



Illinois Department of Transportation

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

JUL 14 2023

July 13, 2023

Cathy Johnson
COUNTY CLERK
VERMILION CO. IL.

CIRCULAR LETTER 2023-21

FEDERAL NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: RURAL AND TRIBAL ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAM

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

INTRODUCTION:

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) has recently announced the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for a new pilot program. The Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program offers technical assistance grants to rural and tribal communities. The NOFO combines two years of funding (Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023), \$3.4 million in total, to eligible applicants on a first-come, first-served basis. Individual awards will range in value up to the statutory limit of \$360,000. **There is no local funding match required to participate in this program.**

Please note that this Program is one where the award will be provided in the form of direct monetary grants for recipients. As such, compliance, reporting, and responsibilities with the federal Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200) will be borne by the recipient for these funds.

ELIGIBILITY AND SCOPE:

Eligible applicants include:

- a unit of local government or political subdivision that is located outside of an urban area that has a population of more than 150,000 residents as determined by the Bureau of the Census;
- a State seeking to advance a project in an area located outside of an urban area with a population of more than 150,000 residents as determined by the Bureau of the Census;
- a federally recognized Indian Tribe; or
- the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands.

The grants may be used to hire staff or advisors to assist with early development-phase activities including, but not limited to, feasibility studies; preliminary engineering and design; environmental review; revenue forecasting; financial feasibility analysis; statutory and regulatory analysis and drafting and negotiation of agreements.

WEBINAR:

The USDOT hosted a webinar to provide more information for interested applicants. A recording of this webinar and a copy of the presentation is available on the [USDOT website](#).

An additional webinar has been scheduled for July 20, 2023 at 3:00 PM Eastern. Registration is available on the [USDOT website](#).

DEADLINES:

USDOT has created a simple, 13 question funding application, and will **begin accepting submissions at 2 PM ET on August 14, 2023**. As stated previously, this program is a first come, first served program, so please note this when applying. The application will remain open until September 27, 2023; however, funding may be fully committed prior to the deadline. A sample application is available on the [USDOT website](#) to allow candidates to prepare.

Importantly, applicants must be pre-registered in [SAM.gov](#) and have a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), which can take 2-4 weeks to complete for first time applicants. Visit <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html> to learn more.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & COORDINATION:

For further information regarding this notice, please contact the USDOT - Office of the Secretary via email at RuralandTribalTA@dot.gov.

In addition, the USDOT has a frequently asked questions document on the USDOT website at <https://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/RuralandTribalGrants>

If you have any questions on the Circular Letter; and as a courtesy, we request that you notify us of your intent to apply to foster good communication, as well as enable the Department to be able to provide administrative support for your project, please contact Holly Primm, Local Planning & Programming Manager at (217) 782-1662 or Holly.Primm@illinois.gov.

Sincerely,



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

cc: David Snyder, FHWA Illinois Division Administrator
Chris Hall, FHWA Illinois Division Deputy Division Administrator
Jon-Paul Kohler, FHWA Illinois Division
Shane Schneider, Illinois Association of County Engineers
Brad Cole, Illinois Municipal League
Jerry Crabtree, Township Officials of Illinois
Arnie Vegter, Township Highway Commissioners of Illinois