

FY 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity

Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program

Office of the Secretary

US Department of Transportation (DOT)

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A. Basic Information

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58, November 15, 2021, IIJA) authorized and appropriated \$1.5 billion to be awarded by the Department of Transportation (“DOT”) for FY 2026 for Local and Regional Project Assistance Program Grants under National Infrastructure Investments. The program is codified at 49 U.S.C. 6702.

IIJA requires the DOT to publish a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) no later than 60 days after enactment, which is November 30, 2025. In order to comply with this requirement, this (NOFO) solicits applications for projects to be funded under the Local and Regional Project Assistance Program, known as the BUILD Grants program.

The Department intends to amend this NOFO to provide more details on application requirements.

Basic Information: Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD)	
Announcement Type	Notice of Funding Opportunity
Funding Opportunity Title	FY 2026 National Infrastructure Investments
Funding Opportunity Number	DTOS59-26-RA-BUILD
Assistance Listing Number	20.933
Objective	The goal of the program is to fund projects that will have a significant local or regional impact and improve transportation infrastructure.
Program Overview	BUILD grants will be awarded on a competitive basis, per statute, for planning or constructing surface transportation infrastructure projects that will improve safety; environmental sustainability; quality of life; mobility and community connectivity; economic competitiveness and opportunity including tourism; state of good repair; partnership and collaboration; and innovation.
Funding	\$1.5 billion in FY 2026 IIJA funds
Minimum Award Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1 million for rural capital projects • \$5 million for urban capital projects • Planning projects do not have a minimum award size
Maximum Award Size	\$25 million
Eligible Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States and the District of Columbia • Any territory or possession of the United States • A unit of local government • A public agency or publicly chartered authority established by one or more States • A special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, including a port authority • A Federally recognized Indian Tribe or a consortium of such Indian Tribes • A transit agency • A multi-State or multijurisdictional group of entities that are separately eligible

Eligible Project Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • highway or bridge projects eligible under title 23; • public transportation projects eligible under chapter 53 title 49; • passenger and freight rail transportation projects; • port infrastructure investments including inland port infrastructure and land ports of entry; • the surface transportation components of an airport project eligible for assistance under part B of subtitle VII; • project investing in surface transportation facilities located on Tribal land, the title or maintenance responsibility of which is vested in the Federal Government; • projects to replace or rehabilitate a culvert or prevent stormwater runoff for the purpose of improving habitat for aquatic species that will advance the goal of the program; • intermodal projects whose components are otherwise an eligible project type; • any other surface transportation infrastructure project that the Secretary considers to be necessary to advance the goals of the program
Submission Requirements and Deadlines	<p>Applications must be submitted online no later than 5:00 pm eastern on February 24, 2026.</p> <p>Complete instructions on how to apply will be posted at grants.gov and the BUILD program website</p> <p>Selections are expected to be announced no later than June 28, 2026</p>
Prior Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For FY 2025 BUILD Round 2, the Department received 815 eligible applications requesting over \$10 billion • 30 projects were awarded a total of \$488 million • Awards were made to projects in 27 states <p>Awards ranged from \$239,000 to \$25 million</p>
Agency Contact Information	<p>Email: BUILDgrants@dot.gov</p> <p>Website: https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants</p>

B. Eligibility

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

1. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible BUILD grant applicants are:

- States and the District of Columbia
- Any territory or possession of the United States
- A unit of local government
- A public agency or publicly chartered authority established by one or more States
- A special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, including a port authority
- A Federally recognized Indian Tribe or a consortium of such Indian Tribes
- A transit agency
- A multi-State or multijurisdictional group of entities that are separately eligible

The following are **not** eligible BUILD grant applicants:

- Federal agencies
- Non-profits
- Private entities
- Individuals

Multiple states or jurisdictions may submit a joint application, designating a lead applicant as the primary contact and award recipient. The application should outline each applicant's roles and responsibilities.

DOT expects the applicant to manage and deliver the project. If the applicant plans to transfer the award to another agency, this should be stated in the application, along with a supporting letter from the designated entity.

2. MINIMUM FUNDING REQUEST FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Capital Grants	Minimum Request
Rural Areas	\$1 million
Urban Areas	\$5 million

Applicants submitting capital grant applications for projects located in rural areas must request at least \$1 million in BUILD funding. Applicants submitting capital grant applications for projects located in urban areas must request at least \$5 million in BUILD funding. **Failure to request the minimum funding amount for a capital grant application will result in the application being ineligible.**

There is **no minimum funding** request requirement for planning grant applications.

3. COST SHARING

Cost sharing means the portion of the project's cost that is not paid by Federal funds. Cost share funds are typically stated as a percentage of the total project cost.

Project Location	Cost Share Requirement
Urban	Up to 80% Federal Funding
Rural	Up to 100% Federal Funding
Area of Persistent Poverty	
Historically Disadvantaged Community	

The Federal share for BUILD grant projects **shall not exceed 80 percent** unless the project receives one of the following location designations (see Location Designations for definitions):

- Rural
- Area of Persistent Poverty (APP) / Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC)

Applicants with projects located in one of the designated areas above are eligible to fund the project up to 100 percent with Federal funding. Projects located in an **urban area**, that are not designated APP/HDC, that have **more than 80 percent federal funding will be ineligible**.

Applicants should use the following equation when determining the cost share for their project:

$$\frac{(\text{BUILD Grant Request} + \text{Other Federal Funds})}{\text{Total Project Cost}} = \text{Federal Cost Share}$$

Total Project Cost means the sum of future eligible Federal and non-Federal costs yet to be incurred.

Eligible sources of non-Federal funds include:

- State funds originating from programs funded by State revenue
- Local funds originating from State or local revenue-funded programs
- Private funds
- Tribal transportation program funds under section 202 of title 23
- Federal lands transportation program funds under section 203 of title 23
- TIFIA program funds (as defined in section 601(a) of title 23)
- Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program under chapter 224
- Federal credit assistance (if repaid from non-Federal sources)

Toll credits under [23 U.S.C. 120\(i\)](#) are considered a Federal source under the BUILD program.

4. LOCATION DESIGNATIONS

i. Urban or Rural

Urban and rural definitions differ across DOT programs. For the BUILD program:

- **Urban:** A project is designated as urban if it is located within (or on the boundary of) a Census-designated urban area that had a population greater than 200,000 in the 2020 Census.¹
- **Rural:** A project is designated as rural if it is located outside a Census-designated urban area that had a population greater than 200,000 in the 2020 Census.

The Department provides an [interactive map](#) to show Census-designated urban areas with populations greater than 200,000 in the 2020 Census.

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

Urban and rural designations impact the following aspects of the BUILD program:

- Minimum BUILD funding requirements
- Fundings restrictions
- Cost share

ii. Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities

The Department provides an [interactive map](#) to show Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities.

Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP) are defined by BUILD statute:

- Any county that has consistently had greater than or equal to 20 percent of the population living in poverty during the 30-year period preceding November 15, 2021, as measured by the 1990 and 2000 decennial census and the most recent annual Small Area Income Poverty Estimates as estimated by the Bureau of the Census
 - The FY 2026 BUILD NOFO updated county APP designations to utilize the most recent annual Small Area Income Poverty Estimates as estimated by the Bureau of the census.
- Any census tract with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent as measured by the [2014-2018 5-year data series available from the American Community Survey](#) of the Bureau of the Census
- Any territory or possession of the United States

¹ For the purpose of this NOFO, the definition of urban and rural is based on the 2020 Census-designated urbanized areas. The Department is required by IIJA to use the most recent decennial census information.

C. Program Description

1. PROGRAM HISTORY AND AUTHORIZATION

The Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program, previously known as the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary grants, was established under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to create jobs and spur economic recovery through transportation infrastructure investments. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58, November 15, 2021), authorized and appropriated \$1.5 billion annually to be awarded by the Department of Transportation (“DOT”) 2022 – FY 2026 for Local and Regional Project Assistance Program Grants under National Infrastructure Investments to fund eligible surface transportation projects with significant local or regional impact. The program is codified at [49 U.S.C. 6702](#).

2. RESTRICTIONS ON FUNDING

The Department must comply with the following funding restrictions:

Funding Restriction	Amount
Per State	No more than 15% which is \$225 million
Rural Projects	No more than 50% which is \$750 million
Urban Projects	No more than 50% which is \$750 million
Planning Projects	At least 5% which is \$75 million
Projects Located in Areas of Persistent Poverty and/or History Disadvantaged Communities	At least 1% which is \$15 million

3. AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

The Department intends to amend this Notice to provide more details.

D. Application Content and Format

The Department intends to amend this Notice to provide more details.

E. Submission Requirements and Deadline

1. ADDRESS TO REQUEST APPLICATION PACKAGE

Instructions for submitting applications will be posted on [grants.gov](#) and the [BUILD website](#).

2. UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER (UEI) AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM)

Each applicant must:

- Be registered in [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) before submitting its application;
- Provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and
- Continue to maintain an active registration in SAM.gov with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration by a Federal agency.

Please note that the SAM registration process takes **several weeks to complete, if not longer**.

3. SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Applications must be submitted by 5:00 PM eastern on February 24, 2026. The Department does not accept applications via mailed paper, fax machine, email, or other means.

F. Application Review Information

1. CRITERIA

Statute requires the Department to evaluate projects based on safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, mobility and community connectivity, economic competitiveness and opportunity to include tourism opportunity, state of good repair, partnership and collaboration, and innovation. Additional considerations include demonstrated project readiness and cost effectiveness.

2. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

The Department intends to amend this Notice to provide more details.

G. Award Notices

The Department intends to amend this Notice to provide more details.

H. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

1. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

The Department intends to amend this Notice to provide more details.

2. REPORTING

The Department intends to amend this Notice to provide more details.

I. Federal Awarding Agency Contact

For further information concerning this notice please contact the BUILD grant program staff via e-mail at BUILDgrants@dot.gov. In addition, DOT will post answers to questions and requests for clarifications on the [BUILD website](#).

J. Other Information

The Department intends to amend this Notice to provide more details.

Issued in Washington D.C. on November 26, 2025

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Maria Lefevre', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Maria Lefevre
Executive Director

Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy