded RAISE project can be amended by the State and MPO. Projects that are not required to be in long range transportation plans, STIPs, and TIPs will not need to be included in such plans to receive a RAISE grant. Port, freight rail, and intermodal projects are not required to be on the State Rail Plans called for in the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008, or in a State Freight Plan (unless National Highway Freight Program funding is identified as a source of other federal funding – States may modify their Freight Investment Plan of a State Freight Plan after award of discretionary grant funding; non-State applicants would need a letter from the State indicating intent to add to State Freight Plan for use of NHFP funding pursuant to selection). However, applicants seeking funding for freight projects are encouraged to demonstrate that they have done sufficient planning to ensure that projects fit into a prioritized list of capital needs and are consistent with long-range goals. Means of demonstrating this consistency would include whether the project is in a TIP or a State Freight Plan that conforms to the requirements 49 U.S.C. 70202 prior to the start of construction. The Port Planning and Investment Took Kit is available at https://aapa.cms-plus.com/files/PDFs/Toolkit/Final%20toolkit.pdf

[20] Projects at or near airports must be compatible with any FAA-approved Airport Layout Plan for each associated airport, applicable airport safety and airspace standards, including aeronautical surfaces associated with the landing and takeoff of aircraft at the airport, 14 CFR Part 77, and compatible land-use. Additionally, projects at an airport must be consistent with established Sponsor Grant Assurances, including (but not limited to) requirements for non exclusive-use aeronautical facilities, consultation with users, consistency with local plans including development of the area surrounding the airport, and consideration of the interest of nearby communities, among others; and must not adversely affect the continued and unhindered access of passengers to the terminal.



intended to be included in the State Freight Plan, or results from application of the FHWA Freight Mobility Tool (https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/freight_analysis/mobility_trends/index.htm). Because projects have different schedules, the construction start date for each RAISE grant must be specified in the project-specific agreements signed by relevant operating administration and the grant recipients, based on critical path items that applicants identify in the application and will be consistent with relevant State and local plans.

(c) Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Project risks, such as procurement delays, environmental uncertainties, increases in real estate acquisition costs, uncommitted local match, unavailability of vehicles that either comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards or are exempt from Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards in a manner that allows for their legal acquisition and deployment, unavailability of domestically manufactured equipment, or lack of legislative approval, affect the likelihood of successful project start and completion. The applicant should provide a public involvement plan demonstrating meaningful engagement of the community affected by the project, to include environmental justice communities or disadvantaged communities, where applicable. The applicant should identify all material risks to the project and the strategies that the lead applicant and any project partners have undertaken or will undertake to mitigate those risks. The applicant should assess the greatest risks to the project and identify how the project parties will mitigate those risks.

If an applicant anticipates pursuing a waiver for relevant domestic preference laws, the applicant should describe steps that have been or will be taken to maximize the use of domestic goods, products, and materials in constructing its project.

To the extent the applicant is unfamiliar with the Federal program, the applicant should contact the appropriate DOT operating administration field or headquarters offices, as found in contact information at www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants, for information on the pre-requisite steps to obligate Federal funds in order to ensure that their project schedule is reasonable and that there are no risks of delays in satisfying Federal requirements.

RAISE planning grant applicants should describe their capacity to successfully implement the proposed activities in a timely manner.

vi. Benefit Cost Analysis

This section describes the recommended approach for the completion and submission of a benefit-cost analysis (BCA) as an appendix to the Project Narrative. The purpose of the BCA is to enable DOT to evaluate the project's cost-effectiveness by comparing its expected benefits to its expected costs. The results of the analysis should be summarized in the Project Narrative directly, as described in Section D.2. Applicants should also provide all relevant files used for their BCA, including any spreadsheet files and technical memos describing the analysis (whether created in-house or by a contractor). The spreadsheets and technical memos should present the calculations in sufficient detail and transparency to allow the analysis to be reproduced by DOT evaluators.



The BCA should carefully document the assumptions and methodology used to produce the analysis, including a description of the baseline, the sources of data used to project the outcomes of the project, and the values of key input parameters. The analysis should provide present value estimates of a project's benefits and costs relative to a no-build baseline. To calculate present values, applicants should apply a real discount rate of 7 percent per year to the project's streams of benefits and costs, which should be stated in constant-dollar terms. The costs and benefits that are compared in the BCA must cover the same project scope.

Any benefits claimed for the project, both quantified and unquantified, should be clearly tied to the expected outcomes of the project. Projected benefits may accrue to both users of the facility and those who are affected by its use (such as through changes in emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants or availability of more affordable transportation choices). Usage forecasts applied in estimating future benefits should account for any additional demand induced by the improvements to the facility. While benefits should be quantified wherever possible, applicants may also describe other categories of benefits in the BCA that are more difficult to quantify and/or value in economic terms.

The BCA should include the full costs of developing, constructing, operating, and maintaining the proposed project, as well as the expected timing or schedule for costs in each of these categories. The BCA may also consider the present discounted value of any remaining service life of the asset at the end of the analysis period.

Detailed guidance from DOT on estimating benefits and costs, together with recommended economic values for converting them to dollar terms and discounting to their present values, is available on the RAISE grant program website (see www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/additional-guidance).



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**3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

Each applicant must: 1) be registered in SAM before submitting its application; 2) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and 3) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. DOT may not make a RAISE grant to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time DOT is ready to make a RAISE grant, DOT may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a RAISE grant and use that determination as a basis for making a RAISE grant to another applicant.

**4. Submission Dates and Times**

Applications must be submitted by 5:00 PM Eastern on April 14, 2022. To submit an application through Grants.gov, applicants must:

(1) Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number;[21]

(2) Register with the System for Award Management (SAM) at www.SAM.gov;

(3) Create a Grants.gov username and password; and

(4) The E-Business Point of Contact (POC) at the applicant's organization must respond to the registration email from Grants.gov and login at Grants.gov to authorize the applicant as the Authorized Organization

[21] On April 4, 2022 the Federal government will stop using the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to uniquely identify entities. At that point, entities doing business with the Federal government will use a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) created in SAM.gov. If your entity is currently registered in SAM.gov, your UEI has already been assigned and is viewable in SAM.gov. This includes inactive registrations.



Representative (AOR). Please note that there can be more than one AOR for an organization.

Please note that the Grants.gov registration process usually takes 2-4 weeks to complete and that DOT will not consider late applications that are the result of failure to register or comply with Grants.gov applicant requirements in a timely manner. For information and instruction on each of these processes, please see instructions at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html. If applicants experience difficulties at any point during the registration or application process, please call the Grants.gov Customer Service Support Hotline at 1(800) 518-4726.

**5. Other Submission Requirements**

(a) Submission Location

Applications must be submitted to Grants.gov.

(b) Consideration of Applications:

Only applicants who comply with all submission deadlines described in this notice and electronically submit valid applications through Grants.gov will be eligible for award. Applicants are strongly encouraged to make submissions in advance of the deadline.

(c) Late Applications

Applicants experiencing technical issues with Grants.gov that are beyond the applicant's control must contact RAISEgrants@dot.gov prior to the application deadline with the user name of the registrant and details of the technical issue experienced. The applicant must provide:

(1) Details of the technical issue experienced;

(2) Screen capture(s) of the technical issues experienced along with corresponding Grants.gov "Grant tracking number;"

(3) The "Legal Business Name" for the applicant that was provided in the SF-424;

(4) The AOR name submitted in the SF-424;

(5) The UEI number associated with the application; and

(6) The Grants.gov Help Desk Tracking Number.

To ensure a fair competition of limited discretionary funds, the following conditions are not valid reasons to permit late submissions: (1) failure to complete the registration process before the deadline; (2) failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its website; (3) failure to follow all instructions in this notice of funding opportunity; and (4) technical issues experienced with the applicant's computer or information technology environment. After DOT reviews all information submitted and contacts the Grants.gov Help Desk to validate reported technical issues, DOT staff will contact late applicants to approve or deny a request to submit a late application through Grants.gov. DOT will not accept appeals of DOT's decision to approve or deny a request for a late application. If the reported technical issues cannot be validated, late applications will be rejected as untimely.

(d) Compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The Department encourages applicants to submit documents that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 508 guidelines are available at https://www.access-board.gov/ict/.

**E. Application Review Information**

**1. Criteria**

(a) Capital Projects

This section specifies the criteria that DOT will use to evaluate and award applications for RAISE grants. The criteria incorporate the statutory eligibility requirements for this program,



which are specified in this notice. The Department will review merit criteria for all applications and will review project readiness and benefit-cost analyses for a subset of projects based on the merit criteria. Section E.2 describes the review and selection process.

i. Merit Criteria

For each merit criterion, the Department will consider whether the benefits are clear, direct, data-driven, and significant, which will result in a rating of "high," "medium," "low," or "non-responsive." As further described in the rubric below, to receive a "high" criterion rating, the criterion must be addressed as a primary project purpose (not an ancillary or incidental consideration), significant benefits in the criterion must accrue to and the benefits must represent more than standard, common practice. To receive a "medium" criterion rating, the criterion must be addressed as a primary project purpose (rather than ancillary or incidental) with clear and direct benefits *aligned with common practice* for the project type. To receive a "low" criterion rating, the criterion benefits may be ancillary or incidental (rather than a primary project purpose) or there may be limited information to assess the benefits. Projects that negatively affect the criterion or for which the application does not contain sufficient information to assess the criterion will receive a "non-responsive" criterion rating. Specific considerations for each merit criterion are described in the rating rubric and following sections (a) through (h). Section E.2 describes how these ratings are used in the review and selection process.

The criterion ratings will inform the following overall Merit Rating in accordance with this rubric below:

- Highly Recommended if five of the eight merit criteria ratings are "high" and none of the merit criteria ratings are "non-responsive."



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- Recommended if at least one, but no more than four, of the merit criteria ratings are "high", no more than three of the merit criteria ratings are "low", and none are "non-responsive."
- Acceptable if (1) there are no "high" ratings and no more than two "non-responsive" ratings, or (2) there are "high" ratings, but four or more "low" ratings, and no more than two "non-responsive" ratings
- Unacceptable if there are three or more "non-responsive" ratings.

| Selection Criteria: | Non-Responsive | Low | Medium | High |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Safety** | Application contains insufficient information to assess safety benefit OR project negatively affects safety | Project may protect travelers or communities from health and safety risks as an ancillary benefit, but safety is not a primary project purpose OR application contains limited information to assess safety benefit. | Project has clear and direct benefits with common practices for planning, designing, or building infrastructure intended to:<br>• Protect non-motorized travelers or communities from health and safety risks; or<br>• Reduce fatalities and/or serious injuries; or<br>• Mitigate systemic safety issues | Project has clear, direct, data-driven, and ***significant*** benefits beyond common practice for planning, designing, or building infrastructure that targets a known, documented safety problem by:<br>• Protecting non-motorized travelers and communities from health and safety risks; or<br>• Reducing fatalities and/or serious injuries for underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities; or<br>• Mitigating systemic safety issues |
| **Environmental Sustainability** | Application contains insufficient information to assess environmental sustainability benefits OR project | Project may improve resiliency and reduce emissions as an ancillary benefit but environmental sustainability is not a primary | Project has clear and direct benefits with common practices for planning, designing, or building infrastructure to:<br>• Reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas | Environmental sustainability is an explicit project purpose AND the project has clear, direct, data-driven, and ***significant*** benefits beyond common practice for planning, designing, or |



| Selection Criteria: | Non-Responsive | Low | Medium | High |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | negatively affects environmental sustainability | project purpose OR application contains limited information to assess environmental sustainability benefits | emissions from transportation; or<br>• Improve the resilience of at-risk infrastructure; or<br>• Reduce vehicle miles traveled; or<br>• Promote energy efficiencies; or<br>• Support fiscally responsible land use and transportation efficient design; or<br>• Incorporate electrification or zero emission vehicle infrastructure; or<br>• Recycle or redevelop brownfield sites | building infrastructure to:<br>• Reduce transportation-related air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from uncoordinated land-use decisions; or<br>• Reduce vehicle miles traveled, or<br>• Promote energy efficiencies; or<br>• Support fiscally responsible land use and transportation efficient design; or<br>• Incorporate electrification or zero emission vehicle infrastructure; or<br>• Improve the resilience of at-risk infrastructure; or<br>• Recycle or redevelop brownfield sites; or<br>• Address the disproportionate negative environmental impacts of transportation on underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities |
| **Quality of Life** | Application contains insufficient information to assess quality of life benefits OR negatively affects quality of life | Quality of life is an ancillary benefit but not a primary project purpose OR the application contains limited information to assess quality of life benefits | Project has clear and direct benefits for planning, designing, or building infrastructure to:<br>• Increase accessibility for travelers; or<br>• Proactively address racial | Quality of life is an explicit project purpose AND the project has clear, direct, data-driven, and ***significant*** benefits beyond common practice for planning, designing, or building infrastructure to: |

| Selection Criteria: | Non-Responsive | Low | Medium | High |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | equity or other disparities; or<br>• Remove barriers for individuals and communities to transportation, jobs, and business, opportunities; or<br>• Enhance the unique characteristics of the community | • Increase accessibility for travelers specifically for underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities; or<br>• Reduce transportation and housing cost burdens, including through commercial and mixed-income residential development near public transportation, along rural main streets, or other walkable neighborhoods; or<br>• Remove barriers for individuals and communities to transportation, jobs, and business, opportunities; or<br>• Proactively address racial equity or other disparities; or<br>• Enhance the unique characteristics of the community for underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities |
| **Mobility and Community Connectivity** | Application contains insufficient information to assess mobility and community connectivity benefits OR project negatively affects mobility | Mobility and community connectivity is an ancillary benefit but not a primary project purpose OR the application contains limited information to assesses mobility | Project has clear and direct benefits with common practices for planning, designing, or building infrastructure to:<br>• Increase affordable transportation choices; or | Mobility and community connectivity is an explicit project purpose AND the project has clear, direct, data-driven, and ***significant*** benefits, beyond common practice for planning, designing, or building infrastructure to: |



| Selection Criteria: | Non-Responsive | Low | Medium | High |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | and connectivity | and community connectivity benefits | • Proactively incorporate Universal Design; or<br>• Increase multimodal freight movement and the movement of supply chains | • Increase affordable transportation choices for underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities; or<br>• Increase the accessibility for all users of a project, particularly non-motorized travelers (those walking, cycling, rolling, or using transit; or<br>• Encourage thriving communities for individuals to work, live, and play by creating transportation choices for individuals to move freely with or without a car; or<br>• Proactively incorporate Universal Design; or<br>• Increase multimodal freight movement and the movement of supply chains |
| **Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity** | Application contains insufficient information to assess mobility and community connectivity benefits OR project negatively affects economic competitiveness | Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity is an ancillary benefit but not a primary project purpose OR the application contains limited information to assess economic competitiveness and opportunity benefits | Project has clear and direct benefits with common practices for planning, designing, or building infrastructure to:<br>• Improve system operations to increase travel time reliability, velocity of goods movement, and multimodal freight mobility, especially for | Economic competitiveness is an explicit project purpose AND the project has clear, direct, data-driven, and ***significant*** benefits beyond common practice for planning, designing, or building infrastructure to:<br>• Improve system operations to increase travel time reliability, velocity of goods movement, |

| Selection Criteria: | Non-Responsive | Low | Medium | High |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | supply chain bottlenecks; or<br>• Offer significant regional and national improvements in economic strength and opportunity by increasing the economic productivity of land, capital, or labor; creating or expanding high-quality, good-paying jobs; and improving the economic strength of regions and cities<br>• Increase transportation options and system connectivity to revitalize communities, increase access to location-efficient affordable housing, or facilitate tourism opportunities; or<br>• Implement local hire agreements or the use of registered apprenticeship | and multimodal freight mobility, especially for supply chain bottlenecks; or<br>• Offer significant regional and national improvements in economic strength and opportunity by increasing the economic productivity of land, capital, or labor; creating or expanding high-quality, good-paying jobs; and improving the economic strength of regions and cities<br>• Increase transportation options and system connectivity to revitalize underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities, increase access to jobs and location-efficient affordable housing, or facilitate tourism opportunities; or<br>• Implement local hire agreements or the use of registered apprenticeship |



| Selection Criteria: | Non-Responsive | Low | Medium | High |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **State of Good Repair** | Application contains insufficient information to assess state of good repair benefits OR project negatively affects state of good repair | State of good repair is an ancillary benefit (to include routine or deferred maintenance) but not a primary project purpose OR the application contains limited information to assess state of good repair benefits | Project has clear and direct benefits with common practices for planning, designing, or building infrastructure to:<br>• Restore and modernize core infrastructure assets; or<br>• Address current or projected system vulnerabilities; or<br>• Maintain assets in a state of good repair | State of good repair is an explicit project purpose AND the project has clear, direct, data-driven, and ***significant*** benefits beyond common practice for planning, designing, or building infrastructure to:<br>• Restore and modernize core infrastructure assets; or<br>• Address current or projected system vulnerabilities for underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities; or<br>• Maintain assets in a state of good repair |
| **Partnership and Collaboration** | Application contains insufficient to assess the partnership and collaboration aspects of project; OR project negatively affects partners or community members (e.g. negative impacts from ROW acquisition) | Partnership and Collaboration is not a primary project purpose OR the application contains limited information to assess partnership and collaboration benefits | Project has, or will, support and engage diverse people and communities by:<br>• Collaborating with other public and private entities<br>• Supporting the expansion of high-quality, good paying jobs through workforce development programs and incorporating workforce strategy into project development; or<br>• Incorporating private sector entities in transportation infrastructure | Project has, or will, support and engage diverse people and communities beyond common practice by:<br>• Collaborating with other public and private entities; or<br>• Ensuring that equity considerations for underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities are meaningfully integrated into planning, development, and implementation of transportation investment; or<br>• Supporting the creation or expansion of high-quality, good-paying jobs through |

| Selection Criteria: | Non-Responsive | Low | Medium | High |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | planning, designing, or building | workforce development programs that incorporate worker representatives and incorporating workforce strategy into project development; or<br>• Incorporating private sector entities, particularly DBEs, in transportation infrastructure planning, designing, or building |
| **Innovation** | Application contains insufficient information to assess innovation benefits | Innovation is not a primary project purpose OR the application contains limited information to assess innovation benefits | Project has clear and direct benefits with common practices for planning, designing, or building infrastructure for:<br>• Deploying innovative technologies that drive safety, equity, climate and resilience, or economic outcomes or augment workers; or<br>• Using innovative practices that facilitate improved project delivery; or<br>• Incorporating innovative funding and financing | Innovation is an explicit project purpose AND the project has clear, direct, data-driven, and ***significant*** benefits beyond common practice for planning, designing, or building infrastructure for:<br>• Deploying technologies and other practices that drive safety, equity, climate and resilience, or economic outcomes for underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities or augment workers;<br>• Using practices that facilitate improved project delivery; or<br>• Incorporating innovative funding and financing |



(a) Safety

DOT will assess how the project targets a known safety problem and seeks to protect motorized and non-motorized travelers and communities from health and safety risks. DOT will consider the project's estimated impacts on the number, rate, and consequences of crashes, fatalities and serious injuries among transportation users; the degree to which the project addresses vulnerable roadway users; and the degree to which the project addresses inequities in crash victims; the project's incorporation of roadway design and technology that is proven to improve safety. Applicants are encouraged to support actions and activities identified in the Supports actions and activities identified in the National Roadway Safety Strategy.[22]

(b) Environmental Sustainability

DOT will consider the extent to which the project incorporates considerations of climate change and environmental justice in the planning stage and in project delivery, such as through incorporation of specific design elements that address climate change impacts. DOT will evaluate the degree to which the project is expected to reduce transportation-related pollution such as air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, increase use of lower-carbon travel modes such as transit and active transportation, improve the resiliency of at-risk infrastructure, incorporate lower-carbon pavement and construction materials, or address the disproportionate negative environmental impacts of transportation on disadvantaged communities. DOT will also consider whether the project will promote energy efficiencies, support fiscally responsible land use and transportation efficient design, incorporate electrification or zero emission vehicle infrastructure, increases resiliency, and recycle or redevelop brownfield sites, particularly in communities that disproportionally experience climate-change-related consequences. DOT will

[22] www.transportation.gov/NRSS



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consider whether projects in floodplains are upgraded consistent with the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard, to the extent consistent with current law, in Executive Order 14030, *Climate-Related Financial Risk* (86 FR 27967) and 13690, *Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input* (80 FR 6425.) DOT will assess whether the project has addressed environmental sustainability, including but not limited to consideration of the following examples:

(1) The project results in significant greenhouse gas emissions reductions relative to a no-action baseline;

(2) A Local/Regional/State Climate Action Plan that results in lower greenhouse gas emissions has been prepared and the project directly supports that Climate Action Plan;

(3) The regional transportation improvement program (TIP) or statewide transportation improvement program (STIP) does not dedicate a significant share of funding (inclusive of all sources) to highway expansion;

(4) A Local/Regional/State Equitable Development Plan has been prepared and the project directly supports that Equitable Development Plan;

(5) The project sponsor has used environmental justice tools such as the EJSCREEN to minimize adverse impacts to environmental justice communities (https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/);

(6) A Local/Regional/State Energy Baseline Study has been prepared and the project directly supports that study;

(7) The project supports a modal shift in freight or passenger movement to reduce emissions, or reduce induced travel demand. The project utilizes demand management strategies to reduce congestion, induced travel demand, and greenhouse gas emissions;



(8) The project incorporates electrification infrastructure, zero-emission vehicle infrastructure, or both;

(9) The project supports the installation of electric vehicle charging stations;

(10) The project promotes energy efficiency;

(11) The project serves the renewable energy supply chains;

(12) The project improves disaster preparedness and resiliency;

(13) The project avoids adverse environmental impacts to air or water quality, wetlands, and endangered species, such as through reduction in Clean Air Act criteria pollutants and greenhouse gases, improved stormwater management, or improved habitat connectivity;

(14) The project repairs existing dilapidated or idle infrastructure that is currently causing environmental harm (e.g. brownfield redevelopment);

(15) The project supports or incorporates the construction of energy- and location-efficient buildings; or

(16) The project proposes recycling of materials, use of materials known to reduce or reverse carbon emissions, or both.

(c) Quality of Life

DOT will consider the extent to which the project improves quality of life in rural areas or urbanized areas. This may include projects that: (i) increase affordable and accessible transportation choices and equity for individuals; (ii) reduce transportation and housing cost burdens, including through public and private investments to support greater commercial and mixed-income residential development near public transportation, along rural main streets or in walkable neighborhoods (iii) enhance the unique characteristics of the community; or (iv)



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proactively address racial equity[23] or other disparities and barriers to opportunity, through the planning process or through incorporation of design elements. DOT will assess whether the project proactively addresses racial equity and barriers to opportunity, including but not limited to the following examples:

(1) Equity impact analysis completed for the project;

(2) The project sponsor has adopted an equity and inclusion program/plan or has otherwise instituted equity-focused policies related to project procurement, material sourcing, construction, inspection, hiring, or other activities designed to ensure racial equity in the overall project delivery and implementation;

(3) The project includes physical-barrier-mitigating land bridges, caps, lids, linear parks, and multimodal mobility investments that either redress past barriers to opportunity or that proactively create new connections and opportunities for underserved communities that are underserved by transportation; or

(4) The project includes new or improved freight access to underserved communities to increase access to goods and job opportunities for those underserved communities.

(d) Mobility and Community Connectivity

DOT will consider the extent to which the applicant describes how the project will increase mobility and expand connectivity for motorized and non-motorized travelers or underserved communities to transportation, jobs, and business opportunities by removing barriers for individuals and communities. DOT will consider how the project increases the walkability and accessibility for pedestrians and encourages thriving communities for individuals to work, live, and play by creating transportation choices for individuals to move freely with or

[23] Definitions for "racial equity" and "underserved communities" are found in Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, Sections 2 (a) and (b).



without a car. DOT will consider whether the project includes new or improved walking, biking, and access for people with disabilities and proactively incorporates Universal Design. DOT will also consider the extent to which projects increase mobility for freight and the movement of goods through supply chains.

(e) Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity

DOT will assess the degree to which the project will:

(1) improve system operations to increase travel time reliability and manage travel demand for goods movement, especially for supply chain bottle necks, thereby reducing the cost of doing business and improving local and regional freight connectivity to the national and global economy;

(2) decrease transportation costs and improve access, through reliable and timely access, to employment centers and job opportunities;

(3) offer significant regional and national improvements in economic strength by increasing the economic productivity of land, capital, or labor, and improving the economic strength of regions and cities;

(4) increase opportunities for tourism;

(5) result in long-term job creation by supporting good-paying jobs directly related to the project with free and fair choice to join a union, such as through the use of project labor agreements, registered apprenticeships, and local hiring provisions, or other targeted preferential hiring requirements, or other similar standards or protections;

(6) help the United States compete in a global economy by encouraging the location of important industries and future innovations and technology in the U.S., and facilitating efficient and reliable freight movement.



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(f) State of Good Repair

DOT will assess whether and to what extent the project (1) is consistent with relevant plans to maintain transportation facilities or systems in a state of good repair, including DOT-required asset management; and (2) addresses current and projected vulnerabilities that, if left unimproved, will threaten future transportation network efficiency, mobility of goods or accessibility and mobility of people, or economic growth. DOT will also consider whether the project includes a plan to maintain the transportation infrastructure built with grant funds in a state of good repair. DOT will prioritize projects that ensure the good condition of transportation infrastructure, including rural transportation infrastructure, and support commerce and economic growth. Projects that represent routine or deferred maintenance will be less competitive in this criterion. Per FHWA's published *Policy on Using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Resources to Build a Better America*[24], the Department encourages applicants to improve the condition and safety of existing state and locally-owned transportation infrastructure within the right-of-way before proposing projects that add new general purpose travel lanes serving single occupancy vehicles.

(g) Partnership and Collaboration

DOT will consider the extent to which the projects have or will engage diverse people and communities and demonstrate that equity considerations and community input and ownership, particularly among disadvantaged communities, are meaningfully integrated into planning, development, and implementation of transportation investments. Competitive applications should demonstrate strong collaboration and support among a broad range of stakeholders, including community-based organizations, other public or private entities and labor

[24] https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/docs/building_a_better_america-policy_framework.pdf



unions. Projects with strong partnership typically involve multiple partners in project development and funding, such as State and local governments, other public entities, and private or nonprofit entities, particularly minority business enterprises. DOT will consider applicants that partner with State, local, community-based, and private entities for the completion and operation of transportation infrastructure to have strong partnership. DOT will consider whether the project supports the expansion of high-quality, good paying jobs through workforce development programs, including labor-management programs, and incorporating workforce strategy into project development. Whenever people or businesses, including those from disadvantaged communities, are forced to be relocated due to the project, DOT will consider whether applicants are providing adequate compensation and mitigation to maintain community cohesion.

DOT will also assess the extent to which the project application demonstrates collaboration among neighboring or regional jurisdictions to achieve local or regional benefits, especially equity-focused community outreach and public engagement in the project's planning in underserved communities.

DOT will also consider the extent to which projects include partnerships that bring together diverse transportation agencies or are supported, financially or otherwise, by other public and private stakeholders that are pursuing similar objectives. For example, DOT will consider the extent to which transportation projects are coordinated with greater economic development such as commercial and mixed-income residential development near public transportation, along rural main streets or other walkable neighborhoods projects, water and waste infrastructure, power and electric infrastructure, broadband and land plans and policies, or other community development efforts.



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(b) Innovation

Consistent with DOT's Innovation Principles to support workers, allow for experimentation and learn from failure, provide opportunities to collaborate, and be flexible and adapt as technology changes, DOT will assess the extent to which the applicant uses innovative strategies, including: (1) innovative technologies; (2) innovative project delivery; or (3) innovative financing.

1. Innovative Technologies

Consistent with overarching goals to support good-paying jobs with the choice of a union and strong labor standards, DOT will assess innovative technological approaches to transportation, particularly in relation to automated, connected, and electric vehicles and the detection, mitigation, and documentation of safety risks. When making RAISE grant award decisions, DOT will consider any innovative technological approaches proposed by the applicant, particularly projects that incorporate innovative technological design solutions, enhance the environment for connected, electric, and automated vehicles, or use technology to improve the detection, mitigation, and documentation of safety risks. Innovative technological approaches may include, but are not limited to:

- Conflict detection and mitigation technologies (e.g., intersection alerts and signal prioritization);
- Dynamic signaling, smart traffic signals, or pricing systems to reduce congestion;
- Traveler information systems, to include work zone data exchanges;
- Signage and design features that facilitate autonomous or semi-autonomous vehicle technologies;



- Applications to automatically capture and report safety-related issues (e.g., identifying and documenting near-miss incidents);
- Vehicle-to-Everything V2X Technologies (e.g. technology that facilitates passing of information between a vehicle and any entity that may affect the vehicle);
- Vehicle-to-Infrastructure (V2I) Technologies (e.g., digital, physical, coordination, and other infrastructure technologies and systems that allow vehicles to interact with transportation infrastructure in ways that improve their mutual performance);
- Vehicle-to-Grid Technologies (e.g., technologies and infrastructure that encourage electric vehicle charging, and broader sustainability of the power grid);
- Cybersecurity elements to protect safety-critical systems;
- Broadband deployment and the installation of high-speed networks concurrent with the transportation project construction;
- Technology at land and seaports of entry that reduces congestion, wait times, and delays, while maintaining or enhancing the integrity of our border;
- Work Zone data exchanges or related data exchanges; or
- Other Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) that directly benefit the project's users as well as workers.

For innovative safety proposals, DOT will evaluate safety benefits that those approaches could produce and the broader applicability of the potential results. DOT will also assess the extent to which the project uses innovative technology that supports surface transportation to

significantly enhance the operational performance of the transportation system. Please note that all innovative technology must be in compliance with 2 CFR § 200.216.[25]

2. Innovative Project Delivery

DOT will consider the extent to which the project utilizes innovative practices in contracting (such as public-private partnerships and single contractor design-build arrangements), congestion management, asset management, or long-term operations and maintenance.

DOT also seeks projects that employ innovative approaches to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the environmental permitting and review to accelerate project delivery and achieve improved outcomes for communities and the environment. DOT's objective is to achieve timely and consistent environmental review and permit decisions. Participation in innovative project delivery approaches will not remove any statutory requirements affecting project delivery.

3. Innovative Financing

DOT will assess the extent to which the project incorporates innovations in transportation funding and finance through both traditional and innovative means, including by using private sector funding or financing or using congestion pricing or other demand management strategies to address congestion in major urban areas.

ii. Demonstrated Project Readiness

For capital projects that receive second-tier analysis, during application evaluation,[26] DOT will consider project readiness to assess the likelihood of a successful project. In that project readiness analysis, DOT will consider three evaluation ratings: Environmental Risk,

[25] https://ecfr.federalregister.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-C/section-200.216
[26] The process for determining which applications receive second-tier analysis is described in Section II.2 of this notice.



Technical Assessment, and Financial Completeness Assessment. The application should contain a section that explicitly addresses Environmental Risk, but the Technical Assessment and Financial Completeness Assessment will be based on information contained throughout the application. Environmental Risk assessment analyzes the project's environmental approvals and likelihood of the necessary approval affecting project obligation, and results in a rating of "high risk," "moderate risk," or "low risk." The Technical Assessment will be reviewed for all eligible applications and will assess the applicant's capacity to successfully deliver the project in compliance with applicable Federal requirements based on factors including the recipient's experience working with Federal agencies, civil rights compliance, previous experience with DOT discretionary grant awards and the technical experience and resources dedicated to the project. Technical Assessment ratings will be one of the following: "certain," "somewhat certain," "uncertain," or "unknown." Lack of previous project delivery according to Federal requirements is not sufficient justification for a rating of "uncertain," but may result in a rating of "unknown." The Financial Completeness Assessment reviews the availability of matching funds and whether the applicant presented a complete funding package, and will receive a rating of "complete, "partially complete," or "incomplete." For projects that receive a rating of "complete" and include funding estimates that are based on early stages of design (e.g. less than 30 percent design) or outdated cost estimates, without specified contingency, evaluators may add a comment to note the potential for uncertainty in the estimated project costs. All applicants, including those requesting 100 percent grant funding, should describe a plan to address potential cost overruns. Low ratings in any of these readiness areas do not disqualify projects from award, but competitive applications clearly and directly describe achievable risk mitigation strategies. A project with mitigated risks or with a risk mitigation plan is more competitive than a comparable project with unaddressed risks.

iii. Economic Analysis of Project Costs and Benefits

For capital projects that receive second-tier analysis, DOT will consider the costs and benefits of projects seeking RAISE grant funding in determining whether a project is cost effective. To the extent possible, DOT will rely on quantitative, evidenced-based and data-supported analysis to assess how well a project addresses this criterion, including an assessment of the project's estimated benefit-cost ratio (BCR) based on the applicant-supplied BCA described in Section D.2.vi.

To evaluate the costs and benefits of a proposed project, DOT will assign the project as either negative (costs exceed benefits) or positive (benefits exceed costs.) Projects with negative ratings will not be selected for an award, unless the project demonstrates clear outcomes, as identified by the SRT, for overburdened, underserved, or historically disadvantaged communities.

(b) Planning Grants

Planning grant applications will be evaluated against the same merit criteria as capital grants. The Department will consider how the plan, once implemented, will ultimately further the merit criteria. The only readiness reviews for planning grants are the Technical Assessment and the Financial Completeness Assessment. DOT will not evaluate the benefits and costs (as expressed in a benefit-cost analysis) or environmental risks of projects that do not include construction.

(c) Additional Considerations

The BIL requires DOT to consider geographical and modal diversity when selecting RAISE grant awards.



**2. Review and Selection Process**

This section explicitly addresses the BIL requirement to describe the methodology for evaluation in the NOFO. The RAISE grant program review and selection process consists of Merit Criteria Review; Project Readiness Review (consisting of Technical Assessment, Environmental Risk Review, Financial Completeness Review); Economic Analysis; and Senior Review. The Secretary makes final project selections.

Teams comprising Department and contractor staff review all eligible applications received by the deadline for a Merit Review and assign ratings as described in Section E.1.i.

Projects that receive "High" ratings in five or more criteria and no "Non-responsive" ratings will be designated "Highly Recommended" and automatically advance for second-tier analysis. Projects that receive a "High" in any selection criterion, no more than three "Low" ratings, and no "Non-responsive" ratings will be designated as "Recommended." The Senior Review Team (SRT) reviews all "Recommended" projects to determine if the benefits of a particular criterion are so significant that the project merits advancing for second-tier analysis. The SRT can advance a "Recommended" project only if (1) the project received a "high" in the priority criteria of safety, environmental sustainability, mobility and community connectivity, or quality of life merit criteria, and the benefits are exceptional or (2) if the SRT provides additional information to demonstrate that a criterion has benefits that are aligned with a "high" rating (whether or not the Merit Review Team assigned a "high" rating) and would be exceptional. Senior Operating Administration staff and OST staff may make recommendations to the SRT for which projects should advance based on the benefits of a particular criterion.

Second-tier analysis for capital projects consists of: (1) an Economic Analysis; (2) an Environmental Risk Assessment; and (3) a Financial Completeness Assessment. Second-tier analysis for planning projects consists only of a Financial Completeness Assessment. The



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Economic Analysis assesses the proposed project's estimated benefit-cost ratio. The Environmental Risk assessment analyzes the project's environmental approvals and the likelihood of the necessary approvals affecting the project's timely obligation of funds. The Financial Completeness Assessment reviews the availability of matching funds and ability to address cost overruns.

Following completion of second-tier analysis, the SRT determines which projects with second-tier analysis are designated as Highly Rated. The SRT may advise the Secretary on projects with the greatest local and regional impact based on selection criteria described in Section E.1 of this Notice. The Secretary selects projects from the Highly Rated List for award, consistent with the selection criteria and statutory requirements for geographic and modal diversity.

The BIL mandated RAISE grant awards by August 12, 2022.

Consistent with past practice, the Department offers debriefs to applicants not selected for award to receive information about the RAISE project's evaluation. Due to overwhelming demand, the Department is unable to provide a RAISE award to every competitive project that applies. The Department will identify "Projects of Merit" with the aim of encouraging sponsors with competitive projects that do not receive a RAISE 2022 award to consider applying in future rounds of funding. Projects for which a RAISE application is advanced by the SRT on the Highly Rated List, but that are not awarded, are automatically designated as "Projects of Merit." This is a novel designation that provides the sponsors of these projects the opportunity to receive additional technical assistance that encourages sponsors with competitive projects to apply in the future.



**3. Additional Information**

Prior to award, each selected applicant will be subject to a risk assessment as required by 2 CFR § 200.206. DOT must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM. An applicant may review information in FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered. DOT will consider comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants.

**F. Federal Award Administration Information**

**1. Federal Award Notice**

Following the evaluation outlined in Section E, the Secretary will announce awarded projects by posting a list of selected projects at www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants. Notice of selection is not authorization to begin performance or to incur costs for the proposed project. Following that announcement, the relevant operating administration will contact the point of contact listed in the SF-424 to initiate negotiation of the grant agreement for authorization.

Recipients of RAISE Grant awards will not receive lump-sum cash disbursements at the time of award announcement or obligation of funds. Instead, RAISE funds will reimburse recipients only after a grant agreement has been executed, allowable expenses are incurred, and valid requests for reimbursement are submitted.

Unless authorized by DOT in writing after DOT's announcement of FY 2022 RAISE awards, any costs that a recipient incurs before DOT executes a grant agreement for that recipient's project are ineligible for reimbursement, and are ineligible match for cost share requirements.

**2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

(a) Administrative Requirements

Please visit https://www.transportation.gov/policy-initiatives/build/grant-agreements for the General Terms and Conditions for BUILD FY 2020 awards. The RAISE FY 2022 Terms and Conditions will be similar to the BUILD FY 2020 Terms and Conditions, but it will include relevant updates consistent with this notice.

All awards will be administered pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards found in 2 C.F.R part 200, as adopted by DOT at 2 C.F.R part 1201. Federal wage rate requirements included in subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, U.S.C., apply to all projects receiving funds under this program, and apply to all parts of the project, whether funded with RAISE Grant funds, other Federal funds, or non-Federal funds.

In connection with any program or activity conducted with or benefiting from funds awarded under this notice, recipients of funds must comply with all applicable requirements of Federal law, including, without limitation, the Constitution of the United States; the conditions of performance, non-discrimination requirements, and other assurances made applicable to the award of funds in accordance with regulations of the Department of Transportation; and applicable Federal financial assistance and contracting principles promulgated by the Office of Management and Budget. In complying with these requirements, recipients, in particular, must ensure that no concession agreements are denied or other contracting decisions made on the basis of speech or other activities protected by the First Amendment. If DOT determines that a recipient has failed to comply with applicable Federal requirements, DOT may terminste the award of funds and disallow previously incurred costs, requiring the recipient to reimburse any expended award funds.



Additionally, applicable Federal laws, rules and regulations of the relevant operating administration administering the project will apply to the projects that receive RAISE grant awards, including planning requirements, Service Outcome Agreements, Stakeholder Agreements, Buy America compliance, and other requirements under DOT's other highway, transit, rail, and port grant programs. For projects that are eligible under RAISE but are not eligible under DOT's other programs or projects that are eligible under multiple DOT programs, the RAISE program will determine the appropriate requirements to ensure the project is delivered consistent with program and Department goals. In particular, Executive Order 14005 directs the Executive Branch Departments and agencies to maximize the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States through the terms and conditions of Federal financial assistance awards. If selected for an award, grant recipients must be prepared to demonstrate how they will maximize the use of domestic goods, products, and materials in constructing their project. RAISE grant projects involving vehicle acquisition must involve only vehicles that comply with applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and Federal Motor Carriers Safety Regulations, or vehicles that are exempt from Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards or Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations in a manner that allows for the legal acquisition and deployment of the vehicle or vehicles.

For projects administered by FHWA, applicable Federal laws, rules, and regulations set forth in Title 23 U.S.C. and Title 23 C.F.R generally apply, including the 23 U.S.C. 129 restrictions on the use of toll revenues, and Section 4(f) preservation of parklands and historic properties requirements under 23 U.S.C. 138. For an illustrative list of the other applicable laws, rules, regulations, executive orders, polices, guidelines, and requirements as they relate to a RAISE grant project administered by the FHWA, please see

https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2020-11/build-fy2020-fhwa-exhibits-20201105.pdf.

For RAISE projects administered by the Federal Transit Administration and partially funded with Federal transit assistance, all relevant requirements under chapter 53 of title 49 U.S.C. apply. For transit projects funded exclusively with RAISE grant funds, some requirements of chapter 53 of title 49 U.S.C. and chapter VI of title 49 C.F.R. apply.

For projects administered by the Federal Railroad Administration, FRA requirements described in 49 U.S.C. Subtitle V, Part C apply.

(b) Program Requirements

a. Climate Change and Environmental Justice Impact Consideration

Each applicant selected for RAISE grant funding must demonstrate effort to consider climate change and environmental justice impacts as described in Section A. Projects that have not sufficiently considered climate change and environmental justice in their planning, as determined by the Department, will be required to do so before receiving funds for construction, consistent with Executive Order 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad* (86 FR 7619). In the grant agreement, applicants will be required to certify that they have taken one or more of the activities numbered in Section E.1.a.i.b, or will be required to propose a new activity to be completed prior to obligation of construction funds that addresses climate change and environmental justice.

b. Racial Equity and Barriers to Opportunity

Each applicant selected for RAISE grant funding must demonstrate effort to improve racial equity and reduce barriers to opportunity as described in Section A. Projects that have not sufficiently considered climate change and environmental justice in their planning, as determined by the Department, will be required to do so before receiving funds for construction, consistent



with Executive Order 13985, *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government* (86 FR 7009). In the grant agreement, applicants will be required to certify that they have taken one or more of the activities listed in Section E.1.a.i.c, or will be required to propose a new activity to be completed prior to obligation of construction funds that addresses racial equity and barriers to opportunity.

c. Labor and Work

Each applicant selected for RAISE grant funding must demonstrate, to the full extent possible consistent with the law, an effort to create good-paying jobs with the free and fair choice to join a union and incorporation of strong labor standards as described in Section A. Projects that have not sufficiently considered job quality and labor rights, standards, and protections in their planning, as determined by the Department, will be required to do so, to the full extent possible under the law, before receiving funds for construction, consistent with Executive Order 14025, *Worker Organizing and Empowerment* (86 FR 22829), and Executive Order 14052, *Implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (86 FR 64335). RAISE funds may not be used to support or oppose union organizing.

**3. Reporting**

(a) Progress Reporting on Grant Activities

Each applicant selected for RAISE grant funding must submit quarterly progress reports and Federal Financial Reports (SF-425) to monitor project progress and ensure accountability and financial transparency in the RAISE grant program.

(b) System Performance Reporting

Each applicant selected for RAISE grant funding must collect and report to the DOT information on the project's performance based on performance indicators DOT identifies related to program goals (e.g. travel time savings, greenhouse gas emissions, passenger counts,

level of service, etc.) and other information as requested by DOT. Performance indicators should include measurable goals or targets that DOT will use internally to determine whether the project meets program goals, and grant funds achieve the intended long-term outcomes of the RAISE Grant Program. To the extent possible, performance indicators used in the reporting should align with the measures included in the application and should relate to at least one of the selection criteria defined in Section E.1. Performance reporting continues for several years after project construction is completed, and DOT does not provide RAISE grant funding specifically for performance reporting.

(c) Reporting of Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

If the total value of a selected applicant's currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds $10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then the applicant during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the SAM that is made available in FAPIIS about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings described in paragraph 2 of this award term and condition. This is a statutory requirement under section 872 of Public Law 110-417, as amended (41 U.S.C. 2313). As required by section 3010 of Public Law 111-212, all information posted in the designated integrity and performance system on or after April 15, 2011, except past performance reviews required for Federal procurement contracts, will be publicly available.

**G. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts**

For further information concerning this notice please contact the RAISE grant program staff via e-mail at RAISEgrants@dot.gov, or call Howard Hill at 202-366-0301. A TDD is available for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing at 202-366-3993. In addition, DOT will post answers to questions and requests for clarifications on DOT's website at



www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants. To ensure applicants receive accurate information about eligibility or the program, the applicant is encouraged to contact DOT directly, rather than through intermediaries or third parties, with questions. DOT staff may also conduct briefings on the RAISE grant selection and award process upon request.

**H. Other information**

**1. Protection of Confidential Business Information**

All information submitted as part of or in support of any application shall use publicly available data or data that can be made public and methodologies that are accepted by industry practice and standards, to the extent possible. If the applicant submits information that the applicant considers to be a trade secret or confidential commercial or financial information, the applicant must provide that information in a separate document, which the applicant may cross-reference from the application narrative or other portions of the application. For the separate document containing confidential information, the applicant must do the following: (1) state on the cover of that document that it "Contains Confidential Business Information (CBI)"; (2) mark each page that contains confidential information with "CBI"; (3) highlight or otherwise denote the confidential content on each page; and (4) at the end of the document, explain how disclosure of the confidential information would cause substantial competitive harm. DOT will protect confidential information complying with these requirements to the extent required under applicable law. If DOT receives a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the information that the applicant has marked in accordance with this section, DOT will follow the procedures described in its FOIA regulations at 49 C.F.R. § 7.29. Only information that is in the separate document, marked in accordance with this section, and ultimately determined to be confidential under § 7.29 will be exempt from disclosure under FOIA.

**2. Publication/Sharing of Application Information**

Following the completion of the selection process and announcement of awards, DOT intends to publish a list of all applications received along with the names of the applicant organizations and funding amounts requested. Except for the information properly marked as described in Section H.1., DOT may make application narratives publicly available or share application information within DOT or with other Federal agencies if DOT determines that sharing is relevant to the respective program's objectives.

Issued in Washington D.C. on January 27, 2022:

Peter Paul Montgomery Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation