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FISCAL YEARS 2023 – 2026

BRIDGE INVESTMENT PROGRAM

LARGE BRIDGE PROJECT GRANTS

Opening Date: September 27, 2023

Amendment No. 1 Date: November 21, 2023

Amendment No. 2 Date: June 2, 2025

NOTE: FHWA uses www.grants.gov for receipt of all applications. Applicants must register and use the system to submit applications electronically. Applicants are encouraged to register in advance of the submission deadline and to register to receive notifications of updates/amendments to this Notice. Approval of user registrations for the site may take multiple weeks. It is the Applicant's responsibility to monitor the grants.gov site for any updates to this Notice.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Notice of Funding Opportunity for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 through FY 2026 Bridge Investment Program, Large Bridge Project Grants

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

ACTION: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Amendment No. 2.

SUMMARY: The purpose of this notice is to solicit applications for Large Bridge Project grants (a project with total eligible costs greater than \$100 million) for awards under the Bridge Investment Program (BIP). This notice establishes a “rolling application” process for Large Bridge Project applications by providing the schedule, requirements, and selection process for such projects for the remaining available amounts of the BIP funding provided by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) for FY 2023 through FY 2026, which total up to \$9.62 billion (see section B.1 for details for funds available for each fiscal year). FHWA will solicit applications for the other two BIP project categories under a separate NOFO: (1) Planning and (2) Bridge Project (a project with total eligible costs not greater than \$100 million).

Large Bridge Project funds will be awarded on a competitive basis for bridge replacement, rehabilitation, preservation, and protection projects with total eligible costs of greater than \$100 million that: (1) improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of people and freight over bridges; and (2) improve the condition of bridges in the United States by reducing (a) the number of bridges, and total person miles traveled over bridges, that are in poor condition or that are in fair condition and at risk of falling into poor condition within the next 3 years, or (b) the number of bridges, and total person miles traveled over bridges, that do not meet current geometric design standards or cannot meet the load and traffic requirements typical of the regional transportation network. In addition, a Large Bridge Project that receives a BIP award of not less than \$100 million is eligible for a multiyear grant, in which DOT can award available funds to a project over the course of several years in accordance with an agreement and in alignment with its schedule. Applications submitted under one funding opportunity may receive funding under a different funding category than identified in the application based on FHWA’s review of the project schedule and total project cost, see Section A.1.b.

This notice describes the application requirements, selection and evaluation criteria, applicable program and Federal requirements, and available assistance during the grant solicitation period.

Amendment No. 1.

Change application due date from November 27, 2023, to December 4, 2023.

Amendment No. 2.

The purpose of this amendment is to (1) remove references to rescinded Executive Orders, (2) align the NOFO with new Executive Orders, and (3) add a new section under amended applications to provide an additional opportunity for applicants under consideration in the FY 2025 application cycle to amend their applications, FHWA is not accepting new applications under the FY 2025 application cycle. FHWA is no longer soliciting applications for Fiscal Years 2022 through 2024.

ASSISTANCE LISTING (formerly CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE) NUMBER: 20.205 Highway Planning and Construction

DATES: For FY 2023 and FY 2024 funds, Large Bridge Project applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. EST on November 27, 2023. For FY 2025 funds, applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. EDT on August 1, 2024. For FY 2026 funds, applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. EDT on August 1, 2025. See Section D.4 for important dates and deadlines for FYs 2023 – 2026 applications.

The Grants.gov “Apply” function will open by September 27, 2023 and will close after November 1, 2025.

Applications must be submitted electronically through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) no later than 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on the date stated above and in Section D.4. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications in advance of the application deadline; however, awards will not be made until after the application deadline. Applications will be accepted throughout the year until the application deadline for the respective fiscal year of funding. See Sections A.3.c and D.4 for details on the application submittal, evaluation, and award timeline.

WEBINAR: FHWA plans to conduct outreach regarding the BIP Large Bridge Project grants in the form of a virtual recorded Webinar which will be posted when available on FHWA's Website: [BIP - Funding Programs - Management and Preservation - Bridges & Structures - Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](#).

ADDRESSES: Applications must be submitted electronically through <https://www.grants.gov/>. Applicants must register and use the system to submit applications electronically. Applicants are encouraged to register in advance of the submission deadline and to register to receive notifications of updates/amendments to this notice. Approval of user registrations for the site may take several weeks. It is the applicant’s responsibility to monitor grants.gov for any updates to this notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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DOT will not review applications in advance of their submission, but staff are available for questions. DOT will not provide technical assistance to any applicant including providing guidance on an application. Please forward your questions to BridgeInvestmentProgram@dot.gov. Questions and Answers (Q&A), previous recordings of Webinars as well as future information on updated Q&As, Webinars, or other events are available on FHWA's Website at [BIP - Funding Programs - Management and Preservation - Bridges & Structures - Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](http://www.fhwa.gov/bip-funding-programs-management-and-preservation-bridges-structures-federal-highway-administration-dot.gov). In addition, FHWA will post answers to questions and requests for clarifications at Grants.gov under this NOFO's page. To ensure an applicant receives accurate information about eligibility or the program, the applicant is encouraged to contact BridgeInvestmentProgram@dot.gov directly, rather than through intermediaries or third parties, with questions.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The organization of this notice is based on an outline set forth in Appendix I to Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 200, to ensure consistency across Federal financial assistance programs. However, that format is designed for locating specific information, not for linear reading. For readers seeking to familiarize themselves with how the BIP multi funding category program application process will work, DOT recommends starting with Section A (Program Description), which describes the goals of the BIP and DOT's purpose for providing separate selection criteria and application periods and cut-off dates for consideration for the BIP Large Bridge Project grants funding category and

Section E (Application Review Information), which describes how DOT will select among eligible applications.

Each section of this notice contains information and instructions relevant to the application process for the BIP Large Bridge Project grants funding category. The applicant should read this notice in its entirety to submit eligible and competitive applications.

This notice contains collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act that has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under 2125-0664. The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, 424C, 424D, and SF-LLL has been approved by OMB under 2105-0520. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection displays a currently valid OMB control number.

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SECTION A - PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. Overview

Section 11118 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA, Pub. L. 117-58, Nov. 15, 2021), established the BIP, which is codified at Title 23, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 124. The purpose of the BIP is to provide financial assistance for a project to replace, rehabilitate, preserve, or protect one or more bridges on the National Bridge Inventory under 23 U.S.C. 144(b).

There are three funding categories of BIP funding: Planning Project, Bridge Project, and Large Bridge Project grants. The purpose of this NOFO is to solicit applications for the BIP Large Bridge Project grants. The BIP funding opportunities for Planning Project and Bridge Project grants were announced under a separate NOFO for combined FY 2023 through FY 2026 funds. The term “large bridge project” means an eligible project with total eligible project costs of greater than \$100,000,000. See Section B.1 for the combined award amounts made available for both Large Bridge Project and Bridge Project grants for each of FYs 2023 through 2026.

a. Program Goals

The goals of the BIP are:

1. To improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of people and freight over bridges;
2. To improve the condition of bridges in the United States by
 - a. Reducing the number of bridges in poor condition or in fair condition and at risk of falling into poor condition within the next three years,¹
 - b. Reducing the total person miles traveled over bridges in poor condition, or in fair condition and at risk of falling into poor condition within the next three years,
 - c. Reducing the number of bridges that do not meet current geometric design standards, or cannot meet the load and traffic requirements typical of the regional transportation network, and
 - d. Reducing the total person miles traveled over bridges that do not meet current geometric design standards, or cannot meet the load and traffic requirements typical of the regional transportation network;
3. To provide financial assistance that leverages and encourages non-Federal contributions from sponsors and stakeholders involved in the planning, design, and construction of eligible projects.

¹ 23 CFR490.409 provides definition and methodology for classifying bridges in Good, Fair, and Poor condition. Bridge Condition is determined by the lowest rating of National Bridge Inventory condition ratings for Item 58 (Deck), Item 59 (Superstructure), Item 60 (Substructure), or Item 62 (Culvert). If the lowest rating is greater than or equal to 7, the bridge is classified as Good; if it is less than or equal to 4, the classification is Poor. Bridges rated 5 or 6 are classified as Fair.

b. BIP Program Requirements and Considerations

DOT will provide FY 2022 through FY 2026 BIP funds for Large Bridge Project grants consistent with the statutory language and the priorities described in this NOFO.² See Section E.1 for Statutory Requirements, Considerations, and Priorities.

Eligible applicants should be aware that DOT may only make a grant to a Large Bridge Project if two conditions are met: (1) the project is reasonably expected to begin construction not later than 18 months after the date on which funds are obligated; and (2) preliminary engineering is complete for the project. See Section C.3.b for details on this requirement as well as Section B.4 for description of obligation for a BIP project.

Consistent with the selection criteria and evaluation process described in this notice, DOT seeks to award BIP funds to Large Bridge Project Grants based on bridge condition, cost effectiveness, project readiness, and other considerations (see Section E for details). DOT will prioritize applications of Large Bridge Project grants with a demonstrated need for a BIP grant of at least \$100 million, with a total eligible project cost of at least \$200 million (see Section E.1.h). In selecting BIP grants, DOT will consider geographic diversity among grant recipients, including the statutorily required project selection priorities discussed in Section E.1.g and the need for a balance between the needs of rural and urban communities (for details see Section D.2.c).

Per statutory requirements, during the period of FY 2022 through FY 2026, in each State from which an eligible project is submitted, DOT will award not fewer than one Large Bridge Project that is deemed justified or two Bridge Projects that are deemed justified. An award is not required to be made to an eligible project that was determined to not be justified under an evaluation. (23 U.S.C. 124(C)(5)(B)(ii) and (iii)). The States that have already met this statutory requirement are listed on FHWA's Website at [BIP - Funding Programs - Management and Preservation - Bridges & Structures - Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bip/). The application review and selection process detailed in Section E.2 will take into account this requirement in order to reach the geographic coverage intended for the program. This will likely impact an applicant's ability to receive BIP Large Bridge or Bridge Project awards if previous awards were made to projects located in their State. Priority will be given to applications from States that have not yet received awards for one Large Bridge Project or two Bridge Project applications, until every State has received one Large Bridge Project or two Bridge Project awards. This takes into account all applications received from eligible entities within a State listed in Section C.1.a. An awarded Large Bridge Project or Bridge Project that is located in multiple States will count as an award for all States where the project is located.

To the extent an eligible applicant is unsure if their proposed project will meet the statutory requirements for Large Bridge Project Grants, DOT encourages eligible applicants to not be dissuaded. If during the review FHWA determines an application should be considered for a Bridge Project or Planning grant, FHWA will notify the applicant of the determination and

² Proper maintenance is an affirmative responsibility of the States as required by 23 U.S.C 116.

evaluate the application under the Planning and Bridge Project Grants NOFO for FY 2023 through FY 2026.

In addition, eligible applicants can apply to be considered for a future fiscal year BIP funding and should clearly specify in their application for which fiscal year funding they would like their project to receive funding. DOT will evaluate and consider these applications for future fiscal year BIP funding and will award selected applications after the application deadline for the applicable fiscal year BIP funding has passed, subject to availability of funds (see Section D).

Section E of this NOFO outlines BIP Large Bridge Project grants selection criteria and describes the process for selecting projects. Section F.3 describes progress and performance reporting requirements for selected projects, including the relationship between that reporting and the program's selection criteria. Applicants are advised to review this NOFO in its entirety before submitting an application.

2. Additional Information

DOT is committed to considering project funding decisions holistically among the various discretionary grant programs available in IIJA. In addition, DOT recognizes that applicants may be seeking funding from multiple discretionary grant programs and opportunities. An applicant may seek the same award amounts from multiple DOT discretionary opportunities or seek a combination of funding from multiple DOT opportunities.

The applicant should identify any other DOT programs or opportunities they intend to apply for (or use if the Federal funding is already available to the applicant), and what award amounts they will be seeking, in the appropriate sections in the application.

3. Changes from the FY 2022 Bridge Investment Program NOFO to FY 2023 through FY 2026 BIP Large Bridge Project Grants NOFO

a. Multi-Year Large Bridge Project Grants NOFO and Available Funding for Planning and Bridge Grants

This FY 2023 through FY 2026 BIP Large Bridge Project Grants NOFO makes changes from the FY 2022 BIP NOFO to reflect the amount of funding available for each fiscal year through FY 2026 and is seeking applications for Large Bridge Project grants only. A separate NOFO will be issued for eligible entities seeking to submit applications for Planning Project grants and Bridge Project grants with a total eligible project cost of not greater than \$100 million. As applicable, DOT can update this notice through a NOFO Amendment.

b. Application Templates and Merit Criteria

The Merit Criteria for Large Bridge Project grants have been revised to clarify what FHWA will evaluate under each criterion, as well as additional considerations for the evaluation of

applications for FY 2023 through FY 2026 that will assist in providing clarity to the application and provide additional information. This NOFO updates the application review and selection criteria information found in Section E. Section D.2 also provides updated application templates that FHWA highly encourages applicants to use to provide project information.

c. Rolling Application Submission and Review Process; Amended Application Submission Opportunity

For the FY 2023 through FY 2026 NOFO, eligible applicants may submit an application for funding for a specific fiscal year of funding at any time up to the application deadline for that fiscal year. Section D.4 provides the fiscal year application deadlines. Unless the applicant requests a specific future year of funding, applications submitted after a fiscal year application deadline will be considered for the next round of funding after the announcement of projects selected to receive a BIP award for the current round of funding. For example, an application submitted after December 4, 2023, will be reviewed after projects selected to receive FY 2023 and FY 2024 BIP awards have been announced.

After receipt, FHWA will review the application in accordance with Section E.1 of this NOFO. FHWA will make every effort to (1) complete the initial eligibility screening within 30 calendar days and (2) complete the Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, and Project Readiness Rating within 90 calendar days. This timeframe is not guaranteed and is dependent on the number and quality of applications received. If, after the initial eligibility screening, an application is determined to be ineligible, applicants will have an opportunity to submit an amended application as described in this section and E.2. Applicants will be allowed to submit only one amended application to address an ineligible determination.

For all applications determined to be eligible, including amended applications, after FHWA completes the Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, and Project Readiness Rating, all applicants will have an opportunity to submit an amended application as described in this section and in Section E.2. Applicants will be allowed to submit only one amended application to address an overall application rating. However, when an amended application to address an eligibility issue advances to the Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, and Project Readiness Rating, the applicant can submit an amended application to address the application's overall application rating. Applicants that elect to submit an amended application at either stage of the review process must do so within 14 calendar days from the date FHWA notified the applicant of the ineligibility determination or overall application rating or from the date of a debrief as described in this section and in Section E.2. FHWA's notification to the applicant on the eligibility determination or the overall application rating will not include detailed information beyond the final application rating. Applicants that would like to receive more information are encouraged to request a debrief within 14 calendar days from the date FHWA notified the applicant.

For applications reviewed during the FY 2025 application cycle, including applications from FY 2023 – FY 2024 application cycle that were carried forward, applicants will be notified of this amended NOFO and provided 14 days to notify FHWA to retain their existing application, submit an amended application, or withdraw the application from consideration in the FY 2025

application cycle. All applications will have ratings adjusted in accordance with this amended NOFO. New applications submitted after August 1, 2024 are not being considered in the FY 2025 application cycle.

FHWA will not review any amended applications submitted after February 26, 2024, for FY 2023 and FY 2024 BIP funding, June 16, 2025, for FY 2025 BIP funding, and November 1, 2025 for FY 2026 BIP funding. The last date an applicant will be notified of an ineligible application, or the overall application rating, will be January 26, 2024, for FY 2023 and FY 2024 BIP funding and October 1 of each calendar year (2024 and 2025) through 2025.

BIP Fiscal Year of Funding	FHWA Applicant Notification Deadline ³	Amended Application Submission Deadline ³
FY 2023 – FY 2024	January 26, 2024	February 26, 2024
FY 2025	October 1, 2024	November 1, 2024 Amended Application Deadline: June 16, 2025
FY 2026	October 1, 2025	November 1, 2025

d. Disposition of Applications

i. Highly Recommended and Recommended Applications Not Selected to Receive an Award

All Highly Recommended and Recommended applications not selected to receive an award under the fiscal year requested in the application will be carried forward for consideration under the next fiscal year of BIP funding. However, if there are any changes to the project, including but not limited to scope, schedule, and budget, an applicant must submit an amendment to the application by the application deadline for the next fiscal year. Applicants are encouraged to submit a summary of all changes with the updated application. The applicant is also responsible for updating an application should an amended NOFO be issued.

ii. Ineligible and Not Recommended Applications

All sponsors of applications, including amended applications, that receive a final ineligibility determination or Not Recommended rating must submit a new application for any future fiscal year of BIP funds. Applicants who are planning to re-apply for the BIP Program using materials prepared for prior competitions should ensure that their new BIP application fully addresses the criteria and considerations described in this NOFO and that all relevant information is up to date and submitted in the proper format.

³ If these dates fall on a weekend, the deadline date will be on the following business day.

SECTION B - FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Award Amount Available

The IJA provided a total of up to \$9.62 billion in FYs 2023 through 2026 BIP funds for Large Bridge Project grants and Bridge Project grants funding opportunities. These funds are available in part through the Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP), which is appropriated funding out of the General Funds (GF) of the U.S. Treasury (HIP GF), as well as through the Federal-aid highway program, which is appropriated funding out of the Highway Trust Funds (HTF), as detailed in the table below. Funds cannot be obligated before the fiscal year in which they are made available. FHWA is no longer soliciting applications for Fiscal Years 2022 through 2024.

BIP Fiscal Year Funding⁴	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
HIP GF⁵	\$1,779,295,000	\$1,779,295,000	\$1,779,295,000	\$1,779,295,000
HTF⁶	\$543,920,000	\$630,000,000 ⁷	\$653,000,000 ⁷	\$676,000,000 ⁷
Total Available for Large Bridge and Bridge Projects	\$2,323,215,000	\$2,409,295,000	\$2,432,295,000	\$2,455,295,000

2. Award Size

For Large Bridge Project grants, a BIP grant shall be in an amount that is adequate to fully fund the project (in combination with other financial resources identified in the application) and not less than \$50 million, with a maximum award amount of not more than 50 percent of the total eligible project costs. Large Bridge Project grants have non-Federal matching requirements as described in Section C.2.

3. Statutory FY 2022 – FY 2026 Funding Provisions

⁴ Funding amounts may be adjusted based on scheduled or projected payments for projects under multiyear grant agreements.

⁵ Of the \$1.847 billion in advance appropriations from the General Fund amount for each fiscal year of IJA, \$20 million set-aside for Tribal transportation facility bridges, \$20 million set-aside for Planning grants, and \$27.705 million set-aside for operations and administrations of FHWA per fiscal year were excluded.

⁶ The HTF amount is calculated as the authorized contract authority from IJA less a set-aside for Tribal transportation facility bridges and an amount due to the imposition of the annual obligation limitation. For FY 2023 BIP funding, the amount is \$640 million authorized less a set-aside of \$18 million for Tribal transportation facility bridges and about \$78 million due to the imposition of the annual obligation limitation.

⁷ The FYs 2024, 2025, 2026 HTF amounts are subject to the imposition of the annual obligation limitation in future Appropriation Acts by Congress.

a. Large Bridge Project

DOT shall use at least 50 percent of funds made available out of the HTF to carry out this program for Large Bridge Project grants. These amounts are \$320 million, \$325 million, \$337.5 million, and \$350 million in FYs 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026, respectively, before set-asides for Tribal transportation facility bridges and the imposition of the annual obligation limitation.

A Large Bridge Project that receives a grant under this program of at least \$100 million may be carried out through a multi-year grant agreement.⁸ A multi-year agreement will be established to describe the terms of participation by the Federal Government in the project, the maximum amount of Federal financial assistance for the project, a payout schedule for the project (providing for disbursement of the full grant amount within four fiscal years after the fiscal year in which the initial amount is provided), and the period of time for completing the project, and to provide timely and efficient management of the project. A multi-year grant award may include a commitment, contingent on amounts to be specified in law, from future available budget authority. Interest and other financing costs of carrying out a project within a reasonable time frame shall be considered a cost of carrying out the project under a multi-year agreement. Interest and other financing costs shall be of the most favorable financing terms reasonably available, and the applicant shall certify to DOT that the applicant carried out reasonable diligence in seeking favorable financing terms.

b. Culvert Limitation

DOT may award no more than 5 percent of funds made available for each fiscal year for the BIP to eligible projects solely consisting of culvert replacement or rehabilitation (23 U.S.C. 124(c)(6)). The culverts are required to be on the National Bridge Inventory under 23 U.S.C. 144(b).

c. Unused Amounts

Of the amounts made available out of the HTF for FYs 2022 through 2026, not less than 50 percent in the aggregate shall be used for BIP Large Bridge Project grants (23 U.S.C. 124(p)(1)). If, in FY 2026, the Secretary determines that grants under the BIP will not meet this requirement, the Secretary shall use the unused amounts to make other grants under the program during FY 2026, consistent with 23 U.S.C. 124(p)(2).

d. Prohibited Use

Grant funds may not be used to support or oppose union organizing.

⁸ 23 U.S.C. 124(j) authorizes the use of multi-year grant agreements for Large Bridge Project Grants. Those agreements may include a commitment, contingent on amounts to be specified in law in advance for such commitments, to provide future year funds.

4. Availability of Funds

The BIP funds are available for obligation for a total of four years (the fiscal year in which they are provided plus three additional years). For example, the FY 2023 BIP funds are available for obligation through September 30, 2026. Obligation of BIP grant funds occurs when a selected applicant enters a grant agreement (or a project agreement which is a type of grant agreement as described in Section B.5 (Type of Award) with FHWA. For construction, this is generally after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements, including transportation planning and environmental review requirements.

Once obligated, HIP GF grant funds may be used to reimburse a recipient only for eligible costs incurred up to five years after the obligation deadline, whereas HTF funds do not have an expenditure deadline. For example, FY 2023 BIP funds from HIP GF must be expended by September 30, 2031. BIP funds remain available for obligation and expenditure as follows:

BIP Fiscal Year Funding	HIP GF Period of Availability for		HTF Period of Availability for	
	Obligation Deadline (Lapse)	Expenditure Deadline (Cancellation)	Obligation Deadline (Lapse)	Expenditure Deadline
FY 2023	Sep. 30, 2026	Sep. 30, 2031	Sep. 30, 2026	Available until expended
FY 2024	Sep. 30, 2027	Sep. 30, 2032	Sep. 30, 2027	Available until expended
FY 2025	Sep. 30, 2028	Sep. 30, 2033	Sep. 30, 2028	Available until expended
FY 2026	Sep. 30, 2029	Sep. 30, 2034	Sep. 30, 2029	Available until expended

Any such amounts not obligated within the period of availability for obligation shall lapse. Once the period of availability for obligation has expired, BIP funds will only remain available for adjusting and liquidating obligations as authorized in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 1553.

Obligated BIP balances from HIP GF are available for expenses properly charged to the account and incurred until the cancellation of the funds, which occurs 5 years after lapse as shown in the table above. After the dates of availability for expenditure, any unexpended balances of obligated HIP GF BIP funds shall be de-obligated. Any such funds that have not been expended are then cancelled and returned to the U.S. Treasury in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 1552 and shall no longer be available for obligation or expenditure.

In addition, a Large Bridge Project that received a grant in an amount not less than \$100,000,000 may be carried out through a multiyear grant agreement using funding available in future fiscal years.⁸ The BIP Large Bridge Project funding category has specific funding restrictions. Refer to Section D.6 for greater detail on funding restrictions.

5. Type of Award

The anticipated award(s) will be cost-reimbursable grant agreements.

6. Period of Performance

The start of the period of performance will begin on the date the grant agreement is executed by FHWA and end on the period of performance end date in the grant agreement.

SECTION C - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

To be selected for a BIP Large Bridge grant, an applicant must meet the eligibility requirements under this Section C including: Eligible Applicant; Eligible Project; Statutory Award Size and non-Federal Match requirements; Construction Start Date After BIP Funds Obligation; Preliminary Engineering Completion; Maintenance Commitment; Asset Management Plan; Eligible Project Costs; and Requirement for Consideration of BIP Grants per State. Applications that do not meet all threshold eligibility requirements will not be evaluated under the Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, and Project Readiness Rating in Section E.

1. Eligible Applicants

a. Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants (23 U.S.C. 124(d))
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A State or a group of States;⁹2. A metropolitan planning organization that serves an urbanized area (as designated by the Bureau of the Census) with a population over 200,000;3. A unit of local government or a group of local governments;4. A political subdivision of a State or local government;5. A special purpose district or a public authority with a transportation function;6. A Federal land management agency;7. A Tribal government or a consortium of Tribal governments; and8. A multi-State or multijurisdictional group of entities as described above in 1 – 7.

b. Joint Applications

Multiple States or a multijurisdictional group that submits a joint application should identify a lead applicant as the primary point of contact (POC). The lead applicant must be an eligible applicant. Joint applications should include a description of the roles and responsibilities of each applicant and should be signed or include a letter of support by each applicant. If selected, the

⁹ The term “[State](#)” means any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico (23 U.S.C. 101(a)(28)).

lead applicant will be the recipient of the grant funds and will be responsible for financial administration of the project.

2. Award Size and non-Federal Matching Requirements

Awards of BIP funds for Large Bridge Project grants may not exceed 50 percent of total eligible project costs (see Section B.2 Award Size). Per 23 U.S.C. 124(c)(4), Federal assistance other than a BIP award may be combined with a BIP award, in which case total Federal assistance for a BIP project may not exceed the Federal share for the project under 23 U.S.C. 120.¹⁰

In the case of an eligible project for an off-system bridge, as defined under 23 U.S.C. 133(f)(1) as a highway bridge¹¹ located on a public road that is not a Federal-aid highway,¹² Federal assistance other than a BIP award may be combined with a BIP award, as long as the total Federal assistance provided for such project does not exceed 90 percent of the total eligible project costs.

Unless otherwise authorized by statute, non-Federal match may not be counted as non-Federal share for both a BIP grant and another Federal program. For example, for a Large Bridge project that receives both a BIP award and a Mega program award under the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Program,¹³ and that has a Federal share of 80 percent under 23 U.S.C. 120, the project would need to provide a non-Federal match of 20 percent. An example of a Federal program that may be used for the local match is the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Program. (See 23 U.S.C. 603(b)(8)).

For a project under BIP, DOT cannot consider previously incurred costs or previously expended or encumbered funds towards the matching requirement. Matching funds are subject to the same Federal requirements as BIP funds.

Non-Federal sources include State funds originating from programs funded by State revenue, local funds originating from State or local revenue-funded programs, private funds, or other funding sources of non-Federal origin. For each project that receives a grant under this NOFO, DOT expects the project to be completed using at least the amount of non-Federal funding that was specified in the application.

¹⁰ https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act/fedshare_fact_sheet.cfm

¹¹ Although 23 U.S.C. 133(f)(1) includes low water crossing in the definition of “off-system bridge,” 23 U.S.C. 124(a)(1)(A) defines an eligible project as a project to replace, rehabilitate, preserve, or protect 1 or more bridges on the National Bridge Inventory under section 23 U.S.C. 144(b). Because a low water crossing is not considered a bridge under 23 CFR 650.305, such structures are not included in the National Bridge Inventory. Therefore, a low water crossing is not eligible for BIP funding.

¹² 23 U.S.C. 133(f)(1) defines an “off-system bridge” as a highway bridge or low water crossing located on a public road that is not a Federal-aid highway. “Federal-aid highway” is defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(6) as a public highway eligible for assistance under chapter 1 of 23 U.S.C. other than a highway functionally classified as a local road or rural minor collector. Therefore, an off-system bridge is a bridge whose Item 26 (Functional Classification) from the National Bridge Inventory is coded either 08, 09, or 19 whereas, on-system bridges are those bridges coded 01, 02, 06, 07, 11, 12, 14, 16, or 17.

¹³ <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/mpdg-NOFO-2023-2024>

For projects under the program of a Federal Land Management Agency (FLMA), a Tribal government, or a consortium of Tribal governments, non-BIP Grant funds may be used to pay the remaining share of the cost of a BIP project and there are no maximum Federal involvement limitations, i.e., Federal funds other than those from the BIP may be used to satisfy 100 percent of the non-Federal share (see 23 U.S.C. 124(c)(4)(C)).

Additional information on non-Federal matching requirements can be found at https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/policy/memonfmr_tapered20190515.htm.

3. Eligible Projects

a. Eligible Projects

Large Bridge Project: A project with a total eligible project costs of greater than \$100 million (See 23 U.S.C. 124(a)(2)).

1. A project to replace, rehabilitate, preserve, or protect one or more bridges on the National Bridge Inventory under 23 U.S.C. 144(b)¹⁴ (See 23 U.S.C. 124(a)(1)(A))
2. A project under the BIP Program includes bridge bundling¹⁴ and culverts¹⁵ (23 U.S.C. 124(a)(1)(B))

“Replacement” is defined in [Specifications for the National Bridge Inventory](#) as total replacement of a bridge with a new facility constructed in the same general traffic corridor. A nominal amount of approach work, sufficient to connect the new facility to the existing roadway or to return the gradeline to an attainable touchdown point in accordance with good design practice, is also eligible. Please refer to the Additional Guidance on approach work: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/0650dsup.cfm>. The replacement structure must meet the current geometric, construction and structural standards required for the types and volume of projected traffic on the facility over its design life.

“Rehabilitation” is defined in 23 CFR 650.305 as the major work required to restore the structural integrity of a bridge as well as work necessary to correct major safety defects. Examples of bridge rehabilitation include but are not limited to: partial or complete deck

¹⁴ This includes a bundle of projects, regardless of whether the bundle of projects meets the requirements of 23 U.S.C. 144(j)(5), which removes the requirement of the bundled projects having similar Federal and local share matches. Bridge Bundling is the use of a single contract award for preservation, preventive maintenance, rehabilitation, or replacement of multiple bridges. Guidance on bridge bundling can be found in the Bridge Bundling Guidebook at https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ipd/pdfs/alternative_project_delivery/bridge_bundling_guidebook_070219.pdf.

¹⁵ This includes projects to replace or rehabilitate culverts for the purpose of improving flood control and improved habitat connectivity for aquatic species. The culverts are required to be on the National Bridge Inventory under 23 U.S.C. 144(b).

replacement, superstructure replacement, substructure/culvert strengthening or partial/full replacement, structure widening, or major modification to substantial portions of the bridge.

“Preservation” of bridges is defined in [FHWA’s Bridge Preservation Guide](#) as actions or strategies that prevent, delay, or reduce deterioration of bridges or bridge elements; restore the function of existing bridges; keep bridges in good or fair condition; and extend their service life.

“Protection” of bridges includes, as stated in 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(9), painting, scour countermeasures, seismic retrofits, impact protection measures, security countermeasures, and protection against extreme events.

Bridges applying for BIP Large Bridge Project grants, including each of the bridges in a bundle of projects, should be on the National Bridge Inventory. To be eligible, all the bundled bridges should be advertised on the same bridge project contract. In addition, each bridge in the bundle should meet the project eligibility criteria for the bundled project to be eligible for BIP funding.

b. Eligible Project Requirements

Eligible Project Requirements for BIP Awards	
Large Bridge Project	Instructions
1. The project is reasonably expected to begin construction not later than 18 months after the date on which BIP funds are obligated for the project. (23 U.S.C. 124(e)(2))	Please provide expected date of obligation (see Section B.4) of BIP funds and construction start date, ¹⁶ referencing project budget and schedule as needed. If the project has multiple independent components, or will be obligated and constructed in multiple phases, please provide sufficient information to show that each component meets this requirement. DOT will base its determination on the project risk as assessed according to the Project Readiness Rating consisting of Environmental Risk, Financial Completeness, and Technical Assessments.
2. Preliminary engineering is complete for the project. ¹⁷ (23 U.S.C. 124(e)(3))	For a project or independent project component to be based on the results of preliminary engineering, please indicate which of the following activities have been completed as of the date of application submission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Assessments

¹⁶ For BIP, construction start date means the anticipated date of project mobilization for physical construction.

¹⁷ Under 23 U.S.C. 124(e)(3), the Secretary may make a grant under BIP only to an eligible entity for a project that is based on the results of preliminary engineering. Although a project may be selected to receive a BIP grant for construction, DOT will not make the grant funds available until all applicable Federal requirements have been met, including completion of preliminary engineering. The BIP grant or “Federal award” will be provided pursuant to a

Eligible Project Requirements for BIP Awards	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topographic Surveys • Metes and Bounds Surveys • Geotechnical Investigations • Hydrologic Analysis • Utility Engineering • Traffic Studies • Financial Plans • Revenue Estimates • Hazardous Materials Assessments • General estimates of the types and quantities of materials • Other work needed to establish parameters for the final design. <p>If one or more of these activities was included in a larger plan or document not described above, please explicitly state that and reference the document. DOT will base its determination on the assessment by technical evaluators.</p>

c. Additional Eligibility Requirements

In addition to meeting the BIP statutory project eligibility requirements, applicants for Large Bridge Project grants must specifically address two 23 U.S.C. requirements: (1) how the bridge will be maintained, and (2) project consistency with an asset management plan.

i. Maintenance Commitment

The application must demonstrate how the grant recipient, whether a State DOT or non-State DOT direct recipient, will maintain or cause to be maintained a Large Bridge Project that receives BIP funds (23 U.S.C. 116(b)). Competitive applications will identify which entity will be responsible for maintaining the BIP funded project, estimated maintenance costs over the life of the project, and sources to fund those costs.

ii. Asset Management Plan

Under 23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(E), DOT must evaluate whether a proposed BIP Large Bridge Project is consistent with the objectives of an applicable asset management plan of the project sponsor, including a State asset management plan required under 23 U.S.C. 119(e) for a BIP Large Bridge Project located on the National Highway System (NHS) that is sponsored by a State. Under 23 U.S.C. 119(e), a State DOT shall develop a risk-based asset management plan for the NHS to

grant agreement setting forth the terms and conditions of the award and the Federal award date means the date the grant agreement is signed by the authorized official of FHWA. (2 CFR 200.1 and 200.201).

improve or preserve the condition of the assets and the performance of the system. The State DOT must include all NHS highway pavements and bridges in its transportation asset management plan (TAMP) regardless of the ownership of the relevant NHS facility. (23 U.S.C. 119(e)(4)(A)). Each State's TAMP can be found on FHWA's Website: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/asset/plans.cfm>.

To meet the statutory evaluation requirement for Large Bridge Project applications under 23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(E), all applications must address the asset management plan criterion. Failure to address this criterion as described immediately below will result in an ineligibility rating. If the application addresses the criterion, it will be evaluated under the State of Good Repair Merit Criterion described in Section E.1.

1. State DOT Project Sponsor

If the project sponsor (the applicant) is a State DOT, the project sponsor must state in the application whether or not it has an asset management plan. As stated above, failure to address this criterion will result in an ineligibility rating.

- If the proposed Large Bridge Project is not on the NHS, and
 - If the project sponsor has an asset management plan, the project sponsor must identify the plan and where DOT can access the plan and must address in the application how the project is consistent with the objectives of the State DOT asset management plan.
 - If the project sponsor does not have an asset management plan, the project sponsor must address in the application how the project would be maintained in a state of good repair.
- If the project is located on the NHS, the project sponsor must address how the project is consistent with the objectives of the State DOT asset management plan.

2. Non-State DOT Project Sponsor

If the project sponsor (the applicant) is a non-State DOT entity, the project sponsor must state in the application whether or not it has an asset management plan. As stated above, failure to address this criterion will result in an ineligibility rating:

- If the project sponsor has an asset management plan, the project sponsor must identify the plan and where DOT can access the plan, and
 - If the proposed Large Bridge Project is not on the NHS, the project sponsor must address in the application how the project is consistent with the objectives of the project sponsor's asset management plan.
 - If the project is located on the NHS, the project sponsor must address in the application how the project is consistent with the objectives of the project sponsor's asset management plan. In addition, the project sponsor must address how the project is also consistent with the objectives of the State DOT asset management plan.
- If the project sponsor does not have an asset management plan, and

- If the proposed Large Bridge Project is not on the NHS, the project sponsor must address in the application how the project would be maintained in a state of good repair.
- If the project is located on the NHS, the project sponsor must address how the project is consistent with the objectives of the State DOT asset management plan.

d. Eligible Project Costs

The list below restates what activities are eligible project costs for Large Bridge Project grants per the BIP statute in 23 U.S.C. 124(h) and (i).

1. Development phase activities, including planning, feasibility analyses, revenue forecasting, environmental review, preliminary engineering and design work, and other preconstruction activities,
2. Construction, which includes replacement and preservation, reconstruction, rehabilitation, acquisition of real property (including land related to the project and improvements to the land), environmental mitigation, construction contingencies, acquisition of equipment, and operational improvements directly related to improving system performance,
3. Expenses related to the protection as described in 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(10) of a bridge, including seismic or scour protection, and
4. On the request of an eligible entity carrying out an eligible project, amounts awarded to the entity to pay subsidy and administrative costs necessary to provide to the entity Federal credit assistance under 23 U.S.C. chapter 6 (TIFIA Program).

This list summarizes the statutorily defined BIP eligible project costs. DOT recognizes that there are other eligible project costs, such as community engagement, that may be necessary for performance of a BIP award. Under 23 U.S.C. 139(j), public entities receiving Federal assistance under 23 U.S.C., or chapter 53, of 49 U.S.C., may provide funds to Federal Agencies, State agencies, and Tribes participating in the environmental review process for the project.

i. Determination of Whether a Large Bridge Project’s Total Eligible Costs Are Greater Than \$100 Million

For a Large Bridge Project, to determine whether total eligible project costs exceed \$100 million, DOT will count all future eligible project costs under the award and some related costs incurred before selection for a BIP Large Bridge Project grant.

DOT will include previously incurred costs in total eligible project costs only if they were eligible project costs under Section C.3.d and were expended as part of the project for which the applicant seeks funds. Although previously incurred costs may be used for meeting the minimum threshold described in this section, they cannot be reimbursed with BIP grant funds

unless DOT has approved a Letter of No Prejudice, nor will they count toward the project's required non-Federal share.

ii. Letters of No Prejudice

Under 23 U.S.C. 124(k), DOT may pay to an applicant all eligible project costs under the BIP, including costs for an activity for an eligible project incurred prior to the date on which the project receives BIP funding assistance. Reimbursement for the activity is dependent upon the following:

- a. Before an applicant carries out the activity, DOT approves through a Letter of No Prejudice the activity, with a finding that it is an eligible BIP activity;
- b. The FHWA National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) project development process is complete for the project with a verifiable Record of Decision (ROD), Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), or Categorical Exclusion (CE) Determination; and
- c. The activity is carried out without Federal assistance and in accordance with all applicable procedures and requirements.

Interest and other financing costs in carrying out an eligible activity for an eligible project may also be incurred under the process set forth in 23 U.S.C. 124(k)(2).

Applicants interested in seeking approval for an eligible activity for an eligible BIP project are advised that an approval (1) does not constitute an obligation of the Federal Government and (2) shall not alter or influence any evaluation for a Large Bridge Project application or any recommendation by DOT for providing BIP funds to the project (23 U.S.C. 142(k)(3)).

Applicants interested in seeking a Letter of No Prejudice should do so with the understanding that if approved they are proceeding at risk, as there is no guarantee that costs incurred will be reimbursed by DOT.

SECTION D - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

All application materials may be found on Grants.gov at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Once at Grants.gov, select the Search Grants tab. Then enter one of the following:

- Opportunity Number: **693JJ323NF00019**
- Opportunity Name: **Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 – 2026 Bridge Investment Program, Large Bridge Project Grants**
- Assistance Listing Number: **20.205 Highway Planning and Construction**

When at one of these pages, select the Opportunity, which will open to a page with several tabs. The first tab is a synopsis of the opportunity. Select the Application Package tab to download the forms needed to submit an FY 2023 - 2026 BIP Large Bridge Project grant application.

For a Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD), please call (202) 366-3993. If potential applicants are unable to download the application package from the Internet, they may send a written request for a paper copy to the below address. Requests should be sent to:

Veronica Jacobson
Agreement Specialist
Office of Acquisition and Grants Management
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
12300 West Dakota Avenue, #180
Lakewood, CO 80228
Email: BridgeInvestmentProgram@dot.gov
Phone: 720-963-3020

Alternate:

Hector Santamaria
Agreement Officer/Team Leader
Office of Acquisition and Grants Management
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.
Washington, DC 20590
Email: BridgeInvestmentProgram@dot.gov
Phone: 202-494-3811

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

The content and form of the application submission is described below. Please be advised that DOT may share application information within DOT or with other Federal Agencies if DOT determines that sharing is relevant to the respective program's objectives.

All applications must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov.

The application package must consist of the following in this order:

a. Application Forms:

i. Standard Form 424

Note: Applicants may leave fields 5a, 5b, 6, 7, and 13 blank on the form.

Note: A number of separate PDF flat files must be attached in Item 15 to provide required project information that is not included in the body of the SF-424.

Instructions for adding Item 15 Attachments:

- Click on "Add Attachments" in Item 15 to open the first pop-up window. Click "Add Attachment" and a second pop-up File Explorer/Directory window will appear, from which you can choose files to attach. Attachments can be added one at a time or all at once by holding down the CTRL key and selecting multiple files. Select "Open" to add the selected files as attachments.
- Click "Done" to finalize the attachments.
- Click "View Attachments" to see a list of files that have been added as attachments.

Required attachment(s): the Project Narrative must be added as Attachments to Item 15 of the SF-424.

ii. Required Forms for Construction Projects

Applicants proposing construction-related projects must submit the following forms:

- A. Standard Form 424C (Budget Information Construction Programs); and
- B. Standard Form 424D (Assurances for Construction Programs).

Note: The Standard Form 424C should be supported by a budget narrative. The budget narrative should breakdown costs for each cost classification used on the Standard Form 424C.

iii. Mandatory Forms for All Applications

- A. Grants.gov Lobbying Form; and
- B. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form (SF-LLL).

693JJ323NF00019

Note: All mandatory forms are available for download at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-mandatory-family.html>.

b. Application Templates

Applicants for a BIP Large Bridge Project grants must use the Large Bridge Project application template as well as the BIP Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) Tool, which will be posted when available on FHWA's Website: [BIP - Funding Programs - Management and Preservation - Bridges & Structures - Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bip/bip_funding_programs_management_and_preservation_bridges_structures_federal_highway_administration_dot_gov/). Applicants may submit a supplemental project narrative to provide any additional information necessary for DOT to determine that the project meets the statutory eligibility criteria described in Section C and to assess the Merit Criteria specified in Section E.1. The Large Bridge Project application template follows the outline below. If a supplemental project narrative is submitted with the application, DOT recommends that the project narrative follow the outline below. Following the outline will also assist evaluators in locating relevant information.

c. Project Narrative

DOT recommends applications include the following sections in their Project Narrative:

I. Basic Project Information – Description, Location, and Parties	See D.2.c.I
II. National Bridge Inventory Data	See D.2.d.II
III. Project Budget – Grant Funds, Sources, and Use of all Project Funding	See D.2.c.III
IV. Merit Criteria	See E.1.b
V. Benefit-Cost Analysis	See D.2.c.V
VI. Project Readiness and Permitting Risk	See D.2.c.VI and E.1.d
VII. DOT Priority Selection Considerations	See D.2.c.VII

For all Large Bridge Project applications, the project narrative should augment information provided in the application template necessary for DOT to do two things: (1) to determine that the project satisfies eligibility requirements described in Section C and the Merit Criteria in Section E.1, and (2) to assess the statutory selection criteria and considerations specified in Section E.1 that are applicable to BIP Large Bridge Project grants. In addition to the information submitted in an application template, applicants should submit a detailed statement of work,

detailed project schedule, and detailed project budget. Applicants may submit a project narrative to support these project elements and should include a table of contents, maps, and graphics, as appropriate, to make the information easier to review.

To the extent practicable, applicants should provide supporting data and documentation in a form that is directly verifiable by DOT. As described in Section A.3 and Section E.2, when DOT notifies an applicant of the overall application rating, DOT may request additional information, including additional data, to clarify supporting data and documentation submitted in an application, but DOT encourages applicants to submit the most relevant and complete information they can provide. DOT also encourages applicants, to the extent practicable, to provide data in a form that is publicly available or verifiable.

DOT recommends that the project narrative be prepared with standard formatting preferences (i.e., 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 25 pages in length, Appendices may include documents supporting assertions or conclusions made in the 25-page project narrative and do not count towards the 25-page limit. 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 identify within the project narrative the relevant portion of the project narrative that each supporting document supports. At the applicant's discretion, relevant materials provided previously to a DOT Modal Administration in support of a different DOT financial assistance program may be referenced and described as unchanged. DOT recommends using appropriately descriptive file names (e.g., "Project Narrative," "Maps," "Memoranda of Understanding and Letters of Support," etc.) for all attachments.

I. Basic Project Information – Project Description, Location, and Parties

Project Description

The applicant should provide a concise description of the project, the specific improvement(s) needed for the bridge, how it will address those challenges, and advance one or more goals of the BIP. The project description should discuss the project's history, including a description of any previously incurred costs. The applicant may use this section to place the project into a broader context of other infrastructure investments being pursued by the project sponsor.

The application should also address how the project will accommodate bicycles and pedestrians pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 217(e). Under this provision, all projects with Federal financial participation (including under BIP) that replace or rehabilitate a highway bridge deck are required to provide safe accommodation of pedestrians or bicyclists, as applicable, on the bridge, when both of the following conditions are met: (1) the bridge is located on a highway on which

pedestrians or bicyclists are allowed to operate at each end of the bridge; and (2) FHWA determines that safe accommodation can be provided at reasonable cost.¹⁸

Project Location

The applicant should describe in the application the project location, including a detailed geographical description of the proposed project, a map of the project's location and connections to existing transportation infrastructure, and geospatial data describing the project location (shapefiles will be accepted under 200 MB file size).

The application should also identify if the project is located within the boundary of a 2020 Census-designated Urbanized Area, the application should identify the Urbanized Area.¹⁹

Information under (c) will be used during the selection process under Section E.2. In selecting BIP grants, the Secretary shall consider geographic diversity among grant recipients, including the need for a balance between the needs of rural and urban communities (23 U.S.C. 124(c)(5)(A)(vii)). For the purpose of this NOFO, FHWA will consider communities that are within urbanized areas (i.e., areas with a population of 50,000 or more) to be urban communities and all other areas to be rural communities.

To the extent possible, DOT encourages, but is not requiring, applicants to identify the degree to which the project may contribute to the functioning and growth of the economy, including the

¹⁸ The first step in this process is to assess whether the bridge is located on a highway on which pedestrians or bicyclists are allowed to operate at each end of the bridge. If that is the case, in making a determination as to whether safe accommodation can be provided at a reasonable cost FHWA will rely on its Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning, Program, and Project Development Guidance (https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/guidance/guidance_2023.pdf); FHWA will presume that safe accommodation for bicyclists and pedestrians can be provided at reasonable cost for all BIP projects absent an affirmative showing by the project sponsor that the cost of such accommodation would exceed 20 percent of the cost of the larger transportation project. For instances where such accommodation exceeds 20 percent, the addition of bicyclist and pedestrian accommodation is not required, but FHWA encourages States to consider providing for such accommodation.

¹⁹ FHWA will rely on the digital maps and geographic shapefiles for the 2020 Census urban areas depicted on the FHWA HEPGIS maps of [MPO and 2020 Census Urban Areas - FHWA HEPGIS Maps \(dot.gov\)](#) (refer to the "MPO and Air Quality Tab" and then scroll to "MPO and 2020 Census Urban Areas") which correlates the definitions of "urban" and "rural areas" under title 23, U.S.C. and Bureau of the Census data. A list of 2020 census designated urban areas is available in the Census Bureau's [December 29, 2022 Federal Register Notice](#) (87 FR 80114). The term "urban area" means an urbanized area or, in the case of an urbanized area encompassing more than one State, that part of the urbanized area in each such State, or urban place as designated by the Bureau of the Census having a population of 5,000 or more and not within any urbanized area in each State, or urban place as designated by the Bureau of the Census having a population of 5,000 or more and note within any urbanized area. (23 U.S.C. 101(35)). The term "urbanized area" means an area with a population of 50,000 or more designated by the Bureau of the Census, within boundaries to be fixed by responsible State and local officials in cooperation with each other, subject to approval by the Secretary. Such boundaries shall encompass, at a minimum, the entire urbanized area within a State as designated by the Bureau of the Census. (23 U.S.C. 101(36)). The term "rural areas" means all areas of a State not included in urban areas. (23 U.S.C. 101(25)).

extent to which the project addresses congestion or freight connectivity, bridges service gaps in rural areas, or promotes greater land-use productivity, including rural main street revitalization.

Lead Applicant

This section of the application should provide details about the lead applicant. The details should include the lead applicant's demonstrated experience with receipt and expenditure of Federal-aid highway program funds under 23 U.S.C. DOT will consider the degree of experience as part of the Project Readiness Rating. If an application is rated highly under other criteria, but the applicant has no or limited experience with the receipt and expenditure of Federal-aid highway program funds, DOT may contact the applicant prior to final selection of BIP awards to discuss technical resources that may be available to assist the applicant in obtaining the capacity and expertise to ensure compliance with all applicable Federal requirements and timely delivery of the project.

Other Public and Private Parties

The applicant should describe in detail all other public and private parties who are involved in delivering the project, including a specific description of the role of each entity in delivering the project.

The applicant should state whether or not a private or non-private entity will receive a direct and predictable financial benefit if the project is selected for award. This includes, but is not limited to, private and non-private entities directly benefitting from completion of the proposed project. If this project directly involves or benefits a specific private corporation, a non-public entity, or a public entity, please identify the full name of each entity, separated by a comma.

Additional Eligibility Requirements

The applicant should include a section to specifically address two 23 U.S.C. requirements for Large Bridge Project Grants: how the bridge will be maintained, and the project's consistency with an asset management plan as detailed in Section C.3.c.

II. National Bridge Inventory Data

The applicant should provide information from the current National Bridge Inventory for each bridge on which the applicant proposes to use BIP funding. If an applicant uses the recommended application template, the recommended National Bridge Inventory data items for each structure is automatically included in the application template. Additional National Bridge Inventory items can be added if they support the project application. Data, format, and coding information can be downloaded from [Download NBI ASCII files - National Bridge Inventory - Bridge Inspection - Safety Inspection - Bridges & Structures - Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/inspection/Download%20NBI%20ASCII%20files%20-%20National%20Bridge%20Inventory%20-%20Bridge%20Inspection%20-%20Safety%20Inspection%20-%20Bridges%20&%20Structures%20-%20Federal%20Highway%20Administration%20(dot.gov).).

III. Project Budget – Grant Funds, Sources, and Uses of all Project Funding

The applicant should describe the project’s budget in detail and the plans for covering the full cost of the project from all sources. The applicant may use this section of a project narrative to elaborate on the information provided in the application template.

The project budget should show how different funding sources will share in each major project activity and present those data in dollars and percentages. The budget should identify other Federal funds the applicant is applying for or has been awarded, if any, that the applicant intends to use. Funding sources should be grouped into three categories: (1) Non-Federal; (2) BIP Funds; and (3) Other Federal Funds with specific amounts from each funding source. The project budget should have a budget narrative with breakdown costs for each cost classification used on the Standard Form 424C.

The project budget should identify all Federal funds to be used for future eligible costs of the project, including the requested BIP grant amount, other Federal grants that have been awarded to the project or for which the project intends to apply in the future, and any Federal formula funds that have already been programmed for the project or are planned to be programmed for the project. For each category of Federal funds to be used for future eligible project costs, the amount, nature, and source of any required non-Federal match for those funds should also be identified.

If the project contains components,²⁰ the budget should separate the costs of each project component. If the project will be completed in phases,²¹ the budget should separate the costs of each phase. The budget should be detailed enough to demonstrate that the project satisfies the BIP statutory maximum Federal involvement requirements described in Section C.2 and non-Federal matching requirements associated with each category of Federal funding.

The application should include information showing that the applicant has budgeted sufficient contingency amounts to cover unanticipated cost increases.²² In addition to the information enumerated above, this section should provide complete information on how all project funds may be used, their availability, and funding commitments. For example, if a 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 source of funds is available for expenditure only during a fixed period, the application should describe that restriction. Complete information about project funds will ensure that FHWA’s expectations for award execution align with any funding restrictions unrelated to FHWA, even if an award differs from the applicant’s request.

IV. Merit Criteria

The applicant should describe how the proposal meets the Merit Criteria listed in Section E.

²⁰ “Project components” means separate projects activities are scheduled to be completed at the same time.

²¹ “Project phases” means a project will be delivered in phases and completed in sequence such as pre-construction followed by construction or construction will be carried out with multiple phases.

²² [Guidance - Cost Estimating - Major Projects - Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](#)

V. Benefit-Cost Analysis

This section describes the recommended approach for the completion and submission of a 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 must be summarized in the project narrative directly. Applicants must also provide all relevant files used for their BCA, including any spreadsheet files (unlocked versions) and technical memos describing the analysis (whether created in-house or by a contractor). The spreadsheets and technical memos must present the calculations in sufficient detail and transparency to allow the analysis to be reproduced by DOT evaluators. Applicants must use the BIP BCA Tool to produce and submit the analysis for their project, which is available on FHWA's Website: [BIP - Funding Programs - Management and Preservation - Bridges & Structures - Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](#). If the applicant does not use the BIP BCA Tool, they must ask for permission in writing from FHWA and state why they are requesting to use another method.

The BCA must 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 in both the no-build baseline and the build alternative to explain the impact of the project. To calculate present values, applicants should apply a real discount rate used in the DOT BCA Guidance (see Website link below) to the project's streams of benefits and costs, which must be stated in constant-dollar terms. The documentation must clearly state that scope of the costs and benefits that are compared in the BCA 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 air pollution). 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 must 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. Full costs should include both those previously incurred and estimated to occur in the future. The BCA may also include the present discounted value of any remaining service life of the asset at the end of the analysis period.

Detailed guidance from DOT on conducting BCA, estimating benefits and costs, recommended economic values for converting them to dollar terms, and discounting to their present values, is available on the DOT's Website (see www.transportation.gov/office-policy/transportation-policy/benefit-cost-analysis-guidance-discretionary-grant-programs-0.)

VI. Project Readiness and Permitting Risk

The application should include information that, when considered with the project budget information, is sufficient for DOT to evaluate whether the project is reasonably expected to begin construction in a timely manner. To assist DOT's Project Readiness Rating, the applicant should provide the information requested on technical feasibility, technical competency, project schedule, project approvals, and project risks, each of which is described in 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 project readiness, promotes a clear discussion that assists project evaluators.

Instructions describing how DOT will evaluate a project's readiness is contained in Section E.1.d. of this notice. Applicants also should review that section before considering how to organize their application.

a) Technical Feasibility and Technical Competency.

The applicant should demonstrate the technical feasibility of the project with engineering and design studies and activities; the development of design criteria and/or a basis of design; the basis for the cost estimate presented in the application, including the identification of contingency levels appropriate to its level of design; and any scope, schedule, and budget risk-mitigation measures. Applicants should include a detailed statement of work that focuses on the technical and engineering aspects of the project and describes in detail the project to be constructed.

The applicant should also demonstrate the applicant's capacity to successfully deliver the project in compliance with applicable Federal requirements including, but not limited to, compliance with Title VI/Civil Rights requirements, to ensure that no person is excluded from participation, denied benefits, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability as described in Section E.1.d.

b) 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 (programming on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program STIP)); 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; project partnership and implementation agreements including agreements with railroads; and construction. The project schedule should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate that:

- All necessary activities will be complete to allow BIP funds to be obligated (as defined in Section B.4) sufficiently in advance of the statutory deadline and that any unexpected delays will not put the funds at risk of expiring before they are obligated;

- If applicable, the project can proceed to the next stage of project development within 12 months of a CE Determination, FONSI, or a ROD;
- The project can begin construction quickly upon obligation of grant funds, or no later than 18 months after obligation, and that the grant funds will be spent expeditiously once construction starts; and
- All real property and right-of-way acquisition necessary for the project will be completed in a timely manner in accordance with 49 CFR 24, 23 CFR 710, and other applicable legal requirements or a statement that no right-of-way acquisition is necessary. A plan for securing any required right-of-way agreements should be included. If applicable, this section should describe a right-of-way acquisition plan that minimally disrupts communities and maintains community cohesion.

c) Required Approvals

i. Environmental Permits and Reviews

The application should demonstrate receipt (or the schedule for anticipated receipt) of all environmental approvals and permits necessary for the project, including each bridge within a bridge bundle 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, Tribal government, State, and local requirements and completion of the NEPA process.²³ This section should also provide:

- 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 CE determination, FONSI, ROD, and any other NEPA documents prepared. If the NEPA process is underway, but not complete, the 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 final agency action with respect to NEPA occurred more than 3 years before the application date, the applicant should describe a proposed approach for updating this material in accordance with applicable NEPA reconsideration requirements.
- Any information on reviews, approvals, and permits by other Federal and State agencies. An application should indicate whether the proposed project requires reviews or approval actions by other agencies, indicate the status of such actions, 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.

²³ [Environmental Review Toolkit | FHWA \(dot.gov\)](#) Provides singular gateway to environmental resources that will help applicants better understand the requirements of NEPA for Federal-aid and Federal Lands highway projects.

- Environmental studies or other documents – preferably through a Website link – that describe in detail known project impacts, and possible mitigation for those impacts.
- A description of discussions with FHWA regarding the project’s compliance with NEPA and other applicable Federal environmental reviews and approvals.
- A description of public engagement about the project that has occurred, including details on the degree to which public comments and commitments have been integrated into project development and design including the consideration of ensuring proportional impacts to all populations.

ii. State and Local Approvals

The applicant should demonstrate receipt (or the schedule for anticipated receipt) of Tribal government, State, and local approvals on which the project depends, such as State and local environmental and planning approvals, and STIP or transportation improvement program (TIP) funding. Additional support from relevant State and local officials is not required; however, an applicant should demonstrate that the project has broad public support, including support from impacted communities.

iii. Federal Transportation Requirements Affecting State and Local Planning

The planning requirements applicable to the Federal-aid highway program apply to all BIP Large Bridge Project Grants.²⁴ 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. Applicants should provide Website links or other documentation supporting this consideration.

Because projects have different schedules, the construction start date for each grant will be specified in the project-specific agreements signed by FHWA and the grant recipients, will be based on critical path items that applicants identify in the application, and will be consistent with relevant State and local plans.

²⁴ In accordance with 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, TIP, and 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 grant until it is included in such plans. Projects not currently included in these plans can be amended by the State and metropolitan planning organization. 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 grant.

iv. Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Project risks, such as procurement delays, environmental uncertainties, increases in real estate acquisition costs, uncommitted local match, lack of support from stakeholders or impacted communities, or lack of legislative approval, affect the likelihood of successful project start and completion. The applicant should identify all material risks and harms to the project and the strategies that the lead applicant and any project partners have undertaken or will undertake to mitigate those risks.²⁵ The applicant should assess the greatest risks to the project and identify how the project parties will mitigate those risks.

To the extent it is unfamiliar with the Federal-aid highway program, the applicant should contact the FHWA Division Office in their State as found at [Field Offices | Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](#) for information on what steps are prerequisite to the obligation of Federal funds to ensure that their project schedule is reasonable and that there are no risks of delays in satisfying Federal requirements.

VII. DOT Priority Selection Considerations

The applicant should include a section to highlight any DOT priority considerations (see Section E.1.h) the project will address. Detailed information demonstrating how the project supports the priority consideration(s) and references to earlier sections of the narrative along with supporting documentation should be included in the application.

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

Effective April 4, 2022, the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is no longer required for entities doing business with the Federal Government and will be replaced by the SAM UEI. Applicants will need to use a UEI issued during the SAM.gov registration process. Active registrants in SAM.gov have had their SAM UEI automatically assigned and it is currently viewable within SAM.gov; there is no action for registered entities to take at this time to obtain their SAM UEI.

Each applicant is required to:

- a. Be registered in SAM before submitting their application;
- b. Provide a valid UEI in their application; and

²⁵ DOT considers an applicant's lack of experience with receipt and expenditure of Federal-aid highway funds under title 23, U.S.C. a material risk.

- c. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which the applicant has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding Agency.

Please see <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html#UEI> for more information on the transition from DUNS to SAM UEI, including what UEI to enter into the UEI field on grants.gov and on application package forms.

DOT may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding Agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding Agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

NOTE TO APPLICANTS: The SAM.gov requires the registrant to provide a valid UEI number to complete the registration. These processes can take several weeks to complete so should be started well before the application deadline.

GRANTS.GOV: Applicants must follow the instructions on Grants.gov to successfully use the Website to submit an application. Use of Grants.gov may entail the following steps for those setting up new accounts or first-time users:

- a. Register with SAM at www.SAM.gov
- b. Obtain a valid UEI;
- c. Create a Grants.gov account; and
- d. Respond to the registration email sent to the E-Business POC from Grants.gov, and login at Grants.gov to authorize the Applicant as the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Please note that there can be more than one AOR for an organization.

Note: The Grants.gov registration process may take 2 to 4 weeks.

GRANTS.GOV HELP: For Grants.gov training resources, including video tutorials, refer to: [Home | GRANTS.GOV](#). For assistance with Grants.gov registration and application submittal, refer to the Grants.gov Support Center: [Support | GRANTS.GOV](#).

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on the dates identified in the table below (or as updated by a NOFO Amendment, if applicable). The due date/time is the date and time by which FHWA must receive the full and completed application, including all required sections. Applications can be submitted anytime throughout the year after the NOFO opening date until the particular application deadline date to

be considered for the corresponding fiscal year BIP funding. For a Large Bridge Project, FHWA will evaluate the application and will strive to as much as possible provide feedback and/or share the outcome/rating of the evaluation with the applicant within 90 days of the application submittal date, but does not guarantee the timing. Applications submitted after an application deadline will not be considered for the next round of funding until the announcement of projects selected to receive a BIP award for which fiscal year funds are available. See Section E.2 for project review and selection process and Section A.3.c for the rolling application process. As this is a “rolling” NOFO, applications can be submitted any time throughout the year, but applicants are advised to take notice of the due dates for consideration for a particular fiscal year BIP funding as follows:

Fiscal Year BIP Funding	Application Deadline
FYs 2023 and 2024	December 4, 2023
FY 2025	August 1, 2024
FY 2026	August 1, 2025

FHWA will not consider applications received after the application deadline that are the result of failure to register or comply with Grants.gov applicant requirements in a timely manner. If applicants are unable to use the system due to verifiable technical difficulties, applicants must email complete applications directly to FHWA POC listed in Section G no later than the NOFO application deadline cited herein, with an explanation of the technical issue experienced and supporting documents regarding the nature of the technical difficulties. For instance, provide screen capture(s) of the technical issues experienced. If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to contact the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. Provide the Grants.gov Help Desk Tracking Number because it will assist FHWA with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the system issue in the event of a late application. If the reported technical issues cannot be validated, late applications may be rejected as untimely.

5. Intergovernmental Review

The BIP is not subject to the Intergovernmental Review of Federal programs under E.O. 12372.

6. Funding Restrictions

Unless authorized by FHWA in writing after FHWA’s announcement of applications selected to receive a BIP award, any costs incurred prior to FHWA’s obligation of funds for a project (“pre-award costs”) are ineligible for reimbursement except as provided under a Letter of No Prejudice as described in Section C.3.d.ii.

7. Other Submission Requirements

a. Scalable Project Options

Applicants are encouraged to identify scaled funding options in case insufficient funding is available to fund a project or a bundled project at the full requested amount. If an applicant advises that a project is scalable, the applicant must provide an appropriate minimum funding amount that will fund an eligible project that achieves the objectives of the program and meets all relevant program requirements. The applicant must provide a clear explanation of how the project budget and the BCA would be affected by a reduced award. DOT may award a lesser amount whether or not a scalable option is provided.

b. Submission Location

Applications must be submitted to www.grants.gov.

c. Consideration of Applications

Except as described in the next section, 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 deadlines.

d. Applications Received After the Application Deadline

Applicants experiencing technical issues with *Grants.gov* that are beyond the applicant's control must contact BridgeInvestmentProgram@dot.gov prior to the application deadline with the username 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 POC name submitted in the SF-424;
- (5) The UEI 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 NOFO; and (4) technical issues experienced with the applicant's computer or information technology environment.

After FHWA reviews all information submitted and contacts the *Grants.gov* Help Desk to validate reported technical issues, FHWA staff will contact late applicants to approve or deny a request to submit a late application through *Grants.gov*. FHWA will not accept appeals of an FHWA decision to approve or deny a request for a late application. If the reported technical issues cannot be validated, late applications will be considered for the next round of funding.

SECTION E - APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

DOT will award BIP grants based on an evaluation of the Merit Criteria, the Economic Analysis Rating, and the Project Readiness Rating including an evaluation of the Statutory Evaluation Requirements, Statutory Secretarial Considerations, and Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities described in this Section under E.1 and the Selection and Review process described in Section E.2.

1. Criteria

a. Statutory Evaluation Requirements

For Large Bridge Project grants, DOT is statutorily required to evaluate specific benefits under 23 U.S.C. 124. The table below describes each benefit and provides instructions to applicants on how to present information supporting the benefit. To assist applicants, the table identifies the Merit Criteria, the Economic Analysis Rating, and the Project Readiness Rating under which DOT will evaluate the responsiveness of an application to the statutory evaluation requirements.

Statutory Evaluation Requirements	
Large Bridge Project	Instructions
In this column DOT includes the statutory evaluation requirements for a Large Bridge Project. The Project is justified by the Secretary under 23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(A) through (E).	In this column, DOT offers instructions to applicants on how to address each of the statutory evaluation requirements.
The project addresses a need to improve the condition of the bridge, as determined by the Secretary, consistent with the goals of the BIP (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(A)).	Summarize the need to improve the condition of the bridge.
Costs avoided by the prevention of the closure or reduced use of the bridge to be improved by the project (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(i))	Summarize the benefits of providing protection activities and benefits to reduced future maintenance costs, and benefits from prevention of the closure or reduced use of the bridge, highlighting the assumptions made about the timing of potential closure and/or reduced use of the bridge in the absence of the project. For a Large Bridge Project, describe how the project is in alignment with an asset management plan, and for NHS structures, how it is sponsored by the State and addressed in the State’s asset management plan. DOT will base its determination on the assessment of this
Benefits from protection as described in 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(10), including improving seismic and scour protection (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(vii))	
Reductions in maintenance costs, including, in the case of a federally owned	

Statutory Evaluation Requirements	
bridge, cost savings to the Federal budget (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(xi))	information during the review of the Merit Criterion for State of Good Repair.
Is consistent with the objectives of an applicable asset management plan of the project sponsor, including a State asset management plan under 23 U.S.C. 119(e) in the case of a project on the NHS that is sponsored by a State (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(E))	
Safety benefits, including the reduction of accidents and related costs (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(iii))	Summarize the safety benefits of the project and independent project components. Also summarize the person and freight mobility benefits of the project. DOT will base its determination on the assessment of this information during the review of the Merit Criterion for Safety and Mobility.
Person and freight mobility benefits, including congestion reduction and reliability improvements (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(iv))	
Person and freight mobility benefits, including congestion reduction and reliability improvements (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(iv))	Summarize the economic benefits and opportunity of the project and independent project components and describe the scale of their impact in national or regional terms with a focus on volume and estimated dollar amount of freight movement and the types of goods being moved. DOT will base its determination on the assessment of this information during the review of the Merit Criterion for Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity.
National or regional economic benefits (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(v))	
Benefits from long-term resiliency to extreme weather events, flooding, or other natural disasters (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(vi))	
Environmental benefits, including wildlife connectivity (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(viii))	Summarize the benefits of the project to improve resiliency of the bridge to extreme weather events, flooding, or other natural disasters. Also describe anticipated environmental benefits of the project, including how the project will improve wildlife connectivity, especially for aquatic species, and reduce air and other pollutants (such as stormwater runoff pollutants). DOT will base its determination on the assessment of this information during the review of the Merit Criterion for Sustainability, Resiliency, and the Environment.

Statutory Evaluation Requirements	
Benefits to nonvehicular and public transportation users (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(ix))	Summarize the benefits of the project to nonvehicular and public transportation users, including how impacted communities are engaged in the project planning process and how the project will improve community connectivity upon completion. DOT will base its determination on the assessment of this information during the review of the Merit Criterion for Quality of Life.
In the case of a bundle of projects, benefits from executing the projects as a bundle compared to as individual projects (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(ii))	Summarize the benefits the project will earn through the use of innovative design and construction techniques, or innovative technologies, and what cost savings the project may achieve through the use of bundling compared to individual projects. DOT will base its determination on the assessment of this information during the review of the Merit Criterion for Innovation.
Benefits of using innovative design and construction techniques or innovative technologies (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B)(x)(I) and (II))	
Is cost effective based on an analysis of whether the benefits and avoided costs described in 23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B), are expected to outweigh the project costs (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(C))	Summarize the results of the BCA, including estimates for the categories of benefits described in 23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(B). DOT will base its determination on the assessment of this information during the review of the Economic Analysis Rating.
Is supported by other Federal or non-Federal financial commitments or revenues adequate to fund ongoing maintenance and preservation (23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4)(D))	Indicate funding source(s) and amounts that will account for ongoing maintenance and preservation upon completion of the project. Demonstrate that the funding is stable and dependable by referencing a letter of commitment, a local government resolution, memorandum of understanding, or similar documentation. DOT will base its determination on the assessment of this information during the review of the Project Readiness Rating.

This section specifies the criteria that DOT will use to evaluate applications. DOT will review Merit Criteria, three components of Project Readiness Rating reviews (Permitting Risk Assessment, Technical Assessment, and Financial Completeness Assessment) and an Economic (benefit-cost) Analysis for all eligible Large Bridge Project applications.

b. Merit Criteria

DOT will evaluate applications using the following Merit Criteria for the FY 2023 through FY 2026 BIP Large Bridge Project grant applications.

DOT has designated six Merit Criteria which will be used to evaluate and rate the responsiveness of an application to the Statutory Required Evaluation Requirements and Statutory Secretarial Considerations. In addition, DOT will use the Merit Criteria to assess how a project will advance safety, reduction in emissions, increased resilience extreme weather events, improved transportation options and access, promoting competitiveness of the U.S. economy, improving job opportunities, and accommodating new emerging technologies.

Criterion #1: State of Good Repair

DOT will assess how the project will contribute to a state of good repair by: (1) improving the condition of a bridge in poor condition or in fair condition and at risk of falling into poor condition within the next 3 years;²⁶ (2) improving protection, such as seismic or scour protection, to provide long-term resiliency to extreme weather events, flooding, or other natural disasters; and (3) reducing maintenance costs. The application should include a detailed plan of the major activities that will be undertaken to address (1) or (2), and (3), with each supported by quantifiable data that supports the anticipated benefits of the project. The data should show how the project will improve the condition of the bridge(s) by reducing the total person miles traveled over the bridge(s): (1) in poor condition or in fair condition and at risk of falling into poor condition within in the next 3 years; and (2) that do not meet current geometric design standards; or that cannot meet the load and traffic requirements typical of the regional transportation network. The application should contain data that classifies each bridge with a condition rating of good, fair, or poor, along with supporting data for the condition classification.²⁶ For bridges in fair condition, the application should include verifiable data that demonstrates the risk of the bridge falling into poor condition within the next 3 years from the date of the application deadline, if applicable. The proposed project should be consistent with relevant plans to maintain transportation facilities or systems in a state of good repair, including how the project is consistent with the objectives of an asset management plan of the project sponsor. In the case of a project on the NHS that is sponsored by a State, this includes a State asset management plan under 23 U.S.C. 119(e). See Section C.3.c for more details. DOT will consider whether the project includes a maintenance plan that demonstrates the project funded with BIP grant funds will be maintained in a state of good repair.

Selection Criteria	Non-Responsive	Responsive	Highly Responsive
State of Good Repair	The application did not address the State of Good Repair criterion; or The application contains insufficient information to assess any one of (1), (2), or (3) of the following: (1.a) the condition of the bridge to support a finding that the	The application describes ALL (1), (2), AND (3) of the following but, without providing quantifiable data for ALL three OR provides quantifiable data or verifiable evidence for only one or two of the following: (1.a) a bridge that is in poor condition or in fair condition and at risk of failing	The application includes quantifiable data that demonstrates ALL (1), (2), AND (3) of the following: (1.a) the bridge is in poor condition or in fair condition and at risk of falling into poor condition within the next 3 years from the date of the Bridge Project application deadline; or

²⁶ See footnote 1 in Section A.1.a.

Selection Criteria	Non-Responsive	Responsive	Highly Responsive
	<p>bridge is in poor condition or in fair condition and at risk of falling into poor condition within the next 3 years; (1.b) whether the bridge does not meet current geometric design standards or cannot meet the load and traffic requirements typical of the regional network; (1.c) whether if the bridge is not improved, there is a threat to the future transportation network efficiency, mobility of goods or accessibility and mobility of people, or economic growth due to a closure or reduction in use; (1.d) how the project will improve protection, such as seismic or scour protection, to improve the bridge's long-term resiliency; OR (2) how the project will reduce maintenance costs; OR (3) whether the project is in an asset management plan or consistent with an asset management plan.</p>	<p>into poor condition within the next 3 years, but the data included in the application is not quantifiable to fully demonstrate current condition of the bridge or the risk of falling into poor condition within the next 3 years; or (1.b) a bridge does not meet current geometric design standards or cannot meet the load and traffic requirements typical of the regional transportation network, but this is not supported with appropriate geometric requirements established by the State; or (1.c) the application mentions but does not demonstrate that if the bridge is not improved, there is a threat to the future transportation network efficiency, mobility of goods or accessibility and mobility of people, or economic growth due to a closure or reduction in use; or (1.d) the application mentions but does not demonstrate how the project will improve protection, such as seismic or scour protection, to improve the bridge's long-term resiliency; AND (2) The project does not provide details on maintenance costs of the current bridge and reduced costs following the project completion or how the project will be maintained in a state of good repair; AND</p>	<p>(1.b) that the bridge does not meet current geometric design standards; or cannot meet the load and traffic requirements typical of the regional transportation network; or (1.c) the application demonstrates that if the bridge is not improved, there is a threat to the future transportation network efficiency, mobility of goods or accessibility and mobility of people, or economic growth due to a closure or reduction in use; or (1.d) the project will improve protection, such as seismic or scour protection, to improve the bridge's long-term resiliency.</p> <p>The major activities proposed to improve the condition of the bridge are feasible and the application provides a detailed description of the project plan, supported by data, that shows how the project will address one or more of the items listed above, including the number of bridges to be improved and the total person miles traveled that would be impacted by the improvement; AND (2) The application provides quantifiable data that the project will reduce maintenance costs by providing details on current maintenance costs and future maintenance costs following the project</p>

Selection Criteria	Non-Responsive	Responsive	Highly Responsive
		(3) The application indicates that the project is in an asset management plan but does not demonstrate how it is consistent with the plan.	completion. And, the application demonstrates the project will be maintained in a state of good repair; AND (3) The application provides verifiable evidence that demonstrates that the project is consistent with the objectives of an asset management plan.

Criterion #2: Safety and Mobility

DOT will assess how the project will improve the safety of the bridge and associated sections of roadway, including the reduction of accidents and related costs. The application should include quantifiable data on: (1) new and continued safety benefits that will be achieved in reducing crashes, injuries, or fatalities due to the project, supported by data from the current/historic and projected number and type of crashes including serious injuries, and fatalities on or affected by the bridge; (2) how the project will target known and documented, if any, safety problems with the bridge, within the project area or wider transportation network; and (3) how the project will protect motorized and non-motorized travelers or communities from safety risks. The application should provide a narrative describing how the project will improve the safety of the bridge and associated sections of roadway. The application should address the inclusion of improvements to safety features such as, but not limited to, traffic signs, pavement markings, multimodal accommodations, and physical bicycle and pedestrian barrier separations. The application should address whether and, if so how, the project has been or could be designed and operated to maximize the existing right-of-way for accommodation of non-motorized modes and transit options that increase safety and connectivity. The application should provide evidence to support the claimed level of effectiveness of the project in improving all safety concerns and proposed improvements for the bridge. Applicants are encouraged to support actions and activities identified in the NRSS ([National Roadway Safety Strategy | US Department of Transportation](#)).

DOT will assess the number of bridges, the total person miles traveled,²⁷ average daily traffic, and average daily truck traffic expected to be impacted by the project or how the project will improve the mobility, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of people and freight, accounting for current traffic demands and estimated future demands. In addressing this criterion, competitive applications

²⁷ Person Miles Traveled (PMT) = Average Annual Daily Traffic x Length x Vehicle Occupancy. Please refer to the table provided by FHWA’s Office of Highway Policy Information at <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/statistics/2021/vm1.cfm> to calculate vehicle occupancy ratios for various vehicles using the PMT data divided by the Vehicle Miles Traveled data.

will provide verifiable data to support how the project will improve the traffic flow of a regional network by addressing current geometric conditions of the bridge or how the project will improve mobility of people and freight by reducing the person miles traveled impacted by these conditions.

Selection Criteria	Non-Responsive	Responsive	Highly Responsive
Safety and Mobility	<p>The application did not address the Safety and Mobility criterion; or the application contains insufficient information to assess any one of the following:</p> <p>(1) new and continued safety benefits that will be achieved in reducing accidents, injuries, or fatalities due to the project; or</p> <p>(2) how the project will target known, documented, if any, safety problems with the bridge, within the project area or wider transportation network if any and how the project will address these problems; or</p> <p>(3) how the project will protect motorized and non-motorized travelers or communities from safety risks including improvements to, the addition of, or</p>	<p>The application describes one or more of (1), (2), (3), or (4) of the following without providing quantifiable data OR provides quantifiable data for only one, two, or three of the following:</p> <p>(1) new and continued safety benefits that will be achieved in reducing crashes, injuries, or fatalities due to the project but does not provide quantifiable data to support these benefits; or</p> <p>(2) how the project will target known, documented, if any, safety problems with the bridge, within the project area or wider transportation network, but does not provide quantifiable data to support these benefits; or</p> <p>(3) how the project will protect motorized and non-motorized travelers or communities from safety risks including improvements to, the addition of, or continuation of safety features; or</p> <p>(4) provides the number of structures, the total person miles traveled, the average daily traffic, and the average daily truck traffic expected to be impacted by the project and improvements to the</p>	<p>The application provides quantifiable data on ALL (1), (2), (3), AND (4) of the following:</p> <p>(1) new and continued safety benefits that will be achieved in reducing crashes, injuries, or fatalities due to the project supported by data from the current/historic and projected number and type of accidents including serious injuries, and fatalities on or affected by the bridge; AND</p> <p>(2) how the project will target known, documented, if any, safety problems with the bridge, within the project area or wider transportation network; AND</p> <p>(3) demonstrate how the project will protect motorized and non-motorized travelers or communities from safety risks including improvements to, the addition of, or continuation of, safety features; AND</p> <p>(4) provides the number of structures, the total person miles traveled, average daily traffic, and average daily truck traffic expected to be impacted by the project and, provides verifiable data on how the</p>

Selection Criteria	Non-Responsive	Responsive	Highly Responsive
	continuation of safety features; or (4) improvements to the mobility, efficiency, or reliability of the movement of people and freight through the project corridor.	mobility, efficiency, or reliability of the movement of people and freight through the project corridor accounting for current traffic demands and estimated future demands but does not provide data to support claims or projections for long-term benefits.	project will improve the mobility, efficiency, or reliability of the movement of people and freight through the project corridor accounting for current traffic demands and estimated future demands.

Criterion #3: Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity

DOT will assess the expected economic impact of the project by evaluating the extent to which it increases the efficiency of freight movement and improves supply chains. Applications should describe those improvements in detail, with verifiable estimates of anticipated improvements, including the anticipated impacts to congestion reduction and travel time reliability improvements. In addressing this criterion, competitive applications will improve the traffic flow of a regional network by addressing current geometric conditions of the bridge and whether those conditions are sufficient for current and future load and traffic requirements of the regional networks. DOT will assess the national and regional economic benefits that are anticipated as a result of the project by supporting a strong economy and labor market. DOT also will evaluate the extent to which the project will promote greater public and private investments in land-use productivity, including rural main street revitalization.

The application should describe in detail how the project is expected to support a strong economy and labor market and thereby contribute to national or regional significance and benefits. This support includes the creation of good-paying jobs, including the use of local and economic hiring preferences; improvement to supply chains; National or regional economic benefits; or greater investments in land-use productivity.²⁸

²⁸ Contracts awarded with geographic hiring preferences are eligible for assistance under the BIP programs.

The Department intends 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, such as through the use of project labor agreements, registered apprenticeship programs, and other training and placement programs.²⁹

Selection Criteria	Non-Responsive	Responsive	Highly Responsive
Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity	The application did not address the Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity criterion; or the application contains insufficient information to assess any of the following: (1) Creation of jobs as a direct benefit of the project; or (2.a) Improvement to supply chains; or (2.b) National or regional economic benefits; or (2.c) Greater investments in land-use productivity.	The application describes one or more of the following: (1) The project sponsor generally describes how the project supports creation of jobs as a direct benefit of the project; or (2.a) The project improves supply chains by reducing congestion or improving travel time reliability, highlighting an increase in freight value, but data to support these benefits are not substantiated; or (2.b) National or regional economic benefits are anticipated by the project, but data to support these benefits are not substantiated; or (2.c) The project advances greater public and private investments in land-use productivity, without providing	The application includes information that: (1) Describe actions an applicant has considered to support the Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity criterion during the development of the project that will create jobs as a direct benefit of the project; ³⁰ AND (2.a) Provides verifiable data on how the project improves supply chains by reducing congestion and improving travel time reliability, accounting for current traffic demands and estimated future demands, as a result of addressing current geometric conditions of the bridge and ensuring conditions are sufficient for current and future load and traffic requirements of the regional network, highlighting the increase of the value of freight moving across the project; or (2.b) Provides data on the national or regional economic benefits that are anticipated as a result of the project by supporting a strong economy and labor market; or (2.c) Includes verifiable estimates of how the project promotes greater public and private

²⁹ These agreements may include pre-hire collective bargaining agreements between unions and contractors that govern terms and conditions of employment for all workers on a construction project.

³⁰ The documentation of this consideration may be in the form of a project narrative submitted in support of an application submitted using the application template.

Selection Criteria	Non-Responsive	Responsive	Highly Responsive
		details to support the stated benefits.	investments in land-use productivity, including rural main street revitalization.

Criterion #4: Sustainability, Resiliency, and the Environment

DOT will assess whether the project will improve resiliency and support environmental sustainability based on data submitted with the application that demonstrates the benefits to each of these areas of consideration. The application should include a detailed discussion of how the project will address impacts of transportation such as exposure to elevated levels of air, water, and noise pollution, including increasing use of lower-carbon pavement and construction materials; improve resiliency of at-risk infrastructure by improving disaster preparedness and resilience to all hazards, including long-term resiliency to extreme weather events, flooding, or other natural disasters, and risks such as coastal flooding, coastal erosion wave action, storm surge, or fluctuations in relative sea level elevation; or improve wildlife connectivity, and with respect to culverts, especially for aquatic species.

Selection Criteria	Non-Responsive	Responsive	Highly Responsive
Sustainability, Resiliency, and the Environment	The application did not address the Sustainability, Resiliency, and the Environment criterion; or the application contains insufficient information to assess any of the following: (1) reduction of air, water, or noise pollution (including use of lower-carbon pavement and construction materials); or (2) improve resiliency of at-risk infrastructure; or (3) improve wildlife connectivity, especially for aquatic species; or	The application describes one or more of the following: (1) a reduction of air, water, or noise pollution, but does not provide data to support a reduction (including use of lower-carbon pavement and construction materials); or (2) improved resiliency of at-risk infrastructure without providing data that the project would withstand the likelihood of an event or risk; or (3) indicates an improvement in wildlife connectivity, but does not support current or projected connectivity with data; or	The application includes quantifiable data that demonstrates one or more of the following: (1) a reduction of air, water, or noise pollution (including use of lower-carbon pavement and construction materials); or (2) improved resiliency of at-risk infrastructure; or (3) improve wildlife connectivity especially for aquatic species; or (4) addresses the disproportionate negative environmental impacts on communities.

	(4) address negative environmental impacts on communities	(4) describes how communities will not be affected by negative environmental impacts without providing supporting data.	
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Criterion #5: Quality of Life

DOT will consider the extent to which a project will improve the quality of life for local, regional, or national users of the facility based on the location of the project. Applicants should provide information about public engagement during the project’s planning, consideration of quality of life benefits to all affected by the project, and how these contributed to the design of the project. Applicants should also describe (1) the consideration of benefits to nonvehicular and public transportation users and increasing affordable transportation choices, and (2) how the project will improve access to critical community services such as housing, jobs, healthcare, grocery stores, schools, places of worship, recreation, or parks through vehicles, transit, and/or active transportation. Competitive applications will demonstrate partnerships with State, local, community-based, and private entities in the planning and designing of the project to provide the most benefits to all affected by the project, and the roles of these entities in the planning, design, construction, and operation of the project.

DOT will consider how the project will improve quality of life in rural areas or urbanized areas. This may include increasing affordable transportation choices. It should also describe how the project has or will meaningfully engage communities affected by the project, with effective public participation that is accessible to all persons. The project application should describe planning and engagement in the project design phase to mitigate and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent physical and economic displacement.

Selection Criteria	Non-Responsive	Responsive	Highly Responsive
Quality of Life	The application did not address the Quality of Life criterion; or the application contains insufficient information to assess any of the following: (1) how the project has or will engage communities affected by the project; or	The application describes one or more of the following: (1) a plan to engage affected communities, but does not provide details on how engagement will occur or has occurred; (2) a plan to mitigate or prevent physical and economic displacement	The project has one or more of the following Quality of Life benefits: (1) the application provides verifiable evidence that demonstrates the project has or will include effective public participation that is accessible to all persons and taking into account consideration of such input in the planning,

	<p>(2) how the project plans to mitigate or prevent physical and economic displacement due to the project; or</p> <p>(3) what considerations for nonvehicular and public transportation were included in the project; or</p> <p>(4) how the project will improve access to daily destinations such as housing, jobs, healthcare, grocery stores, schools, places of worship, recreation, or parks through vehicles, transit and/or active transportation.</p>	<p>required by the project, but does not provide details on how it was affected by the planning and engagement process; or</p> <p>(3) incorporation of nonvehicular and/or public transportation into the project but does not describe benefits realized; or</p> <p>(4) improved access to daily destinations such as housing, jobs, healthcare, grocery stores, schools, places of worship, recreation, or parks through vehicles, transit and/or active transportation but does not provide evidence to demonstrate the improvements.</p>	<p>development, and implementation of the project decision-making process; or</p> <p>(2) the application demonstrates how the planning and engagement in the project design phase will mitigate and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent physical and economic displacement, as may be required by the project; or</p> <p>(3) the project incorporates nonvehicular and/or public transportation into the project, thus increasing affordable transportation choices and provides quantifiable benefits to the quality of life of the users; or</p> <p>(4) the application demonstrates, through verifiable evidence, how the project improves access to daily destinations such as housing, jobs, healthcare, grocery stores, schools, places of worship, recreation, or parks through vehicles, transit and/or active transportation.</p>
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Criterion #6: Innovation

DOT will assess whether and to what extent the applicant describes and documents how the project will deploy innovative project designs or construction techniques, innovative technology, innovative financing, or innovative planning and environmental review process improvements and the benefits of those methods.³¹

³¹ Please refer to FHWA’s Office of Innovative Program Delivery at <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/innovativeprograms/> for more resources on transportation innovations.

For **innovative project design or construction techniques**, DOT will consider the extent to which the project uses innovative practices in design and contracting practices that facilitate accelerated project delivery or cost savings (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 with an objective is to achieve timely and consistent environmental review and permit decisions. Participation in innovative project design or construction techniques will not remove any statutory requirements affecting project delivery.

DOT will also assess the extent to which the project uses **innovative technology** to significantly enhance the operational performance of the transportation system or uses technology to improve the detection, mitigation, and documentation of safety risks.³²

DOT will consider the extent to which **innovative financing** is used on the project, including the use of bundling of projects and benefits of executing the project as a bundle compared to individual projects or by using private sector funding or financing or using congestion pricing or other demand management strategies to address congestion. This includes the use of non-traditional sources of transportation funding to leverage traditional Federal sources of funding to expand the overall investment in transportation infrastructure.

For **innovative planning and environmental review process improvements**, DOT will consider the extent to which the project used Web-based, interactive environmental documents to increase transparency and accessibility for the public, stakeholders, and reviewing agencies. DOT seeks approaches that reduced the barriers for the public to interact with complex NEPA documents, such as accessibility on mobile phones, interactive versus static maps, plain English, and page limits consistent with statutory requirements. DOT also seeks approaches that allowed agencies to collaborate in real-time on NEPA documents and maps to identify and resolve issues earlier, save time, and improve quality.

Selection Criteria	Non-Responsive	Responsive	Highly Responsive
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³² For innovative safety proposals, DOT will evaluate safety benefits that those approaches could produce and the broader applicability of the potential results. Please note that all innovative technology must be in compliance with 2 CFR 200.216.

Innovation	The application did not address the Innovation criterion; or the application contains insufficient information to assess innovation benefits, or the application doesn't have innovation benefits or includes non-innovative practices or components.	The application describes the use of an innovative project design or construction technique, technology, financing methodology, or planning and environmental review process improvements, but does not provide quantitative benefits from using the innovation.	The application includes quantitative benefits for the use of an innovative project design or construction technique, technology, financing, or planning and environmental review process improvements.
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Merit Criteria Ratings Definitions

DOT will assign a Merit Criteria rating of high, medium-high, medium, medium-low, or low according to the following table:

Rating	Description
High	All six Criteria, including State of Good Repair, and Safety and Mobility, are rated Highly Responsive ³³
Medium-High	Five or more Criteria, including State of Good Repair, and Safety and Mobility, are rated Highly Responsive, and no Criteria are rated Non-Responsive ³³
Medium	Four or more Criteria are rated Highly Responsive, and no Criteria are rated Non-Responsive
Medium-Low	Three or fewer Criteria are rated Highly Responsive, and no Criteria are rated Non-Responsive
Low	One or more Criteria are rated Non-Responsive

c. Economic Analysis Rating

DOT will consider the project's benefits as compared to its costs to determine whether the project is cost effective and assign an Economic Analysis Rating. To the extent possible, DOT will rely on quantitative, evidence-based, and data-supported analysis in this assessment. Based on DOT's assessment, DOT will assign an Economic (benefit-cost) Analysis Rating of high, medium-high, medium, medium-low, or low according to the following table:

Rating	Description
High	The project's benefits will exceed its costs, with a benefit-cost ratio of at least 1.5
Medium-High	The project's benefits will exceed its costs
Medium	The project's benefits are likely to exceed its costs
Medium-Low	The project's costs are likely to exceed its benefits
Low	The project's costs will exceed its benefits

³³ For the Merit Criteria to receive a High or Medium-High rating, both State of Good Repair, AND Safety and Mobility are rated Highly Responsive. If either of State of Good Repair or Safety and Mobility criteria are rated Responsive, the highest the Merit Criteria can be rated is Medium.

d. Project Readiness Rating

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

Permitting Risk Assessment analyzes the project's environmental approvals and likelihood of the necessary approval affecting project obligation as described in Section D.2.c.VI, and results in a rating of "high risk," "moderate risk," or "low risk."

The Technical Assessment 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 (including compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and accompanying DOT regulations, the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act), previous experience with DOT discretionary grant awards and the technical experience and resources dedicated to the project. This review is partially based on information submitted with the application and partially based on FHWA's knowledge of the applicant's performance. The Technical Assessment will also assess the technical feasibility of the project as described in Section D.2.c.VI. Technical Assessment ratings will be one of the following: "certain," "somewhat certain or unknown," or "uncertain." DOT will assign the highest rating of "certain," if the application demonstrates that: the applicant has extensive experience with Federal funds; the applicant has extensive experience completing projects with similar scope; the applicant has the resources to deliver the project; the project has minimal or no incomplete right-of-way acquisition; the project will comply with all applicable Federal requirements; and the applicant demonstrates the technical feasibility of the project in detail. 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 funding for the project, including matching funds and whether the applicant presented a complete funding package as described in Section D.2.c.III, and will receive a rating of "complete," "partially complete," or "incomplete." DOT will assign the highest rating of "complete" if the application identifies funding sources for the full project budget, indicates the funding level of commitment or availability, includes documented support such as letters of commitment, and indicates a plan to address potential cost overruns (by including an explicit contingency amount with a funding source, or otherwise). DOT will also consider whether the applicant indicated the level of design that the project is based on. A project with funding estimates that is based on early stages of design (e.g., less than 30 percent design) or outdated cost estimates without specified budget contingencies may receive a lower rating. All applicants should describe a plan to address potential cost overruns and future maintenance and preservation costs and how those costs will be funded. An application could receive an "incomplete" rating if significant project activities that are ineligible for BIP funding are included in the application package, but their funding

source is not fully identified and it's uncertain that funds will be secured to move the project forward.

The Project Readiness Ratings described above will be translated to a high, medium-high, medium, medium-low, or low rating, using the tables below:

Rating	1	2	3
Permitting Risk Assessment	<p>High Risk:</p> <p>The project has not completed or begun NEPA or secured necessary Federal permits and there are known environmental, or litigation concerns associated with the project.</p>	<p>Moderate Risk:</p> <p>The project has not completed NEPA or secured necessary Federal permits, and it is uncertain whether they will be able to complete NEPA or secure necessary Federal permits in the time necessary to meet their project schedule.</p>	<p>Low Risk:</p> <p>The Project has completed NEPA and secured necessary Federal permits, or it is highly likely that the applicant will be able to complete NEPA and secure necessary Federal permits and other environmental reviews in the time necessary to meet their project schedule.</p>
Technical Assessment	<p>Uncertain:</p> <p>The team is not confident in the applicant's capacity to deliver this project in a manner that satisfies Federal requirements. Or, the team is not confident in the technical feasibility of the project or if the project will be successfully completed.</p>	<p>Somewhat Certain/Unknown:</p> <p>The team is moderately confident in the applicant's capacity to deliver the project in a manner that satisfies Federal requirements. Or, the team is moderately confident in the technical feasibility and completion of the project.</p>	<p>Certain:</p> <p>The team is confident in the applicant's capacity to deliver the project in a manner that satisfies Federal requirements. And, the team is confident in the technical feasibility and completion of the project.</p>
Financial Completeness Assessment	<p>Incomplete:</p> <p>The project lacks full funding, or one or more Federal or non-Federal match sources is still uncertain as to whether it will be</p>	<p>Partially Complete:</p> <p>Project funding is not fully committed but appears stable and highly likely to be secured in time to meet the project's</p>	<p>Complete:</p> <p>The project's Federal and non-Federal sources are stable and fully committed and there is demonstrated funding available to</p>

	secured in time to meet the project’s construction schedule. Plan to address potential cost overruns is not provided.	construction schedule. Plan to address potential cost overruns is not fully provided.	cover contingency/cost increases. Plan to address potential cost overruns is provided.
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Rating	Description
High	All 3’s
Medium-High	Two 3’s, one 2
Medium	One 3, two 2’s
Medium-Low	All 2’s
Low	Any 1’s

e. Overall Application Rating

DOT will assign each eligible project a rating of Highly Recommended, Recommended, or Not Recommended for Large Bridge Project grant requests. The rating will be assigned by DOT on the following basis:

A rating of “**Highly Recommended**” will be assigned to a project that:

- Meets all of the eligibility requirements; and
- Received no less than a Medium-High rating for each of Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, and Project Readiness Rating.

A rating of “**Recommended**” will be assigned to a project that:

- Meets all of the eligibility requirements; and
- Received no less than a Medium rating for each of Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, and Project Readiness Rating.

A rating of “**Not Recommended**” will be assigned to a project that:

- Does not meet one or more of eligibility requirements; or
- Received a Medium-Low or Low rating on any of the Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, or Project Readiness Rating; or
- Is not otherwise assigned a “Highly Recommended” or “Recommended” rating.

f. Statutory Secretarial Considerations

In selecting a Large Bridge Project to receive a BIP grant in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 124(c)(5), the Secretary shall give consideration to:

- a. The average daily person and freight throughput supported by the eligible project;

- b. The number and percentage of bridges within the same State as the eligible project that are in poor condition;
- c. The extent to which the eligible project demonstrates cost savings by bundling multiple bridge projects;
- d. In the case of an eligible project of an FLMA, the extent to which the grant would reduce a Federal liability or Federal infrastructure maintenance backlog;
- e. Geographic diversity among grant recipients, including the need for a balance between the needs of rural and urban communities; and
- f. The extent to which a bridge that would be assisted with a grant: (i) is, without that assistance, at risk of falling into or remaining in poor condition or in fair condition and at risk of falling into poor condition within the next 3 years; (ii) does not meet current geometric design standards based on the current use of the bridge, or load and traffic requirements typical of the regional corridor or local network in which the bridge is located; or (iii) does not meet current seismic design standards.

g. Statutory Required Project Selection Priorities³⁴

In selecting a Large Bridge Project for a BIP grant, the Secretary shall:

- a. Give priority to an application for an eligible project that is located within a State for which:
 - i. Two or more applications for eligible projects within the State were submitted for the current fiscal year and an average of two or more applications for eligible projects within the State were submitted in prior fiscal years (23 U.S.C. 124(c)(5)(B)(i)(I)); and
 - ii. Fewer than two grants have been awarded using BIP funds for eligible projects within the State (23 U.S.C. 124(c)(5)(B)(i)(II)).
- b. During the period of FYs 2022 – 2026, in each State from which an eligible project is submitted, DOT shall not:
 - i. Select fewer than one Large Bridge Project the Secretary determines is justified under 23 U.S.C. 124(g)(4); or
 - ii. Two eligible projects that are not large projects that the Secretary determines are justified under 23 U.S.C. 124(f)(3). (23 U.S.C. 124(c)(B)(ii)).

³⁴ 23 U.S.C. 124(c)(5)(B)(i)(I) requires the Secretary to give priority consideration for an eligible project that is located within a State for which two or more applications for eligible projects within the State were submitted for the current fiscal year and an average of two or more applications for eligible projects within the State were submitted in prior fiscal years of the program. For the first fiscal year of the BIP, DOT was unable to take into account eligible projects submitted in a prior fiscal year of the program. DOT will apply this part of the priority consideration during the FY 2023-2026 BIP funds competitions.

- c. The Secretary is not required to award a grant for an eligible project that the Secretary does not determine is justified under 23 U.S.C. 124(f)(3) or 124(g)(4). (23 U.S.C. 124(c)(B)(iii)).

h. DOT Priority Considerations

After completing the technical review consisting of the Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, and Project Readiness Rating, among projects of similar merit, DOT will prioritize a Large Bridge Project that:

- (A) Plans to improve the condition of a bridge or bundle of bridges in poor condition or in fair condition and at risk of falling into poor condition within the next three years, and
- (B) Demonstrates but for a BIP grant the project sponsor(s) will be unable to complete the Large Bridge Project.

If both of these two considerations are met, DOT will prioritize a project that has one or more of the following characteristics:

- 1) The geometric design standards used for the construction of the bridge met the applicable standards at that time but no longer meets the current geometric design standards;
- 2) The total future eligible project costs are no less than \$1 billion;
- 3) The application demonstrated a need for a BIP grant of not less than \$100 million;
- 4) The project readiness evaluation demonstrates that the project can distribute a BIP grant of not less than \$100 million over a multiple year period if a multi-year grant is awarded to the project;
- 5) The applicants are an FLMA that owns the bridge and a State, and Large Bridge Project application provides evidence that upon completion of the project, the bridge will be divested;
- 6) The project is or will be ready to proceed to the next stage of project delivery within 12 months of a CE Determination, FONSI, or ROD;
- 7) The project has national or regional economic significance (e.g., the project connects two states, or a significant number or share of its users are from another state);
- 8) The Department intends 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, such as through the use of project labor agreements, registered apprenticeship programs, and other training and placement programs.³⁵

³⁵ These agreements may include pre-hire collective bargaining agreements between unions and contractors that govern terms and conditions of employment for all workers on a construction project.

- 9) Without a BIP grant, construction of the project is unlikely to commence before September 30 of the fiscal year plus 3 years (September 30, 2026, for FY 2023 funds, September 30, 2027, for FY 2024 funds, September 30, 2028, for FY 2025 funds, and September 30, 2029, for FY 2026 funds.)

2. Review and Selection Process

DOT will conduct an application intake and eligibility review by providing an initial eligibility screening based on the statutory eligibility criteria in Section C. Only an eligible project will be evaluated against the Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, and Project Readiness Rating under Section E.1. The BIP Large Bridge Project eligible application evaluation process consists of the following: (1) a Technical review; (2) a Technical Review Management Team review; (3) an FHWA Senior Review Team (SRT) review; and (4) OST review of applications recommended for consideration by the FHWA Administrator (the Administrator) and Secretary selection of projects.

a. Application Intake and Eligibility Review

DOT will conduct an Application Intake and Eligibility Review by providing an initial eligibility screening based on the statutory eligibility criteria in Section C. For all applications determined to be ineligible during the eligibility review, applicants will be notified of this determination along with the reason for the determination. All applicants will have the option to request a debrief from DOT as well as to submit an amended application. If an applicant intends to submit an amended application, it must be submitted in grants.gov no later than 14 calendar days from either the date DOT notified the applicant of the ineligibility determination or from the date of the debrief. DOT will not review any amended applications submitted after February 26, 2024, for FY 2023 and FY 2024 BIP funding, June 16, 2025, for FY 2025 BIP funding, and November 1, 2025, for FY 2026 BIP funding. DOT will conduct an eligibility screening for each amended application submitted by the deadline. If a determination is made that the amended application meets the eligibility requirements, the application will advance to the Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, and Project Readiness Rating reviews. However, if a determination is made that the amended application does not meet the eligibility requirements, the application may not be amended further, and it will not advance to the Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, or Project Readiness Rating reviews. Only an eligible project will be evaluated against the Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, and Project Readiness Rating in Section E.1. See Section A.3.c and D.4 for the rolling application process and important dates.

b. Technical Review

The evaluation of eligible applications will be conducted by a Technical Review Team who may consist of individuals from FHWA. The Technical Review Team will evaluate each eligible application against the Merit Criteria in Section E.1. The Technical Review Team will also evaluate the Economic Analysis Rating and the Project Readiness Rating in Section E.1. Based

on the outcome of these reviews, the Technical Review Team will assign an overall rating of “Highly Recommended,” “Recommended,” or “Not Recommended,” to each application.

DOT will notify each applicant of the overall application rating. With that notification, DOT will inform the applicant that it has the opportunity to submit an amended application to address the rating within 14 calendar days from the date of the notification, or to submit a request for a debrief. If a debrief is requested, an applicant will have 14 calendar days from the date of the debrief to submit an amended application. DOT will not review any amended applications submitted after February 26, 2024, for FY 2023 and FY 2024 BIP funding, June 16, 2025, for FY 2025 BIP funding, and November 1, 2025, for FY 2026 BIP funding. All timely submitted amended applications will be reevaluated under the Merit Criteria, Economic Analysis Rating, or Project Readiness Rating, as applicable based on the issue(s) addressed in the amended application and assigned an overall application rating based on that reevaluation. See Section A.3.c and D.4 for the rolling application process and important dates.

Beginning with FY 2023, the Technical Review Team will document the following for each State: (1) the number of eligible applications submitted for each fiscal year for which funding is available; (2) the number of eligible applications submitted in each previous fiscal year; and (3) the total number of Large Bridge Project grants that have been awarded to projects within each State. The SRT, the Administrator, and the Secretary will use this information to give statutorily required project selection priority to applications under 23 U.S.C. 124(c)(5)(B).

The Technical Review Team will also evaluate each Highly Recommended and Recommended application’s responsiveness to the DOT Priority Considerations for a Large Bridge Project. The Technical Review Team will send the overall project rating for each Large Bridge Project and evaluation of responsiveness to the DOT Priority Considerations to a Technical Review Management Team.

c. Technical Review Management Team

The Technical Review Management Team is composed of managers from FHWA selected to review the individual criterion ratings and overall ratings, including DOT Priority Considerations, for each project from the Technical Review Team.

All Highly Recommended and Recommended applications will be reviewed by the FHWA division office in the State in which the project is located. The division offices will review the respective applications and evaluate whether there are any aspects in the delivery of the proposed project that may prevent the project from timely moving forward upon receipt of a BIP grant.

The Technical Review Management Team will also assess funding scenarios for the projects found to be Highly Recommended or Recommended and will send them to the Senior Review Team.

d. FHWA Senior Review Team and Applications Recommended for Consideration by the FHWA Administrator

FHWA SRT consists of senior FHWA officials who have been requested to serve by the Administrator. FHWA SRT, which may include the Administrator's participation in the SRT review process, advises the Administrator which projects the Administrator should send to the Secretary.

FHWA SRT will determine which Highly Recommended and Recommended projects to advance to the Administrator. When identifying applications to recommend to the Administrator, the FHWA SRT will consider geographic diversity, including as applicable the need for a balance between the needs of rural and urban communities. They will also take into account the statutorily required project selection priority requirements and may consider an application's responsiveness to the DOT Priority Considerations. FHWA SRT will also consider prioritizing applications from States that have not yet received one Large Bridge Project or two Bridge Project awards, until every State has received one Large Bridge Project or two Bridge Project awards, as discussed in Section A.1.b. See Section E.1.g for Statutory Required Project Selection Priorities. FHWA SRT will consider Highly Recommended and Recommended projects from a pool of applications that were carried over from previous fiscal years as well as those from the current fiscal year of funding. FHWA SRT may recommend a Recommended project over a Highly Recommended project by giving consideration to how well the project addressed the Merit Criteria and number of Merit Criteria rated High as well as the project's High ratings under Economic Analysis and Project Readiness.

The Administrator will determine which Highly Recommended projects, and any Recommended projects to advance to the Secretary after considering the FHWA SRT recommendations, including the statutorily required project selection priorities and responsiveness to the DOT Priority Considerations. The Department intends to apply principles from DOT Order 2100.7, [Ensuring Reliance Upon Sound Economic Analysis in DOT's Policies, Programs and Activities](#), when evaluating applications and making award selections. To the maximum extent permitted by law, the Administrator will prioritize projects that are in alignment with the principles outlined in DOT Order 2100.7.

e. OST Review of Applications Recommended for Consideration by the FHWA Administrator and the Secretary Selection of Projects

The Secretary makes final project selections and will select among the projects advanced by the Administrator. In selecting projects, the Secretary may ask for and receive advice from the Administrator on options for reduced awards, awards under a different funding category than identified in the application, and in the case of a bridge bundle, options for funding certain bridges of the bundle that are immediately ready to proceed to construction upon award, providing separate grants for bridges in the bundle that may need to complete NEPA, or to remove bridges from the bundle altogether from consideration.

The Large Bridge Project application review process gives the Secretary the discretion to determine which applications best address program requirements including the statutorily required project section priorities, DOT Priority Considerations, and should be selected. When selecting projects, the Secretary may also consider geographic diversity including, as applicable,

the need for a balance between the needs of rural and urban communities and selecting projects that ensure the effective use of Federal funding.

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 designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)). An applicant may review information in FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself. 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.

SECTION F - FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notice

DOT will announce the awarded projects by posting a list of selected projects at [BIP - Funding Programs - Management and Preservation - Bridges & Structures - Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](#). Following the announcement, successful applicants and unsuccessful applicants will be notified separately.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All awards will be administered pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards found in 2 CFR Part 200, as adopted by DOT at 2 CFR Part 1201. Applicable Federal laws, rules, and regulations set forth in 23, U.S.C. and 23 CFR shall apply to awards provided under this program.

In connection with any program or activity conducted with or benefiting from funds awarded under this NOFO, 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 DOT and FHWA; and applicable Federal financial assistance and contracting principles promulgated by OMB. 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 terminate the award of funds and disallow previously incurred costs, requiring the recipient to reimburse any expended award funds.

In particular, E.O. 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. Any grant projects involving vehicle acquisition must involve only vehicles that comply with applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) and Federal Motor Carriers Safety Regulations (FMCSR), or vehicles that are exempt from FMVSS or FMCSRs in a manner that allows for the legal acquisition and deployment of the vehicle or vehicles.

a. Program Requirements

i. Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience

It is the policy of the United States to strengthen the security and resilience of its critical infrastructure against both physical and cyber threats consistent with the National Security Memorandum on Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience (NSM-22). Each applicant

selected for Federal funding under this notice must demonstrate, prior to the signing of the grant agreement, effort to consider and address physical and cyber security risks relevant to the transportation mode and type and scale of the project. Projects that have not appropriately considered and addressed physical and cyber security and resilience in their planning, design, and project oversight, as determined by FHWA and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, will be required to do so before receiving funds.

ii. Domestic Preference Requirements

Consistent with law, recipients will maximize the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States. Funds made available under this notice are subject to FHWA's steel, iron, and manufactured product domestic requirements at 23 U.S.C. 313 and 23 CFR 635.410, and the construction materials domestic preference requirement at Pub. L. No 117-58, div. G §§ 70901–70927, as implemented by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) at 2 CFR part 184. FHWA expects all applicants to comply with those requirements.

iii. Civil Rights and Title VI

As a condition of a grant award, grant recipients should demonstrate that the recipient has a plan for compliance with civil rights obligations and nondiscrimination laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and implementing regulations (49 CFR 21), the ADA, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, all other civil rights requirements, and accompanying regulations. This should include a current Title VI Plan, completed Community Participation Plan, and a plan to address any legacy infrastructure or facilities that are not compliant with ADA standards. FHWA's Office of Civil Rights may work with awarded grant recipients to ensure full compliance with Federal civil rights requirements.

iv. Federal Contract Compliance

As a condition of grant award all federally assisted contractors are required to make good faith efforts to meet the goals of EO 14173 Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunities.

v. Compliance with Federal Law and Policies

The applicant assures and certifies, with respect to any application and awarded Project under this NOFO, that it will comply with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, executive orders, policies, guidelines, and requirements as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of Federal funds and will cooperate with Federal officials in the enforcement of Federal law, including cooperating with and not impeding U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other Federal offices and components of the Department of Homeland Security in the enforcement of Federal law.

3. Reporting

a. Progress Reporting on Grant Activities

Each applicant selected for BIP Large Bridge Project grant funding must submit semi-annual progress reports and Federal Financial Reports (SF-425) to monitor project progress and ensure accountability and financial transparency in the BIP Large Bridge Project grant program.

b. Performance and Program Evaluation

As a condition of grant award, grant recipients may be required to participate in an evaluation undertaken by DOT or another agency or partner. The evaluation may take different forms such as an implementation assessment across grant recipients, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grant recipients, or a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment. DOT may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation and/or use information available through other reporting. As a part of the evaluation, as a condition of award, grant recipients must agree to: (1) make records available to the evaluation contractor or DOT staff; (2) provide access to program records, and any other relevant documents to calculate costs and benefits; (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the access to relevant information as requested; (4) access to right-of-way to contractor or DOT staff for long-term data and observation collection; and (5) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor or DOT staff.

Recipients and subrecipients are also encouraged to incorporate program evaluation, including associated data collection activities from the outset of their program design and implementation to meaningfully document and measure their progress towards meeting an Agency priority goal(s). Title I of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act), Pub. L. No. 115-435 (2019) urges Federal awarding agencies and Federal assistance recipients and subrecipients to use program evaluation as a critical tool to learn, to improve equitable delivery, and to elevate program service and delivery across the program lifecycle. Evaluation means “an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency.” (5 U.S.C. 311) Credible program evaluation activities are implemented with relevance and utility, rigor, independence and objectivity, transparency, and ethics (OMB Circular A-11, Part 6 Section 290).

For grant recipients receiving an award, evaluation costs are allowable costs (either as direct or indirect), unless prohibited by statute or regulation, and such costs may include the personnel and equipment needed for data infrastructure and expertise in data analysis, performance, and evaluation. (2 CFR Part 200).

c. BIP Large Bridge Project Grant Specific Reporting Requirements

Each applicant selected for BIP Large Bridge Project grant funding must collect and report to FHWA information on the project's performance based on performance indicators FHWA identifies related to program goals (See Section A.1 for BIP program goals) and other information as requested by FHWA. Performance indicators should include measurable goals or targets that FHWA will use internally to determine whether the project meets program goals, and grant funds to achieve the intended long-term outcomes of the BIP Large Bridge Project. FHWA will work with the grant recipient to establish a recommended two to four performance measures that enable FHWA to measure and evaluate the outcomes of the individual grant, relative to the program goals (identified in Section A.1). Performance reporting will continue for several years after project construction is completed, for details please refer to the Performance Measurement Guidance for the BIP Discretionary Grant Program:

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/bip/BIP_FY_2022_Performance_Measures.pdf.

d. 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, the applicant during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the SAM that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently 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.

e. Other

DOT reserves the right to request additional information, if deemed needed, to better understand the status of the project. The successful applicant will provide additional financial reporting beyond the semi-annual reporting, if such statements are necessary to address DOT's Stewardship and Oversight responsibility of the funds. The successful applicant also agrees to allow periodic project inspections and DOT will provide notice for such inspections.

SECTION G - FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

For questions concerning this NOFO and the BIP Program, please contact:

Veronica Jacobson
Agreement Specialist
Office of Acquisition and Grants Management
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
12300 West Dakota Avenue, #180
Lakewood, CO 80228
Email: bridgeinvestmentprogram@dot.gov
Phone: 720-963-3020

Alternate:

Hector Santamaria
Agreement Officer/Team Leader
Office of Acquisition and Grants Management
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.,
Washington, DC 20590
Email: bridgeinvestmentprogram@dot.gov
Phone: 202-494-3811

SECTION 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 CFR 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 of List of Applications

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.

3. DOT Feedback on Applications

a. Debriefs during the Application Review Process

As described in Sections A.3.c and E.2, applicants may request a debrief during the application review process.

i. Ineligible Application

During the debrief for an initial determination that an application is ineligible, DOT will explain the eligibility criterion or criteria that were not met. DOT will not provide technical assistance regarding what an applicant would need to do to correct an ineligible determination in an amended application.

ii. Overall Application Rating

During the debrief for an overall application rating, as applicable, DOT will: (1) identify discussion points under each Merit Criterion that were not addressed or did not include information described in the NOFO that resulted in the application receiving the assigned overall rating for Merit Criteria; (2) identify information described in the NOFO that was not included in the applicant's BCA that resulted in the application receiving the assigned Economic Analysis Rating; and (3) identify discussion points that were not addressed or information that was not included as described in the NOFO that resulted in the application receiving the assigned Project Readiness Rating. DOT will not provide technical assistance to any applicant, including providing guidance on how an applicant could improve an application or commenting on or reviewing an applicant's proposed amendments to an application.

b. Debriefs for Applications Not Selected to Receive an Award

Debriefs by FHWA BIP staff are available to applicants not selected to receive a BIP award. Note during the debrief, DOT will not provide technical assistance to any applicant including providing guidance on how an applicant could improve an application for future fiscal year BIP funding opportunities. All debrief requests should be submitted to bridgeinvestmentprogram@dot.gov.