



RAIL

MOVING AMERICA FORWARD

Preparing for Upcoming FRA Funding Opportunities: Lessons Learned from CY23

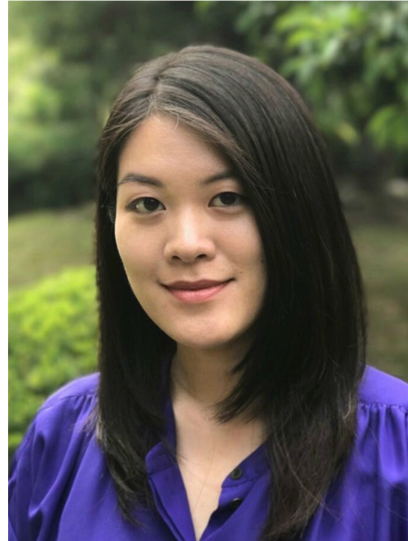
Office of Railroad Development



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

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FRA Presenters



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FRA CY 2023 Grant Cycle: Lessons Learned and Key Takeaways

Agenda

- **Review of 2023 grant cycle program results**
 - Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Grant Program
 - Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grant Program
 - Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program (FSP)
- **Overall cross-program takeaways and lessons learned**
 - What we've heard from you
 - Tips and new resources for the upcoming grant cycle
- **Program-specific takeaways and lessons learned**
- **Previewing new resources and process improvements**

FRA's Goal:

To better assist applicants for the CY 2024 grant cycle to prepare successful submissions

Record Year for FRA Discretionary Grant Programs

FY22 RCE

 **153**
Applications
evaluated

 **63**
Selections

Totaling
 **\$570M**

FY22 CRISI

 **234**
Applications
evaluated

 **70**
Selections

Totaling
 **\$1.4B**

FY22 Corridor ID

 **92**
Applications
evaluated


 **69**
Selections

Totaling
 **\$34.5M**

FY22-23 Fed-State NEC

 **35**
Applications
evaluated

 **25**
Selections

Totaling
 **\$16.4B**

FY22-23 Fed-State National

 **67**
Applications
evaluated

 **10**
Selections

Totaling
 **\$8.2B**



4,300+%

*Increase in awards totals
between CY22 and CY23*

\$26.6B vs. \$603.7M

FRA CY2023 Grant Cycle: Lessons Learned & Key Takeaways Across Programs

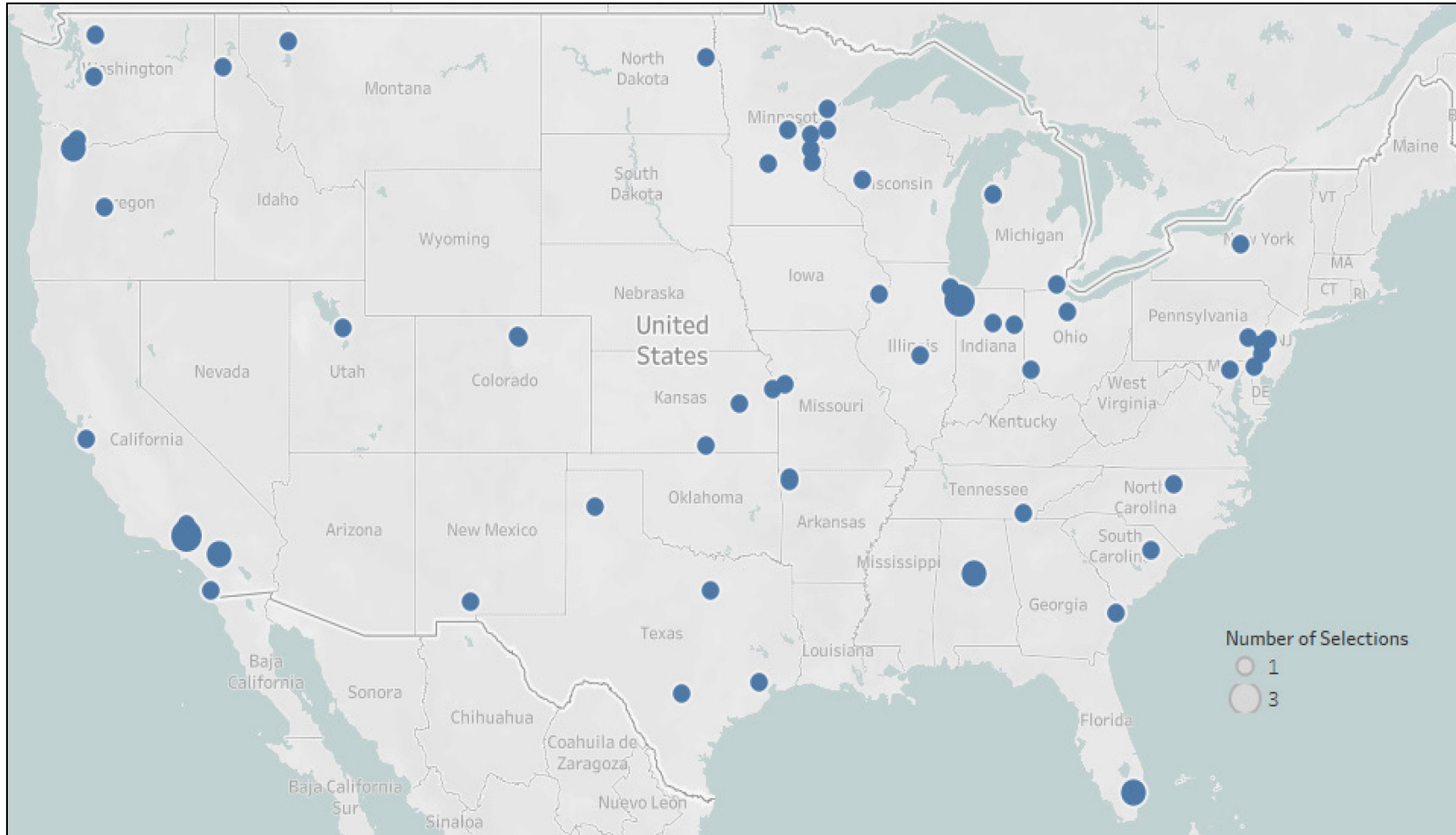
Evaluation Process Overview

All applications go through several layers of review, including:

1. Intake and eligibility
 - ***If an application is late, missing required documents, or deemed ineligible under program criteria as described in the relevant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), it will not move past this stage of consideration.***
2. Technical review
 - Reviewers assess the project's benefits and technical merit against the evaluation criteria listed in the NOFO:
 - Project implementation
 - Environmental readiness
 - Benefit-cost analysis (if applicable)
3. Senior Review Team
4. FRA Administrator/Secretary

Grant Selections

RCE — Selected Projects

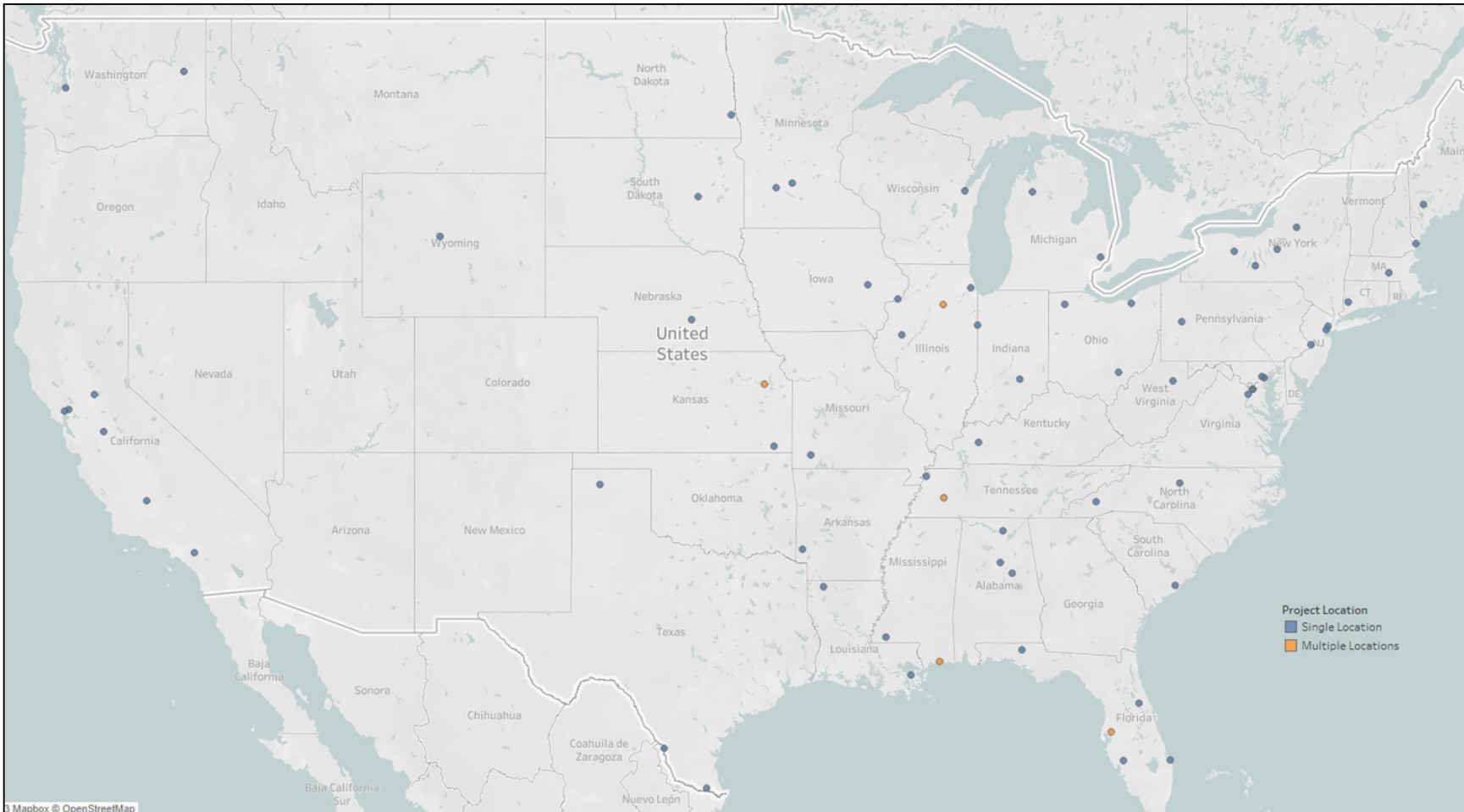


State	FRA Award	Projects Selected
Texas	\$ 86,965,264	5
California	\$ 64,500,960	7
Alabama	\$ 53,508,222	2
Washington	\$ 44,480,000	3
Idaho	\$ 36,000,000	1
New Mexico	\$ 31,171,088	1
North Dakota	\$ 30,000,000	1
Tennessee	\$ 27,483,694	1
Kansas	\$ 27,453,220	3
Michigan	\$ 24,388,400	2
Illinois	\$ 24,000,000	2
Indiana	\$ 21,172,211	5
Pennsylvania	\$ 16,438,596	2
Florida	\$ 16,040,000	3
New York	\$ 11,008,000	1
Ohio	\$ 10,245,000	2
Wisconsin	\$ 9,999,600	1
Minnesota	\$ 8,504,563	3
Iowa	\$ 7,756,862	1
Utah	\$ 3,232,000	1
Georgia	\$ 3,218,460	3
Virginia	\$ 3,200,000	1
Missouri	\$ 2,000,000	1
Delaware	\$ 1,600,000	1
Oregon	\$ 1,550,000	2
Maryland	\$ 1,534,280	1
North Carolina	\$ 1,220,000	1
Colorado	\$ 700,000	1
West Virginia	\$ 576,000	2
Arkansas	\$ 576,000	1
Montana	\$ 400,000	1
South Carolina	\$ 60,000	1
Grand Total	\$ 570,982,420	63

From 153 eligible applications:

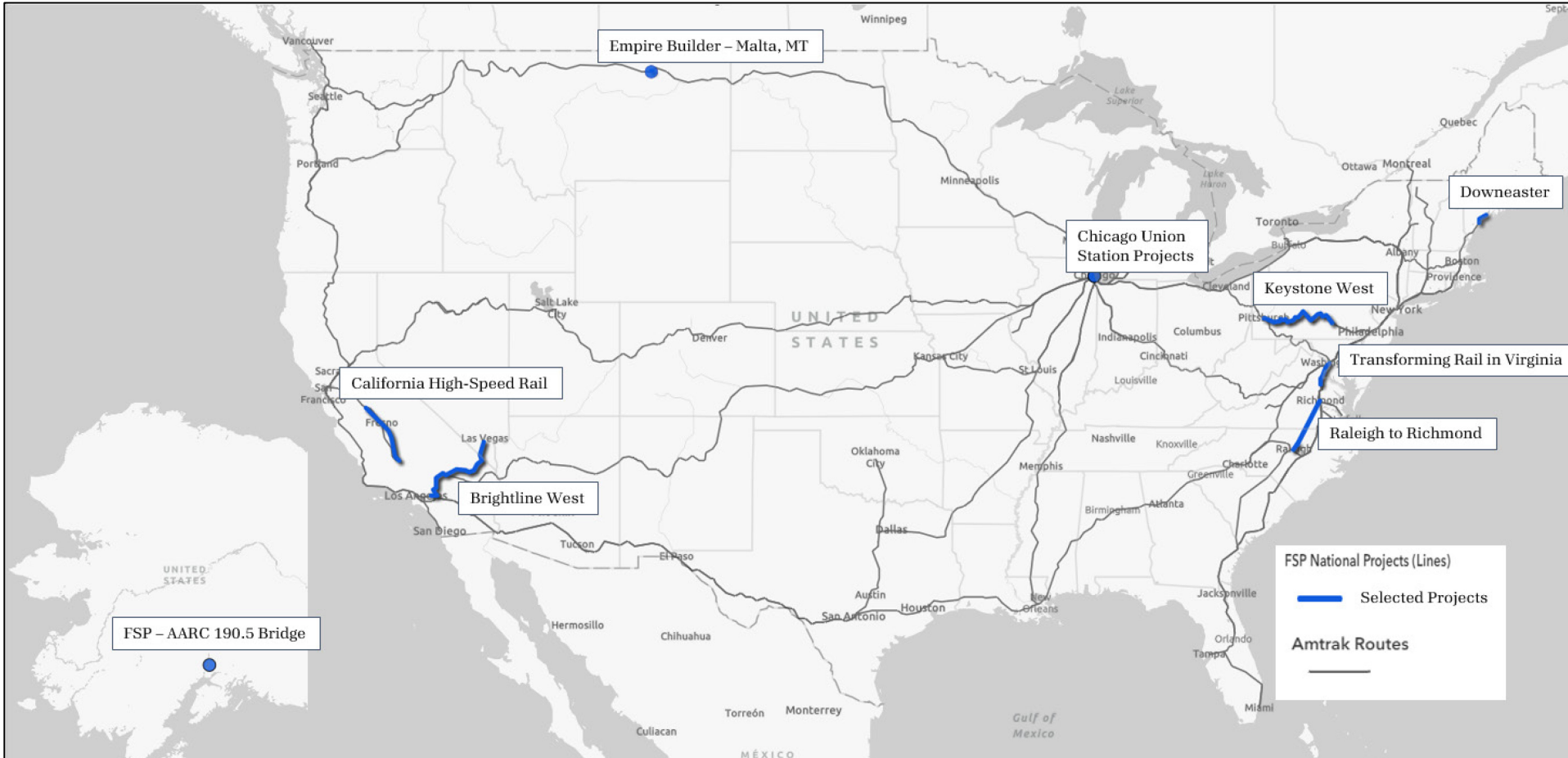
- **63 projects** were selected
- Totaling **\$571 million**
- Across **32 states**

CRISI — Selected Projects



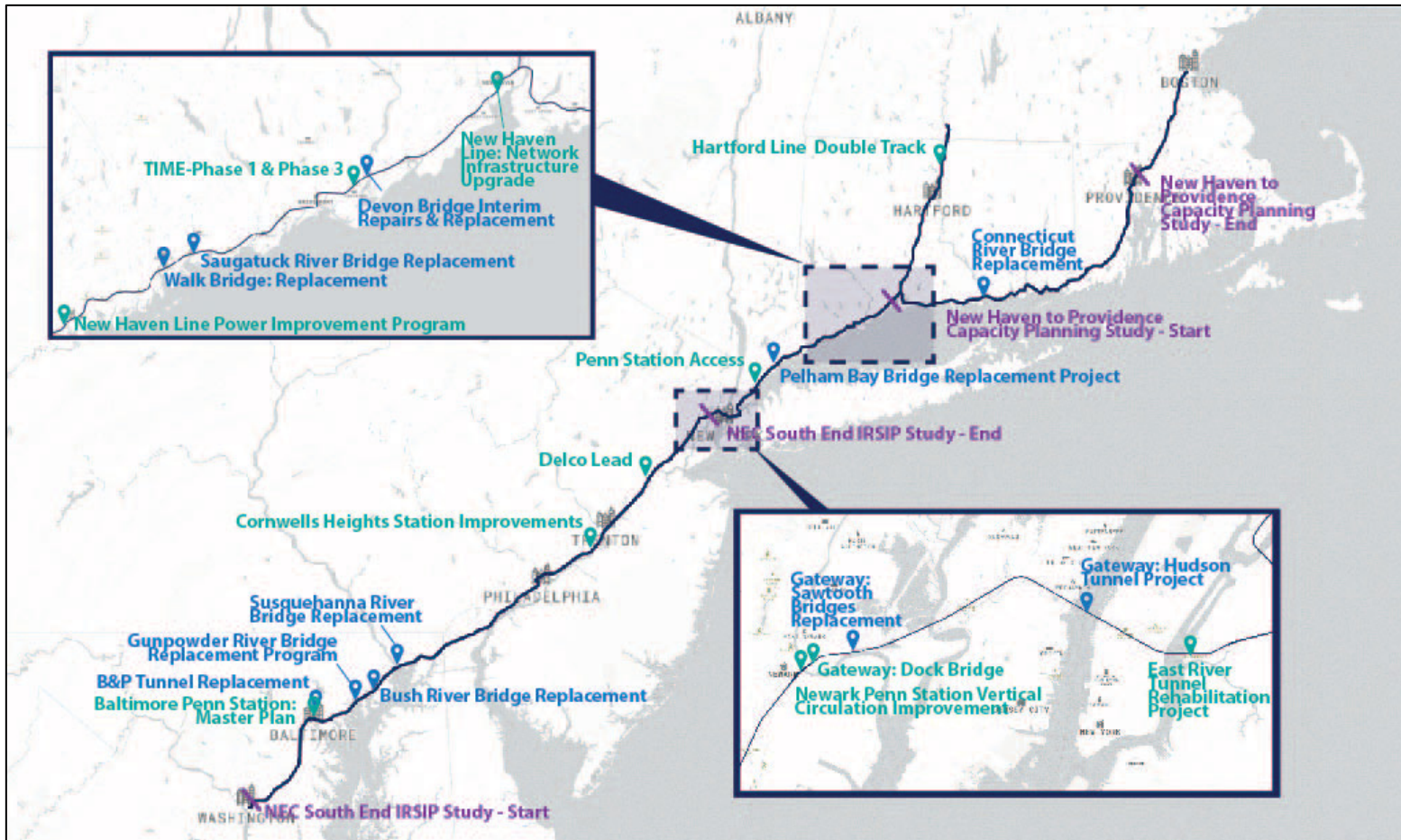
State	FRA Award	Projects Selected
Alabama	\$64,711,574	4
Arkansas	\$11,830,000	1
California	\$300,442,177	6
Connecticut	\$5,372,500	1
District of Columbia	\$11,320,000	2
Florida	\$58,449,135	5
Iowa	\$8,599,720	2
Illinois	\$18,156,018	2
Indiana	\$10,813,600	2
Kansas	\$46,966,427	2
Kentucky	\$29,563,000	1
Louisiana	\$18,626,000	2
Massachusetts	\$108,085,280	1
Maryland	\$20,384,317	2
Michigan	\$35,403,000	2
Minnesota	\$2,623,000	2
Missouri	\$12,804,860	2
Mississippi	\$230,435,333	2
North Carolina	\$12,701,093	2
North Dakota	\$11,772,708	1
Nebraska	\$15,224,354	1
New Hampshire	\$345,000	1
New Jersey	\$59,136,891	1
New York	\$40,497,293	5
Ohio	\$27,644,384	3
Pennsylvania	\$20,050,367	2
South Carolina	\$4,170,000	1
Tennessee	\$31,118,500	2
Texas	\$14,842,032	3
Virginia	\$100,000,000	1
Vermont	\$9,654,789	1
Washington	\$76,895,000	2
Wisconsin	\$2,045,160	1
West Virginia	\$19,442,500	1
Wyoming	\$2,424,000	1
Grand Total	\$1,442,550,013	70

FSP-N — Selected Projects



State	FRA Award	Projects Selected
Alaska	\$8,200,558	1
California	\$3,073,600,000	1
Illinois	\$93,600,000	2
Maine	\$27,492,000	1
Montana	\$14,900,000	1
Nevada	\$3,000,000,000	1
North Carolina	\$1,095,576,000	1
Pennsylvania	\$143,629,028	1
Virginia	\$729,000,000	1
Grand Total	\$8,185,997,586	10

FSP-NEC — Selected Projects



States	FRA Award	Projects Selected
Connecticut	\$1,994,799,600	9
Connecticut; Rhode Island	\$4,000,000	1
Maryland	\$6,945,906,656	5
New Jersey	\$673,614,377	4
New Jersey; New York	\$3,799,999,820	1
New York	\$2,963,704,249	3
Pennsylvania	\$30,500,000	1
Washington, DC; Maryland; Delaware; Pennsylvania; New Jersey	\$21,600,000	1
Grand Total	\$16,434,124,702	25

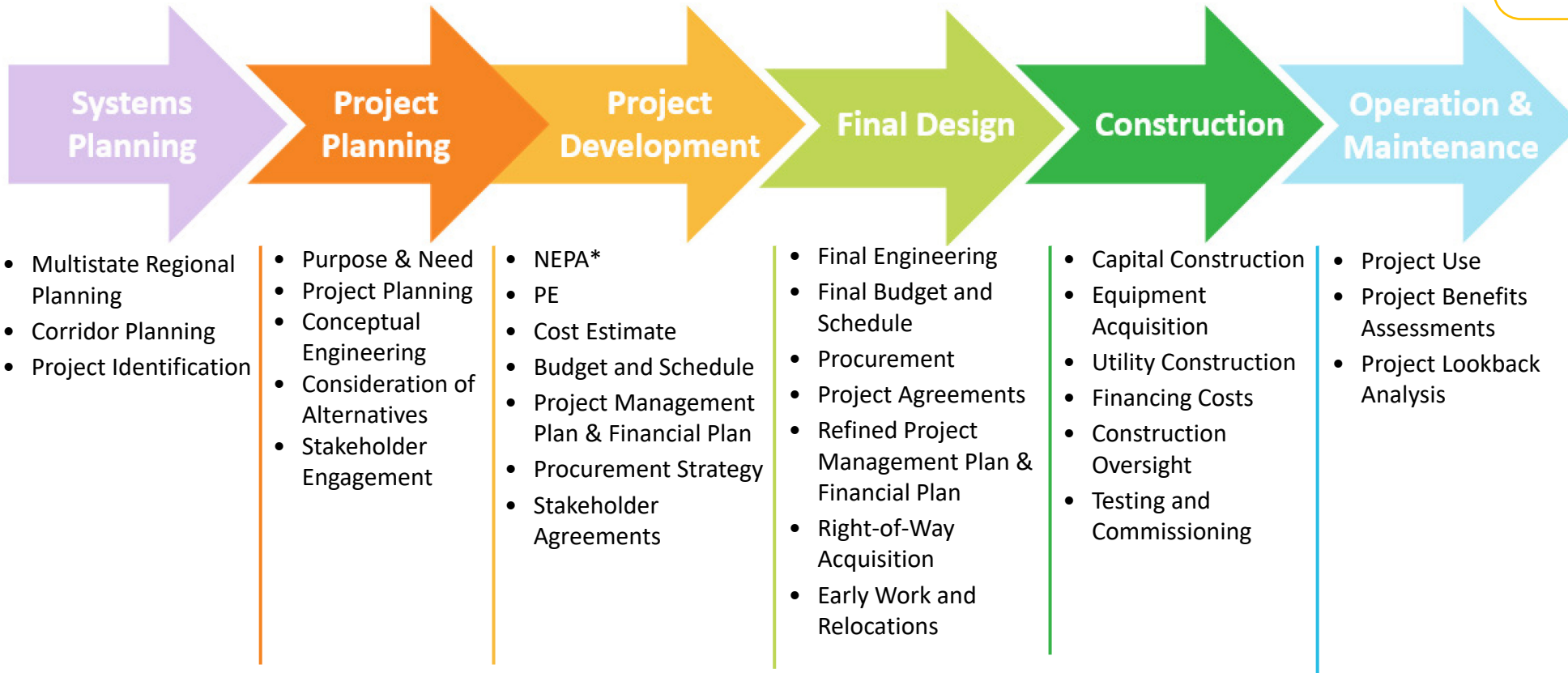
Cross-Program Takeaways

Overview of Capital Project Guidance — Project Lifecycle Stages

Ensure your application accurately describes the project lifecycle stage(s) you are applying for and apply for the stage you are ready for:



[FRA Guidance on Development and Implementation of Railroad Capital Projects](#)



Cross-Program Takeaways

Application Eligibility

- **Application should be rail-focused**
 - Intercity passenger rail and freight rail safety and service improvements
 - Can mention other modal improvements but keep the focus centered on rail

Framing and Writing a Good Application

- **Assume your reviewer has no background on your project**
 - FRA reviewers come from multiple offices and disciplines
 - Narrative format impacts its level of clarity and how streamlined the info appears
 - Make it easy for reviewers to find your critical project details by following our recommended format
- **Statement of Work (SOW)—follow templates**
 - Please reference SOW templates (2-5)



- [Example General Grants - Attach 2 – SOW](#)
- [Example General Grants - Attach 3 - Schedule](#)
- [Example General Grants - Attach 4 – Budget](#)
- [Example General Grants - Attach 5 - Performance Measures](#)

Cross-Program Takeaways

Application Tips

- **Clarity in funding amounts**
 - SF 424 form and Project Narrative funding request amounts must match
 - *SF 424 is only for the funding requested—not for adjacent and related projects*
 - Provide evidence (e.g., letter of support with funding amount) that your non-Federal match is secure
 - Other Federal funding: Provide the appropriate non-Federal match for the FRA funding requested
- **Demonstrate stakeholder support**
 - Letter of support from host railroad/infrastructure owner
 - 22905/Infrastructure Agreements not required at the time of award, but FRA is interested in status of these discussions
- **Prioritize or rank different projects if you have multiple submissions**
- **Note different evaluation criteria if applying to more than one grant program!**
- **First-time applicants:** Leave adequate time to register your organization in the Federal government's System for Award Management (SAM)



• [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#)

Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Grant Program

FY22 Grant Cycle Lessons Learned

RCE-Specific Takeaways

- **RCE-unique eligibility requirements**
 - Focus on improving safety at existing grade crossings
 - Check applicant and project eligibility carefully in the NOFO
- **\$1M minimum funding request** (except for planning-only projects)
- **Safety argument is paramount**
 - Make the safety and mobility case for your project loud and clear
 - Include safety data, such as the grade crossing's 5-Year Incident History:
 - Resources:
 - [FRA's Office of Safety Analysis Grade Crossing Inventory and Accident Reports](#)
 - [DOT Highway Rail Grade Crossing Accident Data](#)
- **Program preferences:** grade separations, closing crossings through track relocation, and corridor-wide grade crossing improvements
- **Applications involving highway components**
 - Focus on the grade crossing in question

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grant Program

FY22 Grant Cycle Lessons Learned

CRISI-Specific Takeaways

- The CRISI program is as competitive as ever—**consult the latest NOFO**
 - Follow the required format for the **Project Narrative, Statement of Work, and BCA**
 - Break down multiple **funding sources**
- A **Benefit-Cost Analysis** is required for every submitted project—even Workforce Development!
 - Economists verify assumptions and calculations
 - Provide unlocked Excel sheets
- **Host railroad agreements**—provide specifics and details on the status of discussions
 - FAQs about 22905 Agreements:



[CRISI Grant Program](#)



[Frequently Asked Questions about Rail Improvement Grant Conditions \(49 U.S.C. § 22905\(c\)\(1\)\)](#)

Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program

FY22 Grant Cycle Lessons Learned

FSP-N-Specific Takeaways

- **Missing documentation**

- BCA
- Statement of Work: Attachments 2-5
- Financial commitment documents
 - Letter(s) of support
- Major Capital Projects supporting documents
 - *Capital Cost Estimate*: Estimate of the cost to implement the capital project from project development → construction
 - *Project Management Plan*: Describes how the capital project will be implemented, monitored, and controlled
 - *Financial Plan*: Reflects the capital project's scope, schedule, cost estimate, and funding structure, based on the capital cost estimate

- ✓ *Supporting documentation is key*
- ✓ *Expanding or improving IPR is the goal of FSP*
- ✓ *Note PFA/LOI requirements*

- **Intercity passenger rail (IPR) nexus**

- How will the project's purpose and need benefit IPR service?
- Shared benefits for freight rail and/or commuter rail are allowed, but **expanding or improving IPR is the goal** of the program
- Provide both qualitative and quantitative data on ridership, trip time, etc. **Don't just copy and paste BCA results.**

- **Follow requirements for Phased Funding Agreements and Letters of Intent**

- Resource:



- [Major Capital Projects, LOIs/PFAs, Domestic Sourcing Plan Webinar](#)

FY22 Grant Cycle Lessons Learned

FSP-NEC-Specific Takeaways

- **Matching funds**

- Provide an accurate and precise breakdown of matching funds, including:
 - Amount
 - Source
 - Status of signed commitment
- Be specific about the pledged match for the current request
 - Avoid mixing or confusing details with related projects or historical funding commitments

- **Construction dates**

- Provide a current and reasonable estimate of construction milestones and dates

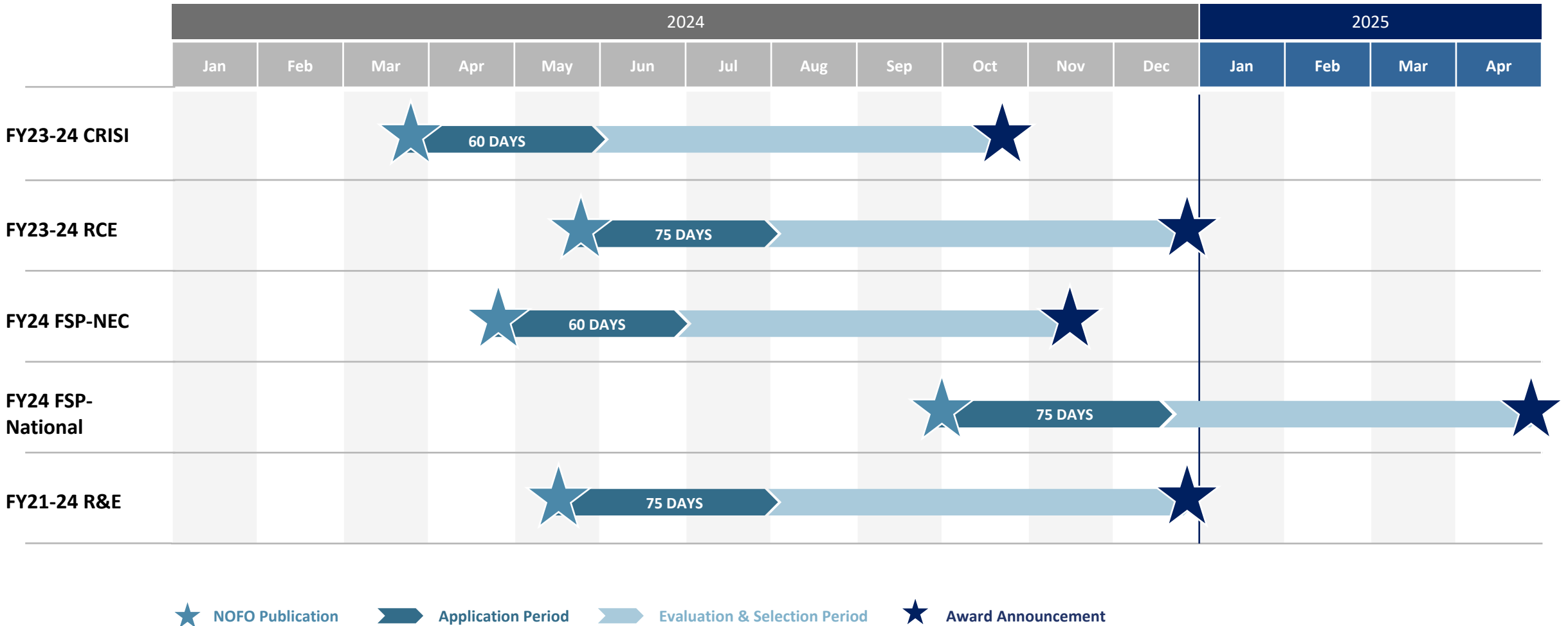
- **Consistency with the NEC Project Inventory**

- Where application details differ from the NEC Project Inventory, explain why in the Project Narrative
- Focus on comprehensive, thoughtful, and complete data during the Northeast Corridor Commission Capital Investment Plan (CIP) submission period
 - CIP data directly feeds into the NEC Project Inventory and subsequent FSP-NEC expectations

- ✓ *Accurate match amount and breakdown*
- ✓ *Accurate target construction dates*
- ✓ *Reconcile application with NEC Project Inventory*

Lessons Learned for FRA

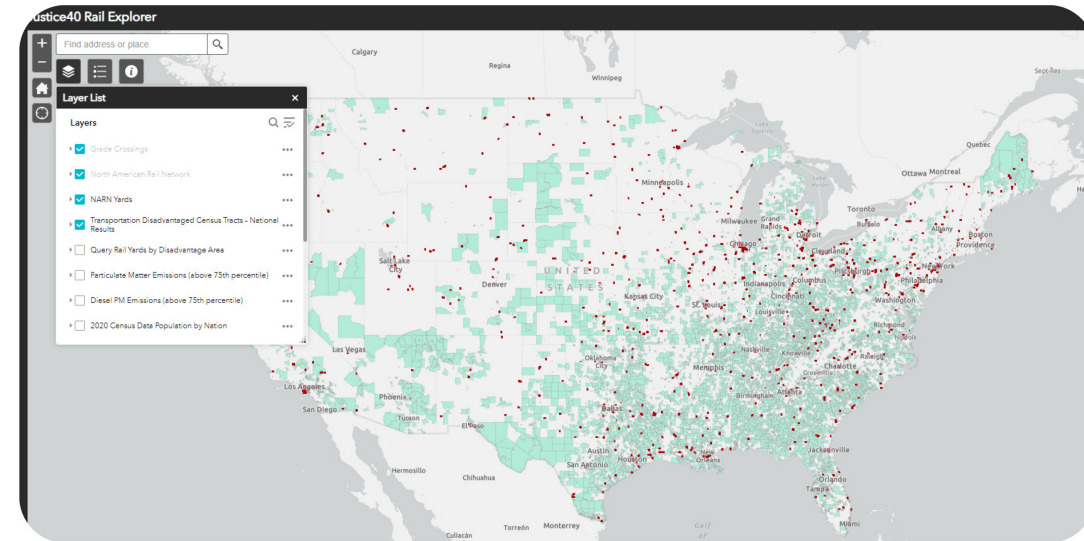
CY 2024 FRA Discretionary Grant Calendar



NOFO CYCLE STAGES ARE ESTIMATED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES, AND NOT EXACT DURATIONS OR DATES. CHANGES MAY OCCUR, AND FRA WILL UPDATE ACCORDINGLY.

Grants Resources

- [FRA Grant Programs](#)
- [FRA Grants Tool](#)
- [Upcoming FRA Grants and Loans Webinars](#)
- [Past FRA Grants and Loans Webinars](#)
- [FRA Competitive Grants Application Process](#)
- [Accident/Incident Dashboards & Data Downloads](#)
- [Crossing Inventory and Data Reports](#)
- [FRA Justice40 Rail Explorer](#) **NEW**
- [FRA Locomotive Emissions Comparison Tool](#) **NEW**



Feedback always welcome!

Contact Us

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Connect with us [USDOTFRA](#)

Questions about a Notice of Funding Opportunity:
FRA-NOFO-Support@dot.gov

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



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