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Office: (202)659-2229 • Fax: (202)659-5234 • www.simoncompany.com**FEDERAL GRANT OPPORTUNITY****FROM: Len Simon
Jen Covino****SUBJECT: DOT FY 2018 BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grant Program****DATE: April 23, 2018**

In follow up to our email on Friday, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the **Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grant Program**. The BUILD Program replaces the popular Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant Program. DOT will award approximately \$1.5 billion under the largest round of funding since the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*. The application deadline is **Thursday, July 19, 2018** at 8:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).

The purpose of the BUILD Program is to provide support for projects of regional or local significance, including highways, roads, bridges, transit, passenger and freight rail, ports, or intermodal projects. DOT will invest in a variety of transportation modes in geographically diverse locations across the country. The agency will select projects that align with the following evaluation criteria: safety; economic competitiveness; quality of life; environmental protection; state of good repair; innovation; partnership; and additional non-Federal revenue for future transportation or infrastructure investments.

No State can receive more than 10 percent of the total BUILD funding — or \$150 million — available under this NOFO. The maximum federal award grant is \$25 million. The award floor is \$5 million for urban projects with a maximum federal cost share of 80 percent, while the minimum award size is only \$1 million for rural projects. There is a 30 percent — or \$450 million — set-aside for projects located in rural communities; however, DOT staff have noted that this set-aside should be considered a floor. DOT awarded 64 percent of funds to rural projects in the previous round of TIGER. The Secretary may choose to provide a federal cost-share greater than 80 percent for rural projects. Rural projects are those located outside the boundaries of an Urbanized Area (UZA) designated by the U.S. Census Bureau. Costs incurred along the boundary of an UZA would be considered urban.

DOT may award up to \$15 million of this funding for planning, preparation, and design of eligible projects, which may include environmental analysis, feasibility studies, and other pre-construction activities. Planning projects do not have a minimum award size.

Up to 20 percent of funds available through the BUILD Grant Program, or \$300 million, may be used to provide subsidy and administrative costs for projects receiving federal credit assistance through the *Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act* (TIFIA) Program.

Funds are available for obligation through September 30, 2020 and all funds must be expended by September 30, 2025. Therefore, DOT grant reviewers will evaluate project readiness to ensure these milestones can be met. Project sponsors should provide sufficient evidence of project milestones including planning, NEPA, and permitting milestones achieved to date and those remaining. The project budget should demonstrate financial capacity and commitment by outlining all project costs and the sources of nonfederal and other federal funds. Project sponsors should include letters of financial commitment demonstrating sources of nonfederal match. The application should include a map of the project that showcases alignment with existing infrastructure.

Sponsors may provide letters of support. We would be glad to request letters from your Congressional delegation and draft templates for their consideration on your behalf. We kindly request at least 30 days notice to engage with Members' offices and work with their legislative staff.

If appropriate, applicants are encouraged to identify project segments that have independent utility and public benefit and the separate, corresponding costs of constructing that phase. The applicant must demonstrate how each phase separately fulfills the objectives outlined in the agency's evaluation criteria.

Eligible applicants are units of State, local, or tribal government; U.S. territories; transit agencies; Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs); port authorities; and other subdivisions of State or local government. DOT will accept applications from consortiums of eligible applicants, which must designate a primary recipient to accept and administer the BUILD Grant if awarded.

US DOT will host an upcoming series of webinars for prospective applicants:

How to Compete for BUILD Transportation Grants

Thursday, May 24th from 2:00-4:00pm EDT

How to Compete for BUILD Transportation Grants for Rural and Tribal Applicants

Tuesday, May 29th from 2:00-4:00pm EDT

How to Prepare a Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) for a BUILD Application
Thursday, May 31st from 2:00-4:00pm EDT

Participants are encouraged to Register for these webinars in advance.

For more information, see the DOT Press Release, BUILD Program Website, BUILD NOFO, BUILD Fact Sheet, or Additional Guidance. Please contact DOT staff within the Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST) Office of Infrastructure Finance and Innovation via email to BUILDgrants@dot.gov or Howard Hill by phone at 202-366-0301 if you have any questions. We would be glad to work directly with DOT on your behalf.

Please let us know if you have any additional questions or interest in pursuing federal resources available through the BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grant Program at your earliest convenience. We would be glad to provide additional guidance.

Thank you for your time reviewing this opportunity. We look forward to talking with you soon.