

GRANT ALERT

October 31, 2024

Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT)

DEADLINE	PROGRAM NAME & LINK
<p>FY 2024-2025 Monday, February 24, 2025, 11:59 p.m. EST</p> <p>FY 2026 Tuesday, February 24, 2026, 11:59 p.m. EST</p> <p><i>(Submitting agencies must complete the Grants.gov registration process before submitting the final application; the process usually takes 2-4 weeks to complete.)</i></p>	<p>Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) US Department of Transportation</p>
DESCRIPTION	
<p>The US DOT Federal program provides discretionary grants to support projects that address the climate crisis by improving the resilience of the surface transportation system, including highways, public transportation, ports, and intercity passenger rail. Projects should support the continued operation or rapid recovery of crucial local, regional, or national surface transportation facilities. Projects in the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Discretionary Grant Program have the potential to demonstrate innovation and best practices that State and local governments in other parts of the country can consider replicating.</p> <p>There are four categories of funding under the PROTECT Discretionary Grant Program. One category is for Planning Grants. The other three categories are for Resilience Improvement, Community Resilience and Evacuation Routes, and At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure projects, and are collectively referred to as Resilience Grants.</p> <p>What's New this Round? The PROTECT Grant NOFO includes 2 OPTIONAL application templates for applicant use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Grant Application Template • Resilience Grant Application Template 	
ELIGIBILITY	
<p style="text-align: center;">Applicants (differs with grant type)</p> <p>Planning Grants, Resilience Improvement Grants, and Community Resilience and Evacuation Route Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States • Metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) • Local governments 	

- Special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, including a port authority or a public transit agency
- Federally recognized Tribal government
- Federal land management agencies that apply jointly with a State or group of States
- A multi-State or multijurisdictional group of entities

At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure Grants

- A State (including the U.S. Territories Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) in, or bordering on, the Atlantic, Pacific, or Arctic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, Long Island Sound, or one or more of the Great Lakes.
- Political subdivision of a State
- Metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs)
- Local government
- Special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, including a port authority or a public transit agency
- Federally recognized Tribal government
- Federal land management agencies that apply jointly with a State or group of States
- A multi-State or multijurisdictional group of entities

Projects

Planning Grants

- In the case of a State or MPO, developing a Resilience Improvement Plan.
- Resilience planning, predesign, design, or the development of data tools to simulate transportation disruption scenarios, including vulnerability assessments.
- Technical capacity building by the eligible entity to facilitate the ability of the eligible entity to assess the vulnerabilities of the surface transportation assets and community response strategies of the eligible entity under current conditions and a range of potential future conditions.
- Evacuation planning and preparation.

Resilience Improvement Grant

- One or more construction activities to improve the ability of an existing surface transportation asset to withstand one or more elements of a weather event or natural disaster, or to increase the resilience of surface transportation infrastructure from the impacts of changing conditions, such as sea level rise, flooding, wildfires, extreme weather events, and other natural disasters.

Community Resilience and Evacuation Route Grant

- One or more projects that strengthen and protect evacuation routes that are essential for providing and supporting evacuations caused by emergency events.

At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure Grants

- Strengthening, stabilizing, hardening, elevating, relocating, or otherwise enhancing the resilience of highway and non-rail infrastructure, including bridges, roads, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle lanes, and associated infrastructure, such as culverts and tide gates to protect highways, that are subject to, or face increased long-term future risks of, a weather event, a natural disaster, or changing conditions, including coastal flooding, coastal erosion, wave action, storm surge, or sea level rise, in order to improve transportation and public safety and to reduce costs by avoiding larger future maintenance or rebuilding costs.

<p style="text-align: center;">General</p> <p>The total amount of funding available for awards under this NOFO is up to \$876 million. This includes up to \$576 million for FY 2024 and FY 2025 and up to \$300 million for FY 2026 available for Grant Program awards under this notice.</p> <p>Of this amount, for FY 2024-2026, up to \$86 million is available for Planning Grants; up to \$618 million is available for Resilience Improvement Grants; up to \$86 million is available for Community Resilience and Evacuation Route Grants; and up to \$86 million is available for At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure Grants.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cost-Sharing</p> <p>For Planning Grants, the Federal share of an eligible planning activity shall be 100 percent.</p> <p>For Resilience Grants, the Federal share of an eligible project shall not exceed 80 percent of the total cost of the project, with some exceptions.</p> <p>Reduction of Non-Federal Share for Resilience Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an Indian Tribe receives a Resilience Improvement Grant and Community Resilience and Evacuation Route Grant or At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure Grants, on the determination of the Secretary of US DOT, the Federal share of an eligible project may be up to 100 percent. • For projects carried out in the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federal share of an eligible project shall be 100 percent. • 3% Reduction in Non-Federal Share if Resilience Improvement Plan is incorporated in other planning. • 7% Reduction in Non-Federal Share if project is prioritized in a Resilience Improvement Plan.
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<p style="text-align: center;">Planning Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum award size of \$100,000 and no maximum award size. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Resilience Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three categories: Resilience Improvements, Community Resilience and Evacuation Routes, and At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure Projects • Minimum award size of \$500,000 and no maximum award size. • FHWA anticipates awarding between 30 to 40 Resilience Grants using FY 2024 – 2025 funds. • FHWA anticipates awarding between 15 to 20 Resilience Grants using FY 2026 funds.
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SELECTION CRITERIA

<p style="text-align: center;">Planning Grants</p> <p>Merit Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program alignment • Planning activity approach • Schedule and budget 	<p style="text-align: center;">Resilience Grants</p> <p>Merit Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerability and risk • Criticality to community • Design elements
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- Public engagement, partnerships, and collaboration
- Innovation

- Public engagement, partnerships, and collaboration
- Equity and Justice40
- Climate Change and sustainability
- Schedule and budget
- Innovation

PROJECT TIMEFRAME

Selected projects will be funded with either FY 2024, FY 2025, or FY 2026 funds. For FY 2024 and FY 2025 funds jointly awarded for the first application period, FHWA expects to obligate FY 2024 funds before FY 2025 funds.

Each fiscal year of funding has a required funding obligation deadline as noted in the table below. Obligation for a PROTECT Discretionary Grant Program grant occurs when a selected applicant enters a project agreement with FHWA, and FHWA authorizes the project to proceed. For construction, this is generally after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements, including transportation planning and environmental review requirements.

Funding obligation deadlines:

- FY 2024 – September 30, 2027
- FY 2025 – September 30, 2028
- FY 2026 – September 30, 2029

For award recipients of the FY2024 and FY2025 PROTECT NOFO, FHWA will consider the estimated project start date provided in the application in determining which fiscal year funding to use. Funds will be assigned after announcement of award during the grant agreement process.

PENNDOT ROLE

PennDOT Emphasis

PennDOT continues to prepare for and anticipate the consequences of extreme weather events and natural disasters on the Commonwealth’s transportation network. The PROTECT grant program provides PennDOT, and its planning partners, the opportunity to plan for extreme weather events and to aid in constructing resilient infrastructure. Extreme weather events and natural disasters are an ever more present threat to the Commonwealth’s transportation infrastructure. Preparing for its impacts and constructing more resilient infrastructure is extremely important in ensuring the Commonwealth’s transportation network can weather the storm in an extreme weather event.

PennDOT Support

Transportation Federal Funding Opportunities Resource Account:

RA-PDTRANSFEDFUNDOPP@pa.gov

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

For FY 2024 – 2025 Applications, the deadline for requesting PennDOT support is February 10, 2025.

For FY 2026 Applications, the deadline for requesting PennDOT support is February 10 2026.