

How to Apply for the FY22 Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant

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Introduction

- The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law established two new programs and reauthorized one preexisting program which are being solicited together using this NOFO.
 - **Mega:** \$1 billion of FY 2022 funding for the National Infrastructure Project Assistance grants program, known as the “Mega” grants program;
 - **INFRA:** Approximately \$1.55 billion in FY 2022 funding to be made available for the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highways Projects grants program, known as “INFRA”;
 - **Rural:** \$300 million in FY 2022 funding for the Rural Surface Transportation Grant program, known as “Rural”.
- DOT is combining these three programs into single NOFO to provide a more efficient application process for project sponsors. While they remain separate programs for the purposes of award, the programs share many common characteristics. Because of these shared characteristics, it is possible for many projects to be eligible and considered for multiple programs using a single application.
 - If your project is only eligible for one program, you can still submit an application for consideration
- **APPLICATION DEADLINE: May 23, 2022 11:59 PM Eastern.**

Eligible Applicants

Mega	INFRA	Rural
1. a State or a group of States; 2. a metropolitan planning organization; 3. a unit of local government; 4. a political subdivision of a State; 5. a special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, including a port authority;	1. State or group of States; 2. a metropolitan planning organization that serves an Urbanized Area (as defined by the Bureau of the Census) with a population of more than 200,000 individuals; 3. a unit of local government or group of local governments;	1. a State; 2. a regional transportation planning organization; 3. a unit of local government; 4. a tribal government or a consortium of tribal governments; or 5. a multijurisdictional group of entities above.

<p>6. a Tribal government or a consortium of Tribal governments;</p> <p>7. a partnership between Amtrak and 1 or more entities described in (1) through (6); or,</p> <p>8. a group of entities described in any of (1) through (7).</p>	<p>4. a political subdivision of a State or local government;</p> <p>5. a special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, including a port authority;</p> <p>6. a Federal land management agency that applies jointly with a State or group of States;</p> <p>7. a tribal government or a consortium of tribal governments;</p> <p>8. a multistate corridor organization;</p> <p>9. a multistate or multijurisdictional group of entities described in this paragraph.</p>	
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- If your organization doesn't neatly fit under one of these categories, reach out to the MPDG Program contact with eligibility questions. They are taking a broad approach to eligibility.
 - For example, if your Port Authority is chartered under a state or local government entity, you can be eligible as long as there is provided documentation
- Amtrak can be a lead applicant as long as there is a clear partnership with other eligible applicant entities

Eligible Projects

Mega	INFRA	Rural
<p>1. A highway or bridge project on the National Multimodal Freight Network</p> <p>2. A highway or bridge project on the National Highway Freight Network</p> <p>3. A highway or bridge project on the National Highway System</p> <p>4. A freight intermodal (including public ports) or freight rail project that provides public benefit</p> <p>5. A railway highway grade separation or elimination project</p> <p>6. An intercity passenger rail project</p> <p>7. A public transportation</p>	<p>1. A highway freight project on the National Highway Freight Network</p> <p>2. A highway or bridge project on the National Highway System</p> <p>3. A freight intermodal, freight rail, or freight project within the boundaries of a public or private freight rail, water (including ports), or intermodal facility and that is a surface transportation infrastructure project necessary to facilitate direct intermodal interchange, transfer, or access into or out of the facility</p> <p>4. A highway-railway grade</p>	<p>1. A highway, bridge, or tunnel project eligible under National Highway Performance Program</p> <p>2. A highway, bridge, or tunnel project eligible under Surface Transportation Block Grant</p> <p>3. A highway, bridge, or tunnel project eligible under Tribal Transportation Program</p> <p>4. A highway freight project eligible under National Highway Freight Program</p> <p>5. A highway safety improvement project, including a project to improve a high risk rural road as defined by the</p>

<p>project that is eligible under assistance under Chapter 53 of title 49 or is a part of any of the project types described above</p>	<p>crossing or grade separation project</p> <p>5. A wildlife crossing project</p> <p>6. A surface transportation project within the boundaries or functionally connected to an international border crossing that improves a facility owned by Fed/State/local government and increases throughput efficiency</p> <p>7. A project for a marine highway corridor that is functionally connected to the NHFN and is likely to reduce road mobile source emissions</p> <p>8. A highway, bridge, or freight project on the National Multimodal Freight Network</p>	<p>Highway Safety Improvement Program</p> <p>6. A project on a publicly-owned highway or bridge that provides or increases access to an agricultural, commercial, energy, or intermodal facility that supports the economy of a rural area</p> <p>7. A project to develop, establish, or maintain an integrated mobility management system, a transportation demand management system, or on-demand mobility services</p>
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- Mobility can include services like on-demand transit services that rural communities use in lieu of a fixed-schedule public transit system
 - Associated costs like facilities, vehicle acquisition, and software could be eligible

Eligible Project Costs

Mega	INFRA	Rural
<p>Development-phase activities and costs, including planning, feasibility analysis, revenue forecasting, alternatives analysis, data collection and analysis, environmental review and activities to support environmental review, preliminary engineering and design work, and other preconstruction activities, including the preparation of a data collection and post-construction analysis plan; and,</p> <p>Construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, acquisition of real property (including land relating to the project and improvements to that land), environmental mitigation (including projects to</p>	<p>Development phase activities, including planning, feasibility analysis, revenue forecasting, environmental review, preliminary engineering, design, and other preconstruction activities, provided the project meets statutory requirements.</p> <p>Construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or acquisition of property (including land related to the project and improvements to the land), environmental mitigation (including a project to replace or rehabilitate a culvert, or to reduce stormwater runoff for the purpose of improving habitat for aquatic species), construction contingencies, equipment acquisition, and operational improvements</p>	<p>Development phase activities, including planning, feasibility analysis, revenue forecasting, environmental review, preliminary engineering and design work, and other preconstruction activities; and,</p> <p>Construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, acquisition of real property (including land related to the project and improvements to the land), environmental mitigation, construction contingencies, acquisition of equipment, and operational improvements.</p>

replace or rehabilitate culverts or reduce stormwater runoff for the purpose of improving habitat for aquatic species), construction contingencies, acquisition of equipment, protection, and operational improvements directly relating to the project.	directly related to system performance.	
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Project Size and Cost Share

Program	MEGA		INFRA		Rural	
	Project Size	Award Size	Cost Share	Project Size	Award Size	Cost Share
Project Size	>\$500M in Costs (\$50%/ \$500M)	\$100M-\$500M in costs (50%/ \$500M)	>\$100M* in costs (Max 85%/ \$1.32B)	<\$100M* in costs (Min 15%/ \$233M)	None	None
Award Size	No Award minimum	No Award minimum	\$25 million award minimum	\$5 million award minimum	\$25 million award minimum (At least \$270 million will be awarded in this category)	No Award minimum (No more than \$30 million will be awarded in this category)
Cost Share	Max 60% Grant Cost Share, Max 80% Federal	Max 60% Grant Cost Share, Max 80% Federal	Max 60% Grant Cost Share, Max 80% Federal**	Max 60% Grant Cost Share, Max 80% Federal**	Max 80% Grant Cost Share***, Max 100% Federal	Max 80% Grant Cost Share***, Max 100% Federal

*12 states have a different, lower threshold for large vs. small between \$56 million and \$95 million (INFRA)

**11 States have a higher, sliding scale max federal share between 80% and 95% (INFRA)

***Appalachian Development Highway System Projects and Denali Access Projects can go to 100% Grant (Rural)

- Rural: There are no project size thresholds
 - Rural projects are eligible across all three programs. You are not restricted to applying to just the Rural Program
- USDOT is using 2010 Census Bureau data for Census-designated urbanized areas. USDOT developed a tool to identify [rural communities](#).
- Local DOT: <https://www.transportation.gov/rural/dot-state-contacts>

Statutory Requirements

Project Requirements

Project Requirement	Mega	INFRA	Rural
1) Generates national or regional economic, mobility, or safety benefits	X	X	X
2) Cost-effective	X	X	X
3) Contributes to one or more 23 U.S.C. 150 goals		X	X
4) Based on the results of preliminary engineering		X	X
5) One or more stable and dependable funding or financing sources	X	X	
6) Cannot be completed easily or efficiently without Federal funding/The project is in significant need of Federal funding	X	X	
7) Reasonably expected to begin construction 18 months from obligation		X	X
8) The Applicant have or will have the sufficient legal, financial, technical capacity to carry out the project.	X		

*INFRA Small Project Considerations

- Cost-effectiveness
 - Effect on mobility in the project's State or region
1. **Requirement 1: National or Regional Benefits (All Three)**
 - a. Summarize the economic, mobility, and safety benefits of the project and independent project components, and describe the scale of their impact in national or regional terms.
 2. **Requirement 2: Cost Effectiveness (All Three)**
 - a. Highlight the results of the Benefit-Cost analysis, as well as the analyses of independent project components if applicable.
 3. **Requirement 3: Highway Program Goals (23 U.S.C. 150) (INFRA and Rural)**
 - a. Specify the Goal(s) and summarize how the project and independent project components contribute to that goal(s).
 - i. Safety
 - ii. Infrastructure condition
 - iii. Congestion reduction
 - iv. System reliability
 - v. Freight movement and economic vitality
 - vi. Environmental sustainability
 - vii. Reduced project delivery delays
 4. **Requirement 4: Preliminary Engineering (INFRA and Rural)**

- a. Based on the results of preliminary engineering. Provide evidence that at least one of the following activities has been completed:
 - i. environmental assessments,
 - ii. topographic surveys,
 - iii. metes and bounds surveys,
 - iv. geotechnical investigations,
 - v. hydrologic analysis, hydraulic analysis,
 - vi. utility engineering,
 - vii. traffic studies,
 - viii. hazardous materials assessments,
 - ix. general estimates of the types and quantities of materials
 - x. Other work needed to establish parameters for the final design.
5. **Requirement 5: Stable & Dependable Financial Plan (Mega and INFRA)**
 - a. Please indicate funding source(s) and amounts that will account for all project costs, broken down by independent project component, if applicable. Demonstrate that the funding is stable, dependable, and dedicated to this specific project by referencing the STIP/TIP, a letter of commitment, a local government resolution, memorandum of understanding, or similar documentation. Please state the contingency amount available for the project.
6. **Requirement 6: Impact of Federal Funding (Mega and INFRA)**
 - a. The project cannot be completed easily or efficiently without Federal funding
 - i. Describe the impacts on the project of federal funding or financial assistance being unavailable for the project:
 1. How would the project scope be affected if INFRA funds were not received?
 2. How would the project schedule be affected if INFRA funds were not received?
 3. How would the project cost be affected if INFRA funds were not received?
 - ii. Do not describe the programmatic impacts or opportunity cost for other projects in the applicant's portfolio
 - iii. Do not simply re-state the project's importance
7. **Requirement 7: 18 months to begin construction (INFRA and Rural)**
 - a. Reasonably expected to begin construction 18 months from obligation
 - b. Based on the project schedule. Applicants should clearly identify:
 - i. Obligation date- occurs when administrative requirements are completed and a grant agreement is executed
 - ii. Construction start date
 - c. Project Readiness team will review if dates provided are reasonable.
 - d. If there is more than one component, they must all meet this requirement.
8. **Requirement 8: Legal, Financial, and Technical Capacity (Mega)**
 - a. Based on the Department's Project Readiness Evaluations
 - i. Technical Assessment: Assesses the applicant's capacity to successfully deliver the project in compliance with applicable Federal requirements

- ii. Financial Completeness: Reviews the availability of matching funding and whether the project has a complete funding package
- iii. Environmental Review and Permitting Risk: Analyzes the project’s environmental approvals and likelihood of the necessary approval affecting project obligation

Selection Criteria

Three main components of the Selection Criteria:

- 1. Project Outcomes (6 outcomes)
- 2. Economic Analysis
- 3. Project Readiness Analysis
 - a. Technical Assessment
 - b. Financial Completeness Assessment
 - c. Environmental Risk Assessment

Project Outcomes

- Not expected to score the highest in all project outcomes in order to be awarded
- Acknowledge that there are often trade-offs between project outcomes and you are not expected to meet all of them in order to apply
 - However, applicants should address all project outcomes in their application

	0	1	2	3
Rating Scale	The project negatively affects this outcome area OR the application contains insufficient information to assess this outcome area.	The project’s claimed benefits in this outcome area are plausible but minimal OR the project’s claimed benefits in this area are not plausible.	The project has clear and direct benefits in this outcome area stemming from adopting common practices for planning, designing or building infrastructure.	The project has clear and direct, data-driven, and significant benefits in this outcome area, that are well supported by the evidence in the application.

Project Outcome Criteria

1. Safety

- a. Addresses known safety problems
- b. Protects both motorized and non-motorized users, vulnerable users, and those with known health and safety risks
- c. Includes estimated impacts on number, rate, and consequences of crashes, fatalities, and serious injuries
- d. Supports Actions in [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#)
- e. Increases access to truck parking

2. State of Good Repair

- a. Consistent with relevant asset management plans

- b. Addresses current and projected vulnerabilities that, if left unimproved, will threaten future transportation network efficiency, mobility of goods or accessibility and mobility of people, or economic growth
- c. DOT will consider whether the application includes a plan to maintain the transportation infrastructure in a SOGR.
- d. Projects that represent routine or deferred maintenance will be less competitive.

3. Economic Impacts, Freight Movement, and Job Creation

- a. Improve system operations to increase travel time reliability and manage travel demand for goods movement, especially strengthening the resilience and expanding the capacity of critical supply chain bottlenecks, to promote economic security and improve local and regional freight connectivity to the national and global economy;
- b. Improve multimodal transportation systems that incorporate affordable transportation options such as public transit to improve mobility of people and goods;
- c. Decrease transportation costs and improve access, through reliable and timely access, to employment centers and job opportunities;
- d. Offer significant regional and national improvements in economic strength by increasing the economic productivity of land, capital, or labor, and improving the economic strength of regions and cities;
- e. Enhance recreational and tourism opportunities by providing access to Federal land, national parks, national forests, national recreation areas, national wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, or State parks;
- f. Result in high quality job creation by supporting good-paying jobs with a free and fair choice to join a union, in project construction and in on-going operations and maintenance, and incorporate strong labor standards, such as through the use of project labor agreements, registered apprenticeship programs, and other joint labor- management training programs;
- g. Result in workforce opportunities for historically underrepresented groups, such as through the use of local hire provisions or other workforce strategies targeted at or jointly developed with historically underrepresented groups, to support project development;
- h. Foster economic growth and development while creating long-term high quality jobs, while addressing acute challenges, such as energy sector job losses in energy communities as identified in the report released in April 2021 by the interagency working group established by section 218 of Executive Order 14008;
- i. Support integrated land use, economic development, and transportation planning to improve the movement of people and goods and local fiscal health, and facilitate greater public and private investments and strategies in land-use productivity, including rural main street revitalization or increase in the production or preservation of location-efficient housing or
- j. Help the United States compete in a global economy by encouraging the location of important industries and future innovations and technology in the U.S. and facilitating efficient and reliable freight movement.

- i. Focus on a selection of the 10 factors that your project has the largest impact on*

4. Climate Change, Resiliency, and the Environment

- a. Reduces air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, or incorporates lower-carbon pavement and construction materials
- b. Explicitly considers climate change and environmental justice in the planning and design stage, particularly in communities that disproportionately experience climate change consequences
- c. Incorporates electrification or zero emission vehicle infrastructure
- d. Reduces air or water pollution, recycles or redevelops brownfield sites
- e. Results in a modal shift that reduces emissions
- f. Promotes energy efficiencies
- g. Improves the resilience of at-risk infrastructure, including upgrade of projects in floodplains

5. Equity, Multimodal Options, and Quality of Life

- a. Increase affordable and accessible transportation choices
- b. Improve access to emergency care, essential services, healthcare providers, treatment and rehabilitation centers
- c. Reduce transportation and housing cost burdens, by investing near public transportation, along rural main streets, or in walkable neighborhoods
- d. Engage diverse people and communities and integrates equity into planning, development, and implementation
- e. Promotes hiring of underrepresented populations and includes investments in high-quality workforce development programs
- f. Reduces physical barriers to transportation or creates new connections to opportunity

6. Innovation

- a. Innovative Technology:
 - i. Innovative and secure-by-design technology
 - ii. Automated, Connected, Electric vehicles
 - iii. Safety and Mobility
- b. Innovative Project Delivery:
 - i. Adopts innovative practices in contracting, congestion management, asset management, O&M
 - ii. Pursues innovative approaches to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of environmental review and permitting
 - iii. Incorporates innovative materials or construction processes which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- c. Innovative Financing:
 - i. Leveraging of non-traditional sources of funding for transportation infrastructure
 - ii. Using demand management strategies

Economic Analysis

- In the Project Narrative, the applicant should identify, quantify, and compare expected benefits and costs relative to a “no-build” baseline.
- Documentation for a benefit-cost analysis (BCA) must be included as an appendix to the Project Narrative.
- Further guidance on BCA for DOT Discretionary Grant Programs- [Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs | US Department of Transportation](#)
- BCA Webinar on April 4, 1-3pm ET. will be provided. Please check this link for dates: [MPDG - Webinars | US Department of Transportation](#)

Project Readiness Assessment

1. Technical Assessment:

- a. Reviews the applicant’s capacity to deliver this project in a manner that satisfies Federal requirements.
- b. Based on:
 - i. Applicant’s history of delivering projects of similar scope and scale;
 - ii. Project’s feasibility or constructability;
 - iii. Applicable Federal requirements, including compliance with Title VI/Civil Rights requirements, ADA, Buy American, among others;
 - iv. Acquisition plan for right-of-way acquisition.

2. Financial Completeness:

- a. The applicant should include a detailed project budget that identifies all sources of funding, including MPDG funds, other Federal funds, and non-Federal funds.
- b. Applicant should include what percent design the funding estimates are based upon (e.g.30% design), and whether contingency is included.
- c. All applicants should describe a plan to address potential cost overruns.
- d. Applicant should demonstrate through letters of commitment, STIP/TIP documents, or other means, that the funding arrangement is certain and the project will be able to meet the obligation target of **September 30, 2025**.

3. Environmental Review and Risk Assessment:

- a. The applicant should include a detailed project schedule that identifies all major project milestones.
- b. Applicant should provide information on required approvals and permits such as NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) and other State or local environmental and planning approvals.
 - i. Demonstrate meaningful community input through public involvement, particularly engaging environmental justice communities or disadvantaged communities that may be affected by the project where applicable.
- c. Applicants should describe schedule/permitting risk mitigation strategies.
 - i. If applicable, right-of-way acquisition plans

Other Considerations

- Geographic Diversity
 - A balance between the needs of urban and rural areas

- The extent to which the project benefits a Historically Disadvantaged Community, or an Area of Persistent Poverty
 - Alignment with the Justice40 Initiative
- Definition, table, and map tool:
 - <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/mpdg-areas-persistent-poverty-and-historically-disadvantaged-communities>
- Location within a federally designated community development zone:
 - Opportunity Zone, Empowerment Zone, Promise Zone, Choice Neighborhood.

Suggested Application Format

1. Application Cover Page: Include all key information requested in the NOFO
2. Project Narrative (25-page limit)
 - a. Project Description
 - b. Project Location: Any maps or other details are encouraged
 - c. Project Parties
 - d. Grant Funds, Sources, and Uses: Important information for Financial Completeness Project Readiness evaluation and eligibility
 - e. Project Outcomes
 - f. Economic Analysis (BCA Narrative)
 - g. Project Readiness and Environmental Risk
 - h. Statutory Project Requirements: You can reference content in other areas of the application, but also include narrative that directly addresses the key questions posed in this section
3. Appendix
 - a. Benefit Cost Analysis
 - b. Supplemental Information (If Applicable)

Project Delivery: What Should Successful Applicants Expect

- Selections will happen in the fall of 2022
- Once selected, projects are assigned to appropriate OA for administration
- This is not a lump sum award; this is a reimbursement program
- Costs incurred on the project prior to the announcement of awards are ineligible for reimbursement. After the announcement but before obligation, costs can be eligible on a case by case basis
- Sign/Execute Project Agreement (obligation)
- Reporting Requirements/Project Modifications
- Project Completion/Close-Out
- Performance Monitoring

Application Deadline

- **Applications must be submitted by 11:59 PM Eastern on May 23, 2022.** Applicants are strongly encouraged to make submissions in advance of the deadline.
- To register on Grants.gov, applicants must:

- Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number;
- Register with the System for Award Management (SAM) at www.SAM.gov;
- Create a Grants.gov username and password; and
- The E-Business Point of Contact (POC) at your organization must respond to the registration email from Grants.gov and login at Grants.gov to authorize you as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Please note that there can be more than one AOR for an organization.
- For complete information and instructions on each of these processes, please see [instructions on grants.gov registration](#).

Additional Resources

- For additional MPDG Opportunity information and how to apply: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/mpdg-announcement>
- ROUTES Grant Toolkit for rural communities: <https://www.transportation.gov/rural/grants/toolkit>
- FAQs: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/mpdg-frequently-asked-questions>
- For technical questions, please email: MPDGGrants@dot.gov

Question and Answer

- You can opt-out of applying for any of the 3 programs. However, you are encouraged to propose your project for all programs that you are eligible for.
- You may submit multiple applications - 9 unique applications is the maximum.
- Multi-purpose trails for bicycles and pedestrians are eligible for Rural Program, provided they are eligible under other federal highway programs
 - Stand-alone trails through the wilderness may not be eligible. Applicants should contact their state representative for further clarity on eligibility
- Apprenticeship and workforce development - Some costs are available under the Federal-aid Highway Program. To the extent that these costs are necessary for the completion of the project, they are likely eligible
 - General purpose workforce development is a little more difficult to qualify
- Projects that have already been submitted to other grant programs, but with no funding awards announced, can be submitted to the MPDG. Provide information in the application to what other programs you have submitted your project to.
- Multiple projects can be submitted in one application. There should be a cohesive reason that these projects are grouped together. Truly individual projects should not be submitted together.
- The Department has flexibility to allocate funds across the three programs. It is possible for one project to receive funding from multiple programs.
- Reporting is required throughout the construction period
 - Programs have different requirements for reporting and data collection after the project is completed
- Rural Program: \$300 million available for FY2022

- Funds can be used for design-build projects. However, you need to be able to demonstrate clear benefits, impacts, and some design/timeline considerations in order to be competitive