



## USDOT Discretionary Grants Opportunity

# Bridge Investment Program (BIP) Planning and Bridge Project Grants

The U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Bridge Investment Program (BIP) Planning and Bridge Project Grants.

### The Program Aims To:

- Improve the safety, efficiency and reliability of people and freight over bridges
- Provide financial assistance that leverages and encourages non-federal contributions from sponsors and stakeholders involved in the planning, design and construction of eligible projects
- Improve the condition of bridges in the United States

Up to \$9.62 billion in BIP funding is available FY 2023 through FY 2026. This includes funds for planning, feasibility analyses and revenue forecasting associated with development of a project subsequently eligible to apply for a Bridge or Large Bridge project grant. Up to \$20 million is available each fiscal year for Planning grants.

Funding is available to replace, rehabilitate, preserve or protect one or more bridges on the National Bridge Inventory. Eligible Bridge Project costs include development phase activities, construction, seismic or scour protection, and subsidy/credit assistance costs for a federal loan from the TIFIA program. Development phase activities include planning, feasibility analyses, revenue forecasting, environmental review, preliminary engineering and design work, and other preconstruction activities.

Planning grants may fund planning, feasibility analyses, and revenue forecasting activities for projects in the early phases of project development. However, costs of an environmental review, preliminary engineering, design work, and other preconstruction activities, apart from planning and environmental linkage (PEL) activities, are ineligible for Planning grants.

More information, including the complete NOFO, is available on [Grants.gov](https://www.fhwa.gov/grants) and from FHWA's [BIP grant program](#).

January 3, 2024



### APPLICATION DEADLINE:

All applications are to be received no later than:

#### Bridge

#### Project Grants:

- FY 2023 and FY 2024 funds:  
**March 19, 2024**
- FY 2025 funds:  
November 1, 2024
- FY 2026 funds:  
November 1, 2025

#### Planning Grants:

- FY 2023 and FY 2024 funds:  
**February 19, 2024**
- FY 2025 funds:  
October 1, 2024
- FY 2026 funds:  
October 1, 2025

**All applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. ET on the date of the deadline**





## Changes from the FY22 NOFO

- 1. Application Templates and Merit Criteria:** Merit Criteria have been revised to clarify what FHWA will evaluate under each criterion, as well as additional considerations for the evaluation of applications for FY23 through FY26 that assist in providing clarity to the application and provide additional information.
- 2. Rolling Application Submission and Review Process; Amended Application Submission Opportunity:** For the FY 2023 through FY 2026 NOFO, eligible applicants may submit an application for a Planning or Bridge Project grant for a specific fiscal year of funding at any time up to the application deadline for that fiscal year. Unless the applicant requests a specific future year of funding, applications submitted after a fiscal year application deadline will be considered for the next round of funding.
- 3. Multi-Year Planning and Bridge Project Grants NOFO and Available Funding for Larger Bridge Grants:** This NOFO makes changes to reflect the amount of funding available for each fiscal year through FY 2026 and is seeking applications for Planning and Bridge Project Grants only. A separate NOFO was issued for eligible entities seeking to submit applications for Large Bridge Project grants with a total eligible project costs greater than \$100 million.

## Minimum Project Cost and Award Size

For BIP Planning grants, there is no minimum or maximum BIP award amount; however, the cost of the ultimate construction project must at least be \$3.125 million.

For Bridge Project Grants, a BIP grant must be adequate to fully fund the project and at least \$2.5 million, with a maximum award amount of 80% of total eligible project costs.

## Expenditure Timeframes

Projects must have completed environmental review and preliminary engineering, be ready to proceed to project delivery within 12 months of environmental clearance, and reasonably expected to begin construction no later than 18 months after BIP funds are obligated.

BIP funds are available for obligation for a total of four years (*the fiscal year in which they are provided plus three additional years*). For example, FY 2023 BIP funds are available for obligation through September 30, 2026. Obligation of BIP grant funds occurs when a selected applicant enters a grant agreement with FHWA. For construction, this is generally after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements, including transportation planning and environmental review requirements.

Once obligated, Highway Infrastructure Programs (HIP) GF grant funds may be used to reimburse a recipient only for eligible costs incurred up to five years after the obligation deadline, whereas Highway Trust Funds (HTF) funds do not have an expenditure deadline. For example, FY 2023 BIP funds from HIP GF must be expended by September 30, 2031.

**BIP funds remain available for obligation and expenditure as follows:**

BIP Fiscal Year Funding	HIP GF Period of Availability for		HTF Period of Availability for	
	Obligation Deadline (Lapse)	Expenditure Deadline (Cancellation)	Obligation Deadline (Lapse)	Expenditure Deadline
FY 2023	Sep. 30, 2026	Sep. 30, 2031	Sep. 30, 2026	Available until expended
FY 2024	Sep. 30, 2027	Sep. 30, 2032	Sep. 30, 2027	Available until expended
FY 2025	Sep. 30, 2028	Sep. 30, 2033	Sep. 30, 2028	Available until expended
FY 2026	Sep. 30, 2029	Sep. 30, 2034	Sep. 30, 2029	Available until expended

**Eligible Recipients**

- A state or group of states
- Metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) serving an urbanized area (*population greater than 200,000*)
- A unit of local government or group of local governments
- Political subdivisions of a state or local government
- A special purpose district or public authority with transportation functions
- A federal land management agency (FLMA)
- A Tribal government or consortium of Tribal governments
- A multistate or multijurisdictional group of any entities listed above

FHWA will consider geographic diversity of grant recipients, including rural/urban balance. Projects in non-urbanized areas, or in urbanized areas with a population below 50,000 will be considered rural.

**Statutory Evaluation Requirements**

There are no statutory evaluation requirements for Planning grants. Bridge Project grants will be evaluated on the basis of the following factors:

- Costs avoided by the prevention or closure of a bridge to be improved
- Benefits from scour or seismic protection
- Reductions in maintenance costs
- Safety benefits, including reduction of accidents and related costs
- Person and freight mobility benefits, including congestion reduction and reliability improvements
- National or regional economic benefits
- Benefits from long-term resiliency to extreme weather events, flooding or other natural disasters
- Environmental benefits, including wildlife connectivity
- Benefits to nonvehicular and public transportation users
- In the case of bundled projects, benefits from executing as a group
- Benefits of using innovative design and construction techniques or technologies
- Benefits outweighing costs (*benefit-cost analysis greater than 1.0*)

**Project Outcome Criteria**

FHWA will evaluate Planning and Bridge projects according to the following specific project outcome criteria:

- State of good repair
- Safety and mobility
- Economic competitiveness and opportunity
- Climate change, sustainability, resiliency, and the environment
- Equity and quality of life
- Innovation

In addition, FHWA will use the merit criteria to assess how a project will advance FHWA policy areas of safety, reduction in surface transportation greenhouse emissions, increased resiliency to climate change, equitable transportation options and access, promoting competitiveness of the U.S. economy, improving job opportunities, and accommodating new emerging technologies.





## Benefit Cost Analysis

A benefit-cost analysis (BCA) is required with a high rating for projects with a BCA of at least 1.5. Applicants are encouraged to use the BIP BCA Tool to produce and submit the analysis for their project, which is posted on FHWA's Website: [BIP - Funding Programs - Management and Preservation - Bridges and Structures - Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bip/funding/management/preservation/bridges/bridges_structures_federal_highway_administration_dotgov/)

## Application Requirements

Project narratives shall describe the following project features for BIP Planning grant applications:

- Basic Project Information - Description, Location, and Parties
- National Bridge Inventory Data
- Project Budget - Grant Funds, Sources, and Use of all Project Funding
- Merit Criteria
- Administration Priorities and Departmental Strategic Plan Goals
- DOT Priority Selection Considerations

## Bridge Project Application Requirements

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- Basic Project Information - Description, Location, and Parties
- National Bridge Inventory Data
- Project Budget - Grant Funds, Sources, and Use of all Project Funding
- Merit Criteria
- Benefit-Cost Analysis
- Project Readiness and Environmental Risk
- Administration Priorities and Departmental Strategic Plan Goals
- DOT Priority Selection Consideration

**Your Infrastructure Finance and grant writing professionals stand by ready to support project sponsors applying for funding from the Bridge Investment Program.**

**If you need any assistance or have questions, please contact:**

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