

**Fiscal Year 2026 Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

Application Opening Date: September 30, 2026

Application Closing Date: November 16, 2026

**Fiscal Year 2026
Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program
Evaluation Plan**

U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration

Fiscal Year 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity

Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program

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A. BASIC INFORMATION

The applicant should read this notice in its entirety for the information necessary to submit eligible and competitive applications.	
Federal Agency Name¹	U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Funding Opportunity Title	Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program (WCPP)
Announcement Type	This is a new Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), replacing the NOFO published on June 6, 2024.
Funding Opportunity Number	FHWA-WCPP-26-002
Assistance Listing Number(s)	20.290
Funding Details	This NOFO will award approximately \$80 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 funding via cost reimbursable grants. DOT may also award any remaining and available funds from previous fiscal years under this opportunity. The actual amount available to be awarded under this notice will be subject to the availability of funds. There is no minimum or maximum award amount for WCPP awards.
Key Dates	Application Due Date: 11/16/2026 [45 day application period] at 11:59 PM EST. DOT anticipates announcing awards under this NOFO in March 2027.
Executive Summary	The purpose of the WCPP is to provide funding to eligible entities for projects seeking to improve safety of the traveling public by reducing the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions (WVC) and, in doing so, improve habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species. Eligible applicants under the WCPP are: • State Department of Transportation (State DOT); • Metropolitan planning organization (MPO); • Units of local government²; • A regional transportation authority;

¹ The Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Railroad Administration may also award and administer projects selected for funding under this opportunity. Procedures for grant administration may vary based on the DOT Operating Administration administering the grant.

² This NOFO uses the definition of “unit of local government” at [2 Code of Federal Regulations § 200.1](#).

	• A special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function; • Indian Tribes³; • A Federal Land Management Agency (FLMA); or • A group of any of the above entities. Projects eligible for funding include both construction and non-construction projects. However, DOT may prioritize awards to construction projects. WCPP requires a non-Federal cost share of 20 percent from all recipients unless an exception applies (see B.3, below). Applicants who do not provide the required non-Federal cost share will be classified as ineligible. FLMAs and Tribes can use other Federal funds for their match, such as those allowable under 23 United States Code (U.S.C.) 120(k). A minimum of 60 percent of funds each fiscal year must be awarded to rural areas (23 U.S.C. 171(g)).
Agency Contact Information	U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E. Mail Stop: W51-250 Washington, D.C. 20590 Attn: Daniel Buford Email: Wildlifecrossings@dot.gov
Changes from Prior NOFO	• Removed references to rescinded Executive Orders (E.O.s). • Aligned the NOFO with current E.O.s and current administration priorities. • Updated application evaluation criteria. • Changed the use of the application template from optional to mandatory. • Rescinds the WCPP multi-year NOFO and opens the final application period for FY 2026 funds.

³ For the purpose of this program and as defined in Section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304), Indian Tribe means any Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (85 Stat. 688) [43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.], which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians [49 U.S.C. § 6703(a)].

B. ELIGIBILITY

1. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

See [Section A](#) for a list of eligible applicants.

Multiple entities submitting a joint application should identify a lead applicant as the primary point of contact (POC) and recipient for purposes of financial administration of the project. Joint applications should include a description of the roles and responsibilities of each applicant and should be signed by each applicant.

Eligible applicants can apply for funding from WCPP in concert with eligible partners (listed below), and if funding is received, may provide such funding to eligible partners of the project in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement (23 U.S.C. 171(f)(2)(B)). Eligible partners include the following entities or a group of any of the following entities:

1. A MPO;
2. A unit of local government;
3. A regional transportation authority;
4. A special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function;
5. An Indian Tribe;
6. A FLMA;
7. A foundation, nongovernmental organization, or institution of higher education; or
8. A Federal, Tribal, regional, or State government entity.

2. ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS ON ELIGIBILITY

If an application is submitted by an eligible entity other than a State DOT or an FLMA, the application shall include documentation that the State highway agency, or an equivalent of that agency, of the State in which the eligible entity is located, was consulted during the development of the application (23 U.S.C. 171(d)(2)). For Tribes, such consultation shall be required only for projects not located on Tribal lands. DOT will not review applications that fail to provide sufficient documentation of consultation, and such applications will not be eligible for funding.

An eligible entity that receives a WCPP grant and enters a partnership with an eligible partner must establish measures to verify the eligible partner complies with the conditions of the WCPP in using WCPP funds (23 U.S.C. 171(f)(3)). FHWA encourages applicants to include in their application such verification measures they plan to implement. Regardless of whether an eligible partner is involved, the eligible applicant remains responsible for meeting the conditions of the grant agreement. Applicants are asked to describe their role with expected partners and other applicants in their applications.

DOT will screen projects for eligibility throughout the application review process as described in [Section F](#).

3. COST SHARING

Per [Section A](#), applications not providing at least the required minimum non-Federal cost share will be determined ineligible.

Cost sharing means the recipient must fund the portion of the project's cost not paid for with Federal grant award funds. Non-Federal sources of income include State funds originating from programs funded by State revenue or local revenue funding programs, or private funds. DOT will not consider previously incurred costs or previously expended or encumbered funds toward the matching requirements for any project. Additional information on non-Federal matching requirements can be found at: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/understanding-non-Federal-match-requirements>.

WCPP requires a non-Federal cost share of 20 percent. However, pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 120(c)(1), the Federal share for certain safety projects may be 100 percent of the cost of such construction projects. In addition, 23 U.S.C. 120(a) and (b) authorize an upward adjustment, also known as a sliding scale, to the Federal share for projects in States containing Federal and nontaxable Indian lands. The amount of the upward adjustment is based on the percentage of Federal nontaxable Indian lands in the State.⁴ FLMAs and Tribes can use other Federal funds for their match, such as those allowable under 23 U.S.C. 120(k).

4. OTHER

Applications determined to be late, duplicates of applications submitted for the same round of applications, or incomplete will not be reviewed under this funding opportunity.

If the grant recipient is any eligible entity other than an Indian Tribe or an FLMA, then, pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 171(f)(2)(A)(ii), the State DOT of the State in which the project is located must administer the grant. For these recipients, the State DOT must directly administer the project on behalf of the recipient or administer and oversee the project by serving as a pass-through entity for the recipient (23 U.S.C. 171(f)(2)(A)(ii)). These recipients may not request FHWA to administer the grant directly. FHWA cannot award a grant to these recipients if the State DOT does not agree to administer the grant.

If a grant recipient is a State DOT or if a State DOT will serve as a pass-through entity to the eligible entity or an eligible partner of the eligible entity, WCPP funds will be awarded upon the execution of a project agreement, which is a type of grant agreement for administration of funds to a State DOT in the FHWA Fiscal Management Information System.

If the grant recipient is an FLMA or Indian Tribe, then, pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 171(f)(2)(A)(i), FHWA must administer the grant. Grant funds will be administered with advanced payment, where appropriate, upon the execution of a grant agreement with FHWA or through existing agreements, and FHWA's Office of Federal Lands Highway will administer the project (23

⁴ FHWA publishes [guidance](#) with the specific share allowable in each State based on a sliding scale.

U.S.C. 171(f)(2)(A)(i)). These recipients may not request the State DOT to administer the grant. If the grant recipient is not an FLMA or Indian Tribe, grant awards will be administered on a reimbursement basis. In such situations, WCPP funds will reimburse recipients only for eligible costs incurred and for work performed after a grant agreement has been executed, allowable expenses are incurred, and valid requests for reimbursement are submitted. At FHWA's sole discretion, alternative funding arrangements may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

5. APPLICATION LIMIT

There is no limit on the number of applications an applicant may submit. If submitting more than one application, indicate the funding priority of each application on the application cover page. DOT is not required to consider the applicant's funding priority when making selections.

C. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. PROGRAM PURPOSE

WVCs present a danger to human safety. The purpose of WCPP is to promote greater adoption of wildlife-vehicle safety countermeasures to reduce the tens of thousands of serious injuries and approximately 200 fatalities occurring each year from more than 1,000,000 WVCs.

2. PROGRAM GOALS AND ADMINISTRATION PRIORITIES

The primary goal of WCPP is to reduce the number of WVCs and in doing so, improve habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species (23 U.S.C. § 171(b)).

DOT seeks to fund projects advancing the priorities of the Trump Administration as described in DOT's mission statement and across E.O.s. DOT intends to apply principles from [DOT Order 2100.7 \(Ensuring Reliance Upon Sound Economic Analysis in DOT's Policies, Programs and Activities\)](#) when evaluating applications and making award selections. Such principles include maximizing benefits for families and communities, to the extent practicable, relevant, appropriate and consistent with law. These benefits may include, but are not limited to, economic opportunities, increased access to jobs, commercial activities or any project components alleviating poverty, enhancing safety and primarily benefiting families and communities by improving the quality of their lives, raising their standard of living, or enabling them to participate more fully in our economy. Under this program, DOT will seek to award funding to projects that address core infrastructure, improve economic competitiveness, reinvest in the American family, and promote innovation. [Section F](#) of this NOFO describes the process for selecting projects furthering the goals and priorities for this program and the Trump Administration.

[Section H](#) describes progress and performance reporting requirements for selected projects, including the relationship between reporting and the program's selection criteria.

3. PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION AND FUNDING

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58, November 15, 2021) appropriated \$350 million in Federal-aid contract authority funding for FYs 2022 through 2026 to be awarded by DOT through FHWA under WCPP.

This NOFO includes the distribution of approximately \$80 million in FY 2026 funds and any unobligated funding from previous fiscal years, subject to their availability. WCPP funds are available for obligation for a period of 3 years after the last day of the fiscal year for which the funds are authorized. FY 2026 funds must be obligated by September 30, 2029. Following obligation, WCPP funds are available until expended. The total period of performance for WCPP awards is anticipated to be between 1 and 4 years.

This NOFO is subject to the availability of funding. The Government's obligation under any resulting award is contingent upon the availability of funding. There is no legal liability on the part of the Government for any payment that may arise until funds are available and obligated to an award. DOT is not obligated to make any award as a result of this notice.

4. AWARD SIZE

There is no minimum or maximum award amount for WCPP awards.

5. TYPE OF AWARD

The anticipated awards will primarily be cost-reimbursable grant agreements for State DOTs, MPOs, units of local governments, regional transportation authorities, and special purpose districts of public authorities with a transportation function. The anticipated awards will primarily be advance payment for Indian Tribes and FLMAs. See [Section G](#) for additional information on cost reimbursement.

6. PERFORMANCE GOALS

See [Section H](#) for details on performance reporting requirements and goals.

7. PREVIOUS AWARDS

Previous program awards can be seen on the WCPP Website at <https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/wildlife-crossings/pilot-program>.

8. BUY AMERICA REQUIREMENTS

Funds made available under this NOFO are subject to domestic preference requirements. See [Section H](#) of this NOFO for additional details. Applicants can also refer to the [FHWA Construction Program Guide](#) for more information about addressing FHWA's Buy America requirements and Build America, Buy America requirements.

D. APPLICATION CONTENT AND FORMAT

1. APPLICATION FORMAT

All applications must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov.

Application files should be single-spaced, 12-point standard font (*e.g.*, Times New Roman), with 1-inch margins. Files should be in PDF unless otherwise specified (*e.g.*, Excel based forms and location files such as Shapefile or KML/KMZ).

DOT recommends applicants use a file naming format of: “[Applicant organization#]-2026-WCPP” where “Applicant organization” reflects the applicant’s legal name, abbreviated as appropriate, and where “#” represents the order of applicant priority for the grant, if more than one application is submitted. If necessary, the workspace title can be edited per the instructions on Grants.gov.

The application package must consist of the following:

All Project Types	Non-Construction Projects-Only	Construction Projects-Only
<u>Standard Form (SF) 424</u> (Application for Federal Assistance)	<u>SF-424A</u> (Budget Information for Non-Construction Projects)	<u>SF-424C</u> (Budget Information for Construction Projects)
<u>Grants.gov Lobbying Form</u> (Certification Regarding Lobbying)	<u>SF-424B</u> (Assurances for Non-Construction Programs)	<u>SF-424D</u> (Assurances for Construction Programs)
<u>SF-LLL</u> (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form)		
The WCPP Application Template (see Section D.2) must be added as an attachment to item 15 of the SF-424.		

2. APPLICATION CONTENT

Standard Forms

All mandatory SFs of the 424 family are available for download at <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-mandatory-family>.

The WCPP Application Template

Applicants must complete the WCPP Template and include it as an attachment to Item 15 of their SF-424. The Application Template should provide all information necessary for DOT to determine the project satisfies the eligibility requirements described in [Section B](#) and evaluate the criteria specified in [Section F](#).

DOT will only review the completed Application Template and the allowable supplemental documents (e.g., budget, schedule, design plans, etc.) specified within the Application Template instructions.

The application must provide a budget for the project, either within the Application Template itself, or as an attachment. The budget must list the amount and percentage of both the Federal funding requested and any additional non-Federal funds, if any, to be used to pay for the project.

The Application Template can be found on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

3. SHARING OF APPLICATION INFORMATION

DOT may share application information within DOT or with other Federal Agencies if DOT determines sharing is relevant to the respective program's goals.

E. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINE

1. ADDRESS TO REQUEST APPLICATION PACKAGE

Applicants may obtain application forms, including the Application Template, on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) under the Funding Opportunity Number under [Section A](#).

Once at [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), select the Search Grants tab. Then enter one of the following:

- **Opportunity Number: XXXXX (Will be generated by GrantSolutions)**
- Opportunity Name: Fiscal Year 2026 Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program Competitive Grant Program.
- Assistance Listing Number: 20.290

Select the opportunity option, which will open to a page with several tabs. The first tab is a synopsis of the Opportunity. Select the Application Package tab to download the forms needed to submit a FY 2026 WCPP application. The applicant must complete and submit all forms included in the application package for this notice, as contained at [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

Should applicants have any difficulties in accessing any SFs and require paper copies, please contact the Agency contact provided in [Section A](#) of this NOFO.

2. UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT

Each applicant must:

- Be registered in System for Award Management (SAM) at [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) before submitting its application;
- Provide a valid Unique Entity Identifier in its application; and

- Continue to maintain an active registration in [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration by a Federal Agency.

Please note the SAM registration process takes several weeks to complete.

3. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be submitted electronically through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov). DOT does not accept applications via mail, fax, email, or other means. Additional resources on applying through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) can be found at <https://www.grants.gov/applicants>.

4. SUBMISSION DEADLINE

FY 2026 WCPP applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) by 11:59 PM EST on November 16, 2026. [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) attaches a time stamp to each application at the time submission is complete.

5. CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS

Only applicants who comply with all submission deadlines described in this notice and electronically submit valid, on-time applications through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) will be eligible for evaluation and possible selection for award.

To the extent practicable, applicants should provide supporting data and documentation in a form directly verifiable by DOT. DOT may, but is not required to, reach back to applicants for the purpose of clarifying application information. DOT will not request additional information to perfect incomplete applications.

6. SUBMISSION ISSUES

For information on submission issues and more information on late applications, see: <https://highways.dot.gov/resources/competitive-grants/submission-issues-0>.

7. INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

This program is not subject to E.O. 12372, *Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs*.

F. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. MERIT CRITERIA

DOT will evaluate applications submitted in response to this notice using the following merit criteria: Reduction of WVCs, Improvement of Terrestrial and Aquatic Habitat Connectivity, and Secondary Statutory Selection Considerations. The rating for each merit criterion will be assigned a label of Highly Responsive, Responsive, or Non-Responsive. These ratings will be

used at the conclusion of the merit criteria evaluation to assign the application an overall merit criteria rating.

In providing information, applicants should include supporting information such as data, modeling, graphics, anecdotal knowledge, or Tribal, State, or regional plans (e.g., Transportation Safety Plans) to support conclusions.

Criterion # 1: Primary Statutory Selection Consideration 23 U.S.C. 171(e)(1) Reduction of WVCs. DOT will assess the extent to which the proposed project is likely to protect motorists by reducing the number of WVCs. DOT also will seek to fund projects that support the Trump Administration’s policy priority of Addressing Core Infrastructure by meaningfully improving transportation safety and reducing fatalities and serious injuries, such as eliminating at-grade wildlife crossings. In evaluating the application, DOT will consider the context and intensity of harm to motorists and wildlife, and the degree to which the project mitigates or removes those harms by reducing WVCs.

Merit Criteria	Highly Responsive	Responsive	Non-Responsive
Criterion #1: Reduction of WVCs: A. Applicants should provide sufficient project data and information to demonstrate the current and projected WVC(s) in the proposed project area, including identifying the species involved; and the number, severity and costs of WVC impacts without (baseline) and with implementation of the project. B. The application provides information on the landscape context, relevant wildlife migratory or movement corridors and connected habitats of species involved in the WVCs, and any other contributing factors that may lead to WVCs within the proposed project area. C. The application provides specific actions (or recommendations in the case of a research project) that will reduce WVCs and describes the proposed effectiveness of the deployed WVC mitigation measures.	The application will significantly reduce WVCs through addressing A, B, C, and D.	The application will moderately reduce WVCs by addressing A, B, and C.	The application does not demonstrate or poorly demonstrates improving safety by reducing WVCs.

D. The application indicates the project area has a high number of WVCs, the WVCs involve large mammals that can cause greater human harm or the WVCs involve species of significance in the local or regional context and provides a solution that will reduce WVCs.			
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Criterion #2: Primary Statutory Selection Consideration 23 U.S.C. 171(e)(1) Improvement of Terrestrial and Aquatic Habitat Connectivity. DOT will assess the extent to which the proposed project is likely to improve terrestrial and aquatic habitat connectivity. In evaluating applications, FHWA will use subject matter experts to consider the context and degree of the impact of current habitat barriers, and the degree to which the project improves connectivity by removing or reducing those barriers and providing connectivity.

Merit Criteria	Highly Responsive	Responsive	Non-Responsive
Criterion #2: Improvement of Terrestrial and Aquatic Habitat Connectivity: A. The application describes the extent to which the proposed project will improve terrestrial and aquatic habitat connectivity while reducing WVCs, including the number of species that will benefit and the amount of habitat that will be connected by the project.	For one or more species, the application quantifiably or qualitatively demonstrates the project will achieve two or more of the following: (1) will reconnect isolated populations or fragmented habitats across roadways; (2) will facilitate safe migrations along known migration corridors crossing roadways; or (3) will safely connect animals to food or water supplies where roadways are a barrier to access.	For one or more species, the application quantifiably or qualitatively demonstrates the project will achieve at least one of the following: (1) will reconnect isolated populations or fragmented habitats across roadways;(2) will facilitate safe migrations along known migration corridors crossing roadways; or (3) will safely connect animals to food or water supplies where roadways are a barrier to access.	The application does not demonstrate or poorly demonstrates an improvement to wildlife habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species.

Criterion #3: Secondary Statutory Selection Consideration: In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 171(e)(2), FHWA will take into consideration, secondarily, the extent to which the proposed project is likely to accomplish the following:

- Leverage investments by encouraging non-Federal contributions.
- Supporting economic development and visitation opportunities.
- Incorporating innovative technologies.
- Provision of educational and outreach opportunities.
- Incorporates monitoring and research.

Merit Criteria	Highly Responsive	Responsive	Non-Responsive
Criterion #3: Secondary Statutory Selection Considerations A. The project is supported by contributions, other than WCPP funds. B. The project will bolster local and regional economic competitiveness, such as attracting visitors, including American families, to wildlife viewing, hunting, or fishing opportunities. C. The application incorporates innovative technologies that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the project in reducing WVCs or the effectiveness of the project in improving habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species. D. The application provides educational opportunities regarding impacts of WVCs to motorist safety, wildlife injury and mortality, and habitat connectivity and provides effective outreach such as providing locations of movement or migration patterns	The application satisfies at least four of the five considerations.	The application satisfies a minimum of three selection considerations.	The application does not satisfy a minimum of three selection considerations.

through signage, Web-based outreach and publications.			
E. The application proposes a monitoring and research plan and an effective method of sharing research and best practices broadly with stakeholders.			

MERIT CRITERIA RATINGS

Based on the assessment described in [Section F.1](#) above, DOT will assign a merit criteria rating as shown in the table below.

Primary Merit Criteria Rating (Criteria #1 & #2)	Description
High	Rated Highly Responsive with both primary merit criteria; or Highly Responsive with one primary merit criterion and Responsive with the other primary merit criterion.
Medium	Rated Responsive with both primary merit criteria.
Low	Rated Non-Responsive for any of the primary merit criteria.

Only applications rated *High* or *Medium* for the primary merit criteria will be evaluated for their responsiveness to the secondary merit criterion by the technical evaluation team.

Secondary Merit Criterion Rating (Criterion #3)	Description
High	Rated Highly Responsive.
Medium	Rated Responsive.
Low	Rated Non-Responsive.

Only applications rated *High* or *Medium* for the secondary merit criterion will be evaluated for their responsiveness to the Project Readiness Assessment by the technical evaluation team.

2. PROJECT READINESS ASSESSMENT

To assess the likelihood of a successful project, DOT will consider project readiness for eligible applications receiving a Medium or High merit criteria rating.

For the Project Readiness Assessment, DOT will consider three evaluation ratings: Technical Assessment, Financial Completeness Assessment, and Permitting Risk Assessment. DOT will use information from the Project Readiness Assessment portion of the application as well as

information contained throughout the application to complete the Project Readiness Assessment. The ratings for each Project Readiness Assessment criteria will also be assigned a numerical label. These will be used at the conclusion of the Project Readiness Assessment to assign the application an overall readiness rating.

Readiness: Technical Assessment

The Technical Assessment will evaluate the applicant's capacity to successfully deliver the project in compliance with applicable Federal requirements and assesses the technical feasibility of the project as described in the application. Technical Assessment ratings will be one of the following: Certain (3), Somewhat Certain (2) or Unknown or Uncertain (1), as defined in the table below.

Technical Assessment ratings will be based on:

Rating	Certain (3)	Somewhat Certain (2)	Unknown or Uncertain (1)
Technical Assessment Elements: A. The applicant has the technical and staffing resources to deliver the project. B. The project will comply with all applicable Federal requirements. C. The applicant demonstrates a commitment for timely project delivery as demonstrated by the schedule information in the application. D. The applicant demonstrates the technical feasibility of the project.	The application demonstrates the applicant and project will meet all four Technical Assessment Elements.	The application demonstrates the applicant and project will meet Technical Assessment Elements B, C, and D, and may not have currently the technical and staffing resources to deliver the project but will obtain needed resources to deliver the project if awarded.	The application does not demonstrate the applicant or project will meet Technical Assessment Elements B, C, and D, and may not have currently the resources to deliver the project and does not commit to obtaining the necessary resources.

Readiness: Financial Completeness Assessment

The Financial Completeness Assessment evaluates the availability of matching funds and whether the applicant presented a complete funding package and will receive a rating of Complete (3), Partially Complete (2), or Incomplete (1), as defined in the table below.

Financial Completeness Assessment ratings will be based on:

Rating	Complete (3)	Partially Complete (2)	Incomplete (1)
Financial Completeness Assessment Elements: A. The application includes complete funding estimates based on recent stages of design (or for non-construction projects, proposal development). B. The application includes a plan to address potential cost overruns. C. The application demonstrates reasonable availability of all funding needed to complete the project with an award. D. For construction projects, the proposal includes information on how future operation, maintenance and preservation costs will be funded.	The application demonstrates that the applicant and project will meet Financial Completeness Assessment Elements A, B, and C, and for construction projects, as well as Element D for maintenance.	The application demonstrates that the applicant and project will meet Financial Completeness Assessment Elements A and C. However, while a plan for cost overruns is provided, it is incomplete or based on approaches or funding sources not reasonably assumed available to the applicant; or for construction projects, the funding described for future operation, maintenance or preservation costs are not reasonably assumed available to the applicant.	The application does not demonstrate that the applicant or project will meet Financial Completeness Assessment Elements A or C; or the application does not demonstrate the applicant or project will meet Elements B or D, or the methods or funding sources for Elements B or D are not reasonably assumed available to the applicant.

Readiness: Permitting Risk Assessment

The Permitting Risk Assessment evaluates the status of the environmental approvals required for the proposed project and the likelihood other necessary approvals, permits, or public engagement will affect project obligations. The applicant must disclose if there is open litigation concerning the project; or, if there is known, and difficult to resolve, public controversy, or agency opposition to the project on environmental grounds. This assessment will result in a rating of High Risk (1), Moderate Risk (2), Or Low Risk (3), as defined in the table below.

Permitting Risk Assessment ratings will be based on:

Rating	Low Risk (3)	Moderate Risk (2)	High Risk (1)
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Permitting Risk Assessment Elements: A. The National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) review is complete or the application demonstrates NEPA will be complete in time to meet the project schedule. B. All necessary permits have been obtained or the application demonstrates permits and approvals will be obtained in time to meet the project schedule. C. Public engagement has occurred or will occur, and any known public controversy has been or will be addressed or mitigated. D. The application discloses any known and unmitigated issues posing high risk to project delivery. Examples include litigation, known public controversy, or agency opposition to the project on environmental grounds.	The application demonstrates the project will meet Permitting Risk Assessment Elements A, B, and C, but does not have any known unmitigated risks to project delivery as shown in Element D.	The application demonstrates the project will meet Permitting Risk Assessment Elements A, B, and C, but there is risk of schedule delay because either: • An Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement is needed and the NEPA document has not been released for public review; • Permit work has not started and the schedule does not include time for schedule delays; - or • Public engagement has not started and the schedule does not include time to address public input; and • The project or program does not have any known unmitigated risks to project delivery as shown in Element D.	The application indicates risk as described in Permitting Risk Assessment Element D; or the application does not meet Elements A, B, or C.
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The Project Readiness Ratings described above will be translated to a High, Medium, or Low rating using the table below:

Project Readiness Rating	Description
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High	At least two readiness assessment items rated as a 3, with no more than one readiness assessment item rated as a 2.
Medium	One readiness assessment item rated as a 3, with two readiness assessment items rated as a 2.
Low	All readiness assessment items rated as either a 2 or a 1.

3. OVERALL RATING OF THE APPLICATION

DOT will assign each eligible application an overall rating of Highly Recommended, Recommended, or Not Recommended. The rating will be assigned on the following basis: A rating of Highly Recommended will be assigned to an application that received (1) a high rating for primary merit criteria; (2) either high or medium in the secondary merit criterion; and, (3) either high or medium for project readiness.

A rating of Recommended will be assigned to an application that receives ratings of (1) medium in primary merit criteria; (2) either high or medium in the secondary merit criterion; and (3) either high or medium in project readiness.

A rating of Not Recommended will be assigned to an application that receives ratings of: (1) low in primary merit criteria; (2) low in secondary merit criterion; or (3) low in project readiness.

4. DOT PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS

After completing the merit criteria review and Project Readiness Assessment, among projects of similar application rating of Highly Recommended or Recommended, DOT may prioritize selections based on one or more of the considerations described below.

- DOT may provide awards to applications receiving a high readiness rating.
- DOT may provide awards to applications receiving a high merit criteria rating.
- DOT may provide awards to construction projects.
- DOT may consider geographic distribution when selecting awards.
- DOT may provide awards to a broad range of eligible recipients rather than to a select group of repeat players.
- DOT may provide awards to projects that improve the travel experience for American families.
- DOT may provide awards to projects that decrease roadway traffic congestion without proposing limits to roadway capacity for motor vehicles or creating artificial chokepoints for motor vehicles.

The applicant should support how the project may meet these selection considerations within their application.

5. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

DOT will review applications received by the deadline for completeness and eligibility based on the information found in [Section B](#) of this notice. This review phase is referred to as the intake and eligibility review. Applications that pass the intake and eligibility review will be evaluated by the Technical Review Team (TRT), and once evaluated and rated, will then be evaluated by the Senior Review Team (SRT), to determine which applications are presented to DOT leadership for final selection, as described below.

Technical Review

The evaluation of eligible applications will be conducted by a TRT, comprised of FHWA employees, other DOT Modal Administration staff, or contractors. TRT will evaluate each application passing the initial intake and eligibility review against the merit criteria in [Section F](#). TRT will then complete the Project Readiness Assessment as described under [Section F](#) to determine which applications are rated as Highly Recommended, Recommended, or Not Recommended.

TRT will then evaluate each Highly Recommended and Recommended application for its responsiveness to the statutory priority considerations and DOT priority considerations. TRT will send information to SRT on all eligible applications, including the rating for each merit criteria, the Project Readiness Assessment rating, and the evaluation of responsiveness to the Statutory Priority Considerations and the DOT priority considerations.

Senior Review

SRT may consist of officials from the Office of the Secretary of Transportation, the FHWA Administrator, and others in senior leadership positions requested to serve by the FHWA Administrator. SRT will determine which projects advance to DOT leadership for final selection. DOT leadership has the discretion to determine which applications best address the WCPP merit criteria, Project Readiness Assessment, and selection considerations and should be selected. DOT is not obligated to make any award as a result of this NOFO.

The Department intends to apply principles from [DOT Order 2100.7 \(Ensuring Reliance Upon Sound Economic Analysis in DOT's Policies, Programs and Activities\)](#) and [DOT Order 2100.9 \(Ensuring Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity in Department of Transportation Policies, Programs, and Activities\)](#) when evaluating applications and making award selections. To the maximum extent permitted by law, DOT will prioritize projects that are in alignment with the principles outlined in DOT Orders 2100.7 and 2100.9.

Reduced Awards

In accordance with [Section D](#) of this NOFO, DOT may enter into discussions with an applicant to consider, if mutually agreeable, a lesser scaled amount of a potential award. This may occur because of the quantity, size and scope of the applications received in response to this notice and the results of the application review process.

6. APPLICANT RISK ASSESSMENT

Prior to award, each selected applicant will be subject to a risk assessment required by Title 2, Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), Part § 200.206. DOT must review and consider any information about the applicant in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM. An applicant may review information in SAM.gov and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding Agency previously entered. DOT will consider comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in SAM.gov, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the risk assessment. DOT reserves the right to deny an award based on the results of the risk assessment or include special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the Federal award in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.206.

DOT will consider the following factors in its risk assessment in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.206:

- Financial stability: the applicant's record of effectively managing financial risks, assets, and resources.
- Management systems and standards: quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in this part.
- History of performance, if applicable: the applicant's record of managing previous and current Federal awards, including compliance with reporting requirements and conformance to the terms and conditions of Federal awards, if applicable; audit reports and findings, reports and findings from audits performed under subpart F or the reports and findings of any other available audits, if applicable.
- Ability to effectively implement requirements: the applicant's ability for effective implementation of statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on recipients of Federal awards.

G. AWARD NOTICES

1. HOW PROJECT SELECTIONS ARE ANNOUNCED

Following the evaluation outlined in [Section F](#), DOT will announce awarded projects by posting a list of selected projects at: <https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/wildlife-crossings/pilot-program>. Notice of selection is not authorization to begin performance or to incur costs for the proposed project. Following the announcement, DOT will contact the POC listed in the SF-424 to initiate negotiation of the project agreement for authorization.

WCPP grants will be awarded upon the execution of a grant agreement between FHWA and the State DOT, or FHWA and the recipient.

Unsuccessful applicants may request a debriefing after the selected funding recipients are publicly announced. The request must be submitted by the applicant identified on the SF-424. The debrief will be limited to how the application responded to the grant program evaluation criteria described in [Section F](#) of the NOFO. All debrief requests should be submitted to wildlifecrossings@dot.gov.

2. REIMBURSEMENTS AND COSTS INCURRED PRIOR TO AWARD AND OBLIGATION OF GRANTS

Unless authorized by DOT in writing after announcement of FY 2026 WCPP grant selections, any costs incurred prior to DOT's obligation of funds for a project are ineligible for reimbursement and are ineligible cost-share requirements. DOT will primarily implement grants to State DOTs, MPOs, units of local government, regional transportation authorities, and special purpose districts or public authorities with a transportation function on a reimbursement basis. Under the reimbursement approach, DOT funds will reimburse recipients only for costs incurred after execution of a grant agreement for costs DOT determines to be allowable, reasonable, and allocable, as defined under 2 CFR Part 200, and after the recipient submits valid requests for reimbursement. DOT will primarily administer grants to Indian Tribes and FLMA's on an advance basis.

If a recipient cannot complete a project on a reimbursable basis DOT will, on a case-by-case basis, consider recipient requests to use alternative payment methods as described under 2 CFR 200.305(b).

H. POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

1. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Administrative Requirements

All awards will be administered pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal awards found in 2 CFR Part 200, as adopted by DOT at 2 CFR Part 1201. Applicable Federal laws, rules, and regulations set forth in Title 49 of the CFR, shall apply to awards provided under this program.

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 United States Constitution; the conditions of performance, non-discrimination requirements, and other assurances made applicable to the award of funds in accordance with regulations of DOT and FHWA; and applicable Federal financial assistance and contracting principles promulgated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). In complying with these requirements, recipients 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 DOT determines a recipient has failed to comply with applicable Federal requirements, DOT may terminate the award of funds and disallow previously incurred costs, requiring the recipient to reimburse any expended award funds.

Program Requirements

Critical Infrastructure Security, Cybersecurity and Resilience

It is the policy of the United States to strengthen the security and resilience of its critical infrastructure against all threats and hazards, including physical and cyber risks, consistent with National Security Memorandum 22 to secure and enhance the resilience of U.S. Critical Infrastructure. Each applicant selected for Federal 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 project. Projects that have not appropriately considered and addressed physical and cyber security and resilience in their planning, design, and project oversight, as determined by DOT and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, will be required to do so before receiving funds.

Domestic Preference Requirements

As expressed in E.O. 14005, *Ensuring the Future Is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers* (86 FR 7475), the executive branch should maximize, consistent with law, the use of goods, products, and materials produced, and services offered in, the United States. Funds made available under this notice are subject to FHWA's steel, iron, and manufactured product domestic requirements at 23 U.S.C. 313 and 23 CFR 635.410, and the construction materials domestic preference requirement at Pub. L. 117-58, div. G §§ 70901–70927, as implemented by OMB at 2 CFR Part 184. DOT expects all applicants to comply with those requirements.

Federal Anti-Discrimination

- Except where prohibited by court order, pursuant to E.O. 14173, *Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity*, as a condition of grant award, each recipient must agree that its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the Government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of Title 31, U.S.C.
- Except where prohibited by court order, pursuant to E.O. 14173, *Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity*, as a condition of grant award, each recipient must certify that it does not operate any programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives that violate the U.S. Constitution or any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.

To the extent a court order bars the implementation or enforcement of one or more of these provisions with respect to a particular applicant or recipient, DOT will not implement or enforce the relevant provision(s) against that applicant or recipient for as long as the court order remains in place.

Compliance with Federal Law and Policies

Except where prohibited by court order, the applicant assures and certifies, with respect to any application and awarded project under this NOFO, it will comply with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, E.O.s, policies, guidelines, and requirements as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of Federal funds.

2. REPORTING

Each applicant selected for WCPP funding must submit semi-annual progress reports and semi-annual Federal Financial Reports (SF-425) to monitor project progress and ensure accountability and financial transparency in the program. The recipient's final progress and SF-425 shall be submitted within 120 days after the termination or expiration of the grant agreement between DOT and the recipient of WCPP grant funds.

Each WCPP grant recipient must collect and report to DOT information on performance measures as detailed in the project grant agreement.

FHWA will work with grant recipients to establish a recommended two to four performance measures that enable FHWA to measure and evaluate the outcomes of each individual grant. Indicators may document changes from an established baseline such as number of WVCs within the project area or degree of ecological benefit from habitat connectivity (e.g., considering pre-project baselines or post-project outcomes). Other indicators or metrics may consist of monitoring or maintenance activities where construction occurs, including those proposed to occur after completion of project construction. Performance reporting is expected to continue for several years after project construction is completed.

[Per the Performance and Program Evaluation Statement on the FWHA Website](#), FHWA reserves the right to request additional information, if deemed needed, to understand better the status of the project. The successful applicant will provide additional financial reporting beyond the quarterly reporting if such statements are necessary to address DOT's Stewardship and Oversight responsibility of the awarded grants funds. The successful applicant also agrees to allow periodic project inspections and DOT will provide notice for such inspections.