



GRANT ALERT

December 1, 2023

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant

DEADLINE

Wednesday, February 28, 2024, 11:59 p.m. EST

(Applicants must complete the Grants.gov registration process before submitting the final application; the process usually takes 2-4 weeks to complete.)

PROGRAM NAME & LINK

[Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity \(RAISE\) | US Department of Transportation](#)

DESCRIPTION

This discretionary grant program was authorized under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) for investments in surface transportation that will have a significant local or regional impact that advance the Departmental priorities of safety, equity, climate and sustainability, and workforce development, job quality, and wealth creation. Selected projects will seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector; incorporate evidence-based climate resilience measures and features; avoid adverse environmental impacts to air or water quality, wetlands, and endangered species; and address the disproportionate negative environmental impacts of transportation on disadvantaged communities. The selected projects will also address environmental justice, particularly for communities that have experienced decades of underinvestment and are most impacted by climate change, pollution, and environmental hazards.

What’s New this Round? Changes from the FY 2023 RAISE Grant Program include:

- Simplify the NOFO with the use of plain language and tables to organize information.
- Refine the merit criteria rating rubric. For example, this [NOFO](#) provides more examples of project elements that align with a “High” rating under Safety, Environmental Sustainability, and Innovation. Please see the merit criteria rating rubric in Section E for more details.
- Clarify what applicants should provide in the Project Budget document for the Financial Completeness Review.
- Update data used to determine Urban, Rural, and Areas of Persistent Poverty designations, and uses the Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), created by the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), to identify Historically Disadvantaged Communities.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants

- State government
- Territory or Possession of the US
- Local government

Projects

Capital Projects

- Highway, bridge, or other road projects.
- Public transportation projects.
- Passenger and freight rail transportation projects

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Agency or publicly chartered authority established by 1 or more States • Tribal government • Transit Agency • Multi-State or multijurisdictional group of entities • Special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, including a port authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Port infrastructure investments. • Surface transportation components of an airport project. • Intermodal projects. • Projects to replace or rehabilitate a culvert or prevent stormwater runoff for the purpose of improving habitat for aquatic species while advancing the goals of the RAISE program. • Projects investing in surface transportation facilities that are located on Tribal land and for which title or maintenance responsibility is vested in the Federal Government. • Any other surface transportation infrastructure project that the Secretary considers to be necessary to advance the goals of the program. <p>Planning Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of master plans, comprehensive plans, transportation corridor plans, and integrated economic development, land use, housing, and transportation plans. • Zero emissions plan for transit fleet. • Planning activities related to the development of a multimodal freight corridor, including those that seek to reduce conflicts with residential areas and with passenger and non-motorized traffic. • Planning activities related to zero emissions goods movement. • Development of port and regional port planning grants, including State-wide or multi-port planning within a single jurisdiction or region. • Risk assessments and planning to identify vulnerabilities and address the transportation system’s ability to withstand probable occurrence or recurrence of an emergency or major disaster.
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FUNDING

<p style="text-align: center;">General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BIL authorized and appropriated \$1.5 billion to be awarded by DOT for RAISE grants under the Local and Regional Project Assistance Program for FY 2024. • DOT must award at least \$75 million for the planning projects. • DOT will award at least \$15 million for projects located in historically disadvantaged communities or areas of persistent poverty. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Cost-Sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RAISE grant program shall not exceed 80 percent unless the project is in a rural area, a historically disadvantaged community (HDC), or an area of persistent poverty (APP). • Federal cost share may not exceed 80% for urban projects that are not located in an APP or HDC. • DOT does not use an applicant’s cost share when evaluating applications on merit. The Department considers an applicant’s cost share
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- The DOT may retain up to \$30 million for oversight and administration of grants and credit assistance made under the program.
- For capital grants, the minimum RAISE grant award is \$5 million in urban areas and \$1 million in rural areas. No minimums for planning grants. Grants may not be greater than \$25 million.
- No more than 50 percent of the funds provided for RAISE grants (or \$750 million) shall be awarded to rural projects and not more than 50 percent of the funds provided for RAISE grants (or \$750 million) shall be awarded to urban projects.

during the evaluation and selection process only to confirm eligibility for urban projects that are not located in an APP or HDC.

APPLICATION & SELECTION CRITERIA

Project Criteria

Projects will be evaluated based on the following Merit Criteria:

- Safety
- Environmental Sustainability
- Quality of Life
- Mobility and community connectivity
- Economic competitiveness and opportunity
- State of good repair
- Partnership and collaboration
- Innovation

Additional considerations:

- Project readiness
 - Environmental risk (Capital Projects)
 - Technical Capacity (Capital and Planning Projects)
 - Financial Completeness (Capital and Planning Projects)
- Benefit-Cost Analysis (Capital Projects)

PROJECT TIMEFRAME

FY 2024 RAISE grant funds are available for obligation only through September 30, 2028. Obligation occurs when a selected applicant and DOT enter into a written grant agreement after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements, such as transportation planning and environmental review requirements for capital construction projects. FY 2024 RAISE funds must be expended (the grant obligation must be liquidated or paid out to the grant recipient) by September 30, 2033. After this date, unliquidated funds are no longer available to the project.

Future Grant Funding Application Deadlines

- FY 2025 Deadline: January 13, 2025, 11:59 pm
- FY 2026 Deadline: January 13, 2026, 11:59 pm

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Rural and Urban Areas

- **Urban** - A project is designated as urban if it is located within (or on the boundary of) a Census-designated urban area¹⁰ that had a population greater than 200,000 in the 2020.
- **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 will have an interactive map on the [RAISE website](#) to show Census-designated urban areas with populations greater than 200,000 in the 2020 Census.

Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities

Urban - A project is designated as

- **Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP)** - (1) any county that has consistently had greater than or equal to 20 percent of the population living in poverty during the 30-year period preceding November 15, 2021, as measured by the 1990 and 2000¹² decennial census and the most recent annual Small Area Income Poverty Estimates as estimated by the Bureau of the census; (2) any census tract with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent as measured by the 2014-2018 5-year data series available from the American Community Survey of the Bureau of the Census;¹³ or (3) any territory or possession of the United States. Information on Areas of Persistent Poverty available through the [Grant Project Location Verification Tool](#).
- **Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC)** - (1) any census tract or tracts identified as disadvantaged in the [Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool \(geoplatform.gov\)](#) (CEJST),¹⁷ created by CEQ, which identifies such communities that have been marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.; (2) any Federally Recognized Tribe or Tribal entity, whether or not they have land. DOT will list all census tracts that meet this definition for Historically Disadvantaged Communities as well as provide an interactive map on the [RAISE website](#).

PENNDOT ROLE

PennDOT Emphasis

PennDOT promotes a strategic and systematic process to operate, maintain, and improve physical assets. PennDOT, and its partners, seek to continue to complete projects which modernize roads, bridges, bridges, transit, rail, ports, and intermodal transportation and make the Commonwealth's transportation systems safer, more accessible, and more sustainable. The RAISE Grant Program provides the opportunity to not only complete construction on projects critical to the Commonwealth's transportation system, but to also plan in-depth for future major projects.

PennDOT Support

Transportation Federal Funding Opportunities Resource Account:

RA-PDTRANSFEDFUNDOPP@pa.gov.

PennDOT will consider providing support for regional grant proposals as applicable. PennDOT support may include offering data and subject matter expertise as available.

PennDOT recognizes the potential this program has to significantly help communities and individuals and will consider how the Department might assist or collaborate with applicants to advance and strengthen competitive proposals. PennDOT will also collaborate with other state agencies where there may be an interest in this program.

The deadline for requesting PennDOT support is February 13, 2024.