

Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors

FY2017-2018 INFRA Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) CAGTC Summary

CAGTC Summary as of 07/05/17

[FY2017-2018 NOFO](#)
[INFRA Homepage](#)

Grants.gov "Apply" function will open by August 1, 2017
Applications due November 2, 2017

Approximately \$1.5 billion available in FY2017-2018, subject to future appropriations

- **The FY2017-2018 NOFO renames the program the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grants** to call attention to the Trump Administration's priority of revitalizing the U.S. economy through investment in infrastructure.
- **Creates new merit criteria, including:**
 - o **Support for National or Regional Economic Vitality:** USDOT will prioritize projects that address congestion in major urban areas, that bridge gaps in service to rural areas, and that attract private economic development. Other objectives include reducing traffic fatalities or injuries, eliminating bottlenecks, improving connections to the transportation network, or reducing barriers between workers and employment centers. USDOT also seeks projects' benefit-cost analysis.
 - o **Leveraging of Federal Funding:** USDOT will prioritize projects that maximize State, local and private sector funding, raise revenue directly, benefit from local self-help, and pair grant funds with broader-scale innovative financing. Other Federal assistance, like TIFIA and RRIF, may satisfy the non-Federal share requirement, but total Federal assistance for a project may not exceed 80 percent of the future eligible project costs. INFRA grants may be used for up to 60 percent of future eligible project costs. USDOT is seeking descriptions of activities to maximize non-Federal investment, evaluations for private funding, fiscal constraints, a description of the non-Federal share for the program, and a plan to address full life-cycle costs. Projects that incorporate private sector contributions will be more competitive. The NOFO states that some areas experience constraints to raising non-Federal dollars, listing areas such as the size of the population and the wealth of the population and will take those into account.
 - o **Using innovative approaches:** USDOT seeks innovation in three areas:
 1. *Environmental review and permitting:* USDOT seeks to test new approaches to this process including ways to accelerate delivery, improve outcomes, facilitate concurrent and consistent reviews, and create a shared vision across all Federal agencies. The Department suggests the creation of liaisons who will have an early role in the project to coordinate activity between agencies and deal with dispute resolutions should the need arise. The liaisons' work will be tracked on the Federal Infrastructure Project Permitting Dashboard.

NASCO – North American Strategy for Competitiveness
The Northwest Seaport Alliance
Nossaman LLP
Ohio Kentucky Indiana Regional Council of Governments
Orange County Transportation Authority
Oregon Department of Transportation
Parsons
Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
Port Newark Container Terminal
Port of Hueneme
Port of Long Beach
Port of Los Angeles
Port Miami
Port of Oakland
Port of Pittsburgh
Port of Portland, OR
Port of San Diego
Port Tampa Bay
Port of Vancouver USA
Puget Sound Regional Council
RAILCET
SANDAG - San Diego Association of Governments
Southern California Association of Governments
Tennessee Department of Transportation
Washington State Department of Transportation
West Coast Corridor Coalition
Will County Center for Economic Development
WSP

AECOM
Alameda Corridor-East Construction Authority
Cambridge Systematics, Inc.
Canaveral Port Authority
Cascadia Center
CenterPoint Properties Trust
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
City of Chicago
COMPASS – Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho
Dewberry
Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana
Florida Department of Transportation
Florida East Coast Railway
Florida Ports Council
Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (Washington State)
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
HERZOG
HNTB Corporation
Illinois Soybean Association
Intermodal Association of North America
Jacobs Engineering
Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Majestic Realty Co.
Maricopa Association of Governments
Memphis Chamber of Commerce
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Moffatt & Nichol
National Railroad Construction and Maintenance Association

1. *Environmental review and permitting continued*: To test these new approaches, USDOT seeks project applications for larger, more complex projects and encourages applicants to indicate whether or not they would like to participate. Applicants should include information on how they would benefit from participation and identify any challenges as well as necessary coordination and the broader applicability of results.
 2. *Experimental project delivery authorities*: USDOT encourages applicants for INFRA funding to consider whether their project is eligible for and would benefit from an experimental authority or waiver under Special Experimental Project No. 14 (SEP-14), Special Experimental Project No. 15 (SEP-15), or some other experimental authority program. (Background information on SEP-14 can be found [here](#) and background information on SEP-15 can be found [here](#)). USDOT is particularly interested in proposals that will accelerate project deployment.
 3. *Safety and technology*: Projects should indicate if they plan to use innovative approaches to transportation safety, specifically calling for projects that would incorporate innovative design solutions, enhance the environment for automated vehicles, or use technology to mitigate safety risks. Applicants should indicate their capacity to implement innovations, their understanding of whether the innovations will require different permitting measures, and the effects of innovations on the project.
 - **Performance and Accountability**: USDOT will prioritize projects that allow it to condition funding on specific, measurable outcomes. USDOT will take into account, among other factors, a project's ability to reach milestones in a timely manner, make specific State or local policy changes that advance desirable transportation outcomes changes (like removing barriers to public-private partnerships), or achieve objectives that support economic vitality or improve safety. This section should describe mechanisms that will allow USDOT to hold the project accountable and include specific timelines or dates. USDOT will prioritize projects that demonstrate thoughtful planning, efficient delivery, and effective policy.
- **Establishes procedures for repeat project applications**. Entities that applied for funding under the FY2017 FASTLANE program but were unsuccessful are instructed to include a supplementary appendix highlighting how the project aligns with the new selection criteria.
 - **Focuses on projects that result in construction**. While the FAST Act allows the grants to fund development phase activities, USDOT is seeking to use INFRA funding to specifically support projects that result in construction.
 - **Some states will see their minimum project size threshold increase**: Per the FAST Act, an applicant's minimum project threshold is the lesser of \$100 million, or 30 percent of their state's fiscal year federal-aid apportionment. Because FY2017's apportionments were larger than FY2016's apportionments, some states minimum project size threshold has increased.
 - **Allows for applications requesting funding for a network of projects**: The NOFO defines a network application as "one INFRA award that consists on multiple projects addressing the same transportation problem," like multiple grade separations along a rail corridor to address rail and highway efficiency. USDOT will evaluate applications for networks of projects similar to how it evaluates projects with multiple components and therefore, an award that funds only some projects in a network may make other projects subject to other Federal requirements.
 - **Addition of one category on the cover page**: Applicants should indicate if they are interested in the new environmental review and permitting approach on the cover page.
 - **Clarification of Safety Requirements**: INFRA requires projects meet two general safety requirements: 1) projects must take a thoughtful, data-driven approach to safety; and 2) projects should incorporate FHWA identified "proven safety countermeasures" and encompass safety-related tools, technologies, and practices identified in FHWA's Every Day Counts initiative.
 - **Comments on the NOFO are due November 2, 2017** and should address USDOT criteria, implementation choices and suggested clarifications. Comments will not affect criteria for this round but will be considered for future rounds.

Additional Information:

- The \$1.5 billion in funding results from a combination of around \$710 million in leftover funds from FY2017 FASTLANE grants and the \$900 million in contract authority mandated by the FAST Act for FY2018. USDOT anticipates that approximately \$810-855 million of FY2018 funds will be available once the FY2018 THUD appropriations bill is enacted. USDOT estimates that around \$81 million - \$85.5 million will go to small projects while between \$1.4 billion and \$1.48 billion will go to large projects.
- After accounting for FY2016 and FY2017 awards, approximately \$326 million of the \$500 million multimodal cap is still available. Per the FAST Act, the multimodal funds can be used for freight rail, water (including ports), or other freight intermodal projects that make significant improvements to freight movement on the National Highway Freight Network.
- Statute requires that at least 25 percent of funds be used for rural areas. USDOT indicated they may elect to go above that threshold should appropriate projects be submitted and once geographic diversity is considered.
- USDOT intends to publish a list of all applications on their website after announcing awards. The NOFO does not mention the 60 day Congressional review period which is required by the FAST Act.