



# Lessons on How to Compete for a USDOT TIGER Grant

Presented by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for  
Transportation Policy  
United States Department of Transportation

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Pine Ridge, SD



North Kingston, RI



Fort Worth, TX

Portland, OR

# TIGER<sub>3</sub>

- \$527 million multimodal, merit-based discretionary grant program
- \$140 million for rural areas
- Up to \$150 million for TIFIA payments
- Last round the average award was \$13.25 million
- Geographic diversity requirement

# 2011 Application Process

- August 22<sup>nd</sup> - Pre-Application Registration
- October 3<sup>rd</sup> - Pre-Applications Due
- October 4<sup>th</sup> - Final Applications Open
- October 31<sup>st</sup> - Final Applications Due



# Changes from TIGER 2

- No Planning Funds this round
- 3 Application Limit (per sponsor)
- TIFIA Letter of Interest



# Keys to Competitive Applications

- Eligibility
- Address Criteria and Outcomes
- Clarity
- Leveraging Investment
- Project Segmentation
- Benefit-Cost Analysis
- Project Readiness/NEPA
- TIFIA Challenge
- Rural & Tribal Applicants
- Highly Competitive Projects
- Applicant Pitfalls
- Planned Technical Assistance



# Eligibility

- Surface transportation capital projects only
- Open to state, tribal, and local entities, and other subdivisions
- Private entities, including non-profits, must partner with a public lead
- Rural grants: \$1 million minimum (no match req)
- Urbanized area grants: \$10 million minimum (20% match)
- **Eligible ≠ Competitive**



# Address Criteria and Outcomes

- Application outline in the NOFA
- Describe how project addresses challenge
- Detail how federal funds will be used
- Address the selection criteria

## **Primary Criteria**

- State of Good Repair
- Economic Competitiveness
- Livability
- Environmental Sustainability
- Safety
- Job Creation/Near-Term Economic

## **Secondary Criteria**

- Innovation
- Partnership



# Clarity

- Ensure project descriptions are clear and concise
- Pictures and maps are helpful
- Focus on why project is compelling
- Staff and experts may review 100-200 applications within a short period of time



# Leveraging Investment

- Matching state and local funds with private funds helps demonstrate commitment = more competitive
- First round: TIGER grantees delivered \$4.5 billion in matching funding for TIGER's \$1.5 billion
- Public-private projects must demonstrate significant public benefits



# Project Segmentation

- Clearly identify multiple project elements if the project is segmentable
- Segments must have “independent utility”
  - Provides transportation benefits
  - Will be ready for use when complete
- **Phases must complete operable segment**



# Benefit-Cost Analysis

- Demonstrate demand for the project
  - include good ridership/”usership” estimates
- Document benefit-cost calculations and references for monetized values
- Show the net societal benefits of the project
  - not just local benefits



# Benefit-Cost Analysis (cont.)

- Be cautious in estimating job-related benefits
- Be cautious in estimating real estate investment benefits
  - Consider costs and benefits of more land development
- Estimate safety benefits based on good crash data and valid analysis of cause
- Review [2010 Benefit Cost Analysis Webcast](#)



# Project Readiness/NEPA

- Projects that are ready to move to construction quickly are given priority
- Document where the project is in the NEPA process
- Initiate NEPA in advance of the application process, if possible
- If the project expects a CE determination, demonstrate why this is justified



# TIFIA Challenge

- Up to \$150 million available for TIGER TIFIA Payments
- Also required to submit a TIFIA letter of interest
- Must demonstrate that the loan is ready to close on or before September 30, 2013



# Rural Applicants

- Rural Areas - any area not in an Urbanized Area (pop. 50,000), as defined by the Census Bureau
- \$1 million minimum grant
- No match requirement
  - Competitive applications often feature a match

# Highly Competitive Projects

- Multimodal projects, coordinated investment from other sources and programs
- Demonstrate project benefits across selection criteria
- New partnerships, multi-jurisdictional cooperation
- Public-private partnerships
- Support key national priorities
- Non-traditional or hard to fund projects

# Application Pitfalls

- Ineligibility: applicants and projects
- Priorities/outcomes not aligned with selection criteria
- Project readiness
- Insufficient matching funds, lack of demonstration
- Non-construction requests: O/M assistance, ROW
- Grouping unrelated projects



# Technical Assistance

- USDOT offers technical assistance to help applicants through the TIGER process
- Preparation of benefit cost analysis
- Previous TIGER application debriefs
- Special Topics Webinars



# Additional Application Help

TIGER Website: [www.dot.gov/tiger/](http://www.dot.gov/tiger/)

## Special Topics Webinars

- July 27<sup>th</sup> - [“Talking Freight”](#)
- August 17<sup>th</sup> - [Benefit Cost Analysis](#)
- August 22<sup>nd</sup> - [Project Readiness/NEPA](#)
- August 24<sup>th</sup> - [Public Private Partnerships & TIFIA](#)
- August 24<sup>th</sup> - Rural and Tribal Applications
- August 30<sup>th</sup> - [MARAD Port Outreach](#)



# For This Year's Round...

- Focus on best project(s) – those that align well with the program's selection criteria
- Develop an application that your neighbor could read and understand
- Questions sent to [TIGERGrants@dot.gov](mailto:TIGERGrants@dot.gov)

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## Question and Answer Session