



Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Grant Program



Est. application deadline: TBD (previous year was due 9/23/2024)



Est. funding: \$1.1B

Note: Estimated based on prior year's NOFO. Subject to change with future announcements (e.g., agency announcements, actual NOFOs).

Source: [2024 Railroad Crossing Elimination \(RCE\) Grant Program Notice of Funding](#)

DOCUMENT INTENDED TO PROVIDE INSIGHT BASED ON CURRENTLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION FOR CONSIDERATION AND NOT SPECIFIC ADVICE

STATE OF MICHIGAN

Considerations for NOFO guidance and application preparation

- As of August 4, 2025, this fact pack was based on the prior program NOFO (released in 2023)
- NOFOs may be subject to change. Recent updates to NOFOs for other grants have included:
 - Revisions to program names
 - Removal of language, merit criteria, and application requirements around climate change and sustainability; environmental justice; equity; and workforce development (e.g., BUILD, Large Bridge Projects)
 - Updates to total funding amounts available
 - Defining Historically Disadvantaged Communities using the same statutory definition for Areas of Persistent Poverty
 - New language on applicant compliance with federal laws, regulations, executive orders, policies, guidelines, and requirements, “including cooperating with and not impeding U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other Federal offices and components of the Department of Homeland Security in the enforcement of Federal law”¹
 - Clarifying all grant agreements or contracts must include terms that are in compliance with Section 3(C)(iv) of EO *Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity*
- Please refer to the MIO TAC website, grants.gov, and other source materials linked in this presentation for the latest information on NOFOs

1. [2025 BIP Large Bridge Project Grants Notice of Funding Amendments](#)

Note: Estimated based on prior year's NOFO. Subject to change with future announcements (e.g., agency announcements, actual NOFOs).

Source: [2025 BUILD Notice of Funding Amendment](#), [2025 BIP Large Bridge Project Grants Notice of Funding Amendments](#)

RCE provides funding for highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods



Goals and merit criteria for RCE grants:

FRA will consider the extent to which the projects address the following DOT Strategic Goals:

- safety;
- equitable economic strength;
- improving core assets;
- equity and barriers to opportunity;
- climate change and sustainability;
- transformation;
- eliminating crossings and making corridor-wide improvements;
- geographic diversity

Note: Estimated based on prior year's NOFO. Subject to change with future announcements (e.g., agency announcements, actual NOFOs).

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RCE Program details

RCE is a moderately competitive program with a 40% award rate, and ~50% of the awards going to small planning grants under \$1M

Match funding
requirement: 20%

Direct Pay
applicability: No

	Capital grants	Planning grants
Description	Construction projects that build or upgrade physical infrastructure at railroad crossings	The planning, environmental review, and design of an eligible project described in options 1) - 4)
Eligible grant uses	(1) Grade separation or closure	Analysis (including but not limited to environmental, feasibility)
At least 3% of the total grant funds available will be made available for planning projects. At least 2% of these funds will be made available for projects located in Rural Areas or on Tribal Lands.	(2) Improvement or installation of protective devices, signals, signs, or other measures to improve safety	Community engagement
	(3) Track relocation	
	(4) Other means to improve the safety and mobility of people and goods	
Award amounts	Minimum award	\$1M
	Maximum award	No minimum award
	Award distribution	No maximum; largest award in 2024 was \$204M
	Award type set aside	A minimum of 20% of funding will be for projects located in rural areas or on Tribal Lands ¹
Previous awards (national)	2023-2024 Awards	A minimum of 3% of grant funds (\$18M)
Previous awards (MI)	2023-2024 awards	123 rail projects (\$1.1B)
		3 rail projects (\$5.2M, \$2.6M, \$73.4M)

1. Rural areas are defined as any area that is not within an area designated as an urbanized area by the most recent Bureau of the Census.
Note: Estimated based on prior year's NOFO. Subject to change with future announcements (e.g., agency announcements, actual NOFOs).
Source: [2024 Railroad Crossing Elimination \(RCE\) Grant Program Notice of Funding](#)

High-level requirements to apply for a RCE grant

RCE grants are open to a range of public entity applicants, and requires a moderately thorough application; it does not include a BCA and the NOFO does not distinguish requirements between capital and planning grants



Eligible Entities

- States and the District of Columbia
- Local government
- Unit of local government or a group of local governments
- Federally recognized Indian Tribe
- Public port authority
- Metropolitan planning organization
- Group of the entities described above



Key Application Components

25-page application limit

- Project description
- Statement of work
- Project location information identifying impacted location (e.g., file like ShapeFile, or decimal format)
- Project budget and funding information
- Narrative of how project meets selection criteria and DOT goals
- Project readiness narrative
 - Project schedule and milestones
 - Describe past experience in managing and overseeing similar projects
 - Environmental readiness
 - State the status of the NEPA application process (not started, started, complete)

Examples of past winners in Michigan



West Side Grade Separation Project (2022)

Applicant: City of Monroe

Impacted locality: City of Monroe

Funding: \$24M

Project description: The proposed project will complete project development activities, right-of way acquisition, final design, and construction of the Monroe West Side Grade Separation and Traffic Safety Improvement Project to eliminate an existing grade crossing and construct a new grade separation with CSX.

RCE goals and merit criteria addressed:

- Improve roadway traffic flow on the west side of Monroe
- Improve safety response times for emergency vehicles



Manistee County Safer Southern Rail Route (2022)

Applicant: Manistee County

Impacted locality: Manistee County (rural)

Funding: \$424K (planning)

Project description: The proposed planning project will support a track relocation study to abandon a northern perimeter track around Lake Manistee for a new southern segment.

RCE goals and merit criteria addressed:

- Elimination of four at-grade crossings
- Elimination of three marine bridges
- Elimination of a rail car staging area on CSX right-of-way