



# Illinois Department of Transportation

Office of Highways Project Implementation / Bureau of Local Roads & Streets  
2300 South Dirksen Parkway / Room 205 / Springfield, Illinois / 62764

May 31, 2022

## CIRCULAR LETTER 2022-14

### SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL (SS4A) DISCRETIONARY GRANT PROGRAM NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO) FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2022 (FFY2022)

COUNTY ENGINEERS / SUPERINTENDENTS OF HIGHWAYS MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS  
/ DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC WORKS / MAYORS / METROPOLITAN PLANNING  
ORGANIZATIONS / TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONERS / CONSULTING  
ENGINEERS

#### **PURPOSE & INTRODUCTION:**

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced through the Federal Register soliciting project applications for a new funding opportunity identified as the [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\) Grant Program](#). This new Program was authorized and established under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

The USDOT announced that the SS4A Program is a \$1 Billion Program for FFY 2022 which is targeted to assist with ensuring safe streets and roads for all, and to address the national roadway safety crisis. This new and dedicated program is made available to support regional, local, and Tribal initiatives with plans, projects and strategies that will prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries.

The SS4A Program will be awarded on a competitive basis to support planning, infrastructure, behavioral, and operational initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets involving all roadway users, including: pedestrians (pedestrians is inclusive of all users of the pedestrian infrastructure, including persons with disabilities); bicyclists; public transportation, personal conveyance, and micro-mobility users; motorists; and commercial vehicle operators.

The SS4A comes at a time when serious injuries and fatalities on roadways are at the highest levels in over a decade. The SS4A supports both the USDOT and IDOT's comprehensive approach to significantly reduce serious injuries, possibilities and locations and deaths on our nation's highways, roads, and streets – as a major program as we all work towards the ambitious long-term goal of reaching zero roadway fatalities.

The funding and program supports the USDOT's [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#) and collaborative efforts to advance the [Safe System Approach](#), and address safety by implementing redundant measures that lead to multiple types and layers of protection.

**PROGRAM INFORMATION:**

Applicants will find detailed program information, eligibility requirements, and other key provisions in the attached [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\) Grant Program / Notice of Funding Opportunity \(Related Documents Tab\)](#). The following summary is provided herewith only as an overview:

**SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL (SS4A) GRANT PROGRAM:**

<b>Purpose:</b>	To support local initiatives to prevent transportation-related deaths and serious injuries, and improve overall roadway safety, through safety action plan development and implementation actions. The focal points of this Program include pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, personal conveyance and micromobility users, and commercial vehicle operators. The Program seeks to provide funding to develop the tools to help strengthen a community's approach to roadway safety and safe lives, on roads and streets while working towards the initiatives of "Vision Zero" or "Towards Zero Deaths".
<b>Eligible Entities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Governmental Agencies (or political subdivision of the State of Illinois)</li> <li>• Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO)</li> <li>• Federally recognized Tribal government</li> <li>• Multijurisdictional group of entities described in the aforementioned 3 (three) types of entities</li> </ul>
<b>Eligible Projects:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Action Plan Grants</u></b>; such as the development, completion or supplementation activities of a comprehensive safety action plan;</li> </ul> <p><b>OR (BUT NOT BOTH);</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Implementation Grants</u></b>; such as the planning, design, and development activities for infrastructure projects and other strategies identified in a comprehensive safety action plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Expected Range of Awards (Size and Quantity)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Action Plan Grants (hundreds of grants nationwide):</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ \$200k to \$1M for Local Governmental Agencies, or Tribal governments</li> <li>○ \$200k to \$5M for MPO, or a joint application of a multijurisdictional group with the same region</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b><u>Implementation Grants (up to 100 grants nationwide):</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ \$5M to \$30M for Local Governmental Agencies</li> <li>○ \$3M to \$30M for Tribal governments</li> <li>○ \$5M to \$50M for MPO or a joint application of a multijurisdictional group with the same region</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Key Provisions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets aside not less than 40% of the total funding each FY for Action Plan Grants</li> <li>• Requires the consideration, among other factors, the likelihood of a project significantly reducing or eliminating fatalities and serious injuries involving various road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, and commercial vehicle operators.</li> <li>• Cost Sharing or Matching – grants may not exceed 80% of the total eligible activity costs.</li> <li>• Emphasis placed on multiple jurisdictions or regionally significant applications</li> </ul>
<b>FY 2022 Funding:</b>	\$1 Billion for FFY 2022 (nationally)

**INFORMATION WEBINARS:**

As with the SS4A Grant Program being new, the USDOT will convene a series of stakeholder “How To Apply” webinars during the month of June to help potential applicants learn about the SS4a Grant Program, and what they need to know in preparing an application. The dates, times, topics and registration links are as follows (or via the webinar series homepage [Webinar Series: Safe Streets and Roads for All Grants | US Department of Transportation](#)):

1. **How to Apply for SS4A Grants: General Overview**
  - This webinar will offer a general overview of the SS4A program, the grant application process, and the available grant types.
  - Monday, June 13, 1:00-3:00 p.m. (EDT)
  - [Register to attend the June 13 webinar.](#)
2. **How to Apply for SS4A: Action Plan Grants**
  - This webinar will offer a general overview of the SS4A program and the grant application process and provide a particular focus on applying for Action Plan Grants.
  - Wednesday, June 15, 1:00-3:00 p.m. (EDT)
  - [Register to attend the June 15 webinar.](#)
3. **How to Apply for SS4A: Implementation Grants**
  - This webinar will offer a general overview of the SS4A program and the grant application process and provide a particular focus on applying for Implementation Grants.
  - Thursday, June 23, 1:00-3:00 p.m. (EDT)
  - [Register to attend the June 23 webinar.](#)

May 31, 2022

**DEADLINES:**

Applications must submit their applications through [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

**Applications from eligible entities must be submitted by 4:00 PM CDT (5:00 PM EDT) on Thursday, September 15, 2022.**

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, INFORMATION & COURTESY COORDINATION:**

For further information regarding this notice, please contact the USDOT Office of the Secretary via email at [SS4A@dot.gov](mailto:SS4A@dot.gov), or call Paul Teicher at (202) 366-4114. A TTD is available at (202)-366-3993.

In addition:

- The Notice of Funding Opportunity is posted at:  
<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A/NOFO>
- Additional resources are available at:  
<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A/resources>

The USDOT will regularly post answers to questions received from requests, and the webinars for all inquiries received before August 15, 2022, at [SS4A Frequently Asked Questions](#).

If you have any questions on the Circular Letter; and as a courtesy to foster good communication, as well as enable the Department to be able to provide administrative support if selected, please contact Stephane B. Seck-Birhame, Local Program Development Engineer at (217) 782-3972 or [Babilbile.Seck@illinois.gov](mailto:Babilbile.Seck@illinois.gov), of your inquiries and application.

Sincerely,



George A. Tapas, P.E., S.E.  
Engineer of Local Roads and Streets

cc: Arlene Kocher, FHWA Illinois Division Administrator  
David Snyder, FHWA Illinois Deputy Division Administrator  
Jon-Paul Kohler, FHWA Illinois Division  
Alan Ho, FHWA Illinois Division  
Steven Travia, IDOT, Director, Office of Highway Project Implementation  
Holly Bieneman, IDOT, Director, Office of Planning & Programming  
Tracy Sisk, IDOT, Bureau Chief, Programming  
Cindy Watters, IDOT, Bureau Chief, Safety Programs and Engineering  
Rick Johnson, Illinois Association of County Engineers  
Brad Cole, Illinois Municipal League  
Jerry Crabtree, Township Officials of Illinois  
Donald Goad, Township Highway Commissioners of Illinois

Attachment: SS4A NOFO

**Office of the Secretary of Transportation**

**Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Discretionary Grant Opportunity**

**AGENCY:** Office of the Secretary of Transportation, U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT or the Department)

**ACTION:** Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Assistance Listing # 20.939

**SUMMARY:** The purpose of this notice is to solicit applications for Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grants. Funds for the fiscal year (FY) 2022 SS4A grant program are to be awarded on a competitive basis to support planning, infrastructure, behavioral, and operational initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets involving all roadway users, including pedestrians; bicyclists; public transportation, personal conveyance, and micromobility users; motorists; and commercial vehicle operators.<sup>1</sup>

**DATES:** Applications must be submitted by 5:00 PM EDT on Thursday, September 15, 2022. Late applications will not be accepted.

**ADDRESSES:** Applications must be submitted through <https://www.grants.gov/>.

**FOR FURTHER CONTACT INFORMATION:** Please contact the SS4A grant program staff via email at [SS4A@dot.gov](mailto:SS4A@dot.gov), or call Paul Teicher at 202-366-4114. A telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) is available at 202-366-3993. In addition, DOT will regularly post answers to questions and requests for clarifications, as well as schedule information regarding webinars providing additional guidance, on DOT’s website at <https://www.transportation.gov/SS4A>. The deadline to submit technical questions is August 15, 2022.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Each section of this notice contains information and instructions relevant to the application process for SS4A grants, and all applicants should read this notice in its entirety so that they have the information they need to submit eligible and competitive applications.

N/A	SUMMARY INFORMATION
A	PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
B	FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION
C	ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION
D	APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION
E	APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION
F	FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION
G	FEDERAL AWARDED AGENCY CONTACTS
H	OTHER INFORMATION

Section A (Program Description) describes the Department’s goals and purpose in making awards, and Section E (Application Review Information) describes how the Department will select from eligible

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<sup>1</sup>The term “pedestrians” is inclusive of all users of the pedestrian infrastructure, including persons with disabilities.

applications. To support applicants through the process, the Department will provide technical assistance and resources at <https://www.transportation.gov/SS4A>.

## DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Applicant’s Jurisdiction(s)	The U.S. Census tracts where the applicant operates or performs their safety responsibilities. If an applicant is seeking funding for multiple jurisdictions, all of the relevant Census tracts for the jurisdictions covered by the application should be included.
Complete Streets	Standards or policies that ensure the safe and adequate accommodation of all users of the transportation system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, personal conveyance and micromobility users, public transportation users, children, older individuals, individuals with disabilities, motorists, and freight vehicles. <sup>2</sup>
Comprehensive Safety Action Plan	A comprehensive safety action plan (referred to as Action Plan) is aimed at preventing roadway fatalities and serious injuries in a locality, Tribe, or region. This can either be a plan developed with an Action Plan Grant, or a previously developed plan that is substantially similar and meets the eligibility requirements (e.g., a Vision Zero plan or similar plan).
Equity	The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, Indigenous and Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.
High Injury Network	Identifies the highest concentrations of traffic crashes resulting in serious injuries and fatalities within a given roadway network or jurisdiction.
Micromobility	Any small, low-speed, human- or electric-powered transportation device, including bicycles, scooters, electric-assist bicycles, electric scooters (e-scooters), and other small, lightweight, wheeled conveyances. <sup>3</sup>
Personal Conveyance	A personal conveyance is a device, other than a transport device, used by a pedestrian for personal mobility assistance or recreation. These devices can be motorized or human powered, but not propelled by pedaling. <sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The definition is based on the “Moving to a Complete Streets Design Model: A Report to Congress on Opportunities and Challenges,” <https://highways.dot.gov/newsroom/federal-highway-administration-details-efforts-advance-complete-streets-design-model>

<sup>3</sup> Source: FHWA, Public Roads Magazine Spring 2021 “Micromobility: a Travel Innovation.” Publication Number: FHWA-HRT-21-003

<sup>4</sup> <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813251>, see page 127 for the full definition as defined in the 2020 FARS/CRSS Coding and Validation Manual.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Political Subdivision of a State	A unit of government created under the authority of State law. This includes cities, towns, counties, special districts, certain transit agencies, and similar units of local government. A transit district, authority, or public benefit corporation is eligible if it was created under State law, including transit authorities operated by political subdivisions of a State.
Rural	For the purposes of this NOFO, jurisdictions outside an Urbanized Area (UA) or located within Urbanized Areas with populations fewer than 200,000 will be considered rural. Lists of UAs are available on the U.S. Census Bureau website at <a href="http://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/UAUC_RefMap/ua/">http://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/UAUC_RefMap/ua/</a> .
Safe System Approach	A guiding principle to address the safety of all road users. It involves a paradigm shift to improve safety culture, increase collaboration across all safety stakeholders, and refocus transportation system design and operation on anticipating human mistakes and lessening impact forces to reduce crash severity and save lives. <sup>5, 6</sup>
Underserved Community	An underserved community as defined for this NOFO is consistent with the Office of Management and Budget’s Interim Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative and the Historically Disadvantaged Community designation, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U.S. Census tracts identified in this table: <a href="https://datahub.transportation.gov/stories/s/tsyd-k6ij">https://datahub.transportation.gov/stories/s/tsyd-k6ij</a>;</li> <li>• Any Tribal land; or</li> <li>• Any territory or possession of the United States.</li> </ul>

## **A. Program Description**

### **1. Overview**

Section 24112 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117–58, November 15, 2021; also referred to as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law” or “BIL”) authorized and appropriated \$1 billion to be awarded by the Department of Transportation for FY 2022 for the SS4A grant program. This NOFO solicits applications for activities to be funded under the SS4A grant program. The FY22 funding will be implemented, as appropriate and consistent with law, in alignment with the priorities in Executive Order 14052, Implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (86 FR 64355).<sup>7</sup>

The purpose of SS4A grants is to improve roadway safety by significantly reducing or eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries through safety action plan development and implementation focused on all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, personal conveyance and micromobility users, and commercial vehicle operators. The program provides funding

<sup>5</sup> See: <https://www.transportation.gov/NRSS/SafeSystem>

<sup>6</sup> Safety culture can be defined as the shared values, actions, and behaviors that demonstrate a commitment to safety over competing goals and demands.

<sup>7</sup> The priorities of Executive Order 14052, Implementation of the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act are: to invest efficiently and equitably, promote the competitiveness of the U.S. economy, improve job opportunities by focusing on high labor standards and equal employment opportunity, strengthen infrastructure resilience to hazards including climate change, and to effectively coordinate with State, local, Tribal, and territorial government partners.

to develop the tools to help strengthen a community’s approach to roadway safety and save lives and is designed to meet the needs of diverse local, Tribal, and regional communities that differ dramatically in size, location, and experience administering Federal funding.

## 2. Grant Types and Deliverables

The SS4A program provides funding for two types of grants: Action Plan Grants (for comprehensive safety action plans) and Implementation Grants. Action Plan Grants are used to develop, complete, or supplement a comprehensive safety action plan. To apply for an Implementation Grant, an eligible applicant must have a qualifying Action Plan. Implementation Grants are available to implement strategies or projects that are consistent with an existing Action Plan. Applicants for Implementation Grants can self-certify that they have in place one or more plans that together are substantially similar to and meet the eligibility requirements for an Action Plan.

### i. Action Plan Grants

An Action Plan is the foundation of the SS4A grant program. Action Plan Grants provide Federal funds to eligible applicants to develop or complete an Action Plan. Action Plan Grants may also fund supplemental Action Plan activities. The goal of an Action Plan is to develop a holistic, well-defined strategy to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries in a locality, Tribe, or region. Further information on eligibility requirements is in Section C.

The primary deliverable for an Action Plan Grant is a publicly available Action Plan. For the purposes of the SS4A grant program, an Action Plan includes the components in Table 1. DOT considers the process of developing an Action Plan to be critical for success, and the components reflect a process-oriented set of activities.

**Table 1: Action Plan Components**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Description</b>
Leadership Commitment and Goal Setting	An official public commitment (e.g., resolution, policy, ordinance, etc.) by a high-ranking official and/or governing body (e.g., Mayor, City Council, Tribal Council, MPO Policy Board, etc.) to an eventual goal of zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The commitment must include a goal and timeline for eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries achieved through one, or both, of the following: (1) the target date for achieving zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries, OR (2) an ambitious percentage reduction of roadway fatalities and serious injuries by a specific date with an eventual goal of eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries.
Planning Structure	A committee, task force, implementation group, or similar body charged with oversight of the Action Plan development, implementation, and monitoring.



Component	Description
Safety Analysis	Analysis of existing conditions and historical trends that provides a baseline level of crashes involving fatalities and serious injuries across a jurisdiction, locality, Tribe, or region. Includes an analysis of locations where there are crashes and the severity of the crashes, as well as contributing factors and crash types by relevant road users (motorists, people walking, transit users, etc.). Analysis of systemic and specific safety needs is also performed, as needed (e.g., high-risk road features, specific safety needs of relevant road users, public health approaches, analysis of the built environment, demographic, and structural issues, etc.). To the extent practical, the analysis should include all roadways within the jurisdiction, without regard for ownership. Based on the analysis performed, a geospatial identification of higher-risk locations is developed (a High-Injury Network or equivalent).
Engagement and Collaboration	Robust engagement with the public and relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and community groups, that allows for both community representation and feedback. Information received from engagement and collaboration is analyzed and incorporated into the Action Plan. Overlapping jurisdictions are included in the process. Plans and processes are coordinated and aligned with other governmental plans and planning processes to the extent practical.
Equity Considerations	Plan development using inclusive and representative processes. Underserved communities are identified through data and other analyses in collaboration with appropriate partners. <sup>8</sup> Analysis includes both population characteristics and initial equity impact assessments of the proposed projects and strategies.
Policy and Process Changes	Assessment of current policies, plans, guidelines, and/or standards (e.g., manuals) to identify opportunities to improve how processes prioritize transportation safety. The Action Plan discusses implementation through the adoption of revised or new policies, guidelines, and/or standards, as appropriate.
Strategy and Project Selections	<p>Identification of a comprehensive set of projects and strategies, shaped by data, the best available evidence and noteworthy practices, as well as stakeholder input and equity considerations, that will address the safety problems described in the Action Plan. These strategies and countermeasures focus on a Safe System Approach, effective interventions, and consider multidisciplinary activities. To the extent practical, data limitations are identified and mitigated.</p> <p>Once identified, the list of projects and strategies is prioritized in a list that provides time ranges for when the strategies and countermeasures will be deployed (e.g., short-, mid-, and long-term timeframes). The list should include specific projects and strategies, or descriptions of programs of projects and strategies, and explains prioritization criteria used. The list should contain interventions focused on infrastructure, behavioral, and/or operational safety.</p>

<sup>8</sup> An underserved community as defined for this NOFO is consistent with the Office of Management and Budget’s Interim Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/M-21-28.pdf>) and the Historically Disadvantaged Community designation, which includes U.S. Census tracts identified in this table <https://datahub.transportation.gov/stories/s/tsyd-k6ij>; any Tribal land; or any territory or possession of the United States.

Component	Description
Progress and Transparency	Method to measure progress over time after an Action Plan is developed or updated, including outcome data. Means to ensure ongoing transparency is established with residents and other relevant stakeholders. Must include, at a minimum, annual public and accessible reporting on progress toward reducing roadway fatalities and serious injuries, and public posting of the Action Plan online.

a) Supplemental Action Plan Activities:

Supplemental action plan activities support or enhance an existing Action Plan. To fund supplemental Action Plan activities through the SS4A program, an applicant must have an existing Action Plan, or a plan that is substantially similar and meets the eligibility requirements for having an existing plan. The plan components may be contained within several documents. Table 2 in Section C is a Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet with instructions to determine whether an existing plan meets the eligibility requirements. Supplemental action plan activities could include, but are not limited to: a second round of analysis; expanded data collection and evaluation using integrated data; testing action plan concepts before project and strategy implementation; feasibility studies using quick-build strategies that inform permanent projects in the future (e.g., paint, plastic bollards, etc.); follow-up stakeholder engagement and collaboration; targeted equity assessments; progress report development; and complementary planning efforts such as speed management plans, accessibility and transition plans, racial and health equity plans, and lighting management plans. Additional information on supplemental action plan activities is located at <https://www.transportation.gov/SS4A>.

Applicants that have an existing plan that is substantially similar to and meets the eligibility requirements of an Action Plan may alternatively choose to fund supplemental Action Plan activities through an application for an Implementation Grant rather than an Action Plan Grant. See Section A.2.ii below.

ii. Implementation Grants

Implementation Grants fund projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan that address roadway safety problems. Implementation Grants may also fund associated planning and design and supplemental Action Plan activities in support of an existing Action Plan. DOT encourages Implementation Grant applicants to include supplemental Action Plan activities in their application to further improve and update existing plans. Applicants must have an existing Action Plan to apply for Implementation Grants or have an existing plan that is substantially similar and meets the eligibility requirements of an Action Plan. If applicants do not have an existing Action Plan, they should apply for Action Plan Grants and **NOT** Implementation Grants. The plan components may be contained within several documents. Table 2 in Section C is a Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet with instructions to determine eligibility to apply for an Implementation Grant. Additional information on eligibility requirements and eligible activities is in Section C below.

**3. SS4A Grant Priorities**

This section discusses priorities specific to SS4A and those related to the Department’s overall mission, which are reflected in the selection criteria and NOFO requirements. Successful grant applications will demonstrate engagement with a variety of public and private stakeholders and seek to adopt innovative technologies and strategies to:

- Promote safety;
- Employ low-cost, high-impact strategies that can improve safety over a wider geographic area;
- Ensure equitable investment in the safety needs of underserved communities, which includes both underserved urban and rural communities;
- Incorporate evidence-based projects and strategies; and
- Align with the Department’s mission and with priorities such as equity, climate and sustainability, quality job creation, and economic strength and global competitiveness.

The Department seeks to award Action Plan Grants based on safety impact, equity, and other safety considerations. For Implementation Grants, DOT seeks to make awards to projects and strategies that save lives and reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries; incorporate equity, engagement, and collaboration into how projects and strategies are executed; use effective practices and strategies; consider climate change, sustainability, and economic competitiveness in project and strategy implementation; and will be able to complete the full scope of funded projects and strategies within five years after the establishment of a grant agreement. Section D provides more information on the specific measures an application should demonstrate to support these goals.

The SS4A grant program aligns with both Departmental and Biden-Harris Administration activities and priorities. The National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS, issued January 27, 2022) commits the Department to respond to the current crisis in roadway fatalities by “taking substantial, comprehensive action to significantly reduce serious and fatal injuries on the Nation’s roadways,” in pursuit of the goal of achieving zero roadway deaths.<sup>9</sup> DOT recognizes that zero is the only acceptable number of deaths on our roads, and achieving that is our long-term safety goal. The outcomes that are anticipated from the SS4A program also support the FY 2022-2026 DOT Strategic Plan and the accompanying safety performance goals such as a medium-term goal of a two-thirds reduction in roadway fatalities by 2040.<sup>10</sup>

As part of the NRSS, the Department adopted the Safe System Approach as a guiding principle to advance roadway safety. The Safe System Approach addresses the safety of all road users. It involves a paradigm shift to improve safety culture, increase collaboration across all safety stakeholders, and refocus transportation system design and operation on anticipating human mistakes and lessening impact forces to reduce crash severity and save lives. For more information on the Safe System Approach, see the NRSS.

DOT encourages communities to adopt and implement Complete Streets policies that prioritize the safety of all users in transportation network planning, design, construction, and operations.<sup>11</sup> A full transition to a Complete Streets design model requires leadership, identification and elimination of barriers, and development of new policies, rules, and procedures to prioritize safety. A Complete Street includes, but is not limited to: sidewalks, curb ramps, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, accessible public transportation stops, safe and accommodating crossing options, median islands, pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, and roundabouts.<sup>12</sup> Recipients of Federal financial assistance are required to ensure the accessibility of pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way. See Section F.2 of this NOFO for program requirements.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.transportation.gov/NRSS>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.transportation.gov/dot-strategic-plan>

<sup>11</sup> Complete Streets are defined in the Definitions table at the beginning of the document.

<sup>12</sup> More information on Complete Streets can be found at <https://highways.dot.gov/complete-streets>

The NOFO aligns with and considers Departmental policy priorities that have a nexus to roadway safety and grant funding. As part of the Department's implementation of Executive Order 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (86 FR 7619), the Department seeks to fund applications that, to the extent possible, target at least 40 percent of benefits towards low-income and underserved communities. DOT also seeks to award funds under the SS4A grant program that proactively address equity and barriers to opportunity, or redress prior inequities and barriers to opportunity. DOT supports the policies in Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (86 FR 7009), to pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, including people of color, rural communities, and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. An important area for DOT's focus is the disproportionate, adverse safety impacts that affect certain groups on our roadways, particularly people walking and biking in underserved communities. See Section F.2.i of this NOFO for equity-related program requirements.

As part of the United States' commitment to a whole-of-government approach to reaching net-zero emissions economy-wide by 2050 and a 50–52 percent reduction in emissions from 2005 levels by 2030, BIL and its associated transportation funding programs permit historic investments to improve the resilience of transportation infrastructure, helping States and communities prepare for hazards such as wildfires, floods, storms, and droughts exacerbated by climate change. DOT's goal is to encourage the advancement of projects and strategies that address climate change and sustainability. To enable this, the Department encourages applicants to consider climate change and sustainability throughout the planning and project development process, including the extent to which projects and strategies under the SS4A grant program align with the President's greenhouse gas reduction, climate resilience, and environmental justice commitments.

The Department intends to use the SS4A grant program to support the creation of good-paying jobs with the free and fair choice to join a union, and the incorporation of strong labor standards and workforce programs, in particular registered apprenticeships, joint labor-management programs, or other high-quality workforce training programs, including high-quality pre-apprenticeships tied to registered apprenticeships, in project planning stages and program delivery. Grant applications that incorporate such considerations support a strong economy and labor market.

Consistent with the Department's Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) initiative, the Department seeks to award funding to rural applications that address disproportionately high fatality rates in rural communities. For applicants seeking to use innovative technologies and strategies, the Department's Innovation Principles serve as a guide to ensure innovations reduce deaths and serious injuries while committing to the highest standards of safety across technologies.<sup>13</sup>

## **B. Federal Award Information**

### **1. Total Funding Available**

The BIL established the SS4A program with \$5,000,000,000 in advanced appropriations in Division J, including \$1,000,000,000 for FY 2022. Therefore, this Notice makes available up to \$1 billion for FY 2022 grants under the SS4A program. Refer to Section D for greater detail on additional funding considerations and Section D.5 for funding restrictions.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.transportation.gov/priorities/innovation/us-dot-innovation-principles>. Released January 6, 2022.

## 2. Availability of Funds

Grant funding obligation occurs when a selected applicant and DOT enter into a written grant agreement after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements. Unless authorized by DOT in writing after DOT's announcement of FY 2022 SS4A grant awards, any costs incurred prior to DOT's obligation of funds for activities ("pre-award costs") are ineligible for reimbursement. All FY 2022 SS4A funds must be expended within five years after the grant agreement is executed and DOT obligates the funds.

## 3. Award Size and Anticipated Quantity

In FY 2022, DOT expects to award hundreds of Action Plan Grants, and up to one hundred Implementation Grants. The Department reserves the right to make more, or fewer, awards. DOT reserves the discretion to alter minimum and maximum award sizes upon receiving the full pool of applications and assessing the needs of the program in relation to the SS4A grant priorities in Section A.3.

### i. Action Plan Grants

For Action Plan Grants, award amounts will be based on estimated costs, with an expected minimum of \$200,000 for all applicants, an expected maximum of \$1,000,000 for a political subdivision of a State or a federally recognized Tribal government, and an expected maximum of \$5,000,000 for a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) or a joint application comprised of a multijurisdictional group of entities that is regional in scope (e.g., a multijurisdictional group of counties, a council of governments and cities within the same region, etc.). The Department will consider applications with funding requests under the expected minimum award amount. DOT reserves the right to make Action Grant awards less than the total amount requested by the applicant.

Joint applications that engage multiple jurisdictions in the same region are encouraged, in order to ensure collaboration across multiple jurisdictions and leverage the expertise of agencies with established financial relationships with DOT and knowledge of Federal grant administration requirements. Applicants may propose development of a single Action Plan covering all jurisdictions, or several plans for individual jurisdictions, administered by the leading agency.

### ii. Implementation Plan Grants

For Implementation Grants, DOT expects the minimum award will be \$5,000,000 and the maximum award will be \$30,000,000 for political subdivisions of a State. For applicants who are federally recognized Tribal governments or applicants in rural areas, DOT expects the minimum award will be \$3,000,000 and the maximum award will be \$30,000,000. For an MPO or a joint application comprised of a multijurisdictional group of entities that is regional in scope, the expected maximum award will be \$50,000,000. For the purposes of the SS4A grant program award size minimum, rural is defined as an area outside an Urbanized Area (UA) or located within a UA with a population of fewer than 200,000.<sup>14</sup> DOT reserves the right to make Implementation Grant awards less than the total amount requested by the applicant.

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<sup>14</sup> Current lists of Urbanized Areas are available on the U.S. Census Bureau website at [http://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/uau\\_refmap/ua/](http://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/uau_refmap/ua/). For the purposes of the SS4A program, Urbanized Areas with populations fewer than 200,000 will be considered rural.

#### 4. Start Dates and Period of Performance

DOT expects to obligate SS4A award funding via a signed grant agreement between the Department and the recipient, as flexibly and expeditiously as possible, within 12 months after awards have been announced. Applicants who have never received Federal funding from DOT before are encouraged to partner with eligible applicants within the same region, such as an MPO, that have established financial relationships with DOT and knowledge of Federal grant administration requirements. While States are not eligible applicants and cannot be a co-applicant, eligible applicants are encouraged to separately partner with States and other entities experienced with administering Federal grants, outside of the SS4A grant award process, to ensure effective administration of a grant award. The expected period of performance for Action Plan Grant agreements is between 12 and 24 months. The period of performance for Implementation Grant agreements may not exceed five years.

Because award recipients under this program may be first-time recipients of Federal funding, DOT is committed to implementing the program as flexibly as permitted by statute and to providing assistance to help award recipients through the process of securing a grant agreement and delivering both Action Plan activities and Implementation Grant projects and strategies.

#### 5. Data Collection Requirements

Under the BIL, the Department shall post on a publicly available website best practices and lessons learned for preventing roadway fatalities and serious injuries pursuant to strategies or interventions implemented under SS4A. Additionally, DOT shall evaluate and incorporate, as appropriate, the effectiveness of strategies and interventions implemented under the SS4A grant program.<sup>15</sup> The Department intends to measure safety outcomes through a combination of grant agreement activities and data collections, DOT data collections already underway, and program evaluations separate from the individual grant agreements in accordance with Section F.3.iii. The grant data-collection requirements reflect the need to build evidence of noteworthy strategies and what works. The Department expects to use the data and outcome information collected as part of the SS4A in evaluations focused on before and after studies.

All award recipients shall submit a report that describes:

- The costs of each eligible project and strategy carried out using the grant;
- The roadway safety outcomes and any additional benefits (e.g., increased walking, biking, or transit use without a commensurate increase in crashes, etc.) that each such project and strategy has generated, as—
  - Identified in the grant application; and
  - Measured by data, to the maximum extent practicable; and
- The lessons learned and any recommendations relating to future projects or strategies to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets.

All recipients must provide aggregated annual crash data on serious injuries and fatalities for the duration of the period of performance for the jurisdiction or jurisdictions for which funds were awarded. These data will provide the information for metrics on changes in serious injuries and fatalities over time.

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<sup>15</sup> BIL specifically cites *Countermeasures That Work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices, Ninth Edition* or any successor document, but DOT also is to consider applied research focused on infrastructure and operational projects and strategies.

Implementation Grant recipients must also provide crash data on serious injury and fatalities in the locations where projects and strategies are implemented, which are expected to include crash characteristics and contributing factor information associated with the safety problems being addressed. Data that measure outcomes for the specific safety problems addressed are required and could include, but are not limited to, aggregated information by road user, safety issue, and demographic characteristics such as race and gender. For Implementation Grants that undertake projects and strategies to foster applied research and experimentation to inform project and strategy effectiveness, additional data collection requirements will be negotiated with the applicant before a grant agreement is established. Federally recognized Tribal governments receiving grants may request alternative data collection requirements during grant agreement formulation, as appropriate. This information will be gathered on a quarterly basis in a Performance Progress Report (SF-PPR).<sup>16</sup>

To fulfill the data collection requirements and in accordance with the U.S. DOT Public Access Plan, award recipients must consider, budget for, and implement appropriate data management, for data and information outputs acquired or generated during the course of the grant.<sup>17, 18</sup> Applicants are expected to account for data and performance reporting in their budget submission.

## **C. Eligibility Information**

### **1. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants for SS4A grants are (1) a metropolitan planning organization (MPO); (2) a political subdivision of a State or territory; (3) a federally recognized Tribal government; and (4) a multijurisdictional group of entities described in any of the aforementioned three types of entities. A multijurisdictional group of entities described in (4) should identify a lead applicant as the primary point of contact. For the purposes of this NOFO, a political subdivision of a State under (2), above, is defined as a unit of government under the authority of State law. This includes cities, towns, counties, special districts, and similar units of local government. A transit district, authority, or public benefit corporation is eligible if it was created under State law, including transit authorities operated by political subdivisions of a State. States are not eligible applicants, but DOT encourages applicants to coordinate with State entities, as appropriate.

Eligible MPOs, transit agencies, and multijurisdictional groups of entities with a regional scope are encouraged to support subdivisions of a State such as cities, towns, and counties with smaller populations within their region. The Department strongly encourages such joint applications for Action Plan Grants, and for applicants who have never received Federal funding and can jointly apply with entities experienced executing DOT grants.

An eligible applicant for Implementation Grants must also meet at least one of these conditions: (1) have ownership and/or maintenance responsibilities over a roadway network; (2) have safety responsibilities that affect roadways; or (3) have agreement from the agency that has ownership and/or maintenance responsibilities for the roadway within the applicant's jurisdiction. For the purposes of this NOFO, an applicant's jurisdiction is defined as the U.S. Census tracts where the applicant operates or performs their safety responsibilities.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.sbir.gov/sites/default/files/SF%20PPR.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <https://doi.org/10.21949/1520559>

<sup>18</sup> United States. Department of Transportation. (2022) *DOT Public Access* [Home page]. <https://doi.org/10.21949/1503647>

## 2. Cost Sharing or Matching

The Federal share of a SS4A grant may not exceed 80 percent of total eligible activity costs. Recipients are required to contribute a local matching share of no less than 20 percent of eligible activity costs. All matching funds must be from non-Federal sources. In accordance with 2 CFR § 200.306, grant recipients may use in-kind or cash contributions toward local match requirements so long as those contributions meet the requirements under 2 CFR § 200.306(b). Matching funds may include funding from the applicant, or other SS4A-eligible non-Federal sources partnering with the applicant, which could include, but is not limited to, funds from the State. Any in-kind contributions used to fulfill the cost-share requirement for Action Plan and Implementation Grants must: be in accordance with the cost principles in 2 CFR § 200 Subpart E; include documented evidence of completion within the period of performance; and support the execution of the eligible activities in Section C.4.

SS4A funds will reimburse recipients only after a grant agreement has been executed, allowable expenses are incurred, and valid requests for reimbursement are submitted. Grant agreements are expected to be administered on a reimbursement basis, and at the Department's discretion alternative funding arrangements may be established on a case-by-case basis.

## 3. Grant Eligibility Requirements

If an applicant is eligible for both an Action Plan Grant and an Implementation Grant, the applicant may only apply for an Action Plan Grant **or** an Implementation Grant, not both. An eligible applicant may only submit one application to the funding opportunity. Action Plan Grant funding recipients are not precluded from applying for Implementation Grants in future funding rounds.

### i. Action Plan Grant Eligibility Requirements

The Action Plan Grant eligibility requirements are contingent on whether an applicant is requesting funds to develop or complete an Action Plan, or if the applicant is requesting funds for supplemental action plan activities. Applicants may not apply to develop or complete an Action Plan **and** fund supplemental action plan activities in the current round of funding.

#### a) Eligibility Requirements to Develop or Complete an Action Plan

Any applicant that meets the eligibility requirements may apply for an Action Plan Grant to develop or complete an Action Plan. Applicants with an existing Action Plan may also apply to develop a new Action Plan.

#### b) Eligibility Requirements for Supplemental Action Plan Activities

Applicants for Action Plan Grants to fund supplemental action plan activities must either have an established Action Plan with all components described in Table 1 in Section A, or an existing plan that is substantially similar and meets the eligibility requirements. Table 2 below provides instructions to determine eligibility for applicants that have a substantially similar plan. The components required for an established plan to be substantially similar to an Action Plan may be found in multiple plans. State-level action plans (e.g., a Strategic Highway Safety Plan required in 23 U.S. Code (U.S.C.) § 148, State Highway Safety Plans required in 23 U.S.C. § 402, etc.) or Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans in 49 U.S.C. § 5329 cannot be used as an established plan. It is recommended that applicants include this eligibility worksheet as part of their narrative submission. If this Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet



is not used, applicants must describe how their established plan is substantially similar to an Action Plan as part of the Narrative, based on the criteria in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet**

<p><b>Worksheet instructions:</b> The purpose of the worksheet is to determine whether an applicant’s existing plan is substantially similar to an Action Plan, or not. For each question below, answer yes or no. For each yes, cite the specific page in your existing Action Plan or other plan/plans that corroborate your response, provide supporting documentation, or provide other evidence. Refer to Table 1 for further details on each component. <i>Note:</i> The term Action Plan is used in this worksheet; it covers either a stand-alone Action Plan or components of other plans that combined comprise an Action Plan.</p> <p><b>Instructions to affirm eligibility:</b> Based on the questions in this eligibility worksheet, an applicant is eligible to apply for an Action Plan Grant that funds supplemental action plan activities, or an Implementation Grant, if the following two conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions 3, 7, and 9 are answered “yes.” If Question 3, 7, or 9 is answered “no,” the plan is not substantially similar and ineligible to apply for Action Plan funds specifically for a supplemental action plan activity, nor an Implementation Grant.</li> <li>• At least four of the six remaining Questions are answered “yes” (Questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, or 8).</li> </ul> <p>If both conditions are met, an applicant has a substantially similar plan.</p>	
Question	Response, Document and Page Number
<p>1. Are both of the following true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did a high-ranking official and/or governing body in the jurisdiction publicly commit to an eventual goal of zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries?</li> <li>• Did the commitment include either setting a target date to reach zero, OR setting one or more targets to achieve significant declines in roadway fatalities and serious injuries by a specific date?</li> </ul>	
<p>2. To develop the Action Plan, was a committee, task force, implementation group, or similar body established and charged with the plan’s development, implementation, and monitoring?</p>	
<p>3. Does the Action Plan include all of the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of existing conditions and historical trends to baseline the level of crashes involving fatalities and serious injuries across a jurisdiction, locality, Tribe, or region;</li> <li>• Analysis of the location(s) where there are crashes, the severity, as well as contributing factors and crash types;</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of systemic and specific safety needs is also performed, as needed (e.g., high risk road features, specific safety needs of relevant road users; and</li> <li>• A geospatial identification (geographic or locational data using maps) of higher risk locations.</li> </ul>	
<p>4. Did the Action Plan development include all of the following activities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with the public and relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and community groups;</li> <li>• Incorporation of information received from the engagement and collaboration into the plan; and</li> <li>• Coordination that included inter- and intra-governmental cooperation and collaboration, as appropriate.</li> </ul>	
<p>5. Did the Action Plan development include all of the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considerations of equity using inclusive and representative processes;</li> <li>• The identification of underserved communities through data; and</li> <li>• Equity analysis, in collaboration with appropriate partners, focused on initial equity impact assessments of the proposed projects and strategies, and population characteristics.</li> </ul>	
<p>6. Are both of the following true?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan development included an assessment of current policies, plans, guidelines, and/or standards to identify opportunities to improve how processes prioritize safety; and</li> <li>• The plan discusses implementation through the adoption of revised or new policies, guidelines, and/or standards.</li> </ul>	
<p>7. Does the plan identify a comprehensive set of projects and strategies to address the safety problems identified in the Action Plan, time ranges when the strategies and projects will be deployed, and explain project prioritization criteria?</p>	

8. Does the plan include all of the following? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A description of how progress will be measured over time that includes, at a minimum, outcome data</li> <li>• The plan is posted publicly online.</li> </ul>	
9. Was the plan finalized and/or last updated between 2017 and 2022?	

ii. Implementation Grant Eligibility Requirements

To apply for an Implementation Grant, the applicant must certify that they have an existing plan which is substantially similar to an Action Plan. The plan or plans should be uploaded as an attachment to your application. Use Table 2, Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet, from the previous section to determine eligibility. The existing plan must be focused, at least in part, on the roadway network within the applicant’s jurisdiction. The components required for an existing plan to be substantially similar to an Action Plan may be found in multiple plans. State-level action plans (e.g., a Strategic Highway Safety Plan required in 23 U.S.C. § 148, State Highway Safety Plans required in 23 U.S.C. § 402, Commercial Vehicle Safety Plans required in 49 U.S.C. § 31102, etc.) as well as Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans in 49 U.S.C. § 5329 cannot be used as an established plan to apply for an Implementation Grant.

**4. Eligible Activities and Costs**

i. Eligible Activities

Broadly, eligible activity costs must comply with the cost principles set forth in with 2 CFR, Subpart E (i.e., 2 CFR § 200.403 and § 200.405). DOT reserves the right to make cost eligibility determinations on a case-by-case basis. Eligible activities for grant funding include the following three elements:

- (A) developing a comprehensive safety action plan or Action Plan (i.e., the activities outlined in Section A.2.i in Table 1 and the list of supplemental Action Plan activities);
- (B) conducting planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan; and
- (C) carrying out projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan.

For Action Plan Grants, eligible activities and costs only include those that directly assist in the development of the Action Plan, element (A), and/or supplemental action plan activities in support of an existing Action Plan or plans.

For Implementation Grants, activities *must* include element (C) “carrying out projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan,” and *may* include element (B) “conducting planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan” and/or element (A) “supplemental action plan activities in support of an existing Action Plan.” Projects and strategies identified in element (C) must be either infrastructure, behavioral, or operational activities identified in the Action Plan, and must be directly related to addressing the safety problem(s) identified in the application and Action Plan. Examples of eligible Implementation Grant activities are listed on the SS4A website located at [www.transportation.gov/SS4A](http://www.transportation.gov/SS4A). The following activities are **not** eligible for element (C) “projects and strategies” funding:

- Projects and strategies whose primary purpose is not roadway safety.
- Projects and strategies exclusively focused on non-roadway modes of transportation, including air, rail, marine, and pipeline. Roadway intersections with other modes of transportation (e.g., at-grade highway rail crossings, etc.) are eligible activities.
- Capital projects to construct new roadways used for motor vehicles. New roadways exclusively for non-motorists is an eligible activity if the primary purpose is safety-related.
- Infrastructure projects primarily intended to expand capacity to improve Levels of Service for motorists on an existing roadway, such as the creation of additional lanes.
- Maintenance activities for an existing roadway primarily to maintain a state of good repair. However, roadway modifications on an existing roadway in support of specific safety-related projects identified in an Action Plan are eligible activities.
- Development or implementation of a public transportation agency safety plan (PTASP) required by 49 U.S.C. § 5329. However, a PTASP that identifies and addresses risks to pedestrians, bicyclists, personal conveyance and micromobility users, transit riders, and others may inform Action Plan development.

All projects and strategies must have equity—the consistent, fair, just, and impartial treatment of all people—at their foundation. This includes traffic enforcement strategies. As part of the Safe System Approach adopted in the USDOT’s National Roadway Safety Strategy, any activities related to compliance or enforcement efforts to make our roads safer should affirmatively improve equity outcomes as part of a comprehensive approach to achieve zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The SS4A program can be used to support safety projects and strategies that address serious safety violations of drivers (e.g., speeding, alcohol and drug-impaired driving, etc.), so long as the proposed strategies are data-driven and demonstrate a process in alignment with goals around community policing and in accordance with Federal civil rights laws and regulations.<sup>19</sup>

Funds may not be used, either directly or indirectly, to support or oppose union organizing.

ii. Project and Strategy Location

For Implementation Grants, applications must identify the problems to be addressed, the relevant geographic locations, and the projects and strategies they plan to implement, based on their Action Plan or established plan. This should include specific intervention types to the extent practicable. To provide flexibility in the implementation of projects and strategies that involve systemic safety strategies or bundling of similar countermeasures, an applicant may wait to specify specific site locations and designs for the projects and strategies as part of executing the grant agreement, if necessary, upon approval of the Department and so long as the identified site locations and designs remain consistent with the intent of the award.

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<sup>19</sup> For one such example see <https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-p157-pub.pdf>.

## D. Application and Submission Information

### 1. Address to Request Application Package

All grant application materials can be accessed at [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Applicants must submit their applications via [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) under the Notice of Funding Opportunity Number cited herein. Potential applicants may also request paper copies of materials at:

Telephone: (202)-366-4114  
Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
W84-322  
Washington, DC 20590

### 2. Content and Form of Application Submission

The Action Plan Grant and Implementation Grant have different application submission and supporting document requirements.

#### i. Action Plan Grant Application Submissions

All Action Plan Grant applications must submit the following Standard Forms (SFs):

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

In addition to the SFs above, the applicant must provide: a) Key Information; b) Narrative; c) Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet, if applying for action plan supplemental activities; d) Map; and e) Budget. While it is not required to conform to the recommended templates below, it is strongly encouraged to provide the information using the specific structure provided in this NOFO.

#### a) Key Information Table

Lead Applicant	
If Multijurisdictional, additional eligible entities jointly applying	
Total jurisdiction population	
Count of motor-vehicle-involved roadway fatalities from 2016 to 2020	
Fatality rate	
Population in Underserved Communities	
States(s) in which projects and strategies are located	
Costs by State (if project spans more than one State)	

Instructions for a):

- The lead applicant is the primary jurisdiction, and the lead eligible entity applying for the grant.

- If the application is multijurisdictional, list additional eligible entities within the multijurisdictional group of entities. If a single applicant, mark as not applicable.
- Total jurisdiction population is based on 2020 U.S. Census data and includes the total population of all Census tracts where the applicant operates or performs their safety responsibilities.
- The count of roadway fatalities from 2016 to 2020 in the jurisdiction based on DOT’s Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data, an alternative traffic fatality dataset, or a comparable data set with roadway fatality information.<sup>20</sup> This should be a number. Cite the source, if using a dataset different from FARS, with a link to the data if publicly available.
- The fatality rate, calculated using the average from the total count of fatalities from 2016 to 2020 based on FARS data, an alternative traffic fatality dataset, or a comparable data set with roadway fatality information, which is divided by the population of the applicant’s jurisdiction based on 2020 U.S. Census population data. This should be a number. Cite the source, if using a dataset different from FARS.
- Check one of the three available boxes to the right of the column with the three Action Plan types: new Action Plan; Action Plan completion; or supplemental action plan activities.
- The population in underserved communities should be a percentage obtained by dividing the population living in Census tracts with an Underserved Community designation divided by the total population living in the jurisdiction.<sup>21</sup> For multi-jurisdictional groups, provide this information for each jurisdiction in the group.
- Note the State(s) of the applicants. If a federally recognized Tribal government, mark as not applicable.
- Allocate funding request amounts by State based on where the funds are expected to be spent. If the projects and strategies are located in only one State, put the full funding request amount.

c) Narrative

In narrative form, the applicant should respond to the Action Plan Grant selection criteria described in Section E.1.i to affirm whether the applicant has considered certain activities that will enhance the implementation of an Action Plan once developed or updated. The narrative must be no longer than 300 words.

d) Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet

If applying for Action Plan Grant funding supplemental action plan activities, attach the filled out Table 2 Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet. If applying to develop or complete an Action Plan, do not include Table 2.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.nhtsa.gov/research-data/fatality-analysis-reporting-system-fars>. To query the FARS data see <https://cdan.dot.gov/query>. To query the FARS data see <https://cdan.dot.gov/query>. For the Census data visit <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/rdo/summary-files.html>

<sup>21</sup> <https://datahub.transportation.gov/stories/s/tsyd-k6ij>

e) Map

The applicant must submit a map that shows the location of the jurisdiction and highlights the roadway network under the applicant’s jurisdiction. The permissible formats include: map web link (e.g., Google, Bing, etc.), PDF, image file, vector file, or shapefile.

f) Budget

Applicants are required to provide a brief budget summary and a high-level overview of estimated activity costs, as organized by all major cost elements. The budget only includes costs associated with the eligible activity (A) developing a comprehensive safety action plan and may include supplemental action plan activities. Funding sources should be grouped into two categories: SS4A Funding Federal share, and non-Federal share funds. The costs or value of in-kind matches should also be provided. This budget should not include any previously incurred expenses, or costs to be incurred before the time of award. DOT requires applicants use SF-424A to provide this information.

ii. Implementation Grant Application Submissions

Implementation Grant applications must submit the following Standard Forms (SFs):

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- Budget Information for Construction Programs (SF-424C)
- Assurances for Construction Programs (SF-424D)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

In addition to the SFs above, the applicant must provide: a) Key Information; b) Narrative; c) Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet; and d) Budget. While it is not required to conform to the recommended template in the Key Information Table below, it is strongly encouraged to provide the information using the specific structure provided in this NOFO.

a) Key Information Table

Application Name	
Lead Applicant	
If Multijurisdictional, additional eligible entities jointly applying	
Roadway safety responsibility	Ownership and/or maintenance responsibilities over a roadway network
	Safety responsibilities that affect roadways
	Have an agreement from the agency that has ownership and/or maintenance responsibilities for the roadway within the applicant’s jurisdiction
Population in Underserved Communities	
States(s) in which activities are located	
Costs by State	
Funds to Underserved Communities	

Cost total for eligible activity (A) supplemental action plan activities in support of an existing Action Plan	
Cost total for eligible activity (B) conducting planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan	
Cost total for eligible activity (C) carrying out projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan	
Action Plan or Established Plan Link	

Instructions for a)

- Provide a grant application name to accompany the grant application.
- The lead applicant is the primary jurisdiction, and the lead eligible entity applying for the grant.
- If the application is multijurisdictional, list additional eligible entities within the multijurisdictional group of entities. If a single applicant, leave blank.
- The roadway safety responsibility response should check one of the three answers to meet eligibility conditions.
- The population in Underserved Community Census Tracts should be a percentage number obtained by dividing the population living in Underserved Community Census tracts within the jurisdiction divided by the total population living in the jurisdiction.
- Identify State(s) in which the applicant is located in. If a federally recognized Tribal government, leave blank.
- The total amount of funds to underserved communities is the amount of spent in, and provide safety benefits to, locations in census tracts designated as underserved communities.
- For each State, allocate funding request amounts divided up by State based on where the funds are expected to be spent. If the applicant is located in only one State, put the full funding request amount only.
- Provide a weblink to the plan that serves as the Action Plan or established plan that is substantially similar. This may be attached as a supporting PDF document instead; if so please write “See Supporting Documents.”

b) Narrative

The Department recommends that the narrative follows the outline below to address the program requirements and assist evaluators in locating relevant information. The narrative may not exceed 10 pages in length, excluding cover pages and the table of contents. Key information, the Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet, and Budget sections do not count towards the 10-page limit. Appendices may include documents supporting assertions or conclusions made in the 10-page narrative and also do not count towards the 10-page limit. If possible, website links to supporting documentation should be provided rather than copies of these supporting materials. If supporting documents are submitted, applicants should clearly identify within the narrative the relevance of each supporting document.



I. Overview	See D.2.ii.b.I
II. Location	See D.2.ii.b.II
III. Response to Selection Criteria	See D.2.ii.b.III and Section E.1.ii
IV. Project Readiness	See D.2.ii.b.IV

### I. Overview

This section should provide an introduction, describe the safety context, jurisdiction, and any high-level background information that would be useful to understand the rest of the application.

### II. Location

This section of the application should describe the jurisdiction’s location, the jurisdiction’s High-Injury Network or equivalent geospatial identification (geographic or locational data using maps) of higher risk locations, and potential locations and corridors of the projects and strategies. Note that the applicant is not required to provide exact locations for each project or strategy; rather, the application should identify which geographic locations are under consideration for projects and strategies to be implemented and what analysis will be used in a final determination.

### III. Response to Selection Criteria

This section should respond to the criteria for evaluation and selection in Section E.1.ii of this Notice and include compelling narrative to highlight how the application aligns with criteria #1 Safety Impact; #2 Equity, Engagement, and Collaboration; #3 Effective Practices and Strategies; and #4 Climate Change and Sustainability, and Economic Competitiveness. Note, criterion #1 Safety Impact assesses “implementation cost” information, which will be described in SF-424C and the d) Budget of the narrative and does not need to be duplicated in this portion of the narrative.

The applicant must respond to each of the four criteria. Applicants are not required to follow a specific format, but the organization provided, which addresses each criterion separately, promotes a clear discussion that assists evaluators. To minimize redundant information in the application, the Department encourages applicants to cross-reference from this section of their application to relevant substantive information in other sections of the application. To the extent practical, DOT encourages applicants to use and reference existing content from their Action Plan/established plan(s) to demonstrate their comprehensive, evidence-based approach to improving safety.

### IV. Project Readiness

The applicant must provide information to demonstrate the applicant’s ability to substantially execute and complete the full scope of work in the application proposal within five years of when the grant is executed, with a particular focus on design and construction, as well as environmental, permitting, and approval processes. Applicants should indicate if they will be seeking permission to use roadway design standards that are different from those generally applied by the State in which the project is located. As part of this portion of the narrative, the applicant must include a detailed activity schedule that identifies all major project and strategy milestones. Examples of such milestones include: State and local planning approvals; start and completion of National Environmental Policy Act and other Federal environmental

reviews and approvals including permitting; design completion; right of way acquisition; approval of plans, specifications, and estimates; procurement; State and local approvals; public involvement; partnership and implementation agreements; and construction. Environmental review documentation should describe in detail known project impacts, and possible mitigation for those impacts. When a project results in impacts, it is expected an award recipient will take steps to engage the public. For additional guidance and resources, visit [www.transportation.gov/SS4A](http://www.transportation.gov/SS4A).

c) Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet

Attach a completed Table 2: Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet.

d) Budget

This section of the application should describe the budget for the SS4A proposal. Applicants are required to provide a brief budget summary and provide a high-level overview of estimated activity costs, as organized by all major cost elements. The budget should provide itemized estimates of the costs of the proposed projects and strategies at the individual component level. This includes capital costs for infrastructure safety improvements and costs associated with behavioral and operational safety projects and strategies. The section should also distinguish between the three eligible activity areas: (A) supplementing action plan activities in support of an existing Action Plan; (B) conducting planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan; and (C) carrying out projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan.

Funding sources should be grouped into two categories: SS4A funding Federal share, and non-Federal share funds. Estimated costs or value of in-kind matches should also be provided. The budget should show how each source of funds will be spent. This budget should not include any previously incurred expenses, or costs to be incurred before the time of award and obligation because these expenses are not eligible for reimbursement or cost-sharing. If non-Federal share funds or in-kind contributions are from entities who are not the applicant, include commitment letters or evidence of allocated cost share as a supporting document. DOT requires applicants use form SF-424C, and the applicant must also provide the information in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Supplemental Estimated Budget**

<b>Subtotal Budget for (A) supplemental action plan activities;</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Itemized Estimated Costs of the (A) supplemental action plan activities</b>	
<b>Item #1</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Item #2</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Subtotal Budget for (B) conducting planning, design, and development activities</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Itemized Estimated Costs of the (B) planning, design, and development activities</b>	
<b>Item #1</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Item #2</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

<b>Item #3</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Subtotal Budget for (C) carrying out projects and strategies</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Itemized Estimated Costs of the (C) proposed projects and strategies</b>	
<b>Item #1</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Item #2</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Item #3</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Item #4</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Subtotal Funds to Underserved Communities</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

### **3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

Each applicant is required to: (i) be registered in SAM (<https://sam.gov/content/home>) before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. DOT may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time DOT is ready to make an award, DOT may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

### **4. Submission Dates and Times**

Applications must be submitted by 5:00 PM EDT on Thursday, September 15, 2022.

### **5. Funding Restrictions**

Per BIL requirements, not more than 15 percent of the funds made available to carry out the SS4A program in FY22 may be awarded to eligible applicants in a single State.<sup>22</sup> In addition, 40 percent of the total FY22 funds made available must be for developing and updating a comprehensive safety action plan, or supplemental action plan activities.

### **6. Other Submission Requirements**

The format of the Section D.2 application submission should be in PDF format, with font size no less than 12-point Times New Roman, margins a minimum of 1 inch on all sides, and include page numbers.

The complete application must be submitted via [grants.gov](https://grants.gov). In the event of system problems or the applicant experiences technical difficulties, contact [grants.gov](https://grants.gov) technical support via telephone at 1-800-518-4726 or email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

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<sup>22</sup> Funding for Tribal lands will be treated as their own State and will not count toward a State's 15% limit.

## E. Application Review Information

### 1. Selection Criteria

This section specifies the criteria DOT will use to evaluate and select applications for SS4A grant awards. The Department will review merit criteria for all applications. Each of the two grant types to be made available through the SS4A grant program, Action Plan Grant and Implementation Grant, will have its own set of application review and selection criteria.

#### i. Action Plan Grant Selection Criteria

For Action Plan Grants, the Department will use three evaluation criteria. The Department will evaluate quantitative data in two selection criteria areas: #1 Safety Impact; and #2 Equity. The Department will also assess the narrative for #3 Additional Safety Considerations. Costs will also be considered.

**Selection Criterion #1: Safety Impact.** The activities are in jurisdictions that will likely support a significant reduction or elimination of roadway fatalities and serious injuries involving various road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, personal conveyance and micromobility users, motorists, and commercial operators, within the timeframe proposed by the applicant. The Department will assess safety impact using two quantitative ratings:

- The count of roadway fatalities from 2016 to 2020 based on DOT's FARS data, an alternative traffic crash dataset, or a comparable data set with roadway fatality information.<sup>23</sup>
- The fatality rate, which is calculating using the average from the total count of fatalities from 2016 to 2020 (based on FARS data or an alternative traffic crash dataset) divided by the 2020 population of the applicant's jurisdiction based on 2020 U.S. Census population data.

**Selection Criterion #2: Equity.** The activities will ensure equitable investment in the safety needs of underserved communities in preventing roadway fatalities and injuries, including rural communities. The Department will assess the equity criterion using one quantitative rating:

- The percentage of the population in the applicant's jurisdiction that resides in an Underserved Community Census tract.<sup>24</sup> Population of a Census tract, either a tract that is Underserved Community or not, must be based on 2020 U.S. Census population data.

**Selection Criterion #3: Additional Safety Considerations.** The Department will assess whether the applicant has considered any of the following in the development of the Action Plan:

- Employ low-cost, high-impact strategies that can improve safety over a wider geographical area;
- Engage with a variety of public and private stakeholders (e.g., inclusive community engagement, community benefit agreements, etc.);
- Seek to adopt innovative technologies or strategies to promote safety and equity; and
- Include evidence-based projects or strategies.

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<sup>23</sup> <https://cdan.dot.gov/query>

<sup>24</sup> <https://usdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/d6f90dfcc8b44525b04c7ce748a3674a>

The applicant must address these considerations in narrative form.

### **Additional Consideration: Budget Costs**

The Department will assess the extent to which the budget and costs to perform the activities required to execute the Action Plan Grant are reasonable based on 2 CFR § 200.404.

#### ii. Implementation Grant Selection Criteria

Implementation Grants have four merit criteria: #1 Safety Impact; #2 Equity, Engagement, and Collaboration; #3 Effective Practices and Strategies; and #4 Climate Change and Economic Competitiveness. Two additional considerations will also be used in the selection process: Project Readiness, and Funds to Underserved Communities. The response to each criterion, to the extent practicable, should be aligned with the applicant's Action Plan. Below describes the specific content the applicant should respond to for each of these criteria.

**Selection Criterion #1: Safety Impact.** DOT will assess whether the proposal is likely to: significantly reduce or eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries; employ low-cost, high-impact strategies over a wide geographic area; and include evidence-based projects and strategies. Safety impact is the most important criterion and will be weighed more heavily in the review and selection process. The Department will assess the applicant's description of the safety problem, safety impact assessment, and costs as part of the Safety Impact criterion:

- Description of the safety problem. DOT will assess the extent to which:
  - The safety problem is described, including historical trends, fatal and serious injury crash locations, contributing factors, and crash types by category of road user.
  - Crashes and/or crash risk are displayed in a High-Injury Network, hot spot analysis, or similar geospatial risk visualization.
  - Safety risk is summarized from risk models, hazard analysis, the identification of high-risk roadway features, road safety audits/assessments, and/or other proactive safety analyses.
- Safety impact assessment. DOT will assess the extent to which projects and strategies:
  - Align with and address the identified safety problems.
  - Are supported by evidence to significantly reduce or eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries involving various road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, personal conveyance and micromobility users, motorists, and commercial vehicle operators.
  - Use low-cost, high-impact strategies and projects that can improve safety over a wider geographical area.
  - Measure safety impact through models, studies, reports, proven noteworthy practices, Crash Modification Factors (CMF), and other information on project and strategy effectiveness.
  - Include a multi-disciplinary, systemic approach that relies on redundancies to reduce safety risks.
  - Will have safety benefits that persist over time.

- Implementation Costs. DOT will assess the extent to which projects and strategies are itemized and summarized, including capital costs for infrastructure, behavioral, and operational safety improvements.

**Selection Criterion #2: Equity, Engagement, and Collaboration.** This criterion supports the legislative requirements to assess the extent to which the application ensures the equitable investment in the safety needs of underserved communities, and demonstrates engagement with a variety of public and private stakeholders. The response to this criterion should focus on equity, engagement, and collaboration in relation to the implementation of the projects and strategies. DOT will assess the extent to which projects and strategies:

- Ensure equitable investment in underserved communities in preventing roadway fatalities and serious injuries, including rural communities.
- Are designed to decrease existing disparities identified through equity analysis.
- Consider key population groups (e.g., people in underserved communities, children, seniors, Black, Latino, Indigenous and Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, other persons of color, persons with disabilities, persons who live in rural areas, and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality) to ensure the impact to these groups is understood and addressed.
- Include equity analysis, both quantitative and qualitative, and stakeholder engagement in underserved communities as part of the development and implementation process.
- Include meaningful engagement with the public, including public involvement for underserved communities, community benefit agreements, and relevant stakeholders such as private sector and community groups, as part of implementation.
- Leverage partnerships within their jurisdiction, with other government entities, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academic institutions, and/or other relevant stakeholders to achieve safety benefits while preventing unintended consequences for persons living in the jurisdiction.
- Inform representatives from areas impacted on implementation progress and meaningfully engage over time to evaluate the impact of projects and strategies on persons living in the jurisdiction.
- Align with the equity analysis performed as part of the development of an existing Action Plan.

**Selection Criterion #3: Effective Practices and Strategies.** DOT will assess the extent to which the application employs low-cost, high-impact strategies that can improve safety over a wide geographical area, includes evidence-based projects or strategies that improve safety, and seeks to adopt innovative technologies or strategies to promote safety and equity. The response to this criterion needs to address, at a minimum, one of the four effective practices and strategies from the list below, which includes: create a safer community; Safe System Approach; Complete Streets; and innovative practices and technologies. If the applicant responds to more than one of the four options, the option that is rated highest in the review process will be used for the rating of this criterion.

- Create a safer community. DOT will assess the extent to which the projects and strategies:
  - Establish basic, evidence-based roadway safety infrastructure features, including but not limited to sidewalks and separated bicycle lanes.

- Improve safety for all road users along a roadway network using proposed Public-Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG).<sup>25</sup>
  - Use evidence-based, proven, and effective safety countermeasures to significantly improve existing roadways.<sup>26</sup>
  - Use evidence-based Countermeasures that Work with four or five stars to address persistent behavioral safety issues and consider equity in their implementation.<sup>27</sup>
  - Apply systemic safety practices that involve widely implemented improvements based on high-risk roadway features correlated with particular severe crash types.
- Safe System Approach. DOT will assess the extent to which the projects and strategies:
    - Encompass at least two of the five safety elements in the National Roadway Safety Strategy (Safer People, Safer Roads, Safer Speeds, Safer Vehicles, and Post-Crash Care). This may include a mix of infrastructure, behavioral, and operational safety projects and strategies.
    - Create a transportation system that accounts for and mitigates human mistakes.
    - Incorporate data-driven design features that are human-centric, limit kinetic energy, and are selected based on the physical limits of people’s crash tolerances before injury or death occurs.
    - Support actions and activities identified in the Department’s National Roadway Safety Strategy that are evidence-based.
- Complete Streets. DOT will assess the extent to which the projects and strategies:
    - Account for the safety of all road users in their implementation through evidence-based activities.
    - Are supported by an existing Complete Streets Policy that prioritizes safety in standard agency procedures and guidance or other roadway safety policies that have eliminated barriers to prioritizing the safety of all users, or includes supplemental planning activities to achieve this. Consider the management of the right of way using a data-driven approach (e.g., delivery access, features that promote biking and micromobility, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, etc.).
    - Improve accessibility and multimodal networks for people outside of a motor vehicle, including people who are walking, biking, rolling, public transit users, and have disabilities.
    - Incorporate the proposed PROWAG, and any actions in an established the American with Disabilities Act Transition Plan to correct barriers to individuals with disabilities.
- Innovative practices and technologies. DOT will assess the extent to which the projects and strategies:
    - Incorporate practices that promote efficiency within the planning and road management lifecycle (e.g., dig once, etc.).
    - Integrate additional data beyond roadway and crash information to inform implementation and location, such as data on the built environment.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.access-board.gov/prowag/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures/>

<sup>27</sup> [https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/2021-09/Countermeasures-10th\\_080621\\_v5\\_tag.pdf](https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/2021-09/Countermeasures-10th_080621_v5_tag.pdf)

- Foster applied, data-driven research and experimentation to inform project and strategy effectiveness, including but not limited to participation in a sanctioned Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices experimentation, research to inform Proven Safety Countermeasures or Countermeasures that Work, and/or research that measures the effectiveness of multidisciplinary activities.
- Adopt innovative technologies or practices to promote safety and equity. These could include infrastructure, behavioral, operational, or vehicular safety-focused approaches.

**Selection Criterion #4: Climate Change and Sustainability, and Economic Competitiveness.** This program's focus on equity and safety are also advanced by considerations of how applications address climate and sustainability considerations, as well as whether applications support economic competitiveness. DOT will assess the extent to which the projects and strategies use safety strategies to support the Departmental strategic goals of climate change and sustainability, and economic strength and global competitiveness, and the extent to which the proposal is expected to:

- Reduce motor vehicle-related pollution such as air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Increase safety of lower-carbon travel modes such as transit and active transportation.
- Incorporate lower-carbon pavement and construction materials.
- Support fiscally responsible land use and transportation efficient design that reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
- Includes storm water management practices and incorporates other climate resilience measures or feature, including but not limited to nature-based solutions that improve built and/or natural environment while enhancing resilience.
- Lead to increased economic or business activity due to enhanced safety features for all road users.
- Increase mobility and expand connectivity for all road users to jobs and business opportunities, including people in underserved communities.
- Improve multimodal transportation systems that incorporate affordable transportation options such as public transit and micromobility.
- Demonstrate a plan or credible planning activities and project delivery actions to advance quality jobs, workforce programs, including partnerships with labor unions, training providers, education institutions, and hiring policies that promote workforce inclusion.
- Result in high-quality job creation by supporting good-paying jobs with a free and fair choice to join a union, incorporate strong labor standards (e.g., wages and benefits at or above prevailing; use of project labor agreements, registered apprenticeship programs, pre-apprenticeships tied to registered apprenticeships, etc.), and/or provide workforce opportunities for historically underrepresented groups (e.g., workforce development program, etc.).

#### **Additional Consideration: Project Readiness**

Applications rated as “Highly Recommended” or “Recommended” based on the selection Criteria 1 through 4 will be reviewed for Project Readiness, which will be a consideration for application selection. Project Readiness focuses on the extent to which the applicant will be able to substantially execute and complete the full scope of work in the Implementation Grant application within five (5) years of when the grant is executed. This includes information related to required design and construction standards, as well



as environmental, permitting, and approval processes. DOT will evaluate the extent to which the application:

- Documents all applicable local, State, and Federal requirements.
- Includes information on activity schedule, required permits and approvals, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) class of action and status, State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) status, public involvement, right-of-way acquisition plans, procurement schedules, multi-party agreements, utility relocation plans and risk and mitigation strategies, as appropriate.
- Is reasonably expected to begin any construction-related projects in a timely manner consistent with all applicable local, State, and Federal requirements.

#### **Additional Consideration: Funds to Underserved Communities.**

The percentage of Implementation Grant funds that will be spent in, and provide safety benefits to, locations in census tracts designated as underserved communities as defined by this NOFO will be considered as part of application selection.<sup>28</sup> DOT will use this information in support of the legislative requirement to ensure equitable investment in the safety needs of underserved communities in preventing roadway fatalities and injuries. Higher percentages of funding to underserved communities will be generally viewed favorably by DOT, and the Department encourages applicants to leverage project and strategy activities to the extent practical and in alignment with the safety problems identified in an Action Plan.

## **2. Review and Selection Process**

This section addresses the BIL requirement to describe the methodology for evaluation in the NOFO, including how applications will be rated according to selection criteria and considerations, and how those criteria and considerations will be used to assign an overall rating. The SS4A grant program review and selection process consists of eligibility reviews, merit criteria review, and Senior Review. The Secretary makes the final selections.

### **i. Action Plan Grant Review and Selection Process**

The process for the application plan review is described below:

- Teams of Department and contractor support staff review all applications to determine eligibility based on the eligibility information in Section C.
- Eligible Action Plan applications received by the deadline will be reviewed for their merit based on the selection criteria in Section E.1.i.
- Applications are scored numerically based on Merit Criteria #1 Safety Impact and #2 Equity Criteria.

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<sup>28</sup> An underserved community as defined for this NOFO is consistent with the Office of Management and Budget's Interim Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative and the Historically Disadvantaged Community designation, which includes: U.S. Census tracts identified in this table <https://datahub.transportation.gov/stories/s/tsyd-k6ij>; any Tribal land; or any territory or possession of the United States.

- The #3 Additional Safety Considerations criterion narrative will be reviewed and assessed as either “qualified,” meaning the application addresses the criterion at least in part, or “not qualified,” meaning the application does not address the criterion. Applications that do not address the #3 Additional Safety Considerations and are deemed “not qualified” will not be considered.
- Action Plan Grant applications to develop or complete a new Action Plan will be noted and prioritized for funding.
- In order to ensure that final selections will meet the statutory requirement that no more than 15 percent of program funds may be awarded to eligible applicants in one State, applications will have their State location denoted. Tribal awards are not counted towards this 15 percent maximum.
- The Teams will examine the locations of the applicants to identify if multiple applicants requested funding for the same jurisdiction. DOT reserves the right to request applicants with duplicative funding requests consolidate their efforts as one multijurisdictional group prior to receiving an award, and may decline to fund duplicative applications irrespective of their individual merits.

ii. Implementation Grant Review and Selection Process

a) Overall Selection Process and Ratings

Teams of Department and contractor support staff review all applications to determine whether they are eligible applicants based on the eligibility information in Section C. All eligible Implementation Grant applications received by the deadline will be reviewed and receive ratings for each of these criteria: #1 Safety Impact; #2 Equity, Engagement, and Collaboration; #3 Effective Practices and Strategies; #4 Climate Change and Sustainability, and Economic Competitiveness. Based on the criteria ratings, an overall application rating of “Highly Recommended,” “Recommended,” “Acceptable,” or “Not Recommended” will be assigned. Criterion #1, Safety Impact, will be weighted most heavily.

Overall “Highly Recommended” Application Rating Scenarios

<b>Selection Criteria</b>	<b>Scenario (a) Criteria Rating</b>	<b>Scenario (b) Criteria Rating</b>
#1 Safety Impact	High	Medium
#2 Equity, Engagement, and Collaboration	Medium or High	High
#3 Effective Practices and Strategies	Medium or High	High
#4 Climate Change Sustainability, and Economic Competitiveness	Low, Medium, or High	High
Overall Rating	Highly Recommended	Highly Recommended

Overall “Recommended” Rating Scenarios

Selection Criteria	Scenario (c) Criteria Rating	Scenario (d) Criteria Rating
#1 Safety Impact	High	Medium
#2 Equity, Engagement, and Collaboration	At least one Low	One Medium and One High or Two Medium
#3 Effective Practices and Strategies		
#4 Climate Change and Sustainability, and Economic Competitiveness	Low, Medium, or High	Low, Medium, or High
Overall Rating	Recommended	Recommended

Overall “Acceptable” and “Not Recommended” Rating Scenarios

Selection Criteria	Scenario (e) Criteria Rating	Scenario (f) Criteria Rating
#1 Safety Impact	Low	Any are determined Non-Responsive
#2 Equity, Engagement, and Collaboration	Low, Medium, or High	
#3 Effective Practices and Strategies		
#4 Climate Change and Sustainability, and Economic Competitiveness	Low, Medium, or High	
Overall Rating	Acceptable	Not Recommended

b) Safety Impact Criterion Rating Methodology

For the #1 Safety Impact criterion, the Department will assess three subcomponents to determine a result in an overall rating of “high,” “medium,” and “low,” or “non-responsive.” The three subcomponents are: the description of the safety problem; the safety impact assessment; and the implementation costs.

The description of the safety problem sub-rating will use the guidelines below:

	High	Medium	Low	Non-responsive
Rating Scale	The narrative and supporting information demonstrate the proposal is addressing a substantial safety problem. The narrative is well-articulated and is strongly supported by data and analysis.	The narrative and supporting information demonstrate the proposal is addressing an existing safety problem. Narrative articulates the description, is generally supporting by data and analysis.	The narrative and supporting information demonstrate the proposal is addressing a safety problem more minor in scope. The narrative is not well-articulated, and the supporting data and analysis are limited.	The narrative and supporting information do not address a safety problem.

The safety impact assessment sub-rating will use the guidelines below:

	High	Medium	Low	Non-responsive
Rating Scale	The projects and strategies have strong potential to address the safety problem. The projects and strategies proposed are highly effective, based on evidence, use a systemic approach, and have benefits that persist over time.	The projects and strategies address the safety problem. Most of the projects and strategies proposed are effective measures, based on evidence, use a systemic approach, and have benefits that persist over time.	The projects and strategies address the safety problem to a limited degree. Some or none of the projects and strategies proposed are effective measures, based on evidence, use a systemic approach, or have benefits that persist over time.	The projects and strategies do not address the safety problem.

The implementation costs sub-rating will use the guidelines below:

	High	Medium	Low	Non-responsive
Rating Scale	The costs for the implementation of the projects and strategies are clearly articulated and summarized. Future costs are well-described. The quantity and quality of the projects and strategies in relation to the cost amounts strongly indicate the costs are reasonable.	The costs for the implementation of the projects and strategies are summarized. Future costs are described. The quantity and quality of the projects and strategies in relation to the cost amounts seem to indicate the costs are reasonable.	The costs for the implementation of the projects and strategies are not well-articulated or missing key details. Future costs are minimally or not described. Based on the limited quantity and/or quality of the projects and strategies in relation to the cost amounts, the cost reasonableness is uncertain.	Cost information is not provided.

The three sub-ratings for the #1 Safety Criterion (the description of the safety problem; the safety impact assessment; and the implementation costs) will be combined and scored using the following rating system to determine if the overall rating for the Safety Criterion is “High,” “Medium,” “Low,” or “Non-Responsive.”

Safety Criterion Sub-Rating Scores	Overall Safety Criterion Rating
At least two “high”, no “low”, no “non-responsive”	High
No “low”, no “non-responsive,” or does not meet the High criterion	Medium
No “high”, at least one “low”, no “non-responsive,” or does not meet the Medium criterion	Low
Any “non-responsive”	Non-Responsive

c) Other Criteria Rating Methodology

For the merit criteria #2 Equity, Engagement, and Collaboration, #3 Effective Practices and Strategies, and #4 Climate Change and Economic Competitiveness, the Department will consider whether the application narrative is clear, direct, responsive to the selection criterion focus areas, and logical, which will result in a rating of “high, “medium,” “low,” or “non-responsive.”

	High	Medium	Low	Non-Responsive
Rating Scale	The application is substantively responsive to the criteria, with clear, direct, and logical narrative.	The application is moderately responsive to the criteria, with mostly clear, direct, and logical narrative.	The application is minimally responsive to the criteria and is somewhat addressed in the narrative.	The narrative indicates the proposal is counter to the criteria, or does not contain sufficient information

“Highly Recommended” and “Recommended” applications will receive a Project Readiness evaluation, as described below. The reviewers will use the application materials outlined in Section D to assess the applicant’s Project Readiness and will provide a rating of either “Very Likely,” “Likely,” or “Unlikely.”

	Very Likely	Likely	Unlikely
Rating Scale	Based on the information provided in the application and the proposed scope of the projects and strategies, it is very likely the applicant can complete all projects and strategies within a five-year time horizon.	Based on the information provided in the application and the proposed scope of the projects and strategies, it is probable the applicant can complete all projects and strategies within a five-year time horizon.	Based on the information provided in the application and the proposed scope of the projects and strategies, it is uncertain whether the applicant can complete all projects and strategies within a five-year time horizon.

iii. Senior Review Team Phase

a) Action Plan Grant Senior Review Team Phase

For the Action Plan Grants, the Secretary will set thresholds for each of the three quantitative criteria ratings based on their distribution, the number of applicants, and the availability of funds. Eligible applicants who meet or exceed the threshold in any of the three criteria will be offered Action Plan Grant award funding. A composite rating of the three criteria will not be made, and each criterion will be considered separately. Based on the overall application pool, available funding, and legislative requirements, the Secretary reserves the discretion to set the threshold(s) most advantageous to the U.S. Government’s interest. The Secretary will consult with a Senior Review Team (SRT) to make the threshold determinations. Additionally, the Secretary may choose to prioritize Action Plan Grants that are developing or completing an Action Plan over Action Plan Grant applications focused on supplemental action plan activities because an Action Plan is a prerequisite to applying for Implementation Grants in future NOFOs.

## b) Implementation Grant Senior Review Team Phase

Once every Implementation Grant application has been assigned an overall rating based on the methodology above, all “Highly Recommended” applications will be included in a list of Applications for Consideration. The SRT will review whether the list of “Highly Recommended” applications is sufficient to ensure that no more than 15 percent of the FY 2022 funds made available are awarded to eligible applicants in a single State. “Recommended” applications may be added to the proposed list of Applications for Consideration until a sufficient number of applications are on the list to ensure that all the legislative requirements can be met and funding would be fully awarded. “Recommended” applications with a “High” Safety Impact Criterion rating will be prioritized and considered first. If that produces an insufficient list, “Recommended” applications with a “Medium” Safety Impact Criterion rating and a “High” rating for the Equity, Engagement, and Collaboration Criterion will also be considered. The SRT will also review all “Highly Recommended” applications that received an “Unlikely” project readiness rating, and either remove those applicants from the Applications for Consideration, OR recommend a reduced scope to minimize the risk the applicant will not complete the scope of work within five years of the grant agreement execution.

Additionally, to ensure the funding awards align to the extent practicable to the program goal of equitable investment in the safety needs of underserved communities, the SRT may review “Recommended” applications and set a threshold based on the percentage of funds that will be spent in, and provide safety benefits to, locations within underserved communities. Any “Recommended” applications at or above that threshold will be included in the proposed list of Applications for Consideration.

For each grant type, the SRT will present the list of Applications for Consideration to the Secretary, either collectively or through a representative of the SRT. The SRT may advise the Secretary on any application on the list of Applications for Consideration, including options for reduced awards, and the Secretary makes final selections. The Secretary’s selections identify the applications that best address program requirements and are most worthy of funding.

### **3. Additional Information**

Prior to entering into a grant agreement, each selected applicant will be subject to a risk assessment as required by 2 CFR § 200.206. The Department must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)). An applicant may review information in FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered. The Department will consider comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants.

Because award recipients under this program may be first-time recipients of Federal funding, DOT is committed to implementing the program as flexibly as permitted by statute and to providing assistance to help award recipients through the process of securing a grant agreement and delivering both Action Plan activities and Implementation Grant projects and strategies. Award recipients are encouraged to identify any needs for assistance in delivering the Implementation Grant projects and strategies so that DOT can provide directly, or through a third party, sufficient support and technical assistance to mitigate potential execution risks.

## **F. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **1. Federal Award Notices**

Following the evaluation outlined in Section E, the Secretary will announce awarded applications by posting a list of selected recipients at [www.transportation.gov/SS4A](http://www.transportation.gov/SS4A). The posting of the list of selected award recipients will not constitute an authorization to begin performance. Following the announcement, the Department will contact the point of contact listed in the SF-424 to initiate negotiation of a grant agreement.

### **2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

#### **i. Equity and Barriers to Opportunity**

Each applicant selected for SS4A grant funding must demonstrate effort to improve equity and reduce barriers to opportunity as described in Section A. Award recipients that have not sufficiently addressed equity and barriers to opportunity in their planning, as determined by the Department, will be required to do so before receiving funds, consistent with Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (86 FR 7009).<sup>29</sup>

#### **ii. Labor and Workforce**

Each applicant selected for SS4A grant funding must demonstrate, to the full extent possible consistent with the law, an effort to create good-paying jobs with the free and fair choice to join a union and incorporation of high labor standards as described in Section A. To the extent that applicants have not sufficiently considered job quality and labor rights in their planning, as determined by the Department of Labor, the applicants will be required to do so before receiving funds, consistent with Executive Order 14025, Worker Organizing and Empowerment (86 FR 22829), and Executive Order 14052, Implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (86 FR 64335).

As expressed in section A, equal employment opportunity is an important priority. The Department wants to ensure that sponsors have the support they need to meet requirements under EO 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity (30 FR 12319, and as amended). All Federally assisted contractors are required to make good faith efforts to meet the goals of 6.9 percent of construction project hours being performed by women and goals that vary based on geography for construction work hours and for work being performed by people of color.<sup>30</sup> Projects over \$35 million shall meet the requirements in Executive Order 14063, Use of Project Labor Agreements for Federal Construction Projects (87 FR 7363).

The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) has a Mega Construction Project Program through which it engages with project sponsors as early as the design phase to help promote compliance with non-discrimination and affirmative action obligations. Through the program, OFCCP offers contractors and subcontractors extensive compliance assistance, conducts compliance evaluations, and helps to build partnerships between the project sponsor, prime contractor, subcontractors, and relevant stakeholders. OFCCP will identify projects that receive an award under this notice and are required to participate in OFCCP's Mega Construction Project Program from a wide range of federally assisted projects over which OFCCP has jurisdiction and that have a project cost above

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<sup>29</sup> An illustrative example of how these requirements are applied to recipients can be found here:

<https://cms.buildamerica.dot.gov/buildamerica/financing/infra-grants/infra-fy21-fhwa-general-terms-and-conditions>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ofccp/ParticipationGoals.pdf>

\$35 million. DOT will require project sponsors with costs above \$35 million that receive awards under this funding opportunity to partner with OFCCP, if selected by OFCCP, as a condition of their DOT award. Under that partnership, OFCCP will ask these project sponsors to make clear to prime contractors in the pre-bid phase that project sponsor's award terms will require their participation in the Mega Construction Project Program. Additional information on how OFCCP makes their selections for participation in the Mega Construction Project Program is outlined under "Scheduling" on the Department of Labor website: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ofccp/faqs/construction-compliance>.

iii. Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience

It is the policy of the United States to strengthen the security and resilience of its critical infrastructure against both physical and cyber threats. Each applicant selected for SS4A grant funding must demonstrate, prior to the signing of the grant agreement, effort to consider and address physical and cyber security risks relevant to the transportation mode and type and scale of the activities. Award recipients that have not appropriately considered and addressed physical and cyber security and resilience in their planning, design, and oversight, as determined by the Department and the Department of Homeland Security, will be required to do so before receiving Implementation Grant funds for construction, consistent with Presidential Policy Directive 21, Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience and the National Security Presidential Memorandum on Improving Cybersecurity for Critical Infrastructure Control Systems. Additionally, funding recipients must be in compliance with 2 CFR § 200.216 and the prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment.

Award recipients shall also consider whether projects in floodplains are upgraded consistent with the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard, to the extent consistent with current law, in Executive Order 14030, Climate-Related Financial Risk (86 FR 27967), and Executive Order 13690, Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input (80 FR 6425).

iv. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)

Funding recipients must comply with NEPA under 42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq. and the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA implementing regulations at 40 CFR §§ 1500-1508, where applicable.

v. Other Administrative and Policy Requirements

All awards will be administered pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards found in 2 CFR § 200, Subpart F, as adopted by the Department at 2 CFR § 1201. Additionally, as permitted under the requirements described above, applicable Federal laws, rules, and regulations of the relevant operating administration (e.g., the Federal Highway Administration, etc.) administering the activities will apply to the activities that receive SS4A grants, including planning requirements, Stakeholder Agreements, and other requirements under the Department's other highway and transit grant programs. DOT anticipates grant recipients to have varying levels of experience administering Federal funding agreements and complying with Federal requirements, and DOT will take a risk-based approach to SS4A program grant agreement administration to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

The Department will also provide additional technical assistance and support resources to first-time DOT funding recipients and those who request additional support, as appropriate. With respect to highway projects, except as otherwise noted in this NOFO, please note that these grants are not required



to be administered under Title 23 of the U.S.C., which establishes requirements that are generally applicable to funding that is provided by formula to State departments of transportation<sup>31</sup>. Therefore, the administration and implementation of SS4A grants should be more streamlined for the entities that are eligible for SS4A awards.

As expressed in Executive Order 14005, Ensuring the Future Is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers (86 FR 7475), it is the policy of the executive branch to maximize, consistent with law, the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States. Infrastructure projects are subject to the Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. No 117–58, div. G §§ 70901–70927) as clarified in OMB Memorandum M-22-11.<sup>32</sup> The Department expects all recipients to be able to complete their projects without needing a waiver. However, to obtain a waiver, a recipient must be prepared to demonstrate how they will maximize the use of domestic goods, products, and materials in constructing their project. Projects under this notice will be subject to the domestic preference requirements at § 70914 of the Build America, Buy America Act, as implemented by OMB, and any awards will contain the award terms specific in M-22-11.

SS4A award recipients should demonstrate compliance with civil rights obligations and nondiscrimination laws, including Titles VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and accompanying regulations. Recipients of Federal transportation funding will also be required to comply fully with regulations and guidance for the ADA, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and all other civil rights requirements. Additionally, to the extent practicable, Implementation Grants must adhere to the proposed Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines.<sup>33</sup> The Department's and the applicable Operating Administrations' Office of Civil Rights may work with awarded grant recipients to ensure full compliance with Federal civil rights requirements.

In connection with any program or activity conducted with or benefiting from funds awarded under this notice, recipients of funds must comply with all applicable requirements of Federal law, including, without limitation, the Constitution of the United States; the conditions of performance, nondiscrimination requirements, and other assurances made applicable to the award of funds in accordance with regulations of the Department of Transportation; and applicable Federal financial assistance and contracting principles promulgated by the Office of Management and Budget. In complying with these requirements, recipients, in particular, must ensure that no concession agreements are denied or other contracting decisions made on the basis of speech or other activities protected by the First Amendment. If the Department determines that a recipient has failed to comply with applicable Federal requirements, the Department may terminate the award of funds and disallow previously incurred costs, requiring the recipient to reimburse any expended award funds.

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<sup>31</sup> Please note that some title 23 requirements apply regardless of funding source. In particular, projects involving routes on the National Highway System must meet the applicable design standards at 23 CFR part 625.

<sup>32</sup> Pub. L. No. 117-58, division. G, Title IX, Subtitle A, 135 Stat. 429, 1298 (2021). For additional information on § 70914, see OMB-22-11. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/M-22-11.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.access-board.gov/prowag/>

### 3. Reporting

#### i. Progress Reporting on Grant Activity

Reporting responsibilities include quarterly program performance reports using the Performance Progress Report (SF-PPR) and quarterly financial status using the SF-425 (also known as the Federal Financial Report or SF-FFR).<sup>34</sup>

#### ii. Post Award Reporting Requirements/Reporting of Matters Related to Integrity and Performance

If the total value of a selected applicant's currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then the applicant during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported in SAM that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)) about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings described in paragraph 2 of this award term and condition. This is a statutory requirement under section 872 of Pub. L. No. 110–417, as amended (41 U.S.C. § 2313). As required by section 3010 of Pub. L. No. 111–212, all information posted in the designated integrity and performance system on or after April 15, 2011, except past performance reviews required for Federal procurement contracts, will be publicly available. Additionally, if applicable funding recipients must be in compliance with the audit requirements in 2 CFR § 200, Subpart F.

#### iii. Program Evaluation

As a condition of grant award, SS4A grant recipients may be required to participate in an evaluation undertaken by DOT, or another agency or partner. The evaluation may take different forms such as an implementation assessment across grant recipients, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grant recipients, or a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment. The Department may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation. As a part of the evaluation, as a condition of award, grant recipients must agree to: (1) make records available to the evaluation contractor; (2) provide access to program records, and any other relevant documents to calculate costs and benefits; (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the access to relevant information as requested; and (4) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor or DOT staff.

Recipients and sub-recipients are also encouraged to incorporate program evaluation including associated data collection activities from the outset of their program design and implementation to meaningfully document and measure the effectiveness of their projects and strategies. Title I of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act), Pub. L. No. 115–435 (2019) urges Federal awarding agencies and Federal assistance recipients and sub-recipients to use program evaluation as a critical tool to learn, to improve equitable delivery, and to elevate program service and delivery across the program lifecycle. Evaluation means “an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency” (codified at 5 U.S.C. § 311). For grant recipients, evaluation expenses are allowable costs (either as direct or indirect), unless prohibited by statute or regulation, and such expenses may include the personnel and equipment needed for data infrastructure and expertise in data analysis, performance, and evaluation (2 CFR §200).

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<sup>34</sup> <https://www.grants.gov/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html>

## **G. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts**

For further information concerning this notice, please contact the Office of the Secretary via email at [SS4A@dot.gov](mailto:SS4A@dot.gov). In addition, up to the application deadline, the Department will post answers to common questions and requests for clarifications on the Department's website at [www.transportation.gov/SS4A](http://www.transportation.gov/SS4A). To ensure applicants receive accurate information about eligibility or the program, the applicant is encouraged to contact the Department directly, rather than through intermediaries or third parties, with questions. Department staff may also conduct briefings on the SS4A grant selection and award process upon request.

## **H. Other Information**

### **1. Publication of Application Information**

Following the completion of the selection process and announcement of awards, the Department intends to publish a list of all applications received along with the names of the applicant organizations. The Department may share application information within the Department or with other Federal agencies if the Department determines that sharing is relevant to the respective program's objectives.

### **2. Department Feedback on Applications**

The Department will not review applications in advance, but Department staff are available for technical questions and assistance. The deadline to submit technical questions is August 15, 2022. The Department strives to provide as much information as possible to assist applicants with the application process. Unsuccessful applicants may request a debrief up to 90 days after the selected funding recipients are publicly announced on [transportation.gov/SS4A](http://transportation.gov/SS4A). Program staff will address questions to [SS4A@dot.gov](mailto:SS4A@dot.gov) throughout the application period.

### **3. Rural Applicants**

User-friendly information and resources regarding DOT's discretionary grant programs relevant to rural applicants can be found on the Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) website at [www.transportation.gov/rural](http://www.transportation.gov/rural).