



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20590

August 2, 2017

The Honorable Bill Shuster  
Chairman  
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This notification to Congress, prepared in accordance with applicable laws, including 49 USC § 311 and Section 1105 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, details proposed Small Project Fiscal Year 2017 Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) grants, authorized by the FAST Act's Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects program. The FAST Act requires written notification of proposed grants to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works at least 60 days before making a grant, which includes an evaluation and justification for each project and the amount of the proposed award. 49 USC § 331 requires notification to the same committees, as well as the Senate Committees on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, three days prior to making announcements of awards.

The Department is accepting applications until 8:00 P.M. EST on November 2, 2017 for FY 2017 Large Projects and FY 2018 Large and Small Projects under the Infrastructure Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grants program Notice of Funding Opportunity published on July 5, 2017.

Similar letters have been sent to the Ranking Member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, and Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elaine L. Chao". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Elaine L. Chao

Enclosure

**US 550 South Connection to US 160**

La Plata County

*La Plata County, Colorado, Rural*

Proposed Award: \$12,312,886.50

Proposed Justification

La Plata County will be awarded \$12,312,886.50 to construct a new approximately 1.7-mile alignment of US 550, connecting with US 160 at the Grandview Interchange. The new alignment will be completed with flatter grades, wider shoulders, a southbound truck climbing lane, and automated anti-icing systems. The project award is less than the \$15,000,000 originally requested, but the applicant will provide the full project scope, as documented in a clarifying email from the applicant.

Proposed Evaluation

The new alignment improves on the existing connection between US 550 and US 160 by replacing an at-grade signalized intersection with a grade-separated interchange with roundabouts, increasing mobility as travel times and congestion are reduced for the more than 6,000 cars and trucks that traverse the US 550-US 160 intersection daily. The reduced grade, wider shoulders and anti-icing systems will produce safety benefits, particularly in winter conditions. The project will also result in positive economic and mobility outcomes, as US 550 is a critical route for freight traveling between Colorado and New Mexico, which will benefit from the truck climbing lane.

**Taylor County Florida Competitiveness & Employment by Rail (CEBYR) Project**

Taylor County

*Taylor County, Florida, Rural*

Proposed Grant Award: \$8,671,513.50

Project Justification

Taylor County Florida will receive \$8,671,513.50 for the Competitiveness & Employment by Rail (CEBYR) Project. The CEBYR project will rehabilitate the Georgia & Florida Railway (GFRR) including upgrades to approximately 19 active warning public grade crossings devices, rebuilding approximately 90 public and private grade crossing surfaces, hardening 16 bridges to support increased traffic, installing approximately 70,000 crossties, and resurfacing approximately 80 miles of railway between Foley, Florida and Adel, Georgia.

Project Evaluation

By improving track condition, this grant will reduce the probability of derailments and accidents, producing safety benefits. This project will additionally help to ensure grade crossing safety by enhancing safety warnings at current crossings. The project will also increase speeds on the GFRR from 10-25 mph, reducing shipping costs and encouraging a shift from truck to rail shipping, producing economic and mobility benefits for industry in this rural area.

**Port of Indiana - Burns Harbor: Enhanced Intermodal Facilities with Rail & Truck Marshalling Yards**

Ports of Indiana

*Porter County, Indiana, Urban*

Proposed Grant Award: \$9,850,000

### Project Justification

The Ports of Indiana will be awarded \$9,850,000 to construct a series of efficiency-enhancing improvements that will also allow the port to increase their cargo handling capacity. The upgrades include the construction of a new 2.3-acre bulk berth facility, a truck-barge-truck conveyer system, a new west-side rail yard and a new rail connection that will connect the port's main terminal with the new rail yard, dockside improvements (retaining walls and paving), and construction of a truck marshaling yard.

### Project Evaluation

The improvements to the Port of Indiana-Burns Harbor will allow the port to expand its freight handling capacity by 50% from 3 million tons to 4.5 million tons per year, and double the port's waterborne bulk freight from 1.5 million to 3 million tons per year by 2020. This will enhance freight mobility and produce positive economic outcomes as demand for freight movement through the region is expected to grow. The Port is experiencing increasing shipping volumes as demand continues to grow for steel, organic grains, fertilizer, limestone, coal and coke, and project cargoes. This project will ensure that the Port will be able to accommodate projected growth through 2030.

### **Maine Railroad Bridge Capacity Project**

Maine Department of Transportation

*Penobscot and Aroostook Counties, Maine*

Proposed Grant Award: \$7,890,000

### Project Justification

Maine DOT will be awarded \$7,890,000 to repair and upgrade 22 rail bridges on the Madawaska Subdivision of the state-owned railway in northeastern Maine. Fourteen bridges will require minor repairs, three bridges require superstructure replacements, and one bridge will be replaced completely. Following project completion, the 151-mile Madawaska Sub will be capable of carrying 286,000 lbs. rail cars.

### Project Evaluation

The Maine Northern Railway, which operates the Madawaska-Subdivision, has seen an average annual growth of 15 percent in the number of carloads it handles since 2011. Restoring these bridges to accommodate standard rail car loads will expand capacity and deliver mobility benefits to the numerous shippers in the region. Increasing the efficiency of the line will enhance the shipping ability of U.S. firms that rely on the line to compete with their Canadian counterparts.

### **U.S. Highway 10 Lake Michigan Crossing Dock Facility Improvements**

City of Ludington/City of Manitowoc

*Mason County, MI, and Manitowoc, WI, Rural*

Proposed Grant Award: \$5,000,000

### Project Justification

The City of Ludington will be awarded \$5,000,000 to replace and update the 70-year-old ferry docking and berthing facilities in Ludington, MI, and Manitowoc, WI. In Ludington, the work will include installation of an approximately 260-foot long timber fender wall system, renovation or replacement of existing mooring dolphins, replacement of the existing access walk to the bow mooring dolphins, and sheet pile encasement of existing apron counter-weight foundation. In Manitowoc, the grant will fund installation of an approximately 420-foot long timber fender system and sheet pile dock wall.

### Project Evaluation

Repairs to the ferry dock and berthing facilities are critical to the passenger, car, and truck ferry service provided by the S.S. Badger, connecting U.S. Route 10 from Michigan to Wisconsin and points west. The S.S. Badger makes approximately 450 crossings each season from May to October, carrying approximately 1,500 commercial vehicles and approximately 100,000 people across Lake Michigan. Maintaining this service provides improves economic and mobility outcomes by reducing travel times and eliminating as much as 300-400 miles of highway driving for many of these cars and trucks.

### **North Central Mississippi Railway Project**

North Central Mississippi Regional Railroad Authority  
*State of Mississippi, Rural*

Proposed Grant Award: \$7,540,000

#### Project Justification

The North Central Mississippi Regional Railroad Authority will be awarded \$7,540,000 to rehabilitate an approximately 90-mile stretch of track of the Grenada Railroad between Grenada and Canton, MS, as well as repair the Coldwater River bridge near Coldwater, MS. Work will also include repair of several bridges, line clean up, , reactivation of 18 active warning devices along the line, and new tie installation sufficient to raise the entire 180-mile line to FRA Class II standards.

#### Project Evaluation

Upon project completion, rail service will be restored to the southern end of the Grenada railway, which will allow shippers between Elliott and Canton to have direct access to rail service without the need to truck their freight to a railhead and transload, improving economic competitiveness. It will also provide shippers on the northern end of the line with more efficient southbound routes for freight headed in that direction, improving mobility. Finally, the new line will become a viable bypass or detour route for the Canadian National (CN) Railway, allowing to CN traffic to continue while its line is out of service due to flooding, derailment, or track construction, which will produce economic competitiveness and mobility benefits for the nation.

### **Rogers' Rangers Bridge**

State of New Hampshire  
*Coos County, New Hampshire and Essex County, Vermont, Rural*

Proposed Grant Amount: \$5,000,000

#### Project Justification

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation will be awarded \$5,000,000 to replace the Rodgers' Rangers Bridge that carries U.S. Route 2 over the Connecticut River between New Hampshire and Vermont. The original bridge was constructed in 1950 and is in poor condition and load-posted. The vertical clearance of the bridge is only 14 feet which is below the minimum required vertical clearance of 16 feet-6 inches necessary for many logging trucks. The bridge currently carries 3,500 vehicles per day, 10 percent of which are trucks.

#### Project Evaluation

The poor condition of the existing bridge along with the limited vertical clearances and weight restrictions restrict the movement of freight traffic in the region. Replacing the bridge will provide economic and mobility benefits, particularly to freight traffic such as logging trucks that will be able to utilize this crossing. This project will provide safety benefits by reducing the need for freight traffic to detour around the bridge through other communities.

## **Evans Avenue Railroad Grade Separation Improvements**

City of Akron

*Summit County, Ohio, Urban*

Proposed Grant Amount: \$5,715,600

### Project Justification

The City of Akron will be awarded \$5,715,600 of a \$9,526,000 project to conduct improvements to Evans Avenue. Evans Avenue currently carries approximately 4,000 vehicles per day and has two at-grade crossings with CSXT Railroad and the Akron Metro Regional Transit Authority (RTA). Metro RTA is refurbishing this rail line to accommodate 10 passenger rail transits daily in the corridor. CSXT has 32 train crossings per day which is approximately one freight train crossing every 45 minutes. The project will realign a short section of Evans Avenue and construct two bridges over existing CSXT and Metro RTA rail lines.

### Project Evaluation

CSXT trains pass through this corridor 32 times per day and result in a road closure of approximately 4 minutes each time. The addition of 10 passenger rail crossings in the future will exacerbate delays to automobiles using Evans Avenue. By constructing the two grade separations, the project will improve safety by removing the possibility of a vehicle-train conflict. The project will provide significant mobility and economic benefits to trucks and cars using Evans Avenue by reducing delays associated with the road closures for trains passing through the corridor.

## **SORR Rehabilitation and Presidio International Rail Bridge Reconstruction**

Texas Department of Transportation

*West Texas, Rural*

Proposed Grant Amount: \$7,000,000

### Project Justification

The Texas Department of Transportation will be awarded \$7,000,000 to repair the Presidio-Ojinaga International Rail Bridge, and rehabilitate approximately 72 miles of the state-owned South Orient Railroad, from the U.S./Mexico border to the Paisano Junction, near Alpine, Texas. Rehabilitation work includes replacement of approximately 15,000 cross ties, repairs to 38 bridges, and the reconstruction 37 grade crossings.

### Project Evaluation

Upgrading the SORR to FRA Class II status, enabling 286,000,000 pounds and 25 mile per hour service, and restoring the Presidio-Ojinaga rail border crossing will produce economic benefits for the energy industry in Western Texas, which use the line to ship frac-sand for petroleum mining. The project also extends to the Paisano Junction, where the SORR interchanges with the Union Pacific railroad, providing connectivity to the national rail network, resulting in positive economic and mobility outcomes.

## **Northern Columbia Basin Rail Road Project**

Port of Moses Lake

*Grant County, Washington, Rural*

Proposed Grant Amount: \$9,900,000

### Project Justification

The Port of Moses Lake, in partnership with the Washington State Department of Transportation, will be awarded \$9,900,000 in funding out of a \$30,300,000 project to complete construction of the Northern Columbia Basin Rail Project. The Port of Moses Lake includes a port facility as well as the Grant County International Airport and over 4,500 acres of industrial areas; however, it currently has no rail access. All cargo entering or existing the Port or Grant County International Airport currently moves via truck. The project will (1) construct a new, approximately 4.5-mile line along the Wheeler Industrial Corridor and reroute existing aging rail infrastructure to this new route; (2) construct approximately three miles of new rail lines to access industrial lands adjacent to the Grant County International Airport; and (3) upgrade and modernize approximately three miles of existing rail line to current standards.

#### Project Evaluation

There is no current rail service that accesses the Port of Moses Lake or the Grant County International Airport. The construction of this project will provide economic benefits by enhancing rail connectivity for the Port of Moses Lake's current and future potential industrial tenants. The project will lead to mobility and safety benefits by diverting truck traffic to rail and diverting that traffic away from congested corridors and existing neighborhoods. The project is estimated to divert nearly 7,000 trucks in the first year of operation leading to improved safety and state of good repair on the adjacent highways.