



RAIL PASSENGERS
ASSOCIATION



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Understanding the FRA's Expanded Grant Application Process:
Become a champion for YOUR project using the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill

Today's Webinar

- Welcome - Jim Mathews, Rail Passengers President & CEO
- Ryan Arbuckle, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Implementation Manager - FRA
 - Overview of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
- Matthew Lorah, Chief, Grants & Program Management Division - FRA
 - Overview of Grant Programs and Process
- Sean Jeans-Gail, Rail Passengers VP of Government Affairs + Policy
 - Opportunities for Advocacy in BIL's Competitive Grant Programs
- Panel Q&A
 - Moderated by Sean Jeans-Gail
- A Look Ahead - Joe Aiello, Rail Passengers Field Coordinator



Welcome

Jim Mathews, President & CEO

Rail Passengers Association



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FRA Presentation

Ryan Arbuckle, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Implementation Manager

Matthew Lorah, Grants and Program Management Division Chief

Federal Railroad Administration



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MOVING AMERICA FORWARD



Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

Federal Railroad Administration








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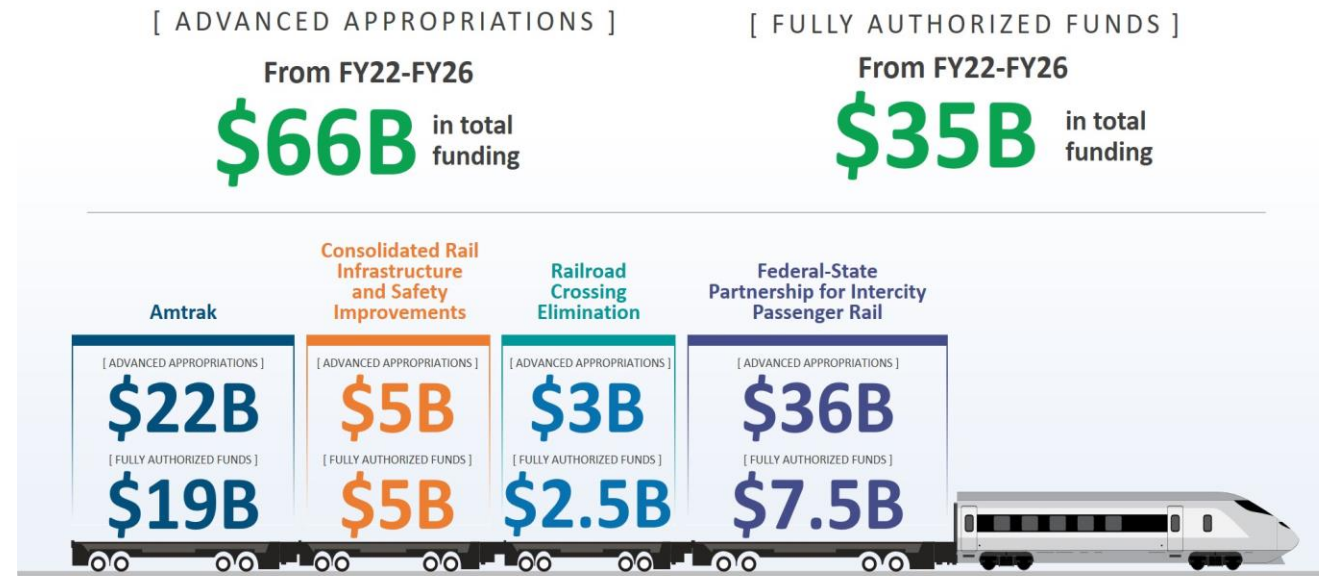
January 26,
2022

Introduction of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

Historic investment in American rail largest in FRA history

Key Goals:

-  1. Build the foundation for a long-term sustainable rail program.
-  2. Bring world-class passenger rail service to other regions across the country.
-  3. Modernize the Northeast Corridor.
-  4. Renew Amtrak's fleet and facilities.
-  5. Grow a safer, cleaner rail system.



Bipartisan Infrastructure Law | Overall Objectives

Rail positioned well to advance Administration's strategic goals:



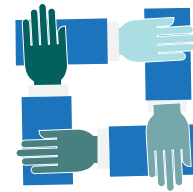
Safety – already one of safest modes and improving.



Economic Strength – freight rail system is world's best, and passenger rail can connect job centers & families.



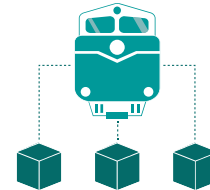
Climate – railroad emissions already lower than other modes and alt fuels/ electrification can enhance.



Equity – passenger rail can enhance access for disadvantaged communities.



Transformation – well suited to support emerging mobility and lifestyle requirements.



Organizational Excellence – rail provides good, union jobs with opportunity for newer generations.

DOT Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding (in millions)

FRA BIL Programs	Purpose	Five-Year Funding (\$ millions)		
		Advanced Appropriations	Authorized	Total
National/Regional Significance (MEGA Projects)	Support multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional projects of national or regional significance.	5,000	10,000	15,000
Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)	Support surface transportation projects of local and/or regional significance.	7,500	7,500	15,000
Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA)	Offers aid to freight infrastructure by providing funding to state and local government for projects of regional or national significance. Cap on multimodal projects has been raised to 30% of program funds.	3,200	6,000	9,200
SMART Grants	Provides grants to conduct demonstration projects focused on advanced smart city or community technologies and systems in a variety of communities to improve transportation efficiency and safety.	500	500	1,000
Total grant Funding		16,200	24,000	40,200

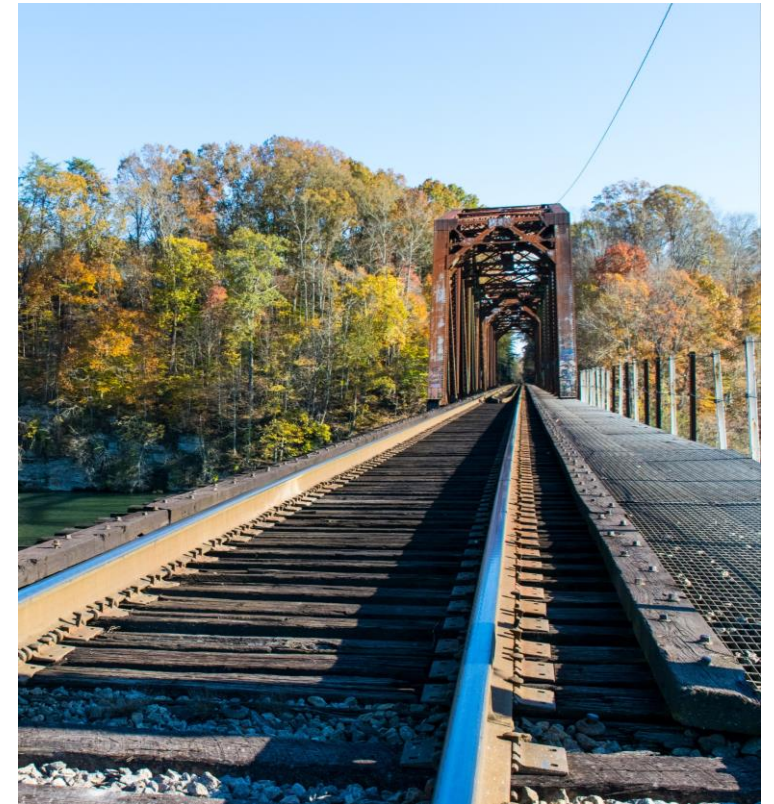
Overview of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

Key Rail Objections

Overall: Invest in safe, clean, equitable, and efficient world-class passenger and freight rail where it is best positioned to connect people, communities, and markets.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is a robust investment into rail throughout the nation with dedicated funding for rail over the next 5 years that will:

- **Enhance Community Safety and Reconnect Neighborhoods.**
- **Expand Travel Options for Communities across the Country.**
- **Modernize the Northeast Corridor.**
- **Provide new stakeholders with access to funding opportunities.**
- **Improve Rural Freight Connections.**
- **Alleviate Passenger-Freight Congestion.**
- **Boost Energy Efficiency and Strengthen Climate Resilience.**
- **Renew Passenger Equipment and Stations.**

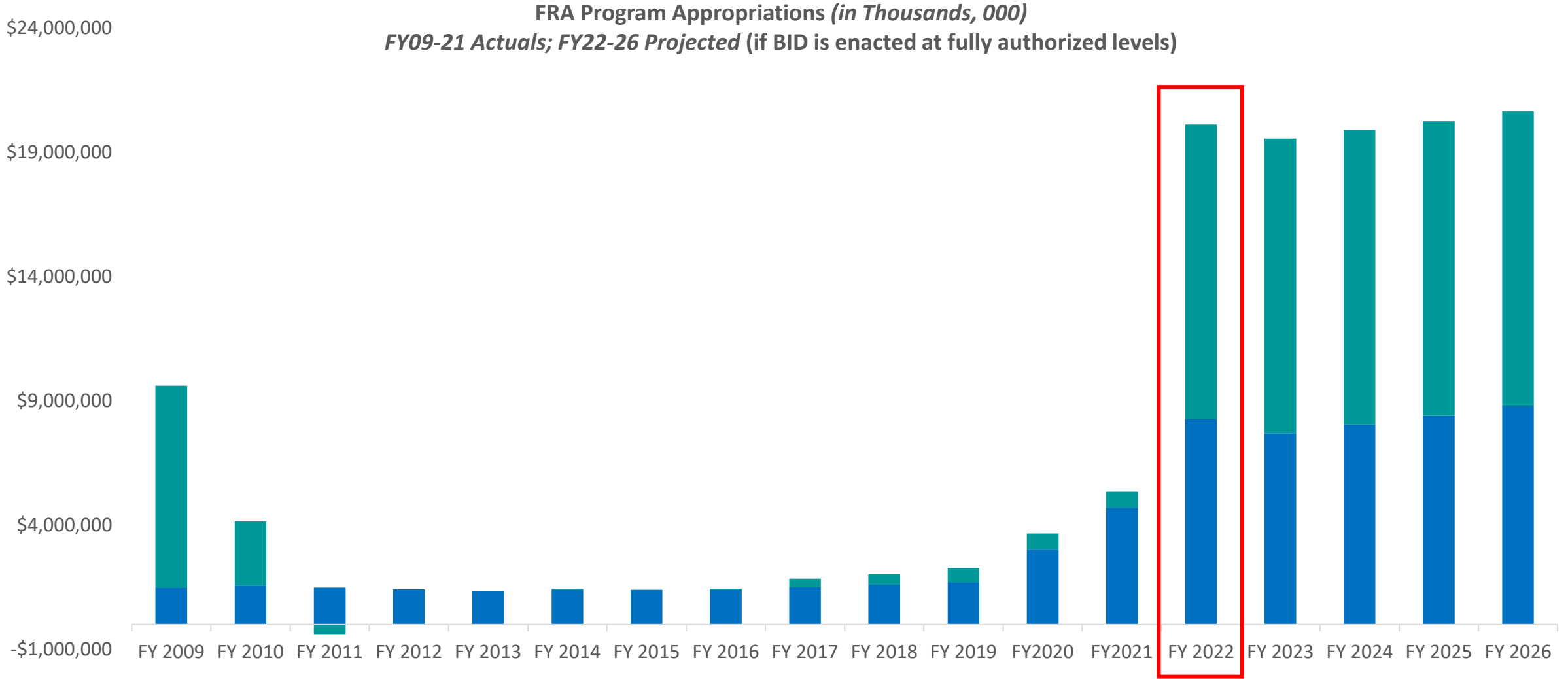


BIL | Key Rail Implementation Priorities

Build a **sustainable rail program for the future** that generates momentum through near-term progress

- Create a strong **planning, project development and delivery** foundation
- Build **capacity** to deliver at all levels, through diverse, inclusive workforces
- Build Grant Programs to support **ongoing pipeline** of shovel worthy projects
 - Use FY21 grant selections this year to set the stage for ongoing BIL investments.
 - Streamline grant process for users and allow sufficient time for project/application prep.
- Engage **stakeholders** early and often throughout BIL implementation
 - Hold listening sessions throughout program development with traditional and non-traditional stakeholders, including Tribal Nations and local governments.

FRA Historical Funding Levels



Overview of Grant Programs and Process

FRA Grant Program Opportunities

Programs	Purpose
Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)	To fund projects that improve the safety, efficiency, or reliability of intercity passenger and freight rail.
Railroad Crossing Elimination <i>(New)</i>	To promote highway rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods.
Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail <i>(Significantly Changed)</i>	To fund capital projects that reduce the state of good repair backlog, improve performance, or expand or establish new intercity passenger rail service, including privately operated intercity passenger rail service if an eligible applicant is involved.
Restoration & Enhancement	To provide operating assistance to initiate, restore, or enhance intercity passenger rail service.
Corridor Identification and Development Program	This program will identify new intercity passenger rail corridors, develop the necessary service planning elements, and create a non-NEC Project Pipeline for associated capital projects.
Interstate Rail Compacts Grant Program	This program will provide funding for interstate rail compacts' administrative costs and to conduct railroad systems planning, promotion of intercity passenger rail operations, and the preparation of grant applications.

FRA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding

FRA BIL Programs	Purpose	Five-Year Funding (\$ millions)		
		Advanced Appropriations	Authorized	Total
Amtrak		22,000	19,220	41,220
Northeast Corridor	Operating & capital for NEC service line	6,000	6,570	12,570
National Network	Operating & capital for long-distance & state-support service lines	16,000	12,650	28,650
Discretionary Grants		44,000	15,250	59,250
Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements	Capital projects for safety, efficiency & reliability of intercity passenger & freight	5,000	5,000	10,000
Railroad Crossing Elimination <i>(New)</i>	Capital for mitigation/ elimination of grade crossings	3,000	2,500	5,500
Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail* <i>(Significantly Revised)</i>	NEC: capital for modernizing shared infrastructure National: capital to improve/ add intercity passenger rail	36,000	7,500	43,500
Restoration & Enhancement** <i>(Revised)</i>	Operating transition asst for new, restored, enhanced IPR	250	250	500
Interstate Rail Compacts** <i>(New)</i>	Operations & planning for multi-state compacts	15	15	30
FRA		0	1,540	1,540
Safety & Operations	Safety programs and internal operations	-	1,315	1,315
Research & Development	R&D programs	-	225	225
Total	<i>Notes:</i>	66,000	36,010	102,010

* Up to 5 percent is set aside for planning purposes within the Corridor Identification & Development Program.

** Grants for Restoration & Enhancement (advanced appropriations portion) and Interstate Rail Compacts are funded through "takedowns" from Amtrak NN account; not included in totals to avoid double-counting.

FRA Grant Lifecycle



Key Activities

- NOFO Publication
- Technical Assistance/ Webinars
- Application Intake & Evaluation
- Briefings
- Project Selection

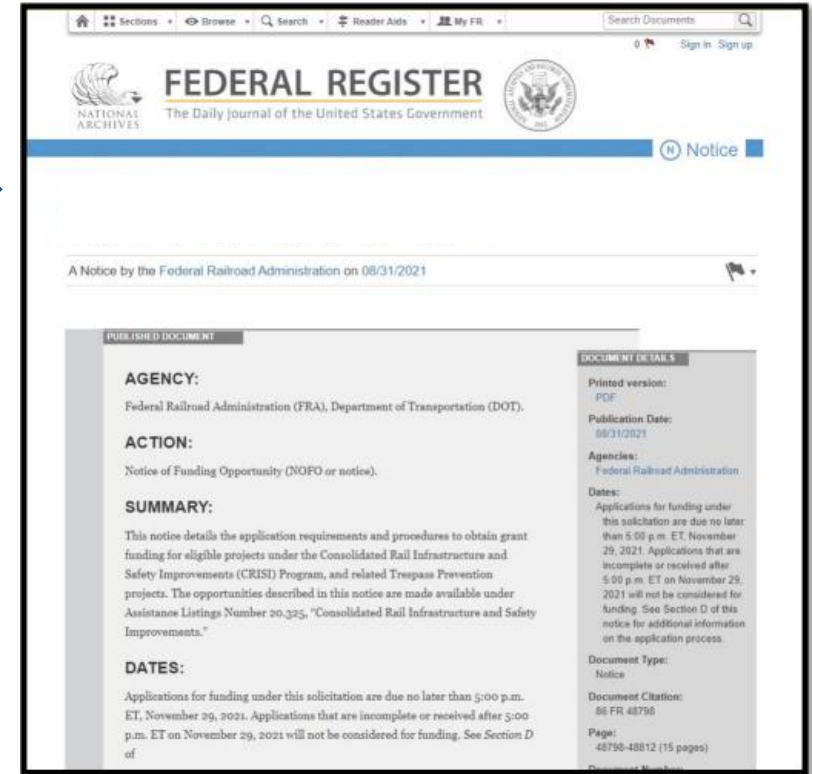
- Notification
- Terms and Conditions
- Budget and SOW Development
- Environmental Clearances *
- Engineering Review *
- Performance Measures *
- Stakeholder Agreements *
- Creating Grant Award in Grant Solutions

- Grant Administration
- Annual Monitoring
- Project Management
- Project Deliverables
- Technical Assistance
- Enforcement and Compliance

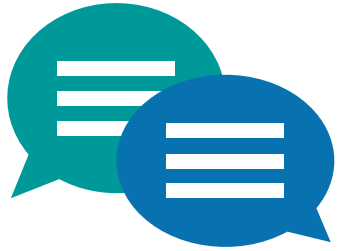
- Grantee Notification
- Final Invoice
- Final Performance Report
- Tracking Project Benefit Agreements

Positioning Grant Applications for Success – Best Practices

- Read the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) completely and carefully to understand the criteria for eligibility and selection.
- FRA has identified three primary areas where applications that are not selected typically demonstrate deficiencies:
 - **Project Narrative**
 - **Statement of Work**
 - **Benefit Cost Analysis**
- For more tools/resources related to FRA discretionary grant applications, please see:



[Tools/Resources for FRA Discretionary Grant Applicants](#)



Need to *Build Back Better*, the first time!

- Starts by listening and engaging with **YOU**, our stakeholders.



Process takes time.

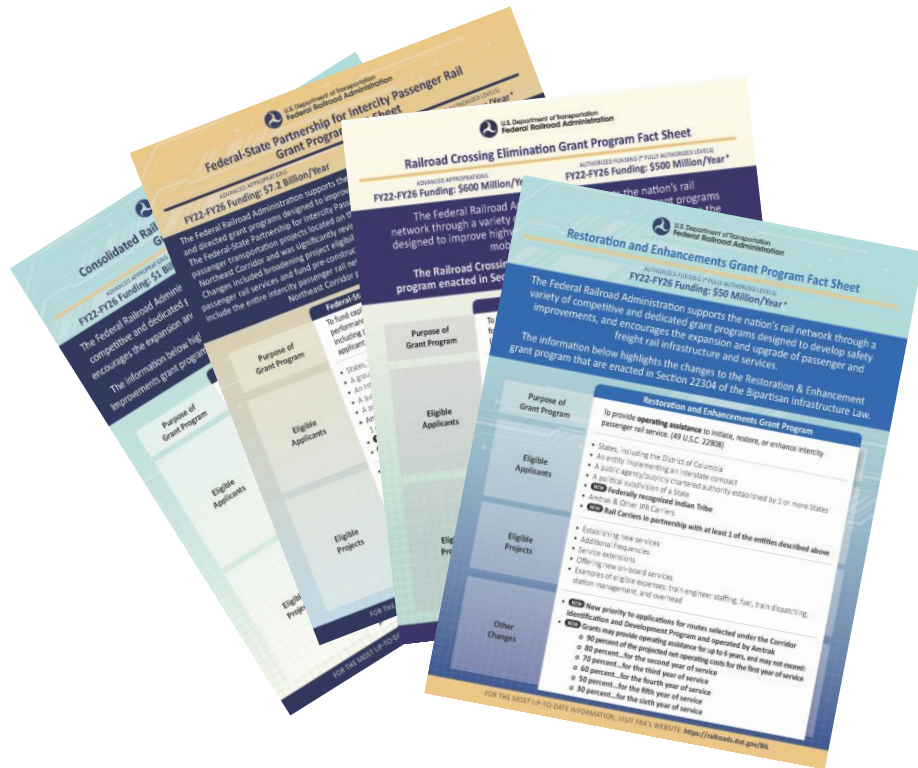
- FRA is looking at ways to streamline and improve.
- Looking to make sure grant programs are available throughout the year.



Responsibility to be good stewards of taxpayer funds.

FRA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Website

For more information about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and rail, please visit our website.



<https://railroads.dot.gov/BIL>

Next Steps

How Do We Achieve the Future of Rail?

- FRA wants to ensure that the American people get the world class railroad network that they deserve — Starts with engagement and being good stewards of the taxpayer dollar.
- Shifting focus from **dollars spent** to **impact to people**. Want to ensure that the impact is meaningful and helps communities, even if the dollar amount of a project isn't large.
- Achieved through the following:
 - **Passenger Equipment and Stations.** Eliminate Amtrak's state-of-good repair backlog and modernize all assets to:
 - Ensure equitable access to passenger stations and railcars for all Americans, including those with disabilities.
 - Provide a safe, convenient and enjoyable travel experience across the Amtrak network.
 - **National Travel Options.** Build and improve rail services in 100-500-mile corridors and interregional connections to:
 - Provide convenient, reliable and affordable alternatives to highway and air travel in short-medium distance markets.
 - Better serve economically and racially disadvantaged communities.
 - Improve connections between large and small communities for family, work and personal travel.
 - **Passenger-Freight Congestion.** Add capacity on shared passenger-freight infrastructure to:
 - Relieve congestion and improve speeds.
 - Improve passenger rail on-time performance on long-distance and State-supported services.

What FRA is doing:

- Listening Sessions
 - We want to ensure that we are administering funds in the most equitable way possible.
 - Although we cannot change the eligibility requirements, we want to hear what works and doesn't work for our stakeholders.
- Educational Sessions
 - Sessions focusing on the grant application process as well as on individual grant programs.
 - Designed to empower and inform applicants so applications are more competitive.

What we need from stakeholders:

- Engagement in these sessions – we want to **hear your thoughts and ideas** related to the programs.
- Patience – program success will be judged on effective delivery of good projects over 5-15 years which requires building a **strong foundation up front**.

Contact Us

Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590



Connect with us at [USDOTFRA](#)

<https://railroads.dot.gov/BIL>



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Opportunities for Advocacy in BIL's Competitive Grant Programs

Sean Jeans-Gail, VP of Gov't Affairs + Policy
Rail Passengers Association



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Identifying Opportunities for Advocacy

Q: Since many of us will not be writing grants, what are specific actions that we as individual advocates and state organizations can do to encourage grant applications from our state and help improve such grants? --*Jacob Adams*

Understanding Which Routes Are in Play



Study existing state and regional rail plans and existing service plans/studies to understand live corridor options.

Figure 33. Proposed Virginia Passenger Rail Projects

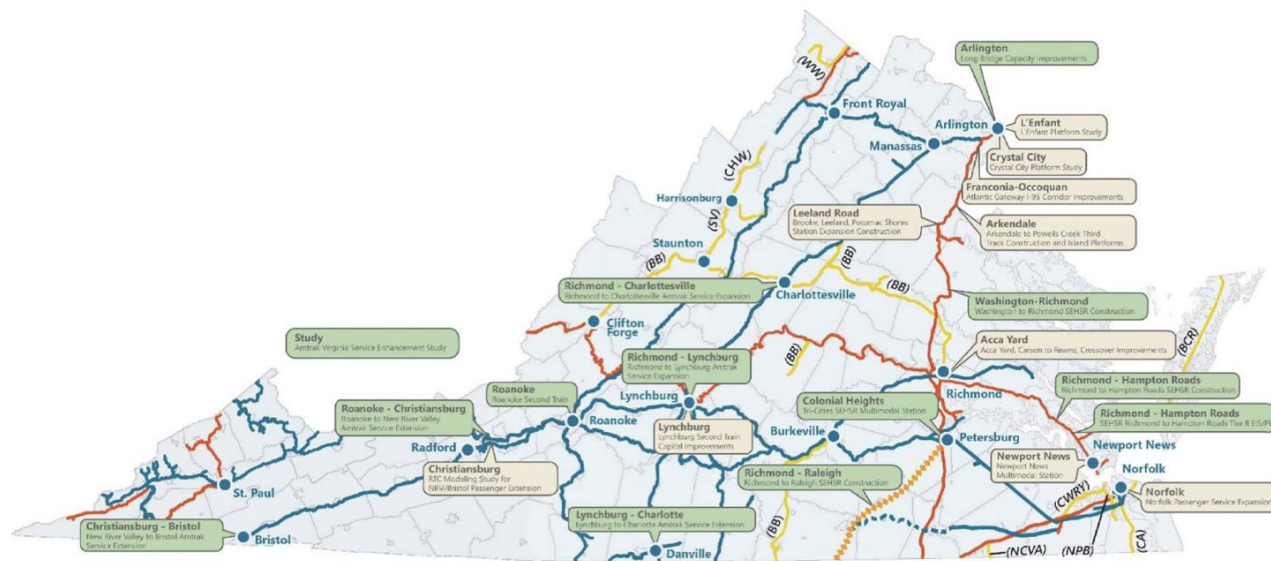
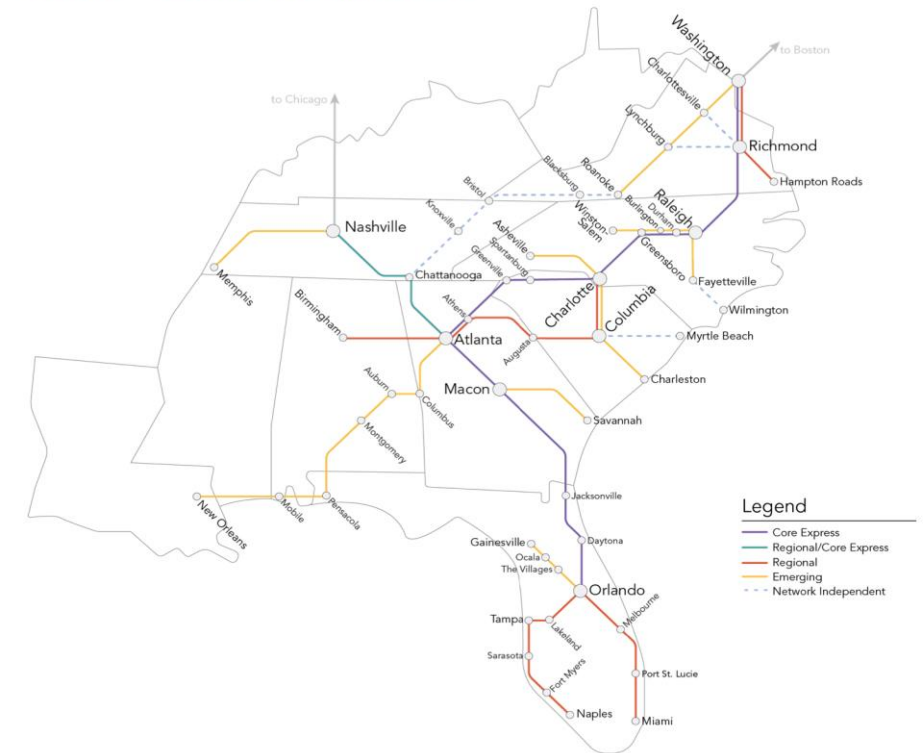


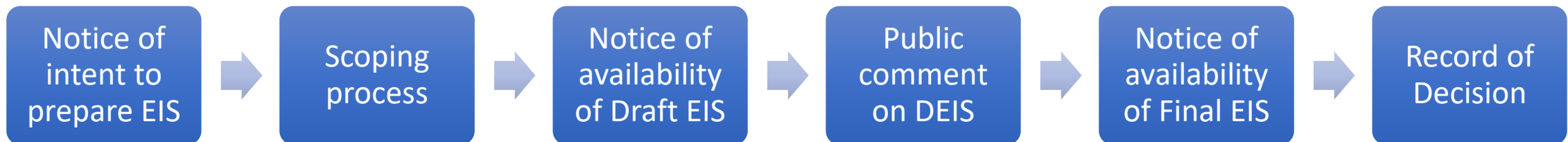
Figure 50. Southeast Regional Network Vision⁴⁶



Understanding Which Routes Are in Play



- Know where your project is in its development lifecycle.
- Familiarize yourself with Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process:





Identify and Support Local Champions

Work with Local Stakeholders

- BIL rail grants require a 20% local funding match for capital costs, ongoing operating funding.
- Political coalitions will need to identify local funding sources.

Foster Institutional Allies

- Identify which state and local entities eligible to apply for federal funds.
- BIL authorizes funding for the creation of Interstate Rail Compacts (Sec. 22306) to promote intercity rail development and operations.

Build Case for Investment

- Emphasizing **benefits** of projects will help build durable coalition.
- *Rail Passengers'* IMPLAN tool helps public and elected officials better understand project ROI.



Become a Resource

Understand grant lifecycle

- Advocates should be conversant in the grant application process
- Utilize and share FRA's online training resources - <https://railroads.dot.gov/rail-network-development/training-guidance/webinars>

Partner with local decisionmakers

- Establish channels of communication with entities eligible to apply for federal grants
- Work with elected officials/stakeholders on open NOFOs and upcoming submission deadlines

Share information with D.C.

- Provide feedback on how to improve passenger rail project delivery



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RailNation:DC 2022

Spring Advocacy Summit & Day On The Hill

Workshop: Drawing the Political Map

Embassy Suites

Alexandria, VA + via Zoom Webinar

March 27-30, 2022

RailPassengers.org/Spring2022



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Q&A

Moderated by Sean Jeans-Gail, VP of Gov't Affairs + Policy
Rail Passengers Association



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A Look Ahead

railpassengers.org/events

- Wednesday, February 23rd
 - **Rail Passengers Webinar Series: Passenger Rail Under the Big Sky & Beyond**
 - An update from Montana's Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority w/ Chairman Dave Strohmaier
- Sunday, March 27th – Wednesday, March 30th
 - **RailNation:DC 2022 - Spring Advocacy Summit & Day On The Hill**
 - railpassengers.org/spring2022



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"A Connected America"

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