

COMPETITIVE GRANT AND EARMARK UPDATE

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Presentation Overview

Competitive Grants

Earmarks

Tools and Tips

ICEASB - COMPETITIVE GRANTS & EARMARKS

- Competitive Grant and Earmark Engineer
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FEDERAL COMPETITIVE GRANTS

- **Application Phase:**
 - An LPA shall inform the Local Systems Bureau of their intent to submit a grant application.
 - LPA shall provide a summary of the application, along with a project timeline and intended funding match.
 - If this step is not completed, the Iowa DOT will not serve as a pass-through
- **Award Phase:**
 - If the steps on the left have been completed, the Iowa DOT reserves the right to choose to be a pass through. FHWA always initially assumes Direct Recipient.
 - There are benefits to both pass-through and Direct Recipient.
 - LPA must submit to Iowa DOT Local Systems Bureau, a project timeline, so Iowa DOT can assess whether we think the timeline is reasonable and achievable
 - Sometimes, time frames listed in grant applications are more optimistic than realistic. If so, the Iowa DOT may not be able to serve in a pass-through role, as the DOT can't take on risks that the project will not make its milestones.
 - We have guidelines, deadlines, and rules in place for various reasons; all our I.M.s and procedures have been vetted through FHWA and follow Federal and State laws and regulations.
 - Our deadlines listed in our I.M.s are requirements and are considered to be minimums.

NEW ONLINE FORM

<https://iowadot.gov/transportation-development/local-systems/resources-tools/iija-information/federal-competitive-grants>

Federal Grant Application Reminders

This Infrastructure Bill includes several grant programs beyond the formula programs like STBG, HBP, TAP, and ICAAP. To minimize future challenges and avoid "surprises", Local Systems wants you to be aware of the below items prior to submitting grant applications.

DISCLAIMER: Iowa DOT is not the host of these Federal Competitive Grants. The information is here for guidance purposes only.

- [Competitive Grant Application Information .pdf](#)

Pass-Through

If you wish for the Local Systems Bureau to act as the pass-through agency, please adhere to the following procedures:

Application Phase Requirements

- **New.** Inform the Local Systems Bureau of your intent to submit a competitive grant application by filling out [this form](#).
- Please provide a summary of the intended application, including the project timeline and intended funding match.
- The form will allow you to download your submission entry once you submit it for your records.
- Local Systems Bureau will not provide comments on your application materials

← [IIJA Information](#)

[Federal Aid Programs](#)

[LPA Guidance](#)

[Federal-aid Conversion Information](#)

[Federal Competitive Grants](#)

COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAMS



U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal-aid Competitive Grants:

- TIGER/BUILD/RAISE
- BIP
- SS4A
- INFRA/MEGA/RURAL
- PROTECT
- CHBP
- Many more...

COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAMS



U.S. Department of Transportation

TIGER/BUILD/RAISE:

- Established in 2009 as TIGER
- BUILD FY26 NOFO released on 12/15/25
- Applications are due on 2/24/26
- Maximum award \$25M
- Minimum award \$1M for rural and \$5M for urban
- Obligation Deadline 9/30/30 and Expenditure Deadline 9/30/35
- <https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants/NOFO>

COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAMS



U.S. Department of Transportation

BIP:

- Established in 2022, three project types: Large Bridge, Planning, and Bridge
- BIP FY26 Planning and Bridge NOFOs are under review and have not been released
- BIP FY26 Large Bridge applications were due 8/1/25, awards have not been made
- Large Bridge projects have total eligible project costs over \$100M
- Planning projects are awarded at 80 percent of the total eligible project costs
- Bridge projects have total eligible project costs under \$100M
- <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/bip/>

COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAMS



U.S. Department of Transportation

SS4A:

- Established in 2022, LPA's must be a direct recipient for this program
- Applicants must have an eligible Action Plan to apply for an implementation grant
- SS4A FY26 NOFO has not been announced
- FY25 NOFO closed on 6/26/25, watch for a spring release of FY26 NOFO
- Congrats to all awardees from the FY25 round of funding
- <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>

COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAMS



U.S. Department of Transportation

PROTECT:

- Established in 2022
- PROTECT FY26 NOFO is under review and has not been released
- Applications are due on 2/24/26
- The deadline for applications has been in late February the past two rounds of funding
- <https://www.transportation.gov/rural/grant-toolkit/promoting-resilient-operations-transformative-efficient-and-cost-saving>

COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAMS



U.S. Department of Transportation

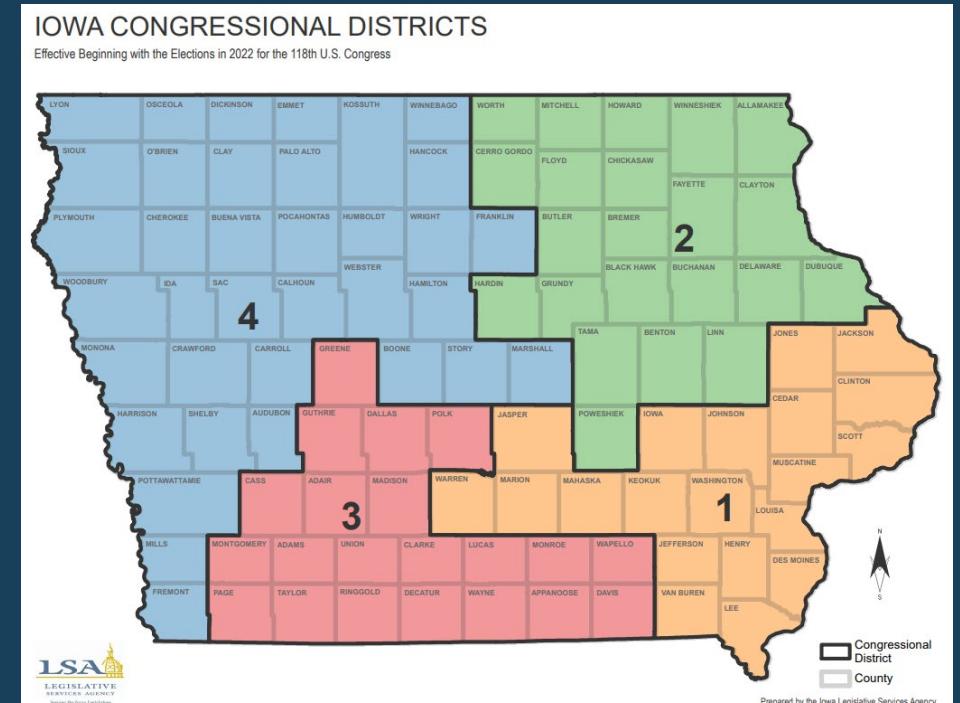
CHBP:

- Established in 2018, State DOTs must be the applicant
- Iowa is one of four states to receive no less than \$32.5M per funding round
- CHBP FY24 and FY25 applications have been submitted with 67 total projects
- Awards have not been made, potential announcement this Spring
- FY24 Obligation Deadline 9/30/27 and Expenditure Deadline 9/30/32
- FY25 Obligation Deadline 9/30/28 and Expenditure Deadline 9/30/33
- <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/chbp.cfm>

FEDERAL EARMARKS

- Also known as **Community Project Funding (CPF)**
- Check on your Congressional representative's webpage for when and if they are taking applications for their CPF (Max of 15 projects per congressional district)
- Awards will depend on how much is available, subject to federal allowance per federal appropriations bills
- The appropriation bill Congress approved in FY25 did not include funding for Earmarks. However, there is funding included in FY26.

Iowa Congressional Districts:



TOOLS



Web Resources:

- USDOT Grant Navigator - <https://www.transportation.gov/navigator>
- USDOT Competitive Grants Dashboard -
<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dashboard>
- Grant Applications - <https://www.grants.gov/>
- DOT Pass Through Form - <https://iowadot.gov/transportation-development/local-systems/resources-tools/iija-information/federal-competitive-grants>

TIPS



- Be sure to attend Federal aid training if you are intending to work with Competitive Grants.
- Consider Project Development timelines compared to the Obligation Date in the Grant NOFO when applying.
- If the total Grant Award will not cover the federal share of construction, please do not use Grant funds to fund PE/CE.
Ex. Construction costs are \$1M and Grant is \$500,000

TIPS



- Review the programmed funding when a Grant is awarded and adjust programmed years, as necessary.
- Review the planned letting schedule from the Grant Application, and if there are changes to the schedule be sure to draft the Grant Agreement with the changes.
- Don't pay for materials in construction that don't have certifications to avoid costs becoming nonparticipating.
- Review BABA requirements during Project Development. Compliance before construction begins will save project costs.

PROJECTS



- All active Competitive Grants in Iowa total approximately \$270M, with the projects having an estimated \$370M in construction funds
- FY22-Fy24 Earmarks total \$75M in federal funding
- There are currently 32 contracts in progress (Planning/Construction)
- The FY24 & FY25 CHBP applications will add 67 Projects and \$65M in Competitive Grant funding.

QUESTIONS



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