

US DOT TIGER 2015 Grant Program

The federal FY 2015 US DOT National Infrastructure Investment grant program (TIGER 7) provides \$500 million for surface transportation projects across all modes. Funding will be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that have a significant impact on the nation, a metro area, or a region.

Funding and Set-asides

A total of \$500 million is available. A number of set-asides were included in the legislation:

- At least \$100 million will be provided to projects in rural areas (areas outside a Census Bureau-defined Urbanized Area of 50,000 or more population).
- Not more than \$100 million may be used for subsidies under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program.
- Not more than \$20 million can be retained by US DOT for administration and oversight.
- Note: Unlike previous years, TIGER awards are not available for funding the planning, preparation, or design of eligible projects.

Grant Sizes

For TIGER 7, US DOT can make grant awards for construction projects as small as \$10 million and as large as \$200 million in urban areas. In rural areas awards may be as small as \$1 million. However, US DOT has indicated that the largest grants are likely to be less than \$200 million. In the TIGER 6 program, grants ranged from \$100,000 to \$25 million, with a median award of \$9 million and a mean award of \$8.1 million.

Matching Funds and Leverage

For projects in urban areas, at least 20 percent of project costs must be provided from non-federal funds. Projects in rural areas may receive up to 100 percent federal funding. US DOT has traditionally given priority to projects for which federal funding is required to complete an overall financing package. Projects can increase their competitiveness by demonstrating significant non-federal contributions. In the first four rounds of TIGER, projects awarded funding averaged about four dollars of non-TIGER funding for every TIGER grant dollar.

Eligible Projects

All surface transportation capital projects are eligible, including highways and bridges, public transit, freight and passenger rail, and port improvements.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include state, local, and tribal governments, including U.S. territories, transit agencies, port authorities, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), other political subdivisions of State or local governments, and multi-State or multi-jurisdictional groups applying through a single lead applicant.

According to the US DOT, a single organization can be the lead applicant on no more than three TIGER 2015 applications. This limit applies only to applications where the applicant is the lead applicant. There is not a limit on applications for which an applicant can be listed as a partnering agency.

Selection Criteria and Considerations

Primary Selection Criteria

Long-Term Outcomes and Readiness Criteria: US DOT will give priority to projects that are ready to proceed quickly and have a significant impact on desirable long-term outcomes for the nation, a metropolitan area, or a region. The following types of long-term outcomes will be given priority:

- **State of Good Repair:** Improving the condition of existing transportation facilities and systems, with particular emphasis on projects that minimize life-cycle costs.
- **Economic Competitiveness:** Contributing to the economic competitiveness of the United States over the medium- to long-term.
- **Quality of Life:** Increasing quality of life through investments that increase transportation choices and access to transportation services for people in communities across the United States.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Improving energy efficiency, reducing dependence on oil, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and benefitting the environment.
- **Safety:** Improving the safety of U.S. transportation facilities and systems.
- **Project Readiness:** DOT will assess whether a project is ready to proceed rapidly upon receipt of a TIGER grant based on an assessment of technical feasibility, financial feasibility, the project's schedule, and an assessment of project risks and mitigation strategies.

Secondary Selection Criteria

Innovation: DOT will give priority to projects that use innovative strategies to pursue the long-term outcomes outlined above.

Partnership: US DOT will give priority to projects that demonstrate strong collaboration among a broad range of participants and/or integration of transportation with other public service efforts.

Additional Considerations

Ladders of Opportunity

US DOT has indicated that the TIGER 2015 program will be particularly focused on funding projects that promote Ladders of Opportunity. According to the TIGER 2015 [NOFA](#):

Ladders of Opportunity projects may increase connectivity to employment, education, services and other opportunities, support workforce development, or contribute to community revitalization, particularly for disadvantaged groups: low income groups, persons with visible and hidden disabilities, elderly individuals, and minority persons and populations.

Distribution and Obligation of Funds

US DOT is directed to ensure an equitable distribution across geography, transportation modes, and between urban and rural areas. Funds must be obligated by September 30, 2017.

Contact Information

Oregon government agencies seeking additional information about TIGER grants can contact Trevor Sleeman, ODOT Federal Affairs Advisor, at 503-986-3448 or trevor.d.sleeman@odot.state.or.us.