

FY19 CONSOLIDATED RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS (CRISI) GRANTS

Webinar

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September 4, 2019



Agenda

- 1 FY19 CRISI Program Overview
- 2 NOFO Overview and How to Apply
- 3 Best Practices
 - Project Narrative
 - Statement of Work (SOW)
 - Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA)
 - Environmental Readiness
- 4 Recap & Reminders
- 5 Q & A



FY19 CRISI Program Overview

FY19 CRISI – Program Overview

Grant Purpose

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

CRISI – Recent & Upcoming Funding Opportunities

Authorization & Appropriations (M)

	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
Authorization	\$98	\$190	\$230	\$255	\$330
Appropriation	—	\$68	\$592.5	\$255	TBD

Status of Funding Opportunities

Year	Available Funding (M)	Status	
FY17	\$65	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Announced awards February 2019
FY18 (PTC)	\$250	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Announced awards August and December 2018
FY18	\$318	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Announced awards June 2019
FY19	\$244	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NOFO published August 19, 2019 / Applications due October 18, 2019

FY19 CRISI – Program Overview

Eligible Applicants

- State entities
- Public agencies or publicly chartered authorities
- Local governments
- Amtrak or other intercity passenger rail carrier
- Class II or III railroads
- Any rail carrier or equipment manufacturer in partnership with at least one state entity, public agency, and/or local government
- The Transportation Research Board (TRB)
- A university transportation center engaged in rail-related research
- A non-profit labor organization

FY19 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, State, Corridor Planning and Environmental Analyses**
- **Safety Programs and Institutes**
- **Research, Workforce Development, and Training**

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



FY19 CRISI – Program Overview

Non-Federal Match Requirements

- Federal share of total costs **shall not exceed 80 percent**
- First 20 percent of non-Federal match is **limited to cash contributions**
- In-kind contributions will be accepted beyond the first 20 percent

Average matching percent of selected projects in FY18 round was 57%

Selection Preferences for Matching Funds

- *50 percent or greater non-Federal match*
- *Non-Federal shares consisting of funding from multiple sources, demonstrating broad participation and cost sharing from affected stakeholders*

FY19 CRISI – Program Overview

Evaluation Criteria

- **Technical Merit:** Readiness, private sector participation, consistency with planning documents
- **Project Benefits:** Effects on system performance, safety, integration with other modes, ability to meet demand

Selection Criteria

- **Preference** for higher matching funds from multiple sources, maximized net benefits, and private sector participation
- **Key Departmental Objectives:**
 - Supporting Economic Vitality
 - Leveraging Federal Funding
 - Preparing for Future Operations/Maintenance Costs
 - Innovative Approaches to Safety and Project Delivery
 - Accountability



NOFO Overview and How to Apply

What is a NOFO?

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):

- Announces the grant opportunity
- Contains details about the application requirements and procedures to request Federal funding for eligible projects

What information is in a NOFO?

Key Parts of a NOFO

- Program summary
- Key Dates
- Addresses
- FRA Contact Information
- Table of Contents
 - Program Description
 - Federal Award Information
 - **Eligibility Information**
 - **Application and Submission Information**
 - **Application Review Information**
 - Federal Award Administration Information
 - Federal Awarding Agency Contacts



Where do I start?

Check the FRA **Discretionary Competitive Grant Program** webpage

- <https://www.fra.dot.gov/grants>



The screenshot shows the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration website. The main navigation bar includes links for About FRA, Railroad Safety, Rail Network Development, Research & Development, Legislation & Regulations, Grants & Loans, Communications & Governmental Affairs, and FRA eLibrary. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area is titled "Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs" and features a sub-section for "Accepting Applications". A red box highlights the link for the "Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (FY 2019)". Below this link, a paragraph describes the program's funding and purpose, followed by a link to the "FY 2019 Notice of Funding Opportunity". A sidebar on the left lists various grant programs, and a right sidebar provides additional document information.

Click on the link to access the NOFO

Where is the FY 19 CRISI Program NOFO?

The screenshot shows the Federal Register website interface. At the top left is the National Archives logo. The main header reads "FEDERAL REGISTER" and "The Daily Journal of the United States Government". On the right is the seal of the National Archives and Records Administration. A blue bar contains the word "Notice". Below this, the title of the notice is "Notice of Funding Opportunity for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements" by the Federal Railroad Administration on 08/19/2019. A green button says "SUBMIT A FORMAL COMMENT". The main content area is divided into "PUBLISHED DOCUMENT" and "DOCUMENT DETAILS". Under "PUBLISHED DOCUMENT", the "AGENCY:" is the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT). The "ACTION:" is a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO or notice). The "SUMMARY:" states that the notice details application requirements for the CRISI Program, with funding provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act (2019 Appropriation). It notes that opportunities are made available under Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 20.325. The "DOCUMENT DETAILS" section includes links for the "Printed version: PDF", the "Publication Date: 08/19/2019", and the "Agencies: Federal Railroad Administration". The "Dates:" section, highlighted with a red box, specifies that applications are due no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT on October 18, 2019, and that applications received after 5:00 p.m. EDT on October 18, 2019, will not be considered for funding.

Where do I find “How to Apply” information?

Search grants on **Grants.gov**:

The screenshot shows the Grants.gov search interface. On the left, under 'BASIC SEARCH CRITERIA', the 'CFDA' field is set to '20.325'. Under 'OPPORTUNITY STATUS', 'Forecasted (0)', 'Posted (1)', 'Closed (0)', and 'Archived (6)' are listed. Under 'FUNDING INSTRUMENT TYPE', 'All Funding Instruments' is selected. On the right, the search results table shows one result: 'FR-CRS-19-001' for 'FY 2019 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)' from DOT-FRA, posted on 08/19/2019. The opportunity number 'FR-CRS-19-001' is highlighted with a red box.

Opportunity Number	Opportunity Title	Agency	Opportunity Status	Posted Date	Close Date
FR-CRS-19-001	FY 2019 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)	DOT-FRA	Posted	08/19/2019	10/18/2019

Click on the **Opportunity Number** to see the Synopsis

What is the Synopsis?

Summary information about the grant opportunity in Grants.gov:

The screenshot shows the Grants.gov interface for viewing a grant opportunity. The page title is "VIEW GRANT OPPORTUNITY" for "FR-CRS-19-001 FY 2019 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)". The agency is the "Department of Transportation DOT/Federal Railroad Administration". There are "Apply" and "Subscribe" buttons. Below the title are tabs for "SYNOPSIS", "VERSION HISTORY", "RELATED DOCUMENTS", and "PACKAGE". The "SYNOPSIS" tab is selected and highlighted with a red box. A "Print Synopsis Details" link is also visible. The synopsis content is organized into a table under the heading "General Information".

General Information	
Document Type: Grants Notice	Version: Synopsis 1
Funding Opportunity Number: FR-CRS-19-001	Posted Date: Aug 19, 2019
Funding Opportunity Title: FY 2019 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)	Last Updated Date: Aug 19, 2019
Opportunity Category: Discretionary	Original Closing Date for Applications: Oct 18, 2019 No Explanation
Opportunity Category Explanation:	Current Closing Date for Applications: Oct 18, 2019 No Explanation
Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement	Archive Date: Nov 17, 2019
Category of Funding Activity: Transportation	Estimated Total Program Funding:
Category Explanation:	Award Ceiling: \$244,621,500
Expected Number of Awards: 40	Award Floor: \$0
CFDA Number(s): 20.325 -- Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements	
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement: Yes	

How do I Apply?

Key Steps

- Obtain a Dun and Bradstreet number (DUNS)
- **Register early** in the Federal government's System for Award Management (SAM)
 - **NOTE: SAM registration can take up to 2 weeks**
- For Grants.gov, complete an **Authorized Organization Representative profile** and create a username and password
- Submit an application addressing all requirements outlined in the NOFO

What do I include in my application?

Required Documents

- Project Narrative
- Statement of Work
- Environmental Compliance Documentation
- Benefit- Cost Analysis

What forms are required?

Required Forms

- SF424 (Application for Federal Assistance)
 - *Either*: SF 424A or 424C- Budget info for Non-Construction OR Construction
 - *Either*: SF 424B or 424D – Assurances for Non-Construction OR for Construction
- FRA's Additional Assurances and Certifications
- SF LLL: Disclosure of Lobbying Activities



Where do I find additional information and help?

Additional information about the grant opportunity in Grants.gov at the bottom of the Synopsis page:

Additional Information

Agency Name: DOT/Federal Railroad Administration

Description: The purpose of the CRISI Program is to assist in funding projects that improve passenger and freight rail transportation safety, efficiency, and reliability. At least \$63,750,000 will be made available for Rural Projects as required by 49 U.S.C. 22907.

Link to Additional Information [FY 2019 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements \(CRISI\)](#)

Grantor Contact Information: If you have difficulty accessing the full announcement electronically, please contact:

Grants.gov Contact Center
Phone Number: 1-800-518-4726

Hours of operation are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The contact center is closed on federal holidays.
support@grants.gov

Grants.gov Customer Support



Application Review and Selection Process

1. Intake and Eligibility

Each application is reviewed for completeness and eligibility to determine which applications move to the evaluation stage



2. Evaluation

Each complete and eligible application is evaluated by a panel of DOT subject matter experts using criteria outlined in the NOFO



3. Selection

Final funding decisions are made by taking into account the evaluation and selection criteria outlined in the NOFO



4. Announcement

FRA press release announces selections approximately 4 to 5 months following application due date





Best Practices

Best Practices – Helpful Hints

- Read the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) completely and carefully to understand the criteria for eligibility and selection, and what information each application must include
- FRA has identified three primary areas where applications not selected for funding typically demonstrate deficiencies:
 - Project Narrative
 - Statement of Work (SOW)
 - Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA)



The screenshot shows the top portion of a Federal Register document. At the top, it says 'FEDERAL REGISTER' and 'The Daily Journal of the United States Government'. Below that, it identifies the document as a 'Notice of Funding Opportunity for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements' issued by the 'Federal Railroad Administration on 07/19/2018'. The document is categorized as a 'PUBLISHED DOCUMENT'. The 'AGENCY:' section lists the 'Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT)'. The 'ACTION:' section is 'Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO or notice)'. The 'SUMMARY:' section provides details about the application requirements and procedures for the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program. On the right side, there is a 'DOCUMENT DETAILS' sidebar with information such as 'Printed version: PDF', 'Publication Date: 07/19/2018', and 'Agencies: Federal Railroad Administration'. A 'Document Type:' field is also present at the bottom of the sidebar.

The background of the slide is a blurred photograph of a railway track. In the foreground, several parallel tracks run horizontally across the frame. Above the tracks, a complex network of overhead power lines and metal support structures (catenary systems) is visible. The entire image has a blue color cast and a motion blur effect, suggesting a train is moving quickly. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

Best Practices – Project Narrative

Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

- I. Cover Page
- II. Project Summary
- III. Project Funding
- IV. Applicant Eligibility
- V. Project Eligibility
- VI. Detailed Project Description
- VII. Project Location
- VIII. Evaluation & Selection Criteria
- IX. Project Implementation & Management
- X. Environmental Readiness

- ☑ Structure your project narrative in accordance with the outline specified in the NOFO
- ☑ Include all elements identified in the outline
- ☑ Follow the instructions for each element
- ☑ Adhere to 25-page limit



Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

- I. **Cover Page**
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- Indicate if an application for the project has been submitted previously to another Federal grant program – include the program and year



Best Practices – Project Narrative

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- ☑ Briefly describe the project **in 4 to 6 sentences**, its anticipated benefits, and the transportation challenges the project will address
- ☑ **Think of this section of the application as your elevator pitch for the project to the DOT Secretary and FRA Administrator**



Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

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- ☑ Only include eligible costs
- ☑ Specify each source of non-Federal match
- ☑ Provide details about in-kind match
- ☑ Indicate public- vs. private-sector match
- ☑ Describe the non-Federal funding arrangements
- ☑ Attach funding commitment letters
- ☑ Identify if the proposed match will not be available until a certain date or if funds must be spent by a deadline



Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

- I. Cover Page
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- V. Project Eligibility
- VI. Detailed Project Description**
- VII. Project Location
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- IX. Project Implementation & Management
- X. Environmental Readiness

- ☑ Thoroughly discuss the transportation challenges and benefits
- ☑ Include data to support project benefits
- ☑ Describe how project components are related and will be sequenced
- ☑ Include photographs or diagrams
- ☑ Identify all host railroads, operators, and beneficiaries



Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

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- V. Project Eligibility
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- IX. Project Implementation & Management
- X. Environmental Readiness

- ☑ Identify cities, counties, and states where project is located
- ☑ Include a map of the project
- ☑ Identify railroad mileposts
- ☑ For grade crossing projects, include the U.S. DOT National Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory number



Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

- I. Cover Page
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- IX. Project Implementation & Management
- X. Environmental Readiness

- ☑ Include a separate section in the project narrative focused on how the project meets each of the evaluation and selection criteria
- ☑ **DO NOT** rely solely on the contents of the “detailed project description” section to satisfy this requirement — it is OK to repeat key points in this section
- ☑ Quantify benefits whenever possible



Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

- I. Cover Page
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- V. Project Eligibility
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- VII. Project Location
- VIII. Evaluation & Selection Criteria
- IX. Project Implementation & Management**
- X. Environmental Readiness

- ☑ Highlight applicant’s past experiences managing and overseeing similar projects, including FRA- or DOT-funded projects
- ☑ Describe expected arrangements for project contracting, contract oversight, change-order management, risk management, and conformance with Federal requirements for progress reporting



Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

- I. Cover Page
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- VI. Detailed Project Description
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- IX. Project Implementation & Management
- X. Environmental Readiness**

- Document environmental work, either initiated or completed





Best Practices – Statement of Work

Best Practices – Statement of Work (SOW)

Federal Railroad Administration
 U.S. Department of Transportation
 August 30, 2016 (final)

CAPITAL COST ESTIMATING

GUIDANCE FOR
 PROJECT SPONSORS



- Utilize FRA’s Standard Cost Categories as a way to organize the scope of work and budget
 - <https://www.fra.dot.gov/Elib/Document/16647>
- Ensure consistency among the project narrative, statement of work, benefit-cost analysis, and other application materials

FRA MAIN WORKSHEET										Issue Date 5/4/16
Grantee Name								Today's Date		8/28/14
Project Name and Location: Rail Project A, Two cities with rural in-between								Yr of Base Year \$		2014
Current Phase : Final Design, Ready to Procure Construction								Yr of Revenue Ops		2017
Standard Cost Category	Unit	Quantity	Base Year Dollars					Percent of Construction Cost	Percent of Total Project Cost	YOE Dollars Total (X000) (from Inflation Worksheet)
			Without Contingency (X000)	Allocated Contingency (X000)	TOTAL (X000)	Unit Cost (X000)				
10 Guideway & Track Elements	Lineal Miles of Guideway	105	1,520,000	140,000	1,660,000	15,810	69%	52%	1,718,100	
10.010 Guideway: At-grade exclusive right-of-way	Lineal Miles of Guideway	100	550,000	50,000	600,000	6,000				
10.020 Guideway: At-grade semi-exclusive (allows cross-traffic)	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.030 Guideway: At-grade in mixed traffic	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.040 Guideway: Aerial structure	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.041 Bridges	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.042 Viaduct	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.043 Other Structure	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.044 Unspecified	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.050 Guideway: Built-up fill	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.060 Guideway: Underground cut & cover	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.061 Cut & Cover Guideway Soft Soils	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.062 Cut & Cover Guideway Hard Soils	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.063 Cut & Cover Guideway Vent Soft Soils	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.064 Cut & Cover Guideway Vent Hard Soils	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					
10.065 Unspecified	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0					

Best Practices – Scope, Schedule & Budget

- ✓ Organize the scope of work into discrete and logically sequenced tasks
- ✓ Provide appropriate timing for tasks
- ✓ Identify the deliverables required to communicate progress and completion of tasks to FRA
- ✓ Check the budget to ensure numbers are consistent with cost information submitted in forms and other areas of the application

STATEMENT OF WORK

[insert applicant/grantee name]
[insert project name]
[insert NOFA name]

I. BACKGROUND

Instructions: The "Background" section of the SOW is intended to provide a consistent frame of reference to the applicable solicitation and funding source of all grants/cooperative agreements awarded funding by the FRA. This section also provides high-level overview information regarding the project and applicant/grantee. Approximately 3-4 paragraph in length.

II. OBJECTIVE

Instructions: The "Objective" section of the SOW is intended to provide a clear description of the underlying transportation problem that the project will address; the work that will be accomplished under the grant/cooperative agreement; the end-state of the project, and the public benefits that the project is intended to achieve.

III. PROJECT LOCATION

Instructions: The "Project Location" section of the SOW is intended to provide information related to the geographic scope of the project, as well as to identify important related intercity corridors or service. The project location should be specific and detailed. Planning projects should note where the project is likely to be deployed.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF WORK

Instructions: The "Description of Work" section breaks the scope of work for the project into discrete and delineable tasks. If the FRA-funded-project is part of a larger effort, describe that larger effort, but link tasks specifically to the FRA-funded portion of the project. Be clear regarding the work to be done in each task and be sure tasks can be linked to deliverables and timelines. Use the guidance below to develop this section.

Task 1: Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule

Task 1 generally includes the following activities/deliverables: the Grantee will prepare a Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule for the follow-on tasks, which may result in a revised statement of work. The project work plan will describe, in detail, the activities and steps necessary to complete the tasks outlined in the statement of work. The work plan will also include information about the project management approach (including team organization, team decision-making, roles and responsibilities and interaction with FRA), as well as address quality assurance and quality control procedures. In addition, the work plan will include the project schedule (with grantee and agency review durations), a detailed project budget, and an environmental class of action recommendation memorandum (if applicable). If the Grantee

A dark, blue-tinted photograph of a railway track receding into the distance under a cloudy sky. The tracks are made of wooden sleepers and metal rails, leading the eye towards the horizon. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, and the overall mood is serene and contemplative.

Best Practices – Benefit-Cost Analysis

BCA – Overview of Steps

- Specify your project's base case, alternate case, and timeline
- Show how your project's alternate case will result in specific effects (i.e., project benefits)
- Break down those effects into the smallest sub-elements possible
- Assign values to the effects using USDOT's *BCA Guidance*
- Calculate results and Discount to Base Year



BCA – Scope of Analysis

- The base case reflects the status quo — i.e., the world as it exists today
- The alternate case (i.e., “build scenario”) is the proposed project
 - An application for final design or construction should present a *single* project
 - Multiple projects need multiple analyses
 - Avoided costs of alternatives not taken are NOT benefits
- The timeline must be appropriate for the proposed project
 - Match the useful life of the project, but not longer than 30 years
 - Projects with useful life beyond 30 years will have residual value (stations in particular) → Calculate with straight line depreciation

BCA – Scope of Analysis

- Examine *ONLY* the differences between the base case and alternate case.
- These differences should reflect realistic projections.

Examples:

- Intercity passengers will likely change modes if their station is unavailable, while commuters are more likely to divert to another nearby station
- Host railroads will impose speed/weight restrictions before shutting down completely
- Rolling stock will have residual value at the end of its useful life



BCA – Benefits & Costs

- The *marginal* effects of the alternate case are the project benefits
 - Marginal effects are sometimes undesirable consequences, which should be shown as negative dollar amounts
- The total cost of constructing the project *as well as operating and maintaining (O&M) it for the full timeline* are the project costs
 - O&M costs on new equipment and infrastructure are costs
 - Reductions to existing O&M costs are regarded as project benefits
 - Residual value for remaining useful life is a benefit, NOT subtracted from costs

BCA – Development

- Break down effects into the smallest possible sub-elements
- Provide documentation for inputs and growth rates.

Example: Replacing a bridge might result in...

- Removal of slow orders, improving travel speed (travel time savings)
- Reduced wait time at the approaches (travel time savings and emissions)
- Decreased delays at nearby sidings along the corridor (travel time savings and emissions)
- Reduced operations and maintenance costs



BCA – Modal Diversion

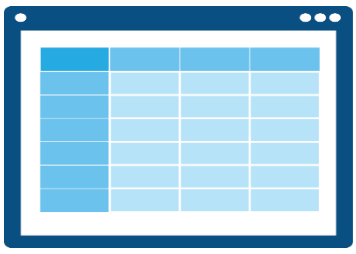
- Modal diversion is a marginal choice; *ONLY* count marginal benefits
- New/induced users value the service less than existing users (Follow USDOT'S *BCA Guidance*)
- Avoided rail-to-highway diversion benefits could involve:
 - Increased pavement and bridge damage
 - Increased harmful emissions
 - Increased congestion on highways
 - Decreased safety
- Avoiding passenger revenue losses are transfers, NOT benefits



BCA – Guidelines Recap

For FY19 CRISI grant applications:

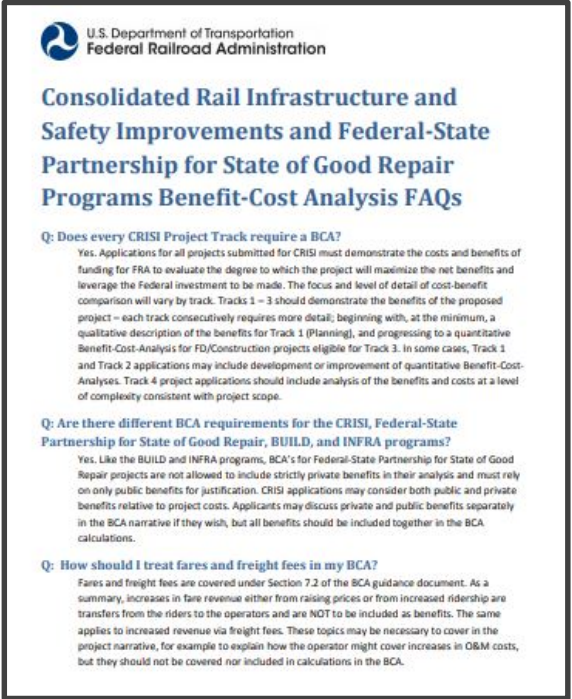
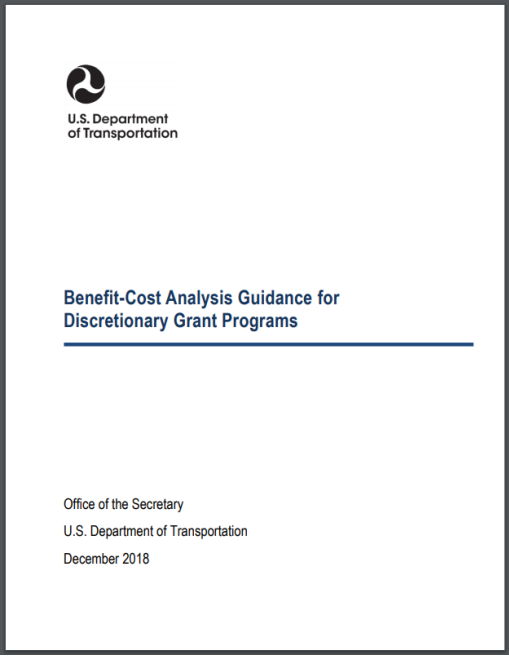
- ✓ Document your assumptions in as much detail as possible
- ✓ If the project has separable elements, report benefits and costs of each sub-project separately
- ✓ If your BCA includes modal diversion, include YOUR passenger counts and Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)
- ✓ ***Must include an unlocked Excel spreadsheet that clearly shows your calculations and discounting***




BCA – Guidance / Online Resources

- Follow USDOT’s *BCA Guidance*, available at: <https://www.transportation.gov/office-policy/transportation-policy/benefit-cost-analysis-guidance>

- For rail-specific examples on how to apply the *BCA Guidance*, refer to FRA’s *BCA FAQ* available at: <https://www.fra.dot.gov/eLib/Details/L19367>



A dark, blue-tinted photograph of a railway track receding into the distance under a cloudy sky. The track is the central focus, leading the eye towards the horizon. The sky is filled with dramatic, layered clouds, and the overall mood is somber and contemplative.

Best Practices – Environmental Readiness

Environmental Readiness – NEPA

The environmental process, most commonly referred to as **NEPA**,* is required of all FRA-grant funded projects to document and substantiate our agency's decision to implement the project

- Submit with your CRISI grant application an approved NEPA document, if available and applicable from FRA, FTA, or FHWA
- If there is no previous NEPA documentation associated with the project, you are encouraged to consider the following in the grant application to the best of your knowledge:
 - Known project location and/or possible impacts to the human (e.g., historic, protected populations, noise and vibration) or natural (e.g., wetlands, air, species/habitat, floodplains) environment
 - Anticipated permitting needs (e.g., construction, Clean Water Act Section 404) or coordination/consultation (e.g., State Historic Preservation Officer)

* *The National Environmental Policy Act*

Environmental Readiness – NEPA

- Rely on FRA’s experience and expertise to determine the type of NEPA and level of documentation and coordination appropriate for your project — contact our experts!

Helpful Information Available on FRA’s Website

- FRA & NEPA Documentation: <https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P1149>
- FRA Recommended Trainings & Environmental Resources: <https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P1152>

This web page provides links to recorded webinars, trainings, and other resources that will be of assistance in preparing NEPA documents for rail projects

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a railway track system. The tracks run parallel to each other, receding into the distance. Overhead power lines and support structures are visible above the tracks. A signal light is positioned on the left side of the tracks. The background shows some buildings and trees, suggesting an urban or suburban setting. The entire image has a blue color cast.

Recap & Reminders

Recap & Reminders

- Always read the NOFO carefully
- Determine what a "successful" project will look like
- Use the checklist with the application requirements in the NOFO as you complete your application
- Address all of the evaluation and selection criteria on which you will be rated
 - By clearly and directly responding to the criteria, your application will be easier to read and evaluate
 - Don't bury key points!



Recap & Reminders

- Verify that all budget figures match corresponding figures cited in different parts of your application package – such as the cover sheet, SOW, Project Narrative, and various forms
 - Numbers in columns and rows should add up properly in budget tables
 - Only include project costs that are expected to be incurred *after* grant selection
- Name key partners, indicate in-place agreements, and include letters of support
- Have an objective “cold reader” — i.e., an individual unfamiliar with the grant application — review your final document before submission



Grant Lifecycle and Approximate Timeframes



<p>Grant Agreement (NGA):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope, schedule, and budget • Performance measures <p>Terms and Conditions</p> <p>NEPA Requirements</p>	<p>Grant Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with FRA • Quarterly Progress and Financial Reports • Invoicing schedule of eligible expenses per NGA • Invoice and Deliverable Reviews <p>Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine monitoring • Annual monitoring reviews/Site visits 	<p>Final Invoice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial reconciliation <p>Final Performance Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of results, outcomes, and public benefits
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THANK YOU

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