

**US Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration**

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

Total Funding Available

**\$848 Million**

Application Deadline

**August 18, 2023**

Match

**20% of Total Project Costs,  
0% for Planning Grants**

Category	Approximate Funding
Planning Grants	\$25 M/year for FY22-FY23 \$30 M/year for FY24-FY26
Resilience Improvement Grants	\$175 M/year for FY22-FY23 \$210 M/year for FY24-FY26
Community Resilience & Evacuation Route Grants	\$25 M/year for FY22-FY23 \$30 M/year for FY24-FY26
At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure Grants	\$25 M/year for FY22-FY23 \$30 M/year for FY24-FY26

*\*DOT anticipates awarding 30-40 Resilience Improvement, Community Resilience, and At-Risk Coastal grants.*

**Maximum Award**

No maximum award size

**Minimum Award**

- Planning Grants: **\$100,000**
- Other PROTECT Categories: **\$500,000**

**Eligibility**

States, MPOs, local governments, and Indian Tribes can apply directly to FHWA. A Federal land management agency may be eligible if the agency applies jointly with a State or group of States.

**Specific Funding Set Asides**

- Rural Set Aside: not less than 25% of grants
- Tribal Set Aside: not less than 2% of grants
- Rail Passenger Limitation: No more than 25% will be used for facilities or services for intercity rail passenger transportation.



## SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW

The purpose of the PROTECT Formula and Discretionary Grant programs is to plan for and strengthen surface transportation to be more resilient to natural hazards, including climate change, sea level rise, flooding, extreme weather events, and other natural disasters through formula and competitive discretionary grants.

Applicants may use one application to submit the same project for multiple funding categories if the project meets the eligibility criteria for multiple categories. For instance, a project to improve resilience of a coastal evacuation route could be eligible under all three Resilience Grant categories. Applicants would need to be sure to submit all the information needed for each category under which they are applying. Applicants should indicate which funding category or categories they are applying, however FHWA reserves the discretion to determine which funding category from which to make an award for a project, including a category for which the applicant did not apply.

The vision of the PROTECT Discretionary Grant Program is to fund projects that address the climate crisis by improving the resilience of the surface transportation system, including highways, public transportation, ports, and intercity passenger rail. Projects selected under this program should be grounded in the best available scientific understanding of climate change risks, impacts, and vulnerabilities. They should support the continued operation or rapid recovery of crucial local, regional, or national surface transportation facilities. Furthermore, selected projects should utilize innovative and collaborative approaches to risk reduction, including the use of natural infrastructure, which is explicitly eligible under the program. Also called nature-based solutions, these strategies include conservation, restoration, or construction of riparian and streambed treatments, marshes, wetlands, native vegetation, stormwater bioswales, breakwaters, reefs, dunes, parks, urban forests, and shade trees. They reduce flood risks, erosion, wave damage, and heat impacts while also creating habitat, filtering pollutants, and providing recreational benefits. Projects in the PROTECT Discretionary Grant Program have the potential to demonstrate innovation and best practices that State and local governments in other parts of the country can consider replicating.

## LINKS

- [View Grant Opportunity](#)
- [PROTECT Discretionary Grant Program](#)



## 4 CATEGORIES OF FUNDING

**Planning Grants** may be used to develop Resilience Improvement Plans to address resilience planning, predesign, design, or the development of data tools to simulate transportation disruption scenarios, including vulnerability assessments; technical capacity building to facilitate the ability of the eligible entity to assess the vulnerabilities of its surface transportation assets and community response strategies under current conditions and a range of potential future conditions; or evacuation planning and preparation.

**Resilience Improvement Grants** may be used to improve the ability of an existing surface transportation asset to withstand one or more elements of a weather event or natural disaster, or to increase the resilience of surface transportation infrastructure from the impacts of changing conditions, such as sea level rise, flooding, wildfires, extreme weather events, and other natural disasters.

**Community Resilience and Evacuation Route Grants** may be used for activities that strengthen and protect evacuation routes that are essential for providing and supporting evacuations caused by emergency events including activities that will improve evacuation routes, provide safe passage during an evacuation, and reduce the risk of damage to evacuation routes as a result of future emergency events. For routes that inadequately facilitate evacuations, including the transportation of emergency responders and recovery resources, activities include expanding capacity through installation of communication and intelligent transportation system equipment and infrastructure, counterflow measures, or shoulders, in addition to constructing new or redundant evacuation routes, acquiring evacuation route or traffic incident management equipment or signage, or ensuring access or service to critical destinations, including hospitals and other medical or emergency services facilities, major employers, critical manufacturing centers, ports and intermodal facilities, utilities, and Federal facilities.

**At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure Grants** may be used for activities to strengthen, stabilize, harden, elevate, relocate or otherwise enhance the resilience of highway and non-rail infrastructure, including: bridges, roads, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle lanes, and associated infrastructure, such as culverts and tide gates to protect highways that are subject to, or face increased long-term future risks of, a weather event, a natural disaster, or changing conditions, including coastal flooding, coastal erosion, wave action, storm surge, or sea level rise, in order to improve transportation and public safety and to reduce costs by avoiding larger future maintenance or rebuilding costs.



## ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

### PROTECT Discretionary Grant Program Funding Category

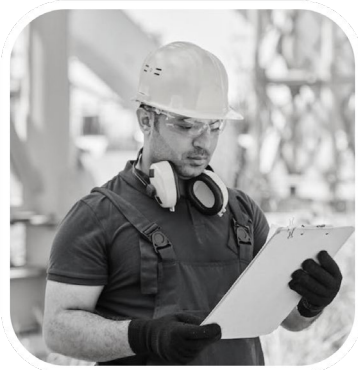
### Project Activities

#### Planning Grant 23 U.S.C. § 176(d)(3)



1. In the case of a State or MPO, developing a Resilience Improvement Plan under 23 U.S.C. § 176(e)(2);
2. Resilience planning, predesign, design, or the development of data tools to simulate transportation disruption scenarios, including vulnerability assessments;
3. Technical capacity building by the eligible entity to facilitate the ability of the eligible entity to assess the vulnerabilities of the surface transportation assets and community response strategies of the eligible entity under current conditions and a range of potential future conditions; or
4. Evacuation planning and preparation.

#### Resilience Improvement Grant 23 U.S.C. § 176(d)(4)(A)(ii)



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

1. Resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, replacement, improvement, or realignment of an existing surface transportation facility eligible for assistance under this title;



**Resilience Improvement Grant (continued)**  
23 U.S.C. § 176(d)(4)(A)(ii)



2. The incorporation of natural infrastructure;
3. The upgrade of an existing surface transportation facility to meet or exceed a design standard adopted by FHWA;
4. The installation of mitigation measures that prevent the intrusion of floodwaters into surface transportation systems;
5. Strengthening systems that remove rainwater from surface transportation facilities;
6. Upgrades to and installation of structural stormwater controls;
7. A resilience project that addresses identified vulnerabilities described in the Resilience Improvement Plan of the eligible entity, if applicable;
8. Relocating roadways in a base floodplain to higher ground above projected flood elevation levels, or away from slide prone areas;
9. Stabilizing slide areas or slopes;
10. Installing riprap;
11. Lengthening or raising bridges to increase waterway openings, including to respond to extreme weather;
12. Increasing the size or number of drainage structures;
13. Installing seismic retrofits on bridges;
14. Adding scour protection at bridges;
15. Adding scour, stream stability, coastal, and other hydraulic countermeasures, including spur dikes;



**Resilience Improvement Grant (continued)**  
23 U.S.C. § 176(d)(4)(A)(ii)

16. Vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, facilitate wildfire control, and provide erosion control; and
17. Any other protective features, including natural infrastructure, as determined by the Secretary.

**Community Resilience and Evacuation Route Grant**  
23 U.S.C. § 176(d)(4)(B)(ii)



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

- a) Is a Resilience Improvement Project under 23 U.S.C. §176(d)(4)(A)(ii), if that eligible activity will improve an evacuation route;
- b) Ensures the ability of the evacuation route to provide safe passage during an evacuation and reduces the risk of damage to evacuation routes as a result of future emergency events, including restoring or replacing existing evacuation routes that are in poor condition or not designed to meet the anticipated demand during an emergency event, and including steps to protect routes from mud, rock, or other debris slides;
- c) If the eligible entity notifies<sup>4</sup> the Secretary that existing evacuation routes are not sufficient to adequately facilitate evacuations, including the transportation of emergency responders and recovery resources, expands the capacity of evacuation routes to swiftly and safely accommodate evacuations, including installation of-
  - a) Communications and intelligent transportation system equipment and infrastructure;
  - b) Counterflow measures; or
  - c) Shoulders;

<sup>4</sup> See PROTECT [Formula Program Implementation Guidance](#)



## Community Resilience and Evacuation Route Grant (continued)

23 U.S.C. § 176(d)(4)(B)(ii)



4. Is for the construction of new or redundant evacuation routes, if the eligible entity notifies the Secretary that existing evacuation routes are not sufficient to adequately facilitate evacuations, including the transportation of emergency responders and recovery resources;
5. Is for the acquisition of evacuation route or traffic incident management equipment or signage; or
6. Will ensure access or service to critical destinations, including hospitals and other medical or emergency service facilities, major employers, critical manufacturing centers, ports and intermodal facilities, utilities, and Federal facilities.

## FUNDING PRIORITIES

- **Environmental Scope:** Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector, including those from the project materials, projects that avoid adverse environmental impacts to air or water quality, wetlands, and endangered species, and address the disproportionate negative environmental impacts of transportation on disadvantaged communities.
- **Safety:** Reduction of the number of fatalities and injuries on the roadways.
- **Equity and Impact on Disadvantaged Populations:** Removing transportation related disparities and efforts to serve disadvantaged populations and the creation of “good-paying jobs” with strong labor standards and training and placement programs.



## INFORMATION TO HAVE READY

- Detailed project list and summary (what you will be doing and what roads and infrastructure items will be impacted/improved)
- List of Roads, bridges, culverts, etc. that will be impacted by project.
- List of innovative and environmental elements that will be included.
- Detailed project budget
- Organizational information
- Signed partner and match letters

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- SF 424 and related forms for budget (construction and non construction)
- SF-LLL
- Project Narrative-25 pages
  - Cover Page with required information
  - Project Description
  - Location (Maps)
  - Partner Descriptions
  - Project Funding
- Merit Criteria
- Economic Analysis
- Benefit-Cost Analysis
- FHWA Priority Considerations
- Detailed Budget Narrative
- Scalable Project Description and Timeline
- Listing of current and pending support (other grants awarded or pending for the same project)
- Security and Resilience Statements
- Domestic (Buy American) Statements
- Statements concerning compliance with additional grant requirements (RFP pages 54-56 and one attachment could possibly provide statements for all of these)
- Match Letter(s)
- Partner Letters and documentation of community input





## GRANT WRITER'S TIPS

- The specific project narrative sections and requirements (Merit Criteria) are dependent upon the grant category. Applicants applying through multiple categories need to adjust their application sections accordingly.
- Many of the requirements and criteria for this program are similar to those of DOT's RAISE and Multi-modal grants. There are differences, though, so narratives from previous projects will need to be adapted rather than simply recycled.
- This grant requires the development of a Benefit Cost Analysis as well as an Economic Analysis. Plan early for how you will develop these.
- Even though this project doesn't specifically require maps, like the RAISE grant, applicants should include at least a summary map.
- Since funding priority is being provided for projects including environmental scope, try to include this element in each application, in addition to the standard safety and equity information for DOT grants.



## ABOUT US

**Simple Grants** is a full-service grant consulting firm. We work closely with our clients and strive to provide unquestionable value with every engagement.

Our goal is to be your trusted navigator and go-to expert for all things grant-related while providing concierge-level service making grants simple.

658

Applications Submitted

\$240,574,079

Amount Awarded to Clients

223

Clients Served

## OUR SERVICES



### Grant Identification

- Private Grants
- Public Grants
- Comprehensive Grant Strategy

Whether you need help locating federal, state, local, or private grants, our team can make sure you're the first to know about grant opportunities that align with your mission. We can create custom strategies to fit budgets and projects of all shapes and sizes.



### Grant Writing

- Program Design
- Proposal Writing
- Proposal Submission

We can help with all aspects of grant writing. From template creation to fully outsourced program and proposal development, including application submission support, our clients benefit greatly from our custom, transparent, and scalable solution to grant writing.



### Grant Management

- Administration
- Compliance
- Reporting

From pre-award requirements to closeout, we offer customized solutions for successfully managing public and private sector grants, including ARPA and other recovery funding allocations.

# Simple Grants



[www.simplegrants.com](http://www.simplegrants.com)



[info@simplegrants.com](mailto:info@simplegrants.com)



(334) 245-3863