

**Local Infrastructure Hub: Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) and Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements (CRISI)**  
Updated: November 2025

## How to Use This Presentation

This presentation is designed to help cities successfully navigate the **Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) and Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant programs**. You'll find practical steps, examples, and tools to help your team align your rail safety and mobility goals with eligible federal projects—such as track relocation, protective devices, and environmental assessments—and strengthen project readiness for competitive, federally supported grant applications.

### What You'll Learn

*(Click a topic to go to that section)*

1. **[Understand the Grants](#)**: Start with the Grant Overview to get familiar with RCE and CRISI, federal priorities, and the White House's guidance on project alignment.
2. **[Use Data to Strengthen Your Case](#)**: Learn how to find and apply relevant datasets and analytical tools to make your proposal evidence-based and compelling.
3. **[Engage the Right Partners](#)**: Discover strategies to involve community members, agencies, and other stakeholders to design stronger, more competitive projects.
4. **[Build a Strong Budget](#)**: Find guidance on eligible funding sources, match requirements, and how to structure a compliant, well-aligned project budget.
5. **[Write a Winning Application](#)**: Follow tips and examples for crafting persuasive grant narratives that emphasize your project's impact and alignment with federal goals.
6. **[Learn from Real Examples](#)**: Review a Grant Case Study & Critique to see what makes a successful application and how to apply those lessons.
7. **[Access Tools & Resources](#)**: Download templates, examples, and helpful references to guide each step of your grant preparation process.

*The Local Infrastructure Hub was a US-focused, nationwide program that helped city leaders connect with resources and expert advice to access and implement federal infrastructure funding from July 2022 to March 2026. This resource was created in February 2026 and is intended to be used as a general guide to the Rail (RCE & CRISI) programs; consult each Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for specific guidance.*



# 1. Grant Overview and Federal Admin Priorities

*A video recording of this section is available [here](#)*

# Federal Administration Priorities

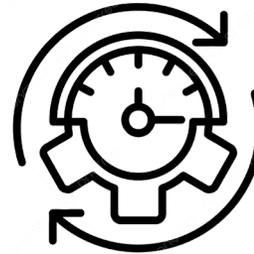
Executive Orders outline administration's priorities:



**Advancing taxpayer dollars to build a stronger & safer America**



**Eliminating financial burden of inflation**



**Promoting efficiency in government**



**Unleashing American energy and manufacturing**

# DOT Strategic Goals and Priorities

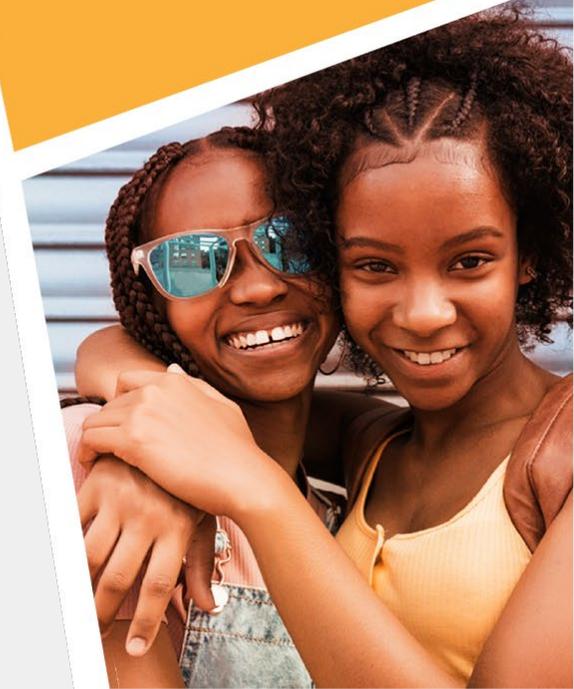


- **Safety:** Make our transportation system safer for all people. Advance a future without transportation-related serious injuries and fatalities.
- **Energy and Environment**
- **Economic Opportunities**
- **Buy America Requirements**
- **Accessibility of Transportation**

Source: [https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2025-02/DOT\\_2100.7-Ensuring\\_Reliance\\_Upon\\_Sound\\_Economic\\_Analysis\\_in\\_DOT\\_Policies.pdf](https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2025-02/DOT_2100.7-Ensuring_Reliance_Upon_Sound_Economic_Analysis_in_DOT_Policies.pdf)



# Directives & NOFO Impacts



# White House Directives

- **Update and revise all Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to comply with Federal Law:**
  - CRISI NOFO: To be released (expected Fall 2025)
  - RCE NOFO: To be released (expected Fall 2025)
- **Develop guidance on the social cost of carbon;**
- **Develop statutes that avoid impacts on families relative to:**
  - The environment,
  - Reduction in transportation services,
  - Maintaining a safe and stable environment, and
  - Economic vitality.

# White House Directives (cont.)

- **Develop statutes that provide economic opportunities such as:**
  - Increased access to jobs,
  - Healthcare facilities,
  - Recreational activities,
  - Commercial activity,
  - Help alleviate poverty,
  - Enhance safety,
  - Improve quality of life, and
  - Implement Buy America requirements

# White House Directives (cont.)

- Discretionary awards must, where applicable, demonstrably advance the President's policy priorities.
- Review current grants to revise the terms and conditions of existing discretionary grants to permit immediate termination for convenience, or clarify that such termination is permitted, including if the award no longer advances agency priorities or the national interest.
- Typical grant program requirements:
  - Civil Rights and Title VI
  - Domestic Preference
  - Compliance with Federal Law and Policies
    - 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 immigration law.

**Note:** *The Administration's directives continue to change and evolve.*

# Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)'s Guiding Principles

- **Integrity** -- highest standards of ethical conduct guide our stewardship of the public's trust and resources
- **Excellence** -- empower employees to focus time and resources on data-driven, cost-effective solutions
- **Transparency & Accountability** -- engage employees in robust dialogue, constructive communication and open decision-making
- **Innovation** -- invests in the future, as it streamlines and improves current operations
- **Engagement** -- creative problem solving and development of effective policies, programs, technology, and investments
- **Safety** -- ensure the safety of our employees, the public, and the rail industry workforce



# CRISI Grant Program Priorities

- Deployment of railroad **safety** technology.
- Capital projects that address **congestion** challenges affecting rail service and facilitate ridership growth as well as improve **regional rail infrastructure**.
- Highway-rail grade **crossing improvement** projects as well as rail line relocation and improvement projects.
- Regional rail and corridor **service development** plans and environmental analyses.
- Enhanced multimodal connections or **service integration** with rail.
- **Safety** program or measures to prevent trespassing.
- Research to advance rail-related capital, operations or **safety** improvements.
- **Workforce development** coordinated with existing local training programs. *[This will likely be revised]*
- **Research, development** and testing to advance innovative rail projects.
- **Emergency plans** for communities where hazardous materials are moved by rail.
- Rehabilitating, remanufacturing, procuring or overhauling locomotives for **emissions reduction**.
- Deployment of magnetic levitation transportation projects.

# RCE Grant Program Priorities

- Grade separation or closure projects, including the use of a bridge, embankment, or tunnel.
- Track relocation.
- Installation of protective devices, signals, signs, etc. to improve **safety**, provided the activities are related to a separation or relocation project.
- Other means to improve **safety and mobility** and highway-rail grade crossings.
- A group or program of projects that collectively **improve the mobility of people and goods**.



Source: The Daily Herald

# Aligning Your Project with Federal Priorities

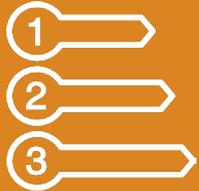
- Describe how your project aligns with the Federal priority - **be clear and concise.**
- Use resources that are highlighted in the NOFO to demonstrate connection.
- Focus on objective data whenever possible.
- Don't force a priority into your project - **be sincere.**
- Ensure your organization can follow directives.



## 2. Incorporating Data

*A video recording of this section is available [here](#)*

# Effectively Utilizing Data is Vital to Winning Federal Funding



**Central to  
Eligibility and  
Credibility**

Many grants have specific evidence and citation requirements in order to meet eligibility criteria and to achieve the highest ratings. **Documenting and citing relevant data** is integral to meeting these thresholds and elevating the quality of your application.



**Improves Grant  
Competitiveness**

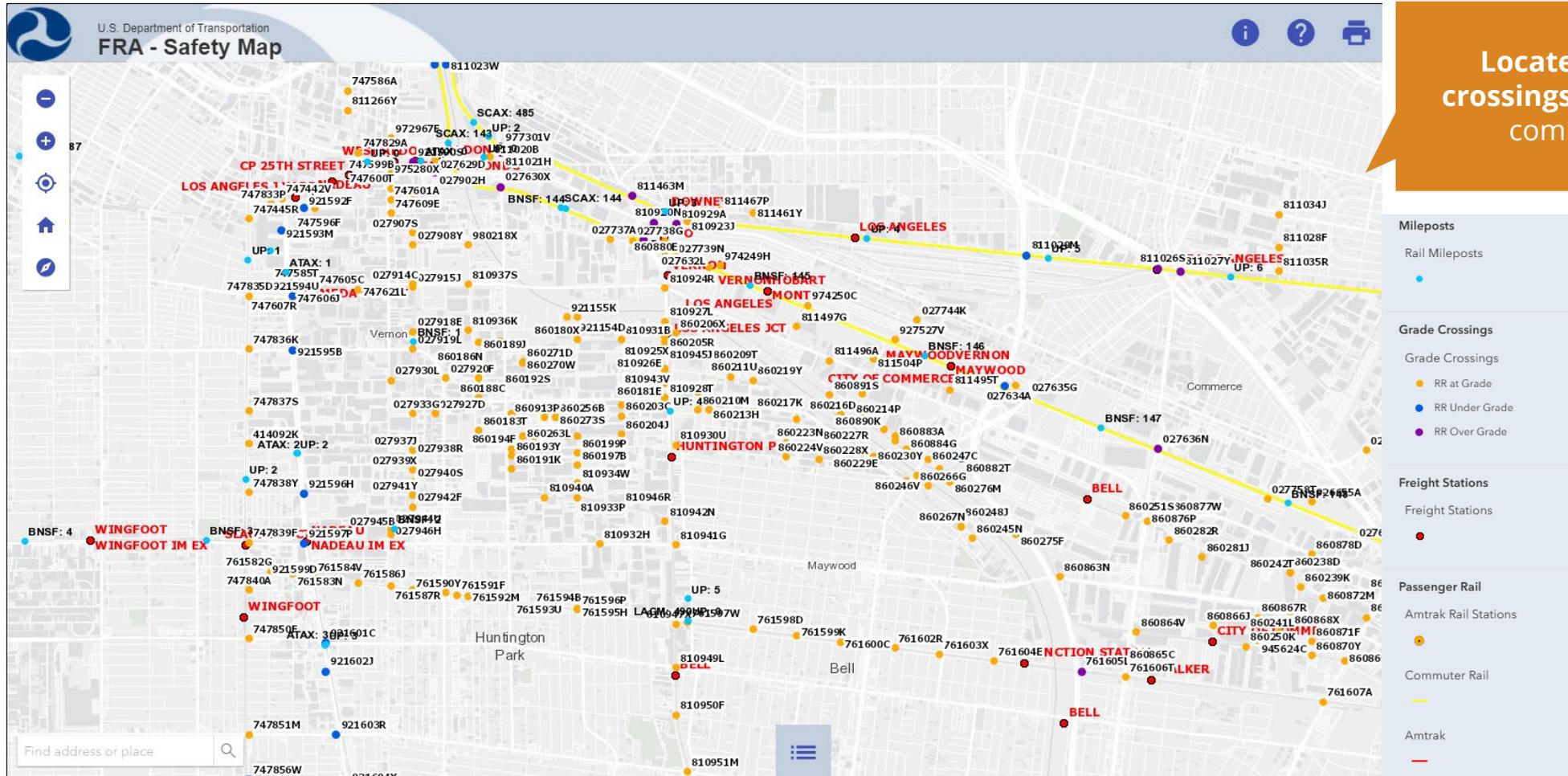
Incorporating data describing populations impacted in your community is not only explicitly required in many grant criteria but will also **help develop a persuasive story** about the impact generated by your use of grant funding.



**Builds A  
Framework for  
Managing Impact**

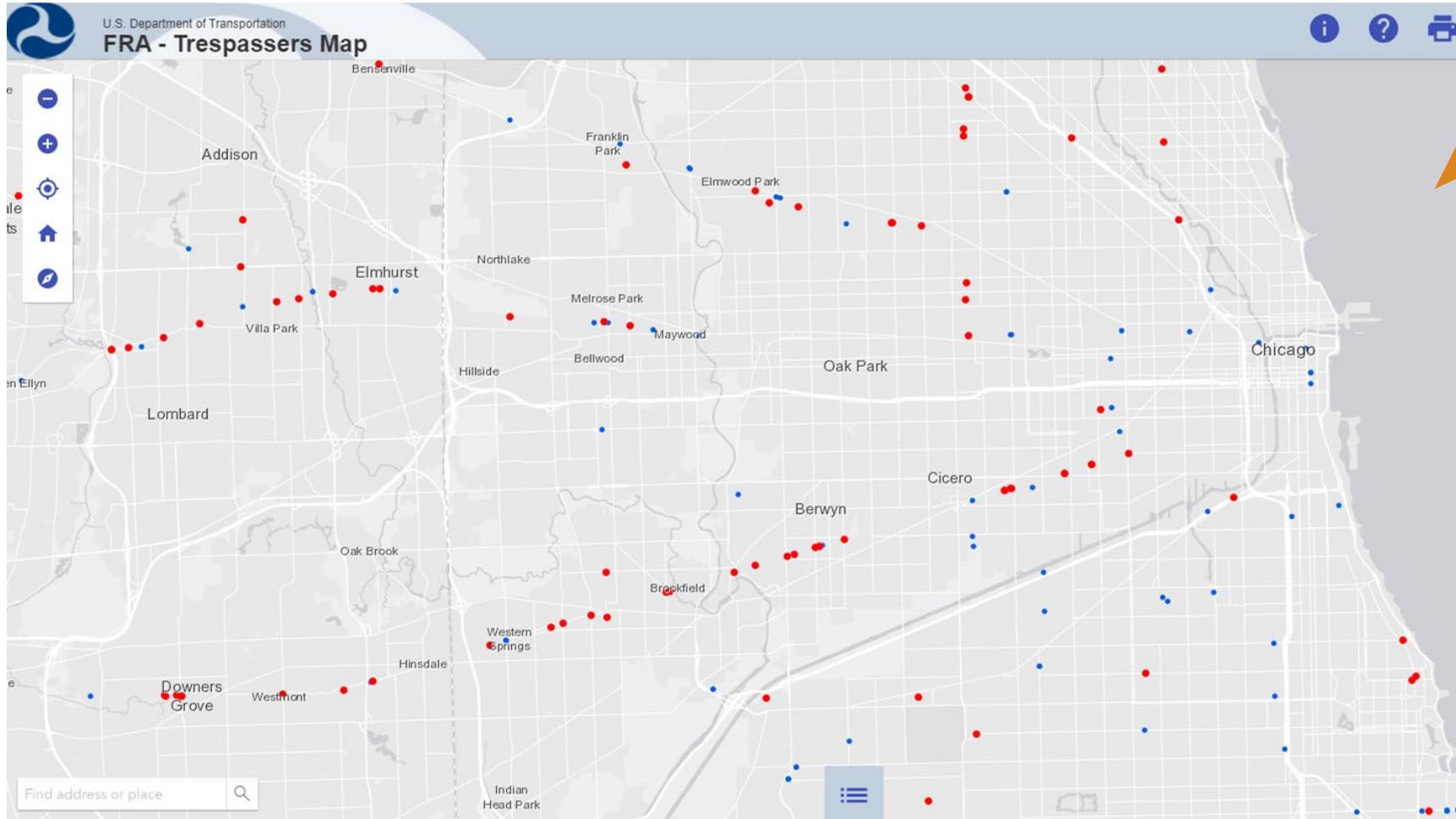
Data use enables a **rigorous assessment of the goals of your envisioned project**, illuminates opportunities for targeted actions that result in demonstrably improved outcomes for residents, and lays out a framework for reporting on progress once the project is underway.

# Data Source: USDOT FRA - Safety Map



Source: [FRA Safety Map](#)

# Data Source: USDOT FRA – Trespassers Map



**Prioritize improvements at high priority locations.**

**Trespassers**

- Trespasser Fatalities
- Trespassers

Source: [FRA Trespassers Map](#)

# Data Source: USDOT FRA – Accident Prediction System



U.S. Department of Transportation  
 Federal Railroad Administration

**Accident Prediction System (APS)**  
 v 2.0.0.88

**Refine your search**

[Reset Filters](#)

Active Filters:

LANSING X

Total Crossings	Total Railroads	Average Predicted Accidents
39	3	0.014912

**Forecast potential accidents based on historical data**

2023 Total Accidents  
**0**

2022 Total Accidents  
**1**

2021 Total Accidents  
**1**

2020 Total Accidents  
**0**

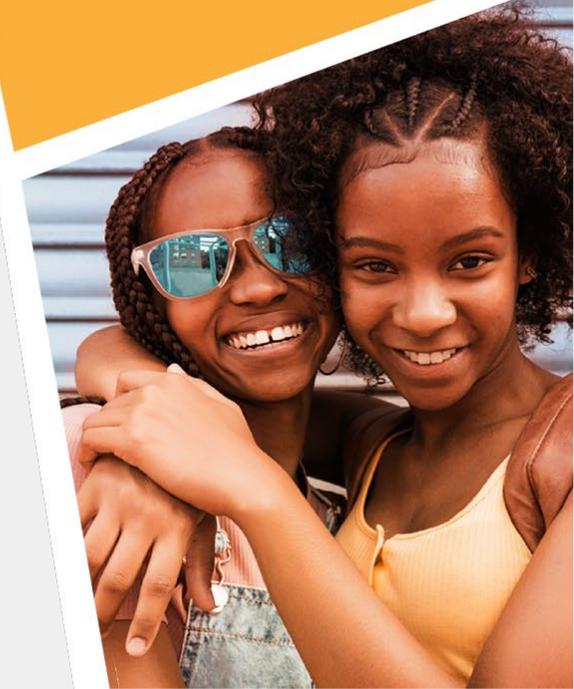
2019 Total Accidents  
**1**

[Export](#)

Predicted Accident Rank	Average Predicted Accidents	Crossing ID	Railroad Code	State	County	City	Street	Yearly Accident Count					Date Change	Warning
								23	22	21	20	19		
25	0.001337	536030A	CSX	MI	INGHAM	LANSING	MAY STREET	0	0	0	0	0		GT
26	0.001314	536370L	JAIL	MI	INGHAM	LANSING	Isbell Street	0	0	0	0	0		SS
27	0.001272	536016E	JAIL	MI	INGHAM	LANSING	Aurelius Road	0	0	0	0	0		GT
28	0.001263	536371T	JAIL	MI	INGHAM	LANSING	Baker Street	0	0	0	0	0		FL
29	0.001250	536026K	JAIL	MI	INGHAM	LANSING	E Kalamazoo Street	0	0	0	0	0	03/2023	GT
30	0.001232	536405K	JAIL	MI	INGHAM	LANSING	Olds Ave	0	0	0	0	0		FL
31	0.001149	283635J	GTW	MI	EATON	LANSING	MILLETT HWY	0	0	0	0	0		SS
32	0.001130	536020U	JAIL	MI	INGHAM	LANSING	Pacific Ave	0	0	0	0	0		FL
33	0.001125	536024W	JAIL	MI	INGHAM	LANSING	E Hazel Street	0	0	0	0	0		FL
34	0.001092	536021B	JAIL	MI	INGHAM	LANSING	E Mt Hope Street	0	0	0	0	0	08/2022	GT
35	0.001069	536018T	JAIL	MI	INGHAM	LANSING	E Cavanaugh Road	0	0	0	0	0		GT
36	0.001053	536401H	JAIL	MI	INGHAM	LANSING	W Michigan Ave	0	0	0	0	0		GT

Source: [FRA Accident Prediction System](#)

# Rail Crossing Inventory and Accident Reports



# Rail Crossing Inventory: Search by Location

**8.01 - Query by Location**

Location:

County  City

County/City:

Crossing Type:  Public Only  All (Includes Private and Pedestrian)

Crossing Position:  At-Grade Only  All (Includes Grade Separated)

Crossing Status:  Open  All (Includes Closed)

Street:

Reporting Level:

0-9 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T  
U V W X Y Z All

Railroad:

Sort:  Sort by Railroad Name  Sort by Railroad Code

**Note! You need to specify state and either county or city, street or railroad search pattern.**



**U. S. DOT CROSSING INVENTORY FORM**

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION

OMB No. 2130-0017

Instructions for the initial reporting of the following types of new or previously unreported crossings: For public highway-rail grade crossings, complete the entire inventory Form. For private highway-rail grade crossings, complete the Header, Parts I and II, and the Submission Information section. For public pathway grade crossings (including pedestrian station grade crossings), complete the Header, Parts I and II, and the Submission Information section. For Private pathway grade crossings, complete the Header, Parts I and II, and the Submission Information section. For grade-separated highway-rail or pathway crossings (including pedestrian station crossings), complete the Header, Part I, and the Submission Information section. For changes to existing data, complete the Header, Part I Items 1-3, and the Submission Information section, in addition to the updated data fields. Note: For private crossings only, Part I Item 20 and Part III Item 2.K. are required unless otherwise noted. An asterisk \* denotes an optional field.

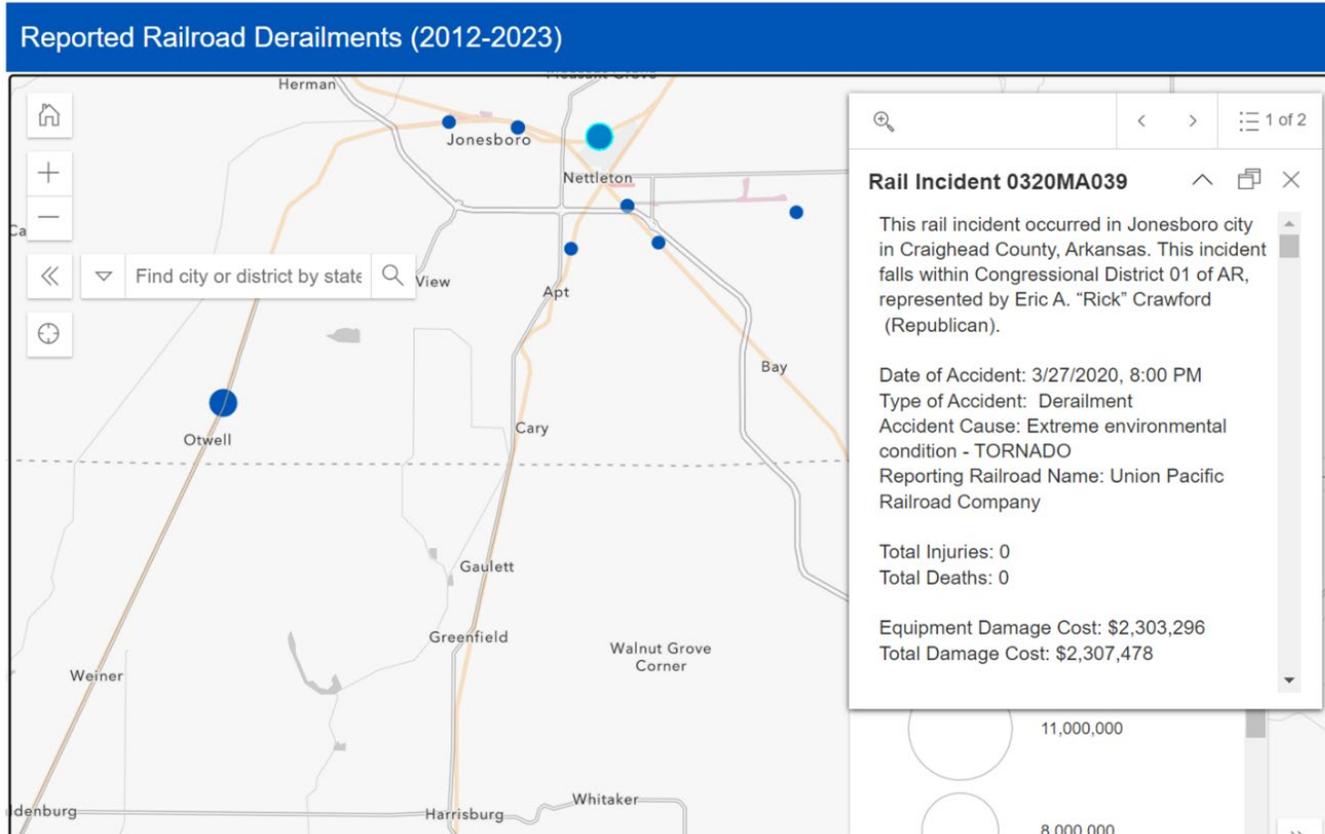
<b>A. Revision Date</b> (MM/DD/YYYY) 09 / 04 / 2019	<b>B. Reporting Agency</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Railroad <input type="checkbox"/> Transit <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<b>C. Reason for Update (Select only one)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change in Data <input type="checkbox"/> Re-Open <input type="checkbox"/> New Crossing <input type="checkbox"/> Date <input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Primary Operating RR	<input type="checkbox"/> No Train Traffic <input type="checkbox"/> Quiet Zone Update <input type="checkbox"/> Admin. Correction	<b>D. DOT Crossing Inventory Number</b> 591493U
---	--	---	---	--

**Part I: Location and Classification Information**

<b>1. Primary Operating Railroad</b> Middletown & Hummelstown Railroad Company [MIDH]	<b>2. State</b> PENNSYLVANIA	<b>3. County</b> DAUPHIN
<b>4. City / Municipality</b> <input type="checkbox"/> In <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Near MIDDLETOWN	<b>5. Street/Road Name &amp; Block Number</b> Swatara Park Dr (Street/Road Name)   * (Block Number)	<b>6. Highway Type &amp; No.</b> local
<b>7. Do Other Railroads Operate a Separate Track at Crossing?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, Specify RR	<b>8. Do Other Railroads Operate Over Your Track at Crossing?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, Specify RR	
<b>9. Railroad Division or Region</b> <input type="checkbox"/> None middletown	<b>10. Railroad Subdivision or District</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None	<b>11. Branch or Line Name</b> <input type="checkbox"/> None MDDLTN & HUMMLT
<b>12. RR Milepost</b> 0004.27 (prefix)   (nnnn.nnn)   (suffix)	<b>13. Line Segment</b> 1122	<b>14. Nearest RR Timetable Station *</b> Freys Grove
<b>15. Parent RR (if applicable)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<b>16. Crossing Owner (if applicable)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
<b>17. Crossing Type</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private	<b>18. Crossing Purpose</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Highway <input type="checkbox"/> Pathway, Ped. <input type="checkbox"/> Station, Ped.	<b>19. Crossing Position</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At Grade <input type="checkbox"/> RR Under <input type="checkbox"/> RR Over
<b>20. Public Access (if Private Crossing)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<b>21. Type of Train</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Freight <input type="checkbox"/> Intercity Passenger <input type="checkbox"/> Commuter <input type="checkbox"/> Transit <input type="checkbox"/> Shared Use Transit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tourist/Other	<b>22. Average Passenger Train Count Per Day</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than One Per Day <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Number Per Day 6
<b>23. Type of Land Use</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Open Space <input type="checkbox"/> Farm <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> RR Yard		
<b>24. Is there an Adjacent Crossing with a Separate Number?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, Provide Crossing Number 591494B		<b>25. Quiet Zone (FRA provided)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> 24 Hr <input type="checkbox"/> Partial <input type="checkbox"/> Chicago Excused Date Established
<b>26. HSR Corridor ID</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<b>27. Latitude in decimal degrees</b> (WGS84 std: nn.nnnnnn) 40.2126610	<b>28. Longitude in decimal degrees</b> (WGS84 std: -nnn.nnnnnn) -76.7218250
		<b>29. Lat/Long Source</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Estimated

Source: [FRA Query by Location](#)

# Reported Derailments: 2012 - 2023



Map-based search tool for 10+ years of rail derailment records with **links to Federal Railway Authority Incident** reports.

Quantifies economic impact of reported incidents, causes, injury and fatality information, and more.

*\* Please see the bottom of the page for source notes and terms of use. Note: derailment reports not submitted to the Federal Rail Administration by April 20, 2023, will not show up in the map. This includes the incident in East Palestine, OH, which occurred on February 2, 2023*

Source: [Interactive Rail Safety Map: See Derailments in Communities Across the U.S.](#)



## 3. Stakeholder Engagement

*A video recording of this section is available [here](#)*

# Stakeholder Engagement Focus

1. Leveraging public / private partnerships
  - a. Especially promoting private investment
2. Project Delivery Driven Engagement
  - a. ROW
  - b. NEPA
  - c. Permitting
3. Project has public support and is included in strategic plans



# ROW, NEPA, and Permitting

1. ROW continues to follow Uniform Act guidance.
2. NEPA and Permitting:
  - Include milestones in budget and schedule.
  - Describe how the project has or will meaningfully engage those affected.
    - Consider military, members of business or industry, community organizations, advocacy groups.
  - Provide 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.
  - Describe private parties who are involved in delivering the project, including a specific description of the role of each entity in delivering the project.
  - Describe agency collaboration:
    - Demonstrate receipt (or the schedule for anticipated receipt) of Tribal government, State, and local approvals on which the project depends.
  - Include mitigations made to reduce impacts to affected people.

# Potential Engagement Strategies

**1**

**List the project in organizational priorities and plans:**

- a. CIP
- b. STIP
- c. Statewide Freight Rail Plan

**2**

**Identify beneficiaries and benefits using bullseye approach.**

**3**

**Understand and mitigate project concerns.**

**4**

**Document public engagement at any scale.**

# Potential Engagement Strategies (cont.)

5

## **. Create project partnerships:**

- a. Develop private match sources – even small amounts matter.
- b. Develop delivery roles, listing private parties who are involved in delivering the project, including a specific description of the role of each entity in delivering the project.
- c. Describe project benefits in terms of commercial opportunities.

6

## **Develop a project advocacy plan, including for key influencers:**

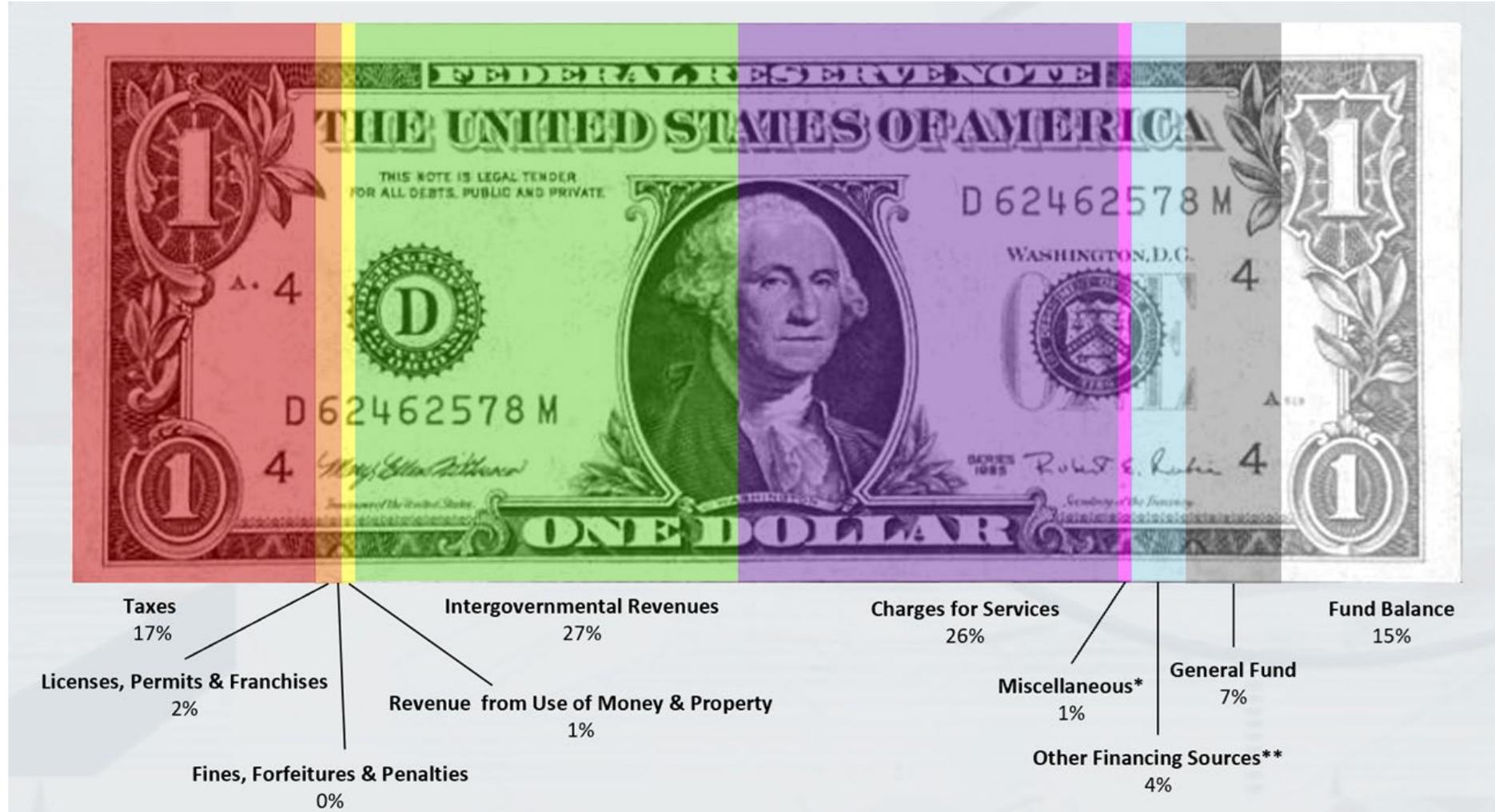
- a. Earned and social media.
- b. Project walk throughs and meetings with dignitaries.
- c. Letters of support, especially from elected officials.



## 4. Budgeting & Financial Management

*A video recording of this section is available [here](#)*

# Understanding the “Color” of Local Money

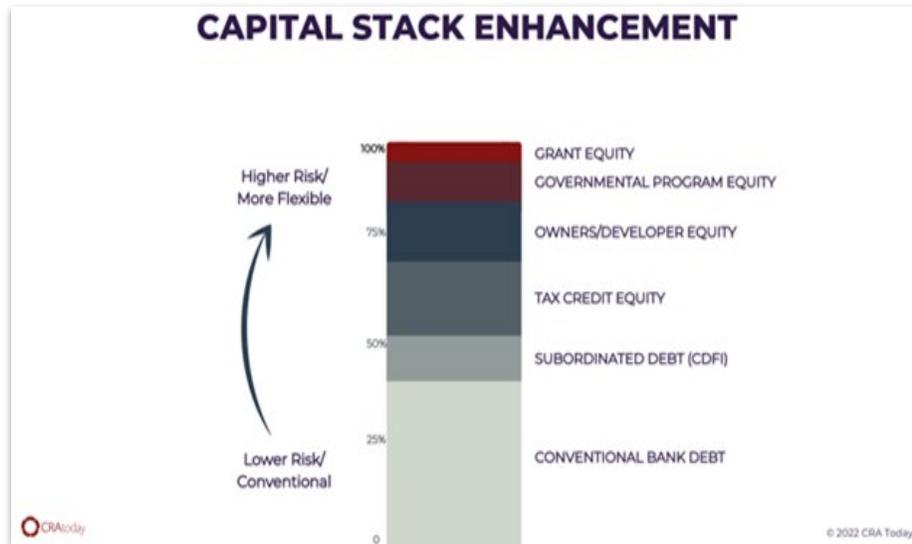


# Capital Resources: Stacking vs. Matching

## Capital Stacking

**Capital stacking is the funding or investment structure of a project within an organization.** In short, this model employs **various sources of capital** to enhance community development financing projects.

For example, a project could be “stacked” using equity (private or government grant funds) + Flexible debt + Conventional Debt.



## Matching

Typically, matching refers to the **non-federal share** of the total project costs that a grantee is **required** to contribute to achieve the purposes of the award. Examples of matching include, but not limited to:

- Cash matching
- Other Grants
- Third-party in-kind matching

**Matching is commonly interchanged: mixing, braiding, leveraging, layering, cost sharing.**

For the purposes of our discussion - **MATCHING** - is the current buzzword!

# Capital Improvement Programming (CIP): 101



Understand the types of budgets

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Learn how to present your budget case

---



Understand revenue sources available to City Departments

---



Understand capital improvement budgeting / forecasting

---



Addressing General Fund demands

---



Knowing your elected officials' political areas of focus

# Capital Budgeting Challenges



Outdated, lowball estimates of project phases

---



Failing to keep up with new regulations that could significantly escalate costs

---



Assuming that once a project is in the budget it's a done deal

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Failing to include maintenance impact of new facilities in operational budgets

---



Failing to include soft costs

---



Failing to deliver the project or a project phase

---



Limited understanding of alternate delivery method selections

# Mitigating CIP Challenges



Update project estimates at each opportunity (at least annually)

---



List regulations that affect the project and track any changes to the law

---



Developing a fiscally constrained and resource balanced CIP

---



Elected Official and manager priorities change – the sooner you build your project, the less chance that the \$\$\$ will go elsewhere

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Delivering “On time, on budget” helps promote and forecast future projects  
(What about early or under budget?)

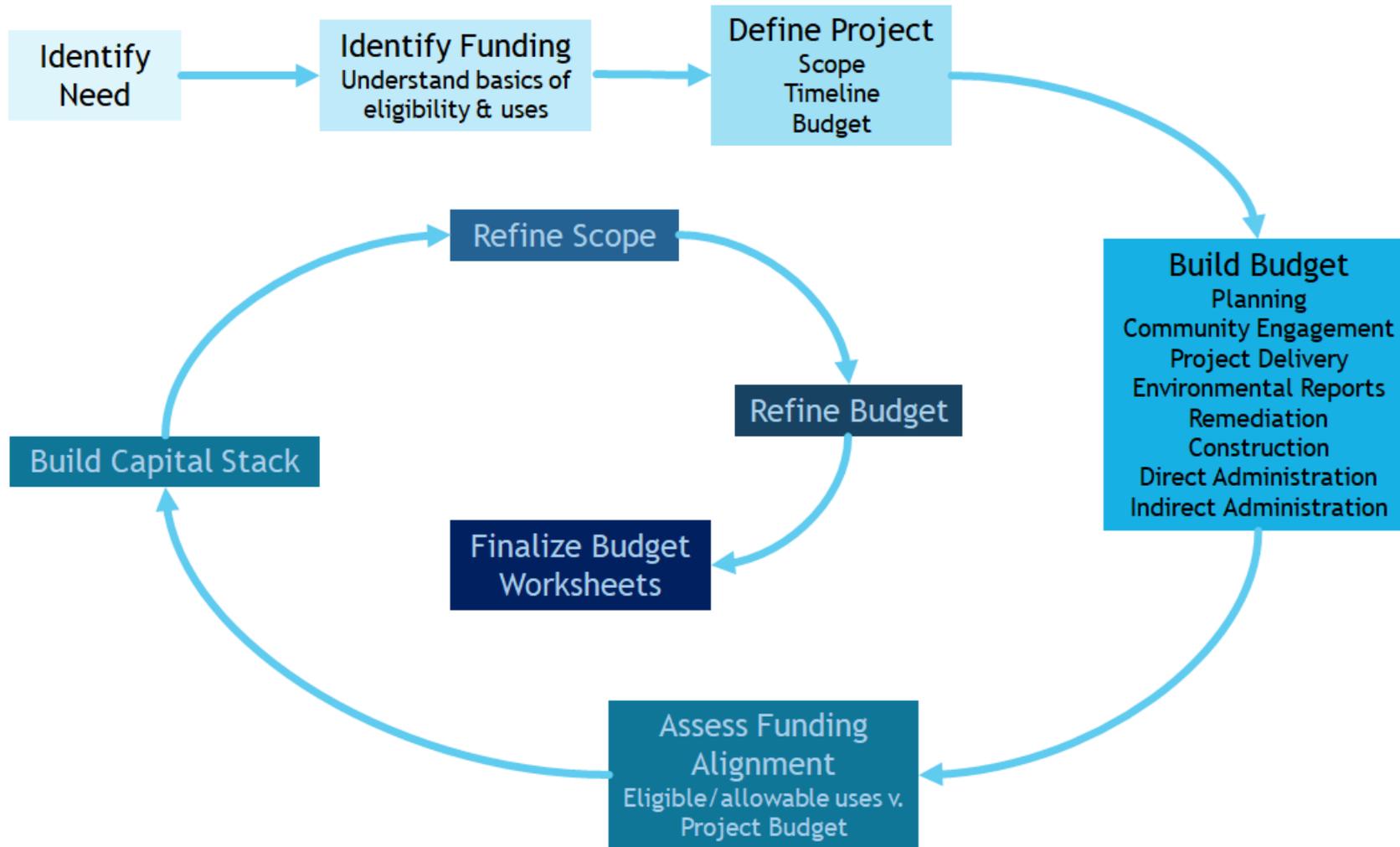
# Example CIP Layout

- Use fiscal constraint tactics
- Implement resource balancing strategies
- Ensure a multi-year program outlining applicable phases

Capital improvement programs should cover 5, 7 or 10 year periods. The example below demonstrates how to layout out a single project.

Project Phases	Fiscal Year 1	Fiscal Year 2	Fiscal Year 3
Construction Cost Estimate			\$10,000,000
Pre-Design	\$200,000		
Design	\$1,400,000		
Design Admin/ Project Mgmt	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Survey - Design	\$400,000		
Survey - Construction			\$400,000
Environmental Permits	\$200,000	\$300,000	
Utilities		\$400,000	
Right of Way		\$2,000,000	
Construction Mgmt			\$1,200,000
Environmental Mitigation			\$500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,300,000</b>	<b>\$2,800,000</b>	<b>\$12,200,000</b>

# Cycle of a Budget and Capital Stack Development



# Grant Financial Plan

## Align with Project Development and Grant Plan

- Cost Risk
  - Bid prices/procurement
  - Inflation
  - Project unknowns (contingencies)
- Budgeting for all grant phases
- Annual revenues (Max. & Min.)
- Year of expenditure and revenue forecasts

Summary of Grant-Related Expenditures and Funding					
<i>Does not include costs of project development activities</i>					
	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27
nd	\$ 47,975,000	\$ 100,975,280	\$ 2,900,000	\$ -	\$ -
: Cost to City	\$ 18,634,500	\$ 43,149,150	\$ 2,030,000	\$ -	\$ -
atch	\$ 15,137,000	\$ 39,931,320	\$ 1,885,000	\$ -	\$ -
it Applications	\$ 430,000	\$ 330,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
nts Applied Per Year	11	6	0	0	0
pplications	\$ 330,000	\$ 180,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
is per Year	2	6	0	0	0
	\$ 100,000	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
it Applications					
Grant Management	\$ 3,027,500	\$ 2,737,830	\$ 145,000	\$ -	\$ -
ayment Costs	\$ 9,155,598	\$ 9,155,598	\$ 9,284,115	\$ 9,284,115	\$ 9,284,115



# RCE and CRISI Grants

	RCE Grant ( <a href="#">link</a> )	CRISI Grant ( <a href="#">link</a> )
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available funding: \$1,148,809,580 for FY 2024</li> <li>• Minimum award: \$1,000,000 (except for planning projects)</li> <li>• <a href="#">FY23-24 NOFO Link</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Recipients of the FY2024 RCE Grant</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available funding: \$2,478,391,050 for FY 23-2024</li> <li>• No predetermined award maximum</li> <li>• <a href="#">Recipients of the FY2024 CRISI Grant</a></li> </ul>
<b>FRA Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety improvements               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Grade separations</li> <li>ii. Closing crossings through track relocation</li> <li>iii. Corridor-wide grade crossing improvements</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Mobility of people and goods</li> <li>• Reconnecting communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects that promote safety, equity, climate and sustainability, workforce development, job quality, and wealth creation (<i>i.e., economic development</i>)</li> <li>• Workforce development and training programs with high quality job opportunities</li> <li>• Locomotive emissions reductions and equity considerations for <i>Areas of Persistent Poverty</i></li> </ul>
<b>Important Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership encouraged, however, no joint applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCA is required</li> <li>• Program preference: Federal share of total project cost is 50% or less</li> <li>• There are 5 application tracks, applicants must choose 1</li> </ul>

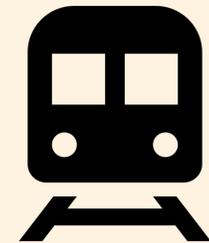
# Identifying Best Fit Funding Sources

Criteria	RCE Grant	CRISI Grant
Cost Share	Minimum 20% non-Federal Share	Minimum 20% non-Federal Share  *FRA will give preference to a proposed project for which the proposed Federal share of total project costs does not exceed 50%
<b><u>REMINDER</u></b>	<b>FRA encourages applicants to propose a project that has operational independence, or a component of such project, that can be completed and implemented with funding under this NOFO as a part of the total project cost.</b>	

# RCE Eligible Activities

1. **Grade separation** or closure, including through the use of a bridge, embankment, tunnel, or combination thereof
2. Track relocation
3. The improvement or installation of protective devices, signals, signs, or other measures that **improve safety**, provided that such activities are related to a separation or relocation project described in (1) or (2)
4. Other means to improve **the safety and mobility of people and goods** at highway-rail grade crossings (including technological solutions)
5. A group of related projects described in (1) through (4) that would collectively improve the mobility of people and goods
6. The planning, environmental review, & design of a project described in (1) through (5)

## Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE)



# CRISI Eligible Activities

1. Deployment of railroad **safety technology**.
2. A capital project as defined in section 22901(2), except that a project shall not be required to be in a State rail plan developed under chapter 227.
3. **A capital project identified by the Secretary as being necessary to address congestion or safety challenges affecting rail service.**
4. A capital project identified by the Secretary as being necessary to **reduce congestion** and facilitate ridership growth in intercity passenger rail transportation along heavily traveled rail corridors. *[Criteria may change]*
5. **A highway-rail grade crossing improvement project.**
6. A rail line relocation or improvement project.
7. A capital project to improve short-line or regional railroad infrastructure.
8. The preparation of regional rail and corridor service development plans and corresponding environmental analyses.
9. Any project that the Secretary considers necessary to enhance multimodal connections or facilitate service integration between rail service and other modes.

## Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)



# CRISI Eligible Activities (cont.)

10. The development and implementation of a safety program or institute designed to improve rail safety.
11. The development and implementation of measures to **prevent trespassing** and reduce associated injuries and fatalities.
12. Any research that the Secretary considers necessary to advance any particular aspect of rail-related capital, operations, or safety improvements.
13. Workforce development and training activities. *[Criteria may change]*
14. Research, development, and testing to advance and facilitate innovative rail projects, including projects using electromagnetic guideways in an enclosure in a very low-pressure environment.
15. The preparation of emergency plans for communities through which hazardous materials are transported by rail.
16. Rehabilitating, remanufacturing, procuring, or overhauling locomotives, provided that such activities result in a significant reduction of emissions. *[Criteria may change]*
17. Deployment of Magnetic Levitation Transportation Projects.

## Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)



# Building the Project



**Define the Scope of Work**



**Develop Preliminary Timeline**



**Draft a Budget**

# Grant Budgeting Considerations



Current, realistic estimates of project phases

---



Inclusion of costs for federalizing project (BABA, NEPA, etc.)

---



Budget in year of expenditure dollars

---



Consideration of alternate delivery costs and savings

---



Grant administration

---

# Developing the Scope of Work

- What scopes of work are needed for a successful project?
- What is required for each scope of work?
  - Level of effort /personnel
  - Supplies/equipment
  - Skills, expertise, experience
- What is known about the site and issues that will impact scope?
  - Has development been attempted before?
  - What do you know about the site history?
  - Are there completed environmental assessments?
- Will the work be phased?
- What is the timeline? How will it be impacted by federal compliance requirements?

## Scopes of Work to Consider

- Project development and grant writing
- Developing site inventories
- Community engagement
- Environmental assessments
- Developing revitalization plan
- Remediation/cleanup activities
- Monitoring & oversight of cleanup
- Reporting
- Compliance oversight
- Environmental Oversight
- Contractor Management
- Grants Management

# Drafting a Budget

- Build the full project budget from the scope of work
- For each scope of work, who will perform the work?
  - Staff or contract
  - What is the level of effort required
  - Are costs fixed? Hourly? Unit rate?
- Has cost estimating been done for environmental assessments, etc.?
- Consider
  - Timeline
  - Market movement

## Cost Categories to Consider

- Personnel
- Fringe benefits
- Travel costs
- Supplies
- Equipment
- Contracts
- Construction (if applicable)
- Administration
  - Direct
  - Indirect

# Building Capital Stacks

## Assess whether the scope of work can be fully funded within:

- Eligible activities
- Timeline
- Award amounts

## Assess whether there are other funding sources which would be a better fit:

- Complexity
- Federal compliance
- Allowable uses

## Combining sources:

- Confirm each source/budget
- Beware of Duplication of Benefits

# Funding Sources to Consider

- Federal Funding
- State Funding
- Local Funding
- General Funds
- Capital Improvement Funds (usually revenue funds from specific taxes)

- Public Private Partnerships
- Bonds
- Private financing
- Tax Credit programs (e.g. Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program & New Markets Tax Credits)
- Philanthropic grants

# Assess Funding Alignment to Project Scope

- Applicant Eligibility
- Timeline
- Available Grant Funds v. Project Budget
- Allowable Fund Uses v. Project Scope
- Grant Priorities & Scoring Criteria vs. Local Priorities & Scope of Work

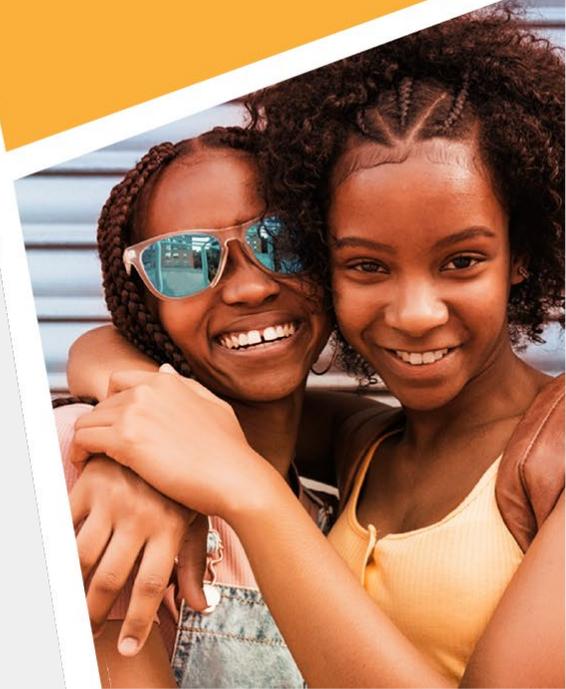


# Refine Scope of Work and Budget

- Consider **Scoring Criteria** when refining project design and scope
- Get updated **cost estimates and budget amounts** based on refined scope
- Refine the budget to **include additional funding to strengthen the projects alignment** to be competitive, as needed, considering:
  - Grant priorities
  - Scoring criteria
- Assess what **project scope** is funded and unfunded
  - Find funding sources for unfunded components, or
  - Assess whether the project is feasible without that scope
- Collect any **missing information** necessary to complete budget forms (e.g. SF424A)



# Grant Application Budget Materials



# Project Funding Sources Table

Funding Source	Funding Type	Description	Amount	% of Total Project Cost
City of Allendale	Non-Federal	Applicant	800,000	23.53%
George County	Non-Federal	Project Partner	\$100,000	2.94%
RFY Transportation	Non-Federal	Private Partner	\$0	0.00%
FRA	Federal	Grant Funds Administrator	\$2,500,000	73.53%
<b>Total Project Cost</b>			<b>\$3,400,000</b>	



## REMINDER

**RCE** Minimum 20% non-Federal match required

**CRISI** Minimum 20% non-Federal match required, **preference for projects with minimum 50% non-Federal Match**

# Project Budget by Major Activity

<b>Project Task</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>% of Total Project Cost</b>
Task 1: Project Administration	\$200,000	28.4%
Task 2: Engineering Design	\$250,000	35.6%
Task 3: Environmental Review	\$3,000	0.4%
Task 4: Feasibility Study	\$250,000	35.6%
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$703,000</b>	

# Complete Form SF - 424 (Application for Federal Assistance)

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424		
<b>* 1. Type of Submission:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication <input type="checkbox"/> Application <input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application	<b>* 2. Type of Application:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision	* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s): <input type="text"/> * Other (Specify): <input type="text"/>
* 3. Date Received: <input type="text"/>	4. Applicant Identifier: <input type="text"/>	
5a. Federal Entity Identifier: <input type="text"/>	5b. Federal Award Identifier: <input type="text"/>	
<b>State Use Only:</b>		
6. Date Received by State: <input type="text"/>	7. State Application Identifier: <input type="text"/>	
<b>8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:</b>		
* a. Legal Name: <input type="text"/>		
* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): <input type="text"/>	* c. UEI: <input type="text"/>	
<b>d. Address:</b>		
* Street1:	<input type="text"/>	
Street2:	<input type="text"/>	
* City:	<input type="text"/>	
County/Parish:	<input type="text"/>	
* State:	<input type="text"/>	

Access the SF-424 Family [here](#)

# Complete Form SF - 424A or SF - 424C

BUDGET INFORMATION - Construction Programs			
<small>NOTE: Certain Federal assistance programs require additional computations to arrive at the Federal share of project costs eligible for participation. If such is the case, you will be notified.</small>			
COST CLASSIFICATION	a. Total Cost	b. Costs Not Allowable for Participation	c. Total Allowable Costs (Columns a-b)
1. Administrative and legal expenses	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
2. Land, structures, rights-of-way, appraisals, etc.	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
3. Relocation expenses and payments	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
4. Architectural and engineering fees	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
5. Other architectural and engineering fees	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
6. Project inspection fees	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
7. Site work	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
8. Demolition and removal	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
9. Construction	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
10. Equipment	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
11. Miscellaneous	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
12. SUBTOTAL (sum of lines 1-11)	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
13. Contingencies	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
14. SUBTOTAL	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
15. Project (program) income	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
16. TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (subtract #15 from #14)	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
FEDERAL FUNDING			
17. Federal assistance requested, calculate as follows: (Consult Federal agency for Federal percentage share.) Enter the resulting Federal share.	Enter eligible costs from line 16c. Multiply X <input type="text"/> %		\$ <input type="text"/>

- **SF-424A** Budget information Non-Construction Costs
- **SF-424C** Budget information Construction Costs

**Instructions for SF-424A and SF-424C found [HERE](#)**

# Complete Form SF - 424B or SF - 424D

[View Burden Statement](#)      ASSURANCES - CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS      OMB Number: 4040-0009  
Expiration Date: 02/28/2025

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0042), Washington, DC 20503.

**PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.**

**NOTE:** Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the Awarding Agency. Further, certain Federal assistance awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

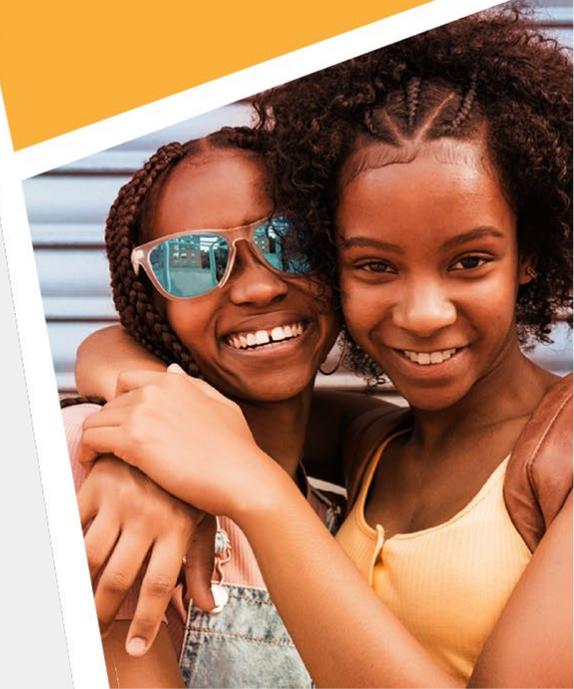
As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance, and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project costs) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of project described in this application.
8. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards of merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).

**Instructions for SF-424B  
and SF-424D found [HERE](#)**

- **SF-424B** Assurances for Non-Construction Program
- **SF 424D** Assurances for Construction Programs

# Benefit - Cost Analysis



## Definition of Benefit - Cost Analysis (BCA)

*The **Benefit-Cost Analysis** (or BCA) is "an analysis which quantifies, in monetary terms, as many of the costs and benefits of a proposal as feasible, including items for which the market does not provide a satisfactory measure of economic value."*

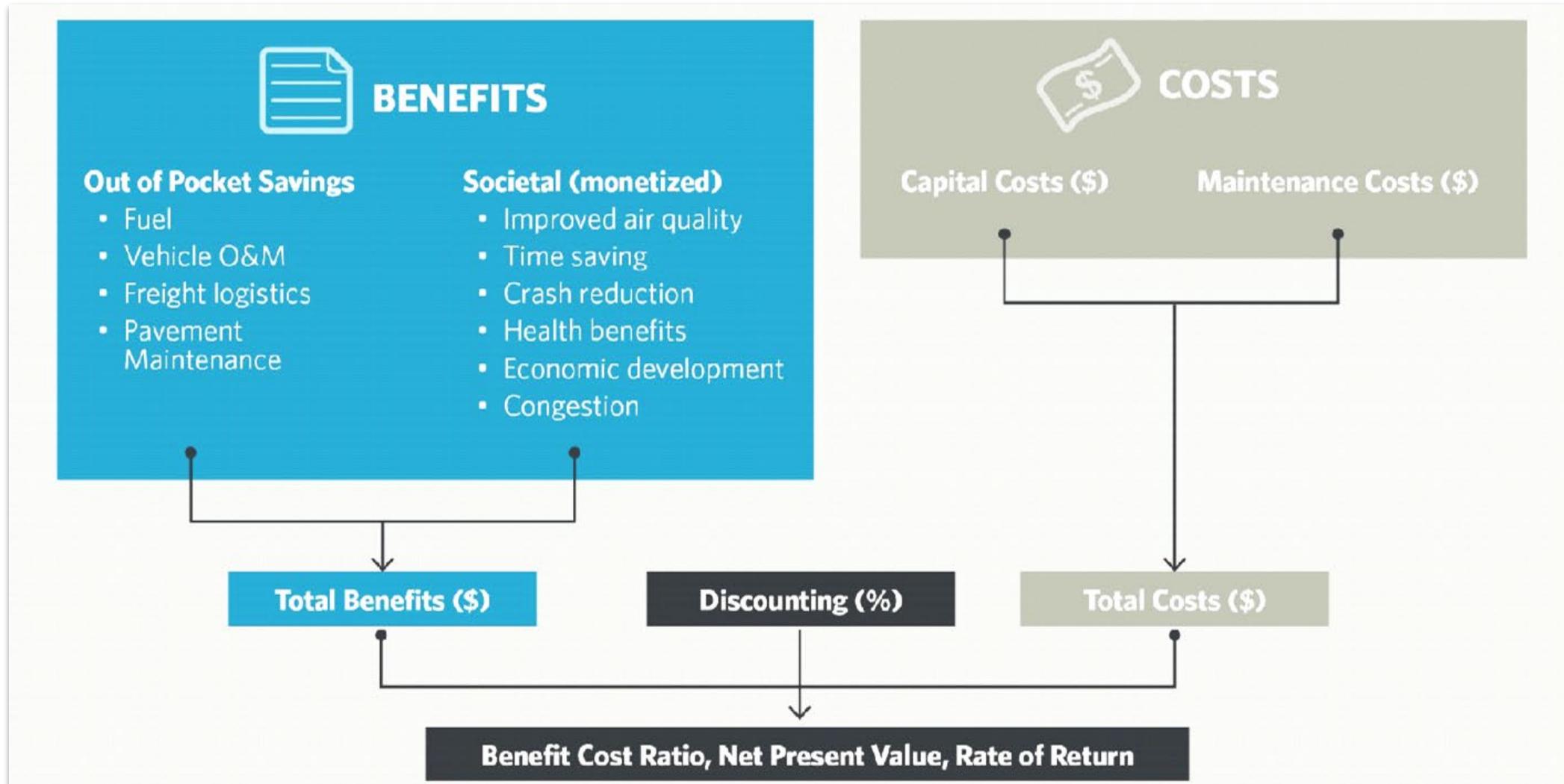
*- UK Treasury (2014)*

# Benefit - Cost Analyses (BCAs)

- Helps assess the socioeconomic benefits of a project
- Provides a benchmark for project evaluation
- Usually:
  - Positive benefit-cost ratio is required
  - Submission must include BCA spreadsheet and technical appendix detailing assumptions and methodology



# Components of BCAs



# Common Benefits

- **Economic**
  - Travel Time Reductions
  - Fuel Savings
  - Reduced Freight Transport Operating Costs
  - Reduced Infrastructure Maintenance Costs
- **Environmental**
  - Criteria to be determined
- **Social**
  - Safety
  - Improved Quality of Life

# Evaluation Metrics

- **Net Present Value**

- The present value of project benefits less the present value of project costs

- **Benefit-Cost Ratio**

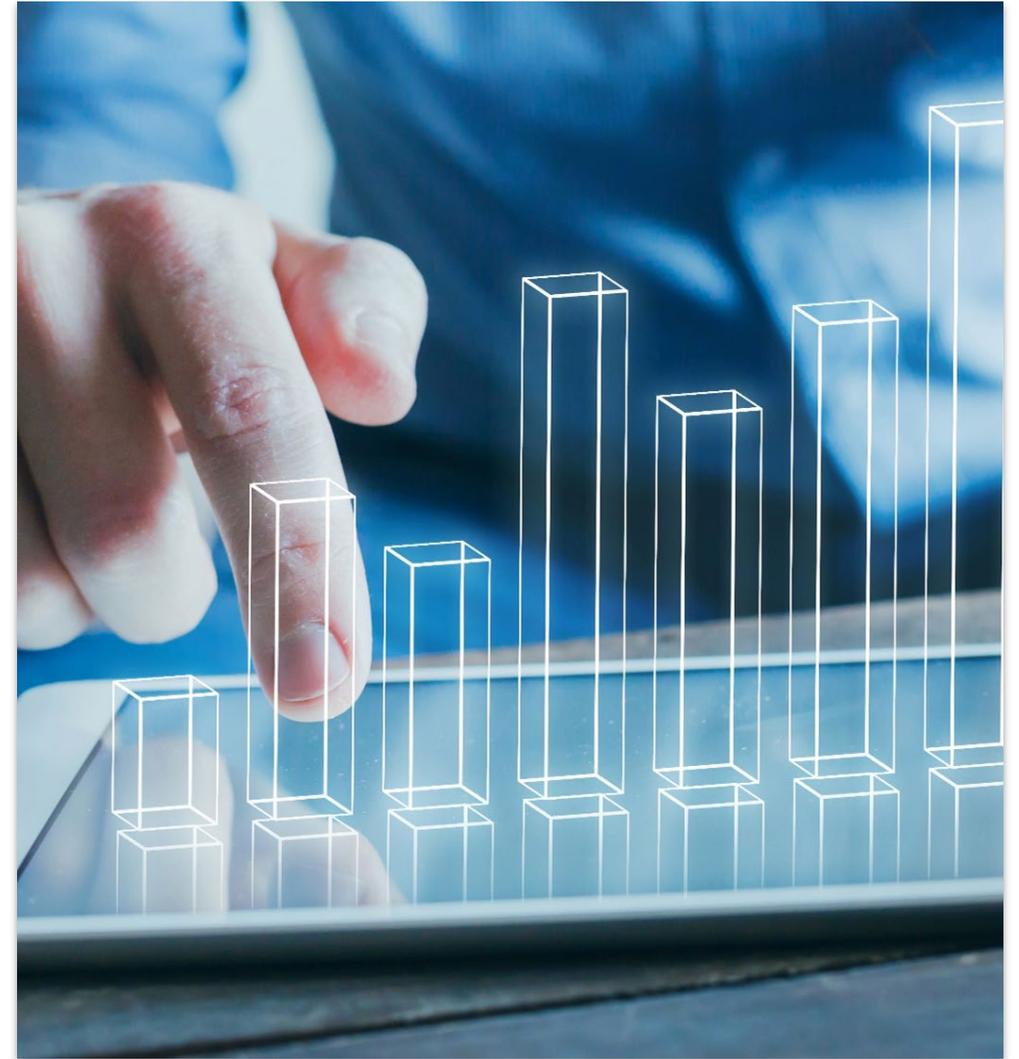
- Ratio of the total benefits to the total costs

- **Internal Rate of Return**

- The discount rate that results in a breakeven results

- **Payback Period**

- Years it takes for the project benefits to surpass its costs



## Steps to Conduct a Benefit - Cost Analysis (BCA)

**Define Project Scope and Impacts**

**Project Cost & Schedule Information**

**Data Collection**

**Assess Quantitative Impacts**

**Highlight Qualitative Impacts**

# Step 1 to Conduct a BCA

**Define Project Scope and Impacts**

**Project Cost & Schedule Information**

**Data Collection**

**Assess Quantitative Impacts**

**Highlight Qualitative Impacts**

**What happens without the project?**

**What changes will happen?**

**Who will be affected?**

**What are the outcomes / benefits?**

## Step 2 to Conduct a BCA

**Define Project Scope and Impacts**

**Project Cost & Schedule Information**

**Data Collection**

**Assess Quantitative Impacts**

**Highlight Qualitative Impacts**

**Cost of the project**

**Is there information by activity?**

**What year are the costs based in?**

**Is there a detailed timeline?**

## Step 3 to Conduct a BCA

**Define Project Scope and Impacts**

**Project Cost & Schedule Information**

**Data Collection**

**Assess Quantitative Impacts**

**Highlight Qualitative Impacts**

**Historical data of users / volumes**

**Forecast of users / volumes**

**Changes in operational costs**

**Other project-specific data points**

## Step 4 to Conduct a BCA

**Define Project Scope and Impacts**

**Project Cost & Schedule Information**

**Data Collection**

**Assess Quantitative Impacts**

**Highlight Qualitative Impacts**

**Apply appropriate methodology**

**Monetization factors**

**Follow appropriate discounting**

**Assess evaluation metrics**

## Step 5 to Conduct a BCA

**Define Project Scope and Impacts**

**Project Cost & Schedule Information**

**Data Collection**

**Assess Quantitative Impacts**

**Highlight Qualitative Impacts**

# Economic Impact Analysis (EIA)

- **Different than a BCA and not a substitute**
- **Evaluates the macroeconomic impacts of a project or event**
  - Assesses the direct macroeconomic impact of the project through GDP, employment, employment income, output, etc.
  - Can incorporate spin-off macroeconomic effects

# Comparing BCAs with EIAs

<b>Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA)</b>	<b>Economic Impact Analysis (EIA)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compares the advantages (user benefits, societal benefits) and disadvantages (costs) of an investment</li><li>• Considers the population's "well-being"</li><li>• Concerned with economic efficiency and welfare gains</li><li>• Benefits expressed as resource cost savings or changes in "well-being"</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assess how the investment affects economic activity in the region</li><li>• Estimates effects of the investment on macroeconomic indicators, where project expenditures (costs) are seen as benefits as they generate economic activity</li><li>• Primarily concerned with changes in economic activity</li><li>• Impacts expressed as changes in business sales, employment, income, or tax revenue</li></ul>

# U.S. DOT Direction on BCA

*As of May 2025*

- May 2025 [BCA Guidance](#)
- [USDOT Order: Ensuring Reliance Upon Sound Economic Analysis in Department of Transportation Policies, Programs, and Activities](#)
  - Funding based on sound economic principles and analysis supported by rigorous cost-benefit requirements and data-driven decisions.
  - Project benefits must outweigh costs.
  - Change anticipated in methods & factors used to calculate social cost of carbon
  - Maximize benefits to families and communities.
  - Prioritize user-pay models.
  - Funding in local opportunity zones.
  - Focus on families.

# Examples of Data to Gather for Rail Project BCAs

- Vehicle count,
- Train count,
- Passenger count,
- Delay to freight,
- Accidents – fatal and other,
- Distance from crossing to population centers,
- Operating costs,
- Type of project benefits.

Source: <https://safetydata.fra.dot.gov/officeofsafety/publicsite/crossing/crossing.aspx> and <https://railroads.dot.gov/railroad-safety/divisions/highway-rail-crossing-and-trespasser-programs/crossinginventory/grade>



## 5. Writing and Packaging a Strong Grant

*A video recording of this section is available [here](#)*

# Tell Your WHY

You are the expert: **Why is your proposed project important and urgent?**

Consider:

- How the "WHY" aligns with the grant priorities and DOT's strategic goals
- The impact on your community
- Information gathered from community engagement



Source: [FY2022-26 US DOT Strategic Plan](#)  
released January 20, 2023

# Project Narrative Logistics

Length	Documents	Website Links	Additional Materials
<p><b>Project Narrative may <u>not</u> exceed 25 pages</b></p> <p><i>Cover page, Table of Contents, and supporting documents not included in page count</i></p>	<p><b>Supporting documents may be included</b></p> <p><i>This material is <u>excluded</u> from the 25-page limit</i></p>	<p><b>Provide website links to supporting documents when possible</b></p> <p><i>If supporting documents are submitted, applicants must clearly identify the relevant portion of the supporting document with the page numbers of the cited information in the Project Narrative</i></p>	<p><b>Supporting Documents may include</b> planning, engineering and design documentation, and letters of support from partnering organizations</p> <p><b>For CRISI grants specifically,</b> especially consider “documentation that evidences completion of appropriate Lifecycle Stage(s) of a Capital Project”</p>

# CRISI Project Narrative Content

*From the CRISI FY23-FY24 NOFO:*

## Minimum Project Narrative Content:

- I. **Cover Page** (See D.2.a.i)
- II. **Project Summary** (See D.2.a.ii)
- III. **Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of Project Funds** (See D.2.a.iii)
- IV. **Applicant Eligibility Criteria** (See D.2.a.iv)
- V. **Project Eligibility Criteria** (See D.2.a.v)
- VI. **Detailed Project Description** (See D.2.a.vi)
- VII. **Project Location** (See D.2.a.vii)
- VIII. **Evaluation and Selection Criteria** (See D.2.a.viii)
- IX. **Project Implementation and Management** (See D.2.a.ix)

Source: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/29/2024-06710/notice-of-funding-opportunity-for-the-fy-2023-fy-2024-consolidated-rail-infrastructure-and-safety>

# RCE Project Narrative Content

*From the RCE FY23-FY24 NOFO:*

## **Minimum Project Narrative Content:**

- I. **Cover Page** (See D.2.a.i)
- II. **Project Summary** (See D.2.a.ii)
- III. **Project Funding - Funds, Sources and Uses of Project Funds** (See D.2.a.iii)
- IV. **Applicant Eligibility** (See D.2.a.iv)
- V. **Project Eligibility Criteria** (See D.2.a.v)
- VI. **Detailed Project Description** (See D.2.a.vi)
- VII. **Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Safety Information and Education Programs** (See D.2.a.vii)
- VIII. **Project Location** (See D.2.a.viii)
- IX. **Grade Crossing Information** (See D.2.a.ix)
- X. **Safety Benefit** (See D.2.a.x)
- XI. **Evaluation and Selection Criteria** (See D.2.a.xi)
- XII. **Project Implementation and Management** (See D.2.a.xii)

Source: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/07/10/2024-15061/notice-of-funding-opportunity-for-the-fy-2023-fy-2024-railroad-crossing-elimination-program>

# Getting Started: The Writing Process

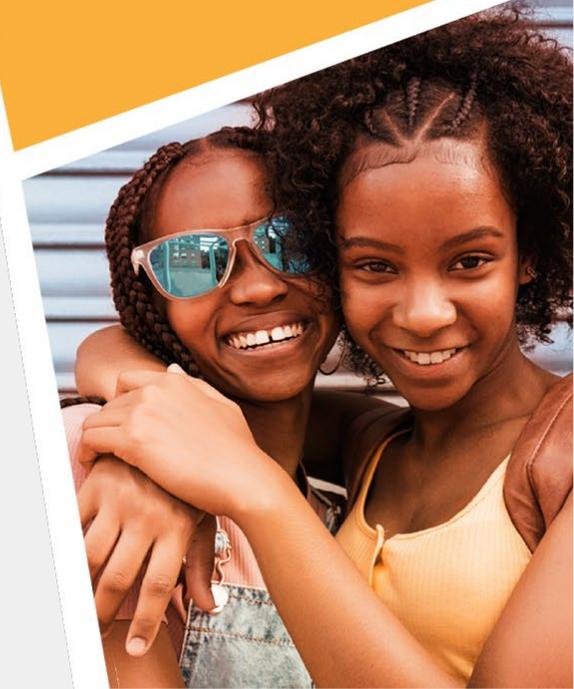
- **Collect anything already written about the project that you can repurpose - do not start from scratch if possible!**
- Outline the required components of the narrative.
  - Make sure you cover all key points.
  - Manage document lengths as you write - **pages over the limit will not be considered.**
- Read the full instructions.
- Start with a section that feels approachable (can use data as a guide).
- Write the summary last.
- Write a section at a time - don't try to tackle it all at once.
- Let the process be iterative, and the puzzle pieces will start to fall into place as you go.



# Tips for Writing an Effective Narrative

- Make it easy for the reviewer to score you well:
  - Articulate your points **clearly and concisely**.
  - Follow the structure provided in NOFO and **cover all key points**.
  - Know what the grant requires and wants to accomplish - **tell them how you will do it**.
- Use the language in the NOFO.
- Remember reviewers do not know your community or site - provide context.
- Have an external reviewer provide comments - ideally someone who does **not** know your community well that can highlight where context is missing.

# Addressing Required Criteria



# CRISI Evaluation Criteria

From the CRISI FY23-FY24 NOFO:

***FRA will evaluate the Benefit-Cost Analysis and project benefits of the proposed project for the anticipated private and public benefits relative to the costs of the proposed project and the summary of benefits provided in response to subsection D(2)(b)(ii) including:***

- A. Effects on system and system performance;
- B. Effects on safety, competitiveness, reliability, trip or transit time, and resilience;
- C. Efficiencies from improved integration with other modes; and
- D. Ability to meet existing or anticipated demand.

# RCE Evaluation Criteria

From the RCI FY23-FY24 NOFO:

***FRA will evaluate application information for the extent to which the proposed project:***

- A. Improves safety at Highway-Rail or Pathway-Rail Grade Crossings;
- B. Proposes to grade, separate, eliminate, or close one or more Highway-Rail or Pathway-Rail Grade crossings;
- C. Improves mobility of both people and goods;
- D. Reduces emissions, protects the environment, and provides community benefit (including noise reduction);
- E. Improves access to emergency services;
- F. Improves access to communities;
- G. Provides economic benefit; and
- H. Uses contracting incentives to employ local labor, to the extent permissible under Federal law.

# CRISI Technical Merit Criteria

*From the CRISI FY23-FY24 NOFO:*

**A.** The tasks and subtasks outlined in the statement of work (SOW) are appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes of the proposed project.

**B.** Applications indicate strong project readiness and meet requirements under the project track(s) designated by the applicant.

**C.** The technical qualifications and experience of key personnel proposed to lead and perform the technical efforts, and the qualifications of the primary and supporting organizations to fully and successfully execute the proposed project within the proposed timeframe and budget are demonstrated.

**D.** The proposed project's business plan considers potential private sector participation in the financing, construction, or operation of the proposed project.

**E.** The applicant has, or will have, the legal, financial, and technical capacity to carry out the proposed project; satisfactory continuing control over the use of the equipment or facilities; and the capability and willingness to maintain the equipment or facilities.

**F.** The degree to which the applicant and project deploy innovative technology, encourage innovative approaches to project delivery, and incentivize the use of innovative financing.

**G.** The proposed project is consistent with planning guidance and documents set forth by DOT, including those required by law or State rail plans developed under title 49, US Code, Chapter 227.

**Note:** *Deployment of Magnetic Levitation Transportation Projects (Track 5) have different technical merit criteria.*

# RCE Technical Merit Criteria

*From the RCI FY23-FY24 NOFO:*

<p><b>A.</b> The tasks and subtasks outlined in the statement of work (SOW) are appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes of the proposed project.</p>
<p><b>B.</b> The application demonstrates strong project readiness and ability to meet RCE Program requirements.</p>
<p><b>C.</b> The technical qualifications and experience of key personnel proposed to lead and perform the technical efforts, and the qualifications of the primary and supporting organizations to fully and successfully execute the proposed project within the proposed timeframe and budget are demonstrated.</p>
<p><b>D.</b> The project is identified in the freight investment plan component of a state freight plan, a state rail plan, a state highway-rail grade crossing action plan, a state freight plan, or other equivalent document.</p>
<p><b>E.</b> The project will use innovative technologies, innovative design and construction techniques, or construction materials that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p>
<p><b>F.</b> The project will use financial support from impacted rail carriers</p>
<p><b>G.</b> Provides Economic Benefit</p>
<p><b>H.</b> The project will improve the mobility of multiple modes of transportation, including ingress and egress from freight facilities, or users of non-vehicular modes of transportation such as pedestrians, bicycles, and public transportation.</p>

# RCE and CRISI Selection Criteria

**After the eligibility and completeness review of the evaluation criteria outlined in this section, FRA will then consider the extent to which the projects address the following DOT Strategic Goals:**

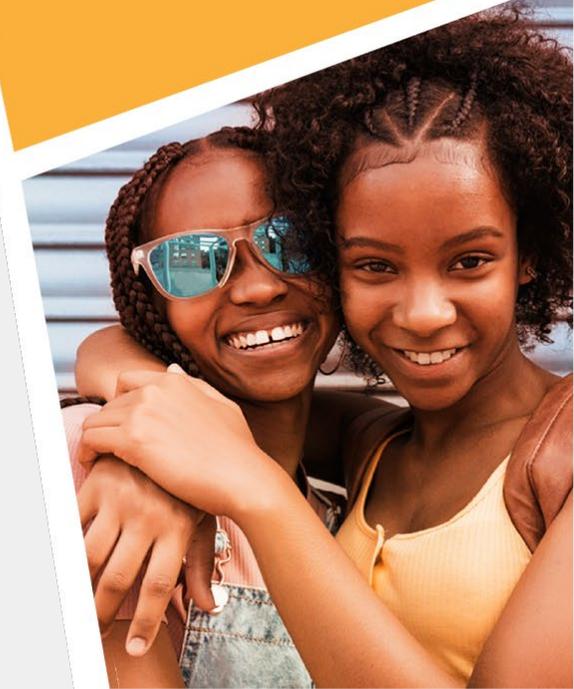
1. Safety
2. Equitable Economic Strength and Improving Core Assets
3. Equity and Barriers to Opportunity
4. Climate Change and Sustainability
5. Eliminating Crossings and Making Corridor-Wide Improvements
6. Transformation of Our Nation's Infrastructure
7. Geographic Diversity

# CRISI Additional Selection Criteria

## Preference given to:

- A. A proposed project for which the proposed Federal share of total costs does not exceed 50%.
- A. Projects for which the net benefits of the grant funds will be maximized considering the Benefit-Cost Analysis, including anticipated private and public benefits relative to the costs of the proposed project, and factoring in the other considerations in [49 U.S.C. 22907\(e\)\(2\)](#).
- A. Projects eligible under [49 U.S.C. 22907\(c\)\(11\)](#), projects for the development and implementation of measures to prevent trespassing and reduce associated injuries and fatalities that are located in the top 25 counties with the most pedestrian casualties.

# Submitting a Complete Package



# CRISI Grant Application Required Materials

*From the CRISI FY23-FY24 NOFO:*

- Project Narrative
- Statement of Work
- Benefit-Cost Analysis
- Environmental Compliance Documentation
- Application for Federal Assistance (**SF-424**)
- Budget Information for Non-Construction/Construction Programs (**SF-424A/C**)
- Assurances for Non-Construction/Construction Programs (**SF-424B/D**)
- FRA F 30—[Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters, Drug-Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying](#)
- FRA F 251—[Applicant Financial Capability Questionnaire](#)
- SF LLL—[Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable](#)

# RCE Grant Application Required Materials

*From the RCI FY23-FY24 NOFO:*

- Project Narrative
- Statement of Work
- Environmental Compliance Documentation
- Application for Federal Assistance ([SF-424](#))
- Budget Information for Non-Construction/Construction Programs (**SF-424A/C**)
- Assurances for Non-Construction/Construction Programs (**SF-424B/D**)
- FRA F 30 — [Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters, Drug-Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying](#)
- FRA F 251 — [Applicant Financial Capability Questionnaire](#)
- SF LLL — [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable](#)

# How to Submit the Application

- Consult the relevant NOFO for exact submission instructions/changes.
- Submit the application by the deadline.
- Submit through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov):
  - Must be registered in <http://www.grants.gov/> .
  - Must be registered (and current) with [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov).
  - Must have a Unique Entity Identifier (**UEI**) assigned by [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov)
  - Designate the organization's Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) in [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and acquire authorization within the portal (grants.gov).

# Things to Remember...

- The federal government relies on communities at the local level for grant programs like CRISI and RCE to be successful - they need you!
- Draw on work you have already done - community engagement, prioritization processes, data analysis, project scope, budget.

## 6. Grant Case Study & Critique

*A video recording of this section is available [here](#)*

# RCE Awarded Example: City of Fairfield Symmes Road Project

## 7.0 Evaluation and Selection Criteria

The following sections detail how the proposed project addresses the evaluation criteria, followed by tables summarizing technical merit and selection criteria.

### 7.1 EVALUATION CRITERIA

#### IMPROVES SAFETY AT HIGHWAY-RAIL OR PATHWAY RAIL GRADE CROSSINGS

The current Symmes Road crossing is skewed at an angle of 30 to 59 degrees, which limits the visibility of trains to oncoming vehicles. The current at-grade crossing also lacks advanced warning lights and side lights. ***There have been five recorded crashes at the highway-rail interchange, with one crash resulting in an injury.*** All five crashes occurred at night and in dry conditions, which can be indicative of visibility issues. In addition to roadway safety deficiencies, the current crossing does not have sidewalks or pedestrian gates. A 2008 study further attributed 19 crashes (7 likely and 12 possible) over the previous four years to congestion caused by backups at the Symmes Road crossing.

The current North Gilmore Road Crossing is skewed at an angle of approximately 60 to 90 degrees, which similarly limits visibility. The current at-grade crossing lacks advanced warning lights and side lights. ***There have been 11 recorded crashes at the highway-rail interchange, with a total of eight fatalities and eight injuries.*** The vast majority of these crashes have occurred on a dry road with relatively evenly distributed visibility conditions. In addition to roadway safety deficiencies, the current crossing does not have sidewalks or pedestrian gates. ***The North Gilmore Road Crossing is located directly adjacent to a Fairfield 9-12 grade campus which includes freshman and senior high school buildings for both the City and Fairfield Township.***

# City of Fairfield Symmes Road Project: RCE Technical Merit

FRA Evaluation Criteria	Project Attributes Meeting this Goal
<p>The tasks and subtasks outlined in the statement of work (SOW) are appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes of the proposed project</p>	<p>As presented in Appendix A, the BCTID has identified the supporting tasks and work products required to advance the proposed countermeasures at the Symmes Road and North Gilmore Road crossings.</p>
<p>The application demonstrates strong project readiness and ability to meet RCE Program requirements</p>	<p>The BCTID is ready to build upon previous work developed by the City for two potential conceptual design alternatives to advance the project development of the Symmes Road grade separation and North Gilmore Road grade crossing closure.</p>
<p>The technical qualifications and experience of key personnel the applicant proposes to lead and perform the technical efforts, including the qualifications of the primary and supporting organizations, demonstrates the ability to fully and successfully execute the proposed project within the proposed time frame and budget</p>	<p>The City of Fairfield and Butler County Transportation Improvement District (BCTID) are both certified by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to execute and administer federal-aid projects. BCTID, a partner on this project, has led similar projects including the \$26 million South Hamilton crossing project to provide grade separation of Central Avenue.</p>

# City of Fairfield Symmes Road Project: RCE Selection Criteria

FRA Evaluation Criteria	Project Attributes Meeting this Goal
Safety	<p>The Symmes Road and North Gilmore Road crossings have seen a combined 16 crashes, eight fatalities and nine injuries according to the FRA Grade Crossing Inventory. Grade separation and closure of these crossings, respectively, will eliminate two conflict points while improving emergency response times regionally. New sidewalks on the overpass will also safely accommodate pedestrians.</p>
Equitable Economic Strength and Improving Core Assets	<p>With more than 36,000 jobs within three miles of the project, the Symmes Road corridor provides critical east-west access to the region's workforce. Several industrial properties surrounding the Symmes Road crossing, including the former General Motors Fisher Body plant which employed 5,000 local residents prior to its closure, present new job attraction and retention opportunities. Many of these sites can be served by rail, with grade separation of Symmes Road better accommodating rail spur operations.</p>
Equity and Barriers to Opportunity	<p>The costs of current safety and mobility challenges and the benefits of resolving them are concentrated within a Census tract with a 9.5% poverty rate and a median annual household income of under \$50,000. The project location qualifies as a Justice40 Community. Benefits of the Symmes Road grade separation will flow to this community by helping to enhance equitable access to jobs and removing a functional barrier for the community. The BCTID is committed to conducting thoughtful outreach and engagement to communities impacted by potential closure of the Gilmore Road crossing as part of the feasibility study.</p>

# Budget Spreadsheet Example

## 1. Detailed Project Costs By Component, All Phases

DESCRIPTION	ITEM No	Pay Unit	Unit Price	
<b>REPLACEMENT STRUCTURE TYPE</b>				Subtotals
<b>CLEARING AND GRUBBING</b>	201.0003.0000	ACRE	\$30,000.00	\$150,000
<b>UNCLASSIFIED EXCAVATION</b>	203.0003.0000	CY	\$20.00	\$784,000
<b>REMOVAL OF PAVEMENT</b>	202.0002.0000	SY	\$20.00	\$91,000
<b>REMOVAL OF CULVERT PIPE</b>	202.0004.0000	LF	\$40.00	\$39,760
<b>EMBANKMENT</b>				\$0
- BORROW, TYPE A (CULVERT BEDDING)	203.0006.000A	TON	\$50.00	\$67,500
- BORROW, TYPE C	203.0006.000C	TON	\$30.00	\$0
- RIPRAP, CLASS II	611.0001.0002	CY	\$150.00	\$477,000
- STRUCTURAL BACKFILL	205.0006.0000	CY	\$200.00	\$288,000
<b>STRUCTURAL SECTION</b>				\$0
-AGGREGATE BASE COURSE, GRADING D-1	301.0001.00D1	TON	\$40.00	\$95,600
-HMA, Type II; Class A	401.0001.002A	TON	\$200.00	\$314,000
-DRIVEWAY, RESIDENTIAL	639.0002.0000	EACH	\$1,500.00	\$4,500
<b>STRUCTURES</b>				\$0
-BRIDGES		SF	\$600.00	\$9,340,800
-TEMPORARY CROSSINGS		EACH	\$1,500,000.00	\$4,500,000
-STEEL BRIDGE RAILING, 2-TUBE	507.0001.0002	LF	\$400.00	\$270,400
-STRUCTURAL STEEL SHEET PILES	505.0009.0000	SF	\$100.00	\$870,000
<b>PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES</b>				\$0
-ASPHALT PATHWAY	608.2002.0000	TON	\$200.00	\$62,000
-PEDESTRIAN RAILING	507.0002.0000	LF	\$350.00	\$118,300
<b>DRAINAGE</b>				\$0
-ALUMINUM BOX CULVERT 13'x6'		LF	\$4,000.00	\$768,000
-ALUMINUM BOX CULVERT 22.75'x5.33'		LF	\$6,000.00	\$510,000
-STRUCTURAL PLATE PIPE, 216IN	602.0001.0216	LF	\$3,000.00	\$396,000
-LAKE RETENTION WEIR		LUMP SUM	\$100,000.00	\$100,000
<b>W-BEAM GUARDRAIL</b>	606.0001.0000	LF	\$55.00	\$66,000
<b>PARALLEL GUARDRAIL TERMINAL</b>	606.0013.0000	EACH	\$4,000.00	\$24,000

TOPSOIL	620.0001.0000	SY	\$10.00	\$80,000
SEEDING	618.0004.0000	SY	\$30.00	\$240,000
<b>PAVEMENT MARKINGS and SIGNING</b>		LANE-MILE	\$125,000.00	\$75,000
<b>LANDSCAPING</b>	621.MF01.0001	LUMP SUM	1%	\$199,000
<b>ADDITIONAL DRAINAGE MEASURES</b>		LUMP SUM	0%	\$0
<b>EROSION and POLLUTION</b>		LUMP SUM	3%	\$595,000
<b>STREAM DIVERSION &amp; DEWATERING</b>		LUMP SUM	3%	\$595,000
<b>CONSTRUCTION SURVEYING</b>	642.0001.0000	LUMP SUM	3%	\$595,000
<b>TRAFFIC CONTROL</b>	643.2019.0000	LUMP SUM	7%	\$1,385,000
<b>CONTRACTOR FURNISHED AS-BUILTS</b>	642.2004.0000	LUMP SUM	1%	\$199,000
<b>MOBILIZATION</b>	640.2001.0000	LUMP SUM	10%	\$1,975,000
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>				\$25,274,860
<b>CONSTRUCTION CONTINGENCY (15%)</b>			15%	\$3,791,229
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL</b>				\$29,066,089
<b>CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION (15%)</b>			15%	\$4,359,913
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL and PERMITTING (3%)</b>			3%	\$871,983
<b>PROJECT &amp; GRANT MANAGEMENT</b>			1%	\$290,661
<b>DESIGN</b>			10%	\$2,906,609
<b>PRIOR EXPENDITURES</b>			0.5%	\$145,330
<b>PROJECT SUBTOTAL</b>				\$37,640,585
<b>UTILITIES</b>		LUMP SUM	5%	\$1,453,304
<b>RIGHT-of-WAY</b>		LUMP SUM		\$581,322
<b>ICAP/Indirect (DOT&amp;PF on all minus Knik)</b>		LUMP SUM	5.17%	\$1,910,744
<b>ICAP/Indirect (Knik on Knik Budget)</b>		LUMP SUM	19.22%	\$109,993
<b>MITIGATION</b>		LUMP SUM	0.5%	\$145,330
<b>TOTAL FY24 \$</b>				\$41,841,280

# Budget Spreadsheet Example

## 2. Schedule, All Phases

Design Task	Task 3	Value Engineering and Constructability Review (Prelim)	1/2/2026	2/16/2026	
Design Task	Task 3	Education and Technical Training	9/1/2025	7/1/2027	
Design Task	Task 3	Agency Coordination, Tribal Consultation, Public Involvement	12/1/2025	3/31/2026	
Design Task	Task 3	Permit and Environmental Document Prep	2/1/2026	3/31/2026	
Design Task	Task 3	NEPA Review	2/1/2026	12/28/2026	
Milestone	Task 3	NEPA Review Complete	12/28/2026		
Milestone	Task 4	DOT&PF ATP - Final Design	5/1/2026		
Design Task	Task 4	65% Design	5/3/2026	8/31/2026	
Design Task	Task 4	Plans-in-Hand (PIH) Review	9/1/2026	9/30/2026	
Design Task	Task 4	Railroad ROW Use Agreement Negotiations	10/1/2026	3/30/2027	
Design Task	Task 3	Value Engineering and Constructability Review (Final)	10/2/2026	11/16/2026	
Design Task	Task 4	90% Design	11/16/2026	4/30/2027	
Design Task	Task 4	Local Agency Coordination	11/16/2026	3/31/2027	
Milestone	Task 4	Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E) Review	5/1/2027		
Design Task	Task 4	Final Design	6/1/2027	7/1/2027	
Milestone	Task 4	Design Approved by DOT&PF	7/16/2027		
Milestone	Task 5	Construction Bid Advertisement	8/15/2027		
Construction Task	Task 5	Bidding Period	8/15/2027	9/29/2027	
Milestone	Task 5	Bid Opening and Award	10/1/2027		
Milestone	Task 6	DOT&PF ATP - Construction	11/2/2027		
Construction Task	Task 6	Education and Technical Training	7/1/2027	7/17/2030	
Construction Task	Task 6	Material Procurement	11/2/2027	6/30/2028	
Construction Task	Task 6	Construction Season #1	4/15/2028	10/12/2028	

# Budget Spreadsheet Example

## 3. Summary by Workplan Task, Grant Eligible/Ineligible, Year of Activity, Year of Expenditure Costs

Project Task(s)	Years of Activity	Project Activities	Engineer Estimate FY24 \$ (All Projects)	Cost Adjusted to Expected Year of Expenditure (All Projects)	Cost Adjusted to Expected Year of Expenditure (Answer Creek)
1	2024	Prior Expenditures	145,330	145,330	\$20,437
2	2025-2030	Management	290,661	311,699	\$43,832
3, 4, & 5	2025-2027	Design	2,906,609	3,024,431	\$425,301
3 & 4	2025-2027	Environmental & Permitting	871,983	907,329	\$127,590
2	2025-2030	Indirect	2,020,738	2,167,000	\$304,728
6	2028-2030	Site Work	934,000	1,031,346	\$112,631
6	2028-2030	Demolition and Removal	130,760	144,388	\$24,955
6	2028-2030	Utilities	1,453,304	1,604,775	\$225,667
6	2028-2030	Construction	24,210,100	26,733,401	\$3,787,050
6	2028-2030	Construction Admin	4,359,913	4,814,326	\$677,000
3 & 4	2026-2027	Right of Way	581,322	610,855	\$85,900
6	2028-2030	Mitigation	145,330	160,478	\$22,567
6	2028-2030	Contingencies	3,791,229	4,186,370	\$588,696
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$41,841,280</b>	<b>\$45,841,730</b>	<b>\$6,446,353</b>
<b>Total Grant Request</b>			<b>41,695,949</b>	<b>45,696,399</b>	<b>6,425,917</b>

# Budget Spreadsheet Example

## 4. Eligible Year of Expenditure Costs by SF424C Category

Group Costs by Expenditure YOES		
Activity	SF424C Category	Total
Prior Expenditures	Arch. and Eng. Fees	\$145,330
Management	Admin. and Legal Exp.	\$311,699
Design	Arch. and Eng. Fees	\$3,024,431
Environmental & Permitting	Other Arch. and Eng. Fees	\$907,329
Indirect	Admin. and Legal Exp.	\$2,167,000
Site Work	Site Work	\$1,031,346
Demolition and Removal	Demolition and Removal	\$144,388
Utilities	Relocation Exp.	\$1,604,775
Construction	Construction	\$26,733,401
Construction Admin	Proj Inspec. Fees	\$4,814,326
Right of Way	Land, Struct. ROW	\$610,855
Mitigation	Land, Struct. ROW	\$160,478
Contingencies	Contingencies	\$4,186,370
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$45,841,730</b>
<b>Grant Request</b>		<b>\$45,696,399</b>



## 7. Tools & Resources

*Resources to help you understand and strengthen core components of your grant application*

# Tools & Resources (1/4)

- [Rail \(RCE CRISI\) Fact Sheet & Guide 2025](#)  
Local Infrastructure Hub Overview and Guidance to the Rail Programs.
- [White House Directives on Economic Analysis](#)  
Federal directive emphasizing the integration of sound economic analysis in DOT programs and NOFO processes.
- [FRA Guiding Principles](#)  
Overview of the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) mission, values, and approach to rail safety and collaboration.
- [CRISI Grant Program Priorities](#)  
Details on FRA's Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements program priorities and eligible projects.

## Data & Safety Mapping Tools

- [USDOT FRA Safety Map](#)  
Interactive map displaying rail safety data, crash locations, and infrastructure assets.
- [USDOT FRA Trespassers Map](#)  
Visualization of rail trespassing incidents and hotspots to support safety planning.
- [USDOT FRA Accident Prediction System](#)  
Predictive tool used to assess accident risk at highway-rail grade crossings.
- [Rail Crossing Inventory](#)  
Database of active rail crossings with location, safety, and signal data.
- [Reported Derailments Map](#)  
National League of Cities interactive map visualizing rail derailments across the U.S.

# Tools & Resources (2/4)

## Budgeting & Financial Management

- [FY2024 RCE Grant Recipients](#)  
List of awarded RCE project for FY23–24 and funding allocations.
- [FY2024 CRISI Grant Recipients](#)  
List of awarded CRISI projects for FY23-24 and funding allocations.
- [SF-424 Forms Repository](#)  
Access to SF-424 and SF-424C forms with official instructions for federal grant applications.
- [Benefit-Cost Analysis \(BCA\) Guidance](#)  
USDOT guidance on conducting Benefit-Cost Analyses for infrastructure grant applications.
- [FRA Crossing Safety Portal](#)  
Public portal providing access to highway–rail crossing safety and trespasser program data.

# Tools & Resources (3/4)

## Writing & Packaging a Strong Grant

- [DOT Strategic Plan](#)  
Overview of DOT's long-term goals, priorities, and focus areas for transportation innovation and equity.
- [49 U.S. Code § 22907 – Railroad Safety Grants](#)  
Statutory authority outlining federal support for railroad safety and infrastructure grants.
- [FRA F-30 Certification Form](#)  
Certification form addressing debarment, suspension, and responsibility matters for grant applicants.
- [FRA F-251 Form](#)  
Required FRA form for financial and administrative compliance in grant submissions.
- [SF-LLL Disclosure Form](#)  
Standard form for disclosing lobbying activities as part of federal grant applications
- [RCE FY23–24 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)  
Official past NOFO for the Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program, outlining eligibility, deadlines, and selection criteria.
- [CRISI FY23-24 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)  
Official past NOFO for the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program, outlining eligibility, deadlines, and selection criteria

# Tools & Resources (4/4)

## Local Infrastructure Hub Workshop Recordings

1. **Understand the Grants** Start with the Grant Overview to get familiar with RCE and CRISI, federal priorities, and the White House's guidance on project alignment.
2. **Use Data to Strengthen Your Case**: Learn how to find and apply relevant datasets and analytical tools to make your proposal evidence-based and compelling.
3. **Engage the Right Partners**: Discover strategies to involve community members, agencies, and other stakeholders to design stronger, more competitive projects.
4. **Build a Strong Budget**: Find guidance on eligible funding sources, match requirements, and how to structure a compliant, well-aligned project budget.
5. **Write a Winning Application**: Follow tips and examples for crafting persuasive grant narratives that emphasize your project's impact and alignment with federal goals.
6. **Learn from Real Examples**: Review a Grant Case Study & Critique to see what makes a successful application and how to apply those lessons

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