



# RAIL

*MOVING AMERICA FORWARD*

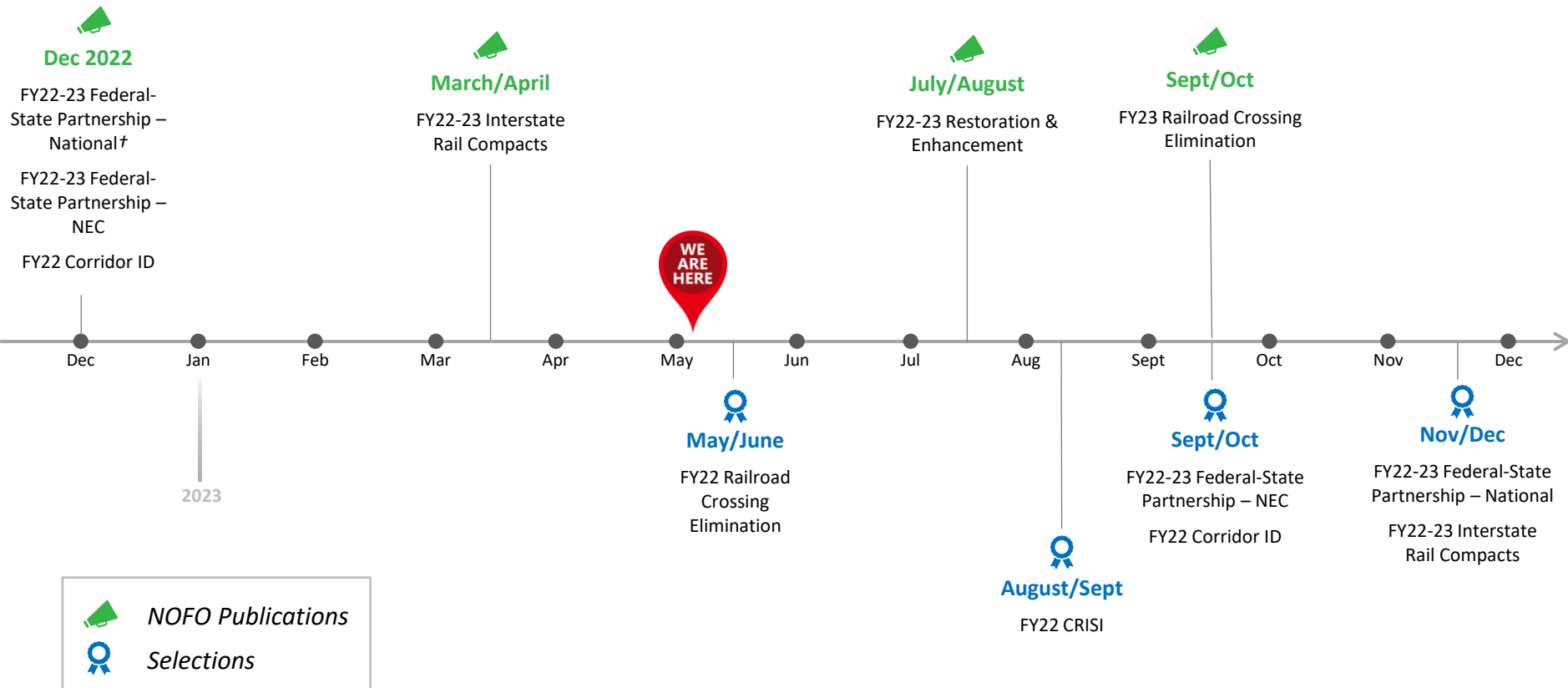
## FRA Discretionary Grant Programs

May 2023

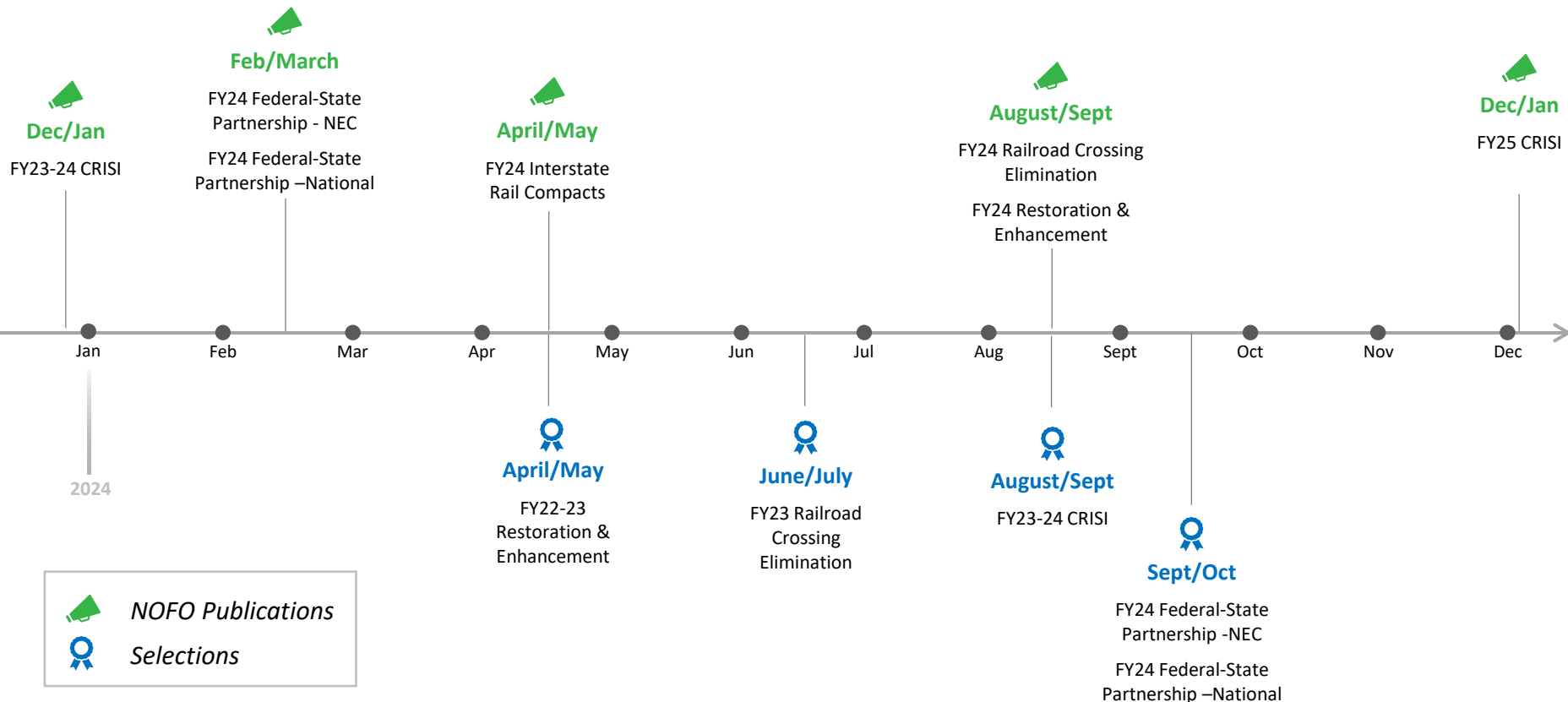


U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Railroad Administration

# Calendar of Upcoming FRA Publications / CY2022-CY2023



# Calendar of Upcoming FRA Publications / CY2024



# Grant Lifecycle and Approximate Time Frames



# FY22 RCE Program Overview

# Railroad Crossing Elimination – Program Overview

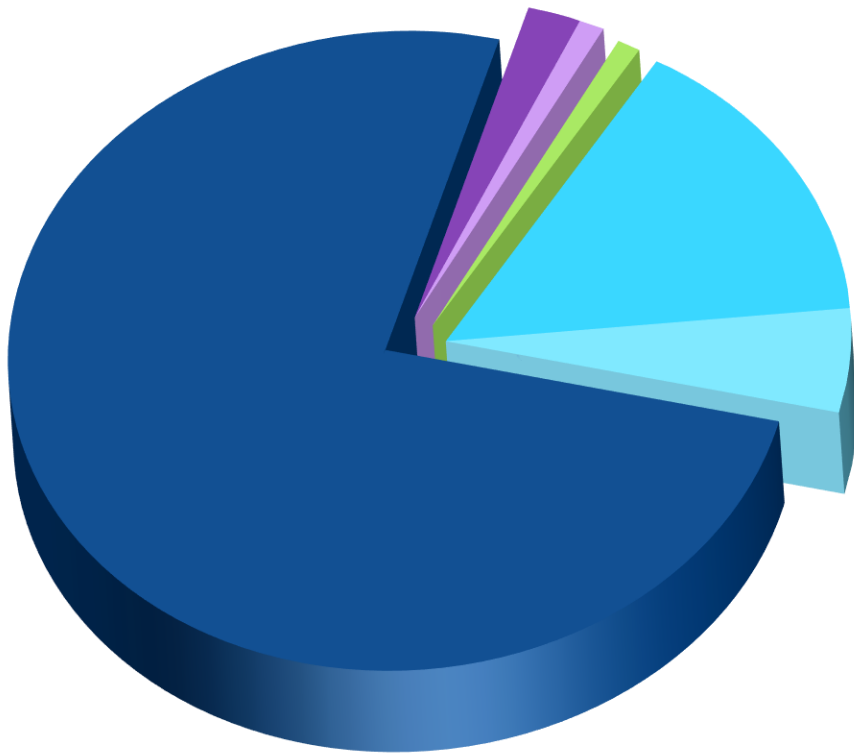
## PROGRAM PURPOSE

- To fund highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on **improving the safety and mobility of people and goods.**

## Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- FY22: Published in the Federal Register on July 6, 2022
  - \$573 million available; Application period closed on October 11, 2022
  - FY22 Selection Announcement – Spring/Summer 2023
    - *Debriefings held upon request for projects not selected*
- FY23 \$573 million available
  - NOFO Anticipated in Fall/ Q3 of 2023

# Program Purpose and Funding Overview (FY22)



## Planning

- Not less than 3% of total funding (\$18,000,000) is for planning projects.
  - Not less than 25% of these funds (\$4,500,000) is for planning projects in rural areas or on Tribal lands.

## Crossing Safety Information and Education Program

- At least \$1,500,000 will be made available for highway-rail grade crossing safety information and education programs

## Rural and Tribal Set Aside

- Not less than 20% of total funding (\$114,652,800) is reserved for projects located in rural areas or on Tribal lands.
  - Not less than 5% of these funds (\$5,732,640) are reserved for projects in counties with 20 or fewer residents per square mile.

## Grant Conditions

- No grant awarded shall be smaller than \$1M, except for planning grants.

## State Limitation

- No more than 20% of total funding (\$114,652,800) in any fiscal year may be selected for projects in a single State.

# Railroad Crossing Elimination – Program Conditions

## Differences with other FRA Programs

### Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA)

- BCAs are not required, although applicants must at the very least provide sufficient qualitative information on the project's benefits for FRA to evaluate.
- Note that applicants would need to provide a BCA if interested in applying for CRISI for the same project.

### Pre-Award Costs

- Applicants may count costs incurred for preliminary engineering associated with an eligible project if such costs were incurred before project selection for award and no earlier than Nov. 15, 2021 (date of BIL enactment). These costs must also be compliant with 2 CFR part 200 and RCE requirements.

### Commuter Rail Projects

- Commuter rail passenger transportation projects are eligible, but commuter rail authorities are not.
- Selected projects must be transferred to FTA to administer.



# Key Program Definitions

## Grade Separation or Closure

- An underpass or overpass to eliminate level crossings between railroad and highway users at an existing highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing.
- The closing of a highway-rail grade crossing to vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

## Improvement Project

- A project related to an existing highway or pathway-rail crossing including:
  - installation, repair, or improvement of crossings, grade separations, railroad crossing signals, gates, bells, audible warning devices and related technologies;
  - highway traffic signalization, lighting, crossing approach signage, and roadway improvements such as medians or other barriers;
  - pathway improvements such as bollards; railroad crossing panels and surfaces; and other safety engineering improvements, or highway-rail programs to reduce risk.

# Railroad Crossing Elimination – Eligible Applicants

## ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- States, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other U.S. territories and possessions.
- Political subdivision of a State.
- Federally recognized Indian Tribe.
- A unit of local government or a group of local governments.
- A public port authority.
- A metropolitan planning organization.
- A group of the entities described above.

# Railroad Crossing Elimination – Eligible Projects

## ELIGIBLE PROJECT CRITERIA

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

# Evaluation and Selection Criteria

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

### Technical Merit:

- Quality of statement of work and application materials
- readiness and completion of prerequisites
- applicant past performance, technical capacity, and financial contributions
- private-sector participation
- qualifications and experience of key personnel and organizations
- consistency with planning documents

### Project Benefits:

- improvements to safety at highway-rail or pathway rail grade crossings
- proposals to grade separate, eliminate, or close one or more highway-rail/pathway rail grade crossings
- improvements to the mobility of both people and goods
- reductions in emissions, protects the environment and provides community benefits
- improvements to access emergency services
- improvements to access communities; economic benefits
- contracting incentives to employ local labor, to the extent permissible under Federal law

# Railroad Crossing Elimination – Selection Criteria

## DEPARTMENTAL GOALS

- **Safety**
  - Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit safety justifications for a project that relies on standardized, objective safety metrics and data, if available, including data from sources such as: GradeDec.Net; National Risk Index; safety metrics found in Appendix D of 49 C.F.R. Part 222; the FRA crossing incident dashboard (FRA Safety Data & Reporting | dot.gov); or other relevant safety data or metrics.
- **Equitable Economic Strength and Improving Core Assets**
- **Equity and Barriers to Opportunity**
- **Climate Change and Sustainability**
- **Transformation of Our Nation's Transportation Infrastructure**

## Program Preference

- **Grade separations, closing crossings through track relocation, and corridor-wide grade crossing improvements**

# FY22 CRISI Program Overview

# CRISI – Program Overview

## GRANT PURPOSE

- **To fund projects that improve the safety, efficiency, and/or reliability of intercity passenger and freight rail systems**

## Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- FY22: Published in the Federal Register on September 2, 2022
  - \$1.425 billion available; Application period closed December 1, 2022
  - FY22 Selection Announcement –August/ September 2023
- FY23-24
  - NOFO Anticipated in December 2023/ January 2024
  - Estimated total: approx. \$2.5B (FY23 advance and annual, FY24 advance)

# FY22 CRISI – Program Overview

## ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- A State (including the District of Columbia) or group of States
- An Interstate Compact
- Public agencies or publicly chartered authorities established by one or more States
- A political subdivision of a State
- Amtrak or other intercity passenger rail carrier
- Class II or III railroads and associations that represent a Class II or III railroad
- Any rail carrier or equipment manufacturer in partnership with at least one state entity, public agency, and/or local government
- Federally recognized Indian Tribe
- The Transportation Research Board (TRB) together with any entity with which it contracts in the development of rail-related research, including cooperative research programs
- A university transportation center engaged in rail-related research
- A non-profit labor organization representing a class or craft of employees of rail carriers or rail carrier contractors



# FY22 CRISI – Program Overview

## ELIGIBLE PROJECT CRITERIA

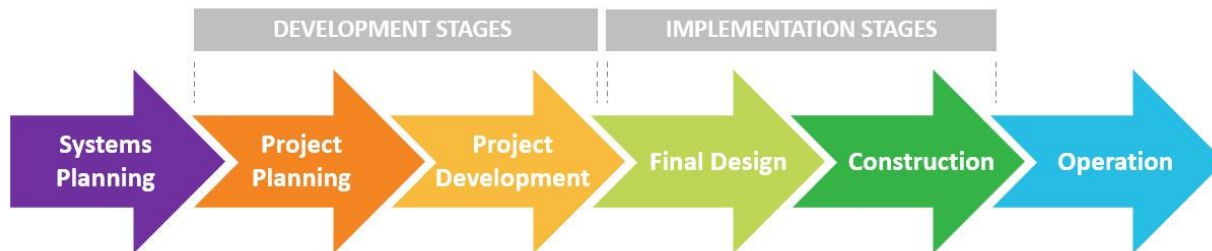
- **Wide Range of Rail Capital Projects**
  - Congestion mitigation
  - Ridership growth facilitation
  - Enhancements to multimodal connections
  - Improvements to short-line or regional railroad infrastructure
- **Railroad Safety Technology**
- **Track, Station, and Equipment Improvements for Intercity Passenger Rail**
- **Grade Crossing Improvements**
- **Rail Line Relocation and Improvement**
- **Regional and Corridor Service Planning and corresponding Environmental Analyses**
- **Safety Programs and Institutes**
- **Research**
- **Workforce Development and Training**
- **New in the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#):**
  - Measures that prevent trespassing
  - Preparation of emergency plans for hazardous materials that are transported by rail
  - Rehab or procurement of locomotives, provided that such activities result in a significant reduction of emissions

**At least 25% of funds is reserved for rural projects**

# Best Practices

## PROJECT READINESS

- Project readiness
  - Identify Project Lifecycle Stage that you are applying for;
    - FRA has released project lifecycle guidance here:  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/01/12/2023-00508/guidance-on-development-and-implementation-of-railroad-capital-projects>



## NON-FEDERAL MATCH REQUIREMENTS

- Federal share of total costs **shall not exceed 80 percent**.
- 20 percent minimum non-Federal match for projects may consist of public sector (e.g., state or local) and/or private sector funding.
  - FRA will not consider any Federal financial assistance, nor any non-Federal funds already expended (or otherwise encumbered), toward the matching requirement, unless compliant with 2 CFR part 200.
- Applicants must identify the source(s) of their matching and other funds, and must clearly and distinctly reflect these funds as part of the total project cost.
- In-kind contributions, including the donation of services, materials, and equipment, may be credited as a project cost, in a uniform manner consistent with 2 CFR 200.306.

# Best Practices

## FUNDING BREAKDOWN

- Clearly show the project match breakdown
- Verify funding amounts
  - Does the SF 424 match what is listed in the application?

## PROJECT LOCATION

- Provide latitude and longitude information (in decimals)
- Grade crossing projects should include crossing number(s)
  - Include crossing numbers in an easy to access spreadsheet

# Best Practices

## BENEFIT COST ANALYSIS (BCA)

- Follow 2023 DOT BCA Guidance
  - <https://www.transportation.gov/mission/office-secretary/office-policy/transportation-policy/benefit-cost-analysis-guidance>
- Provide unlocked excel document as an attachment to application
- Provide realistic and defensible benefits
  - Quantitative benefits are preferred

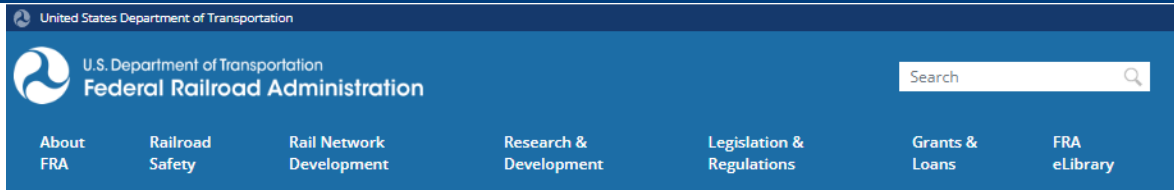


### Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs

Office of the Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
January 2023

# Additional Resources

# Discretionary Grant Tool



[Home](#) / [Grants & Loans](#) / [Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs](#)

Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs

[Accepting Applications](#)

[Legacy and Inactive Grant Programs](#)

## Contact Us

For specific questions about a Notice of Funding Opportunity

**Email:**  
[fra-nofo-support@dot.gov](mailto:fra-nofo-support@dot.gov)

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, please dial 7-1-1 to access telecommunications relay services.

## FRA Discretionary Grant Program Tool

The Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) discretionary grant program tool provides stakeholders with a consolidated listing of FRA discretionary grant programs and their respective eligibilities, by both project sponsor and activity type.

***This tool does not determine eligibility for grant programs and is meant for informational purposes only. Interested parties should refer to the applicable program legislation to determine eligibility.***

**Step 1** – Choose a project sponsor type from the list of eligible project sponsors under at least one of FRA's discretionary grant programs. Interested parties should select the category that represents their entity type.

**Step 2** – Select the project activity category that best corresponds to your project; for example, Capital Projects, Rail Program, Rail Research, or Operating Assistance.

**Step 3** – Identify a specific eligible activity, based on the selections made in steps 1 and 2.


**Step 4** – Click the link for the appropriate discretionary grant program for more information on the eligibility of the activity identified in step 3.






# Webinars

United States Department of Transportation

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## Webinars

FRA regularly holds webinars to provide technical assistance to grantees and stakeholders. The links to the webinar recordings and presentation files are listed below for reference. If you would like to be added to FRA's mailing list to learn about future trainings and events, please [subscribe](#) and select Program Delivery announcements.

For information on upcoming webinars, visit the [FRA Rail Program Delivery Webinar Series: Grants & Loans](#) and [FRA Rail Program Delivery Webinar Series: Environment](#) webpages.


Expand All

Collapse All

Environment

Grants & Loans

### FY22 Corridor Identification and Development Grant NOFO Webinar




FY22 Corridor Identification and Development Grant NOFO Webinar

Presented by  
Rashad Gholami • Victoria Davis • Henry Ding • Deborah Hubbs

February 16, 2023

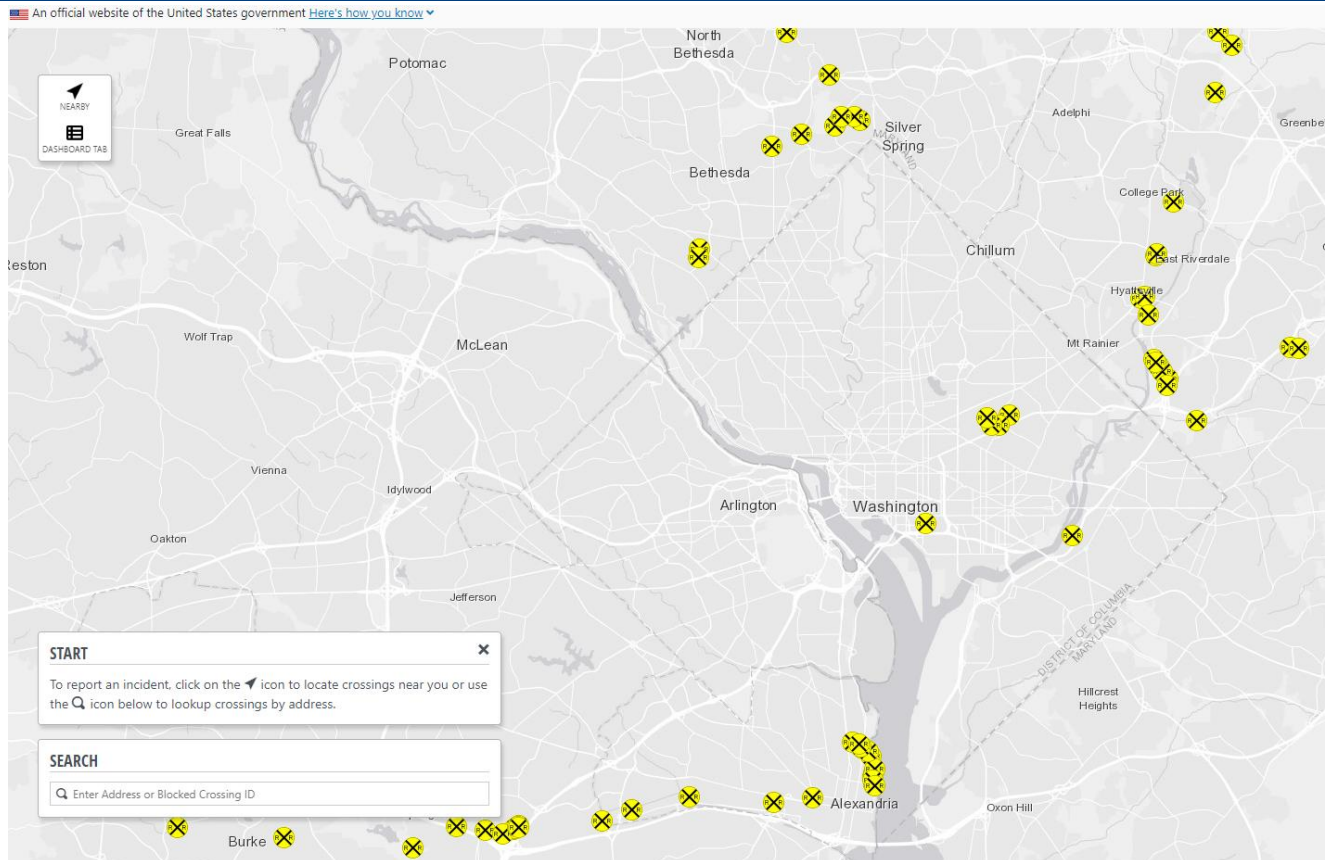
[Webinar Recording](#)  
[Presentation File](#)

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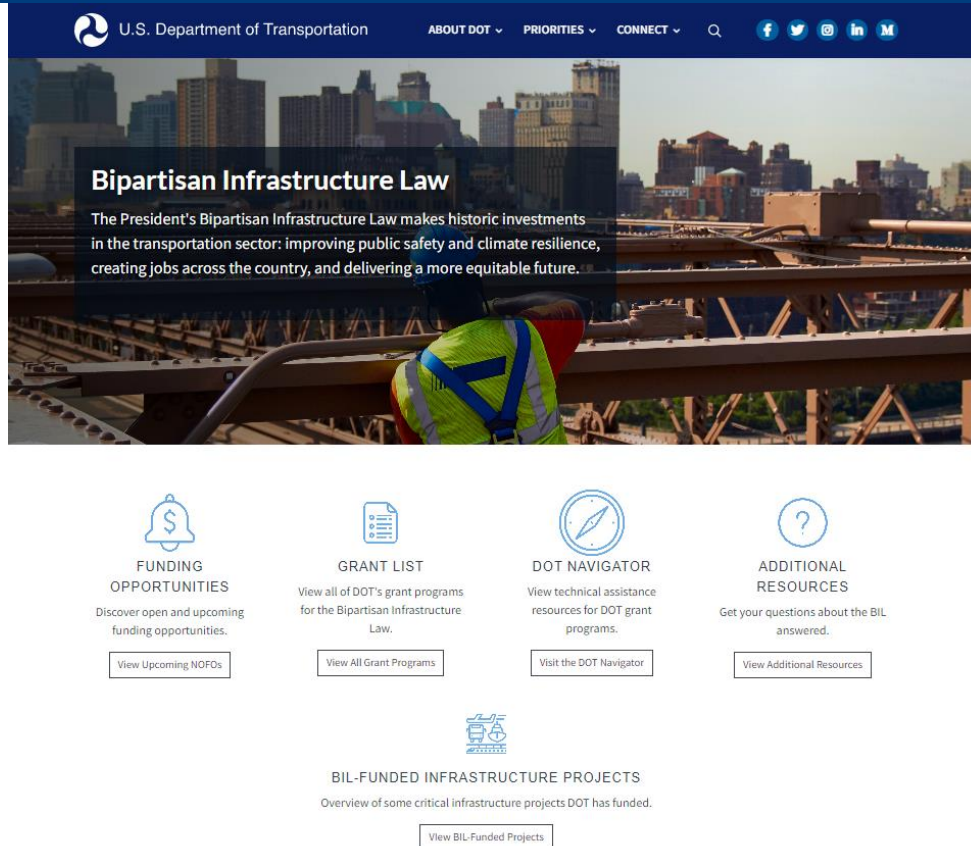
<https://railroads.dot.gov/rail-network-development/training-guidance/webinars-0>

25

# Blocked Crossing Portal



# DOT Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Website



# Contact Us

Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590



Connect with us **USDOTFRA**



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Railroad Administration**

FRA Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs Webpage  
<https://www.fra.dot.gov/grants>

Not sure which FRA grant program is right for your project? Check out the FRA Discretionary Grant Tool:

<https://railroads.dot.gov/grants-loans/competitive-discretionary-grant-programs/fra-discretionary-grant-program-tool>

Have a question? Want to request a debriefing or ask for technical assistance?

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