



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

213.922.2000 Tel
metro.net

JULY 7, 2017

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: PHILLIP A. WASHINGTON PAW
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: THERESE W. MCMILLAN TWM
CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER

SUBJECT: USDOT FY18 INFRA PROGRAM
NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

ISSUE

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), a five-year transportation authorization bill funded at \$305 billion and signed into law on December 4, 2015, established the Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects (NSFHP) program to provide federal financial assistance to projects of national or regional significance. This grant program, originally known as the Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) grant program, was authorized at \$4.5 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2016 through 2020, with \$850 million for FY 17 and \$900 million for FY 18 authorized to be awarded by the Secretary of Transportation and vetted by Congress.

On July 5, 2017, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) that rebranded the FASTLANE program as the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program and provided information on funding availability, project eligibility criteria, and application requirements. This rebranding will require the resubmission of projects that were submitted under the FASTLANE program.

The NOFO indicated that only the 10% of funding from FY 17 FASTLANE reserved for small projects would be awarded by USDOT, with the remaining 90% rolled into this new FY 17 INFRA program. As Metro's applications for the FY 17 FASTLANE competition were for large projects, those applications will not be awarded funding from USDOT without a new or refined application into the FY 18 INFRA program.

The deadline for INFRA grant applications is November 2, 2017.

BACKGROUND

Funding Availability

While the FASTLANE/INFRA program was meant to be an annual allocation of grant funding, the transition between Administrations has created a unique situation in which most of the funding available from FY 17 (90% reserved for large projects) has been carried over into the FY 18 NOFO, resulting in approximately \$1.5 billion available for allocation in this year's competition.

Fiscal Year Cycle	Amount Available
FY 17 (carryover)	\$710 Million
FY 18	\$810 -- \$855 Million ¹
FY 18 NOFO Total	Up to \$1.56 Billion¹

New Project Eligibility Criteria

As part of its introduction of INFRA, USDOT also announced four new major project eligibility criteria that will guide its decision-making process in awarding INFRA grants for the FY 18 competition. These new criteria, or key program objectives, are as follows:

#1: Supporting Economic Vitality

The INFRA program will seek projects that address congestion in major urban areas, particularly ones that use congestion pricing or deployment of advanced technology and projects that attract private economic development.

#2: Leveraging of Federal Funding

With a focus on federal funding expanding the total resources being spent on infrastructure, and not displacing or substituting for State, local, and private funds, the INFRA program will give priority consideration to projects that use all available non-Federal resources for development, construction, operations, and maintenance.

¹ Final amount available for FY 18 dependent upon enactment of appropriations legislation

#3: Innovation

USDOT seeks to use the INFRA program to encourage innovation in three areas:

- (1) environmental review and permitting;
- (2) use of experimental project delivery authorities; and
- (3) safety and technology.

#4: Performance and Accountability

The INFRA program will seek projects that can provide specific, measurable outcomes related to delivery milestones, performance objectives, and potential policy changes needed at the State and local levels.

NEXT STEPS

Metro staff, led by the Goods Movement planning division, will review the INFRA guidelines and initiate a working group across agency departments to determine projects and program components that will meet INFRA guideline requirements and lead to competitive applications for this funding opportunity.

Metro staff will also continue its outreach to partner agencies (including Caltrans District 7) and freight stakeholders (e.g., the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach) within the region to determine if there are additional opportunities to create corridor-level applications across jurisdictional boundaries that would be competitive for the INFRA program.

Metro staff will also work with professional consultant services to assist in the grant development and writing phases to deliver its applications by the November 2, 2017 deadline.