

Funding for Installation of Quiet Zones

Section 130 funds

Federal Formula funds for public railroad - highway at-grade crossing improvement are federal dollars provided to the State DOT for safety related projects

- Annual Set aside from the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- Funding is apportioned to the State by formula
- Program is to improve the safety of railroad/highway crossings

Since the installation of Quiet Zones (QZ) are not considered safety treatments (QZ's are more of a noise mitigation measure) – these funds cannot be used for establishment of a QZ.

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement (CRISI) grant

This federal discretionary grant program is to fund projects that improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of intercity passenger and freight rail

Eligible Projects under this grant program include, but are not limited to:

- Deployment of railroad safety technology;
- Capital projects, as defined in section 49 U.S.C. § 24401(2) for intercity passenger rail service, except that a project under this NOFO is not required to be in a state rail plan;
- Capital projects that:
 - address congestion challenges affecting rail service,
 - reduce congestion and facilitate ridership growth along heavily traveled rail corridors, and/or
 - improve short-line or regional railroad infrastructure;
- Highway-rail grade crossing improvement projects;
- Rail line relocation and improvement projects;
- Regional rail and corridor service development plans and environmental analyses;
- Any project necessary to enhance multimodal connections or facilitate service integration between rail service and other modes;
- The development and implementation of a safety program or institute;
- Any research that the Secretary considers necessary to advance any particular aspect of rail related capital, operations, or safety improvements; and
- Workforce development and training activities, coordinated to the extent practicable with the existing local training programs supported by the Department of Transportation, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Education.

Eligible Recipients:

- (1) State;
- (2) Group of States;

- (3) Interstate Compact;
- (4) Public agency or publicly chartered authority established by one or more States;
- (5) Political subdivision of a State;
- (6) Amtrak or another rail carrier that provides intercity rail passenger transportation;
- (7) Class II railroad or Class III railroad or a holding company of a Class II or Class III railroad;
- (8) Any rail carrier or rail equipment manufacturer in partnership with at least one of the entities described in (1) through (5);

Therefore, these funds are available for local governments for the establishment of QZ's.

- The entity would prepare an application and submit the application to FRA via the federal on-line software.
- FRA puts out a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for these grants and they typically give the eligible recipients approximately 2-3 months to prepare and submit the application
- FY21 grants - \$362 Million, of which 25% (\$93 M) was set aside for rural projects.
- 80/20 match requirement with preference for projects with 50/50 match

Special Transportation Circumstance (STC) Funding

This federal grant program is a subpart of the CRISI grant program. The funds are provided to the States of Alaska, South Dakota and Wyoming because they do not have intercity passenger rail or connected to the national rail system (Amtrak). The funds are non-competitive for these three states, but the project must still meet eligibility requirements.

- Eligibility: projects must be freight rail capital projects in those states that are on a state rail plan developed under Chapter 227, and that provide public benefits as defined in 49 U.S.C. § 22701(2).
- 80/20 match requirement (they State RR Board has not historically provided state funds for match requirements on non-state assets)
- Past SD STC projects have been for short line railroad infrastructure projects (sidings, bridges/structures, rail replacement, etc.)