



5 winning strategies for developing successful Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) grant applications

#1 Focus on safety.

The RCE program aims to improve [America's outdated rail infrastructure](#) – so your RCE project must enhance rail safety, improve the health and safety of communities, eliminate highway-rail and pathway-rail grade crossings that are frequently blocked by trains, and/or reduce the impacts that freight movement and railroad operations may have on [underserved communities](#). Additionally, the Federal Railroad Administration has a program preference for grade separations, closing crossings through track relocation, and corridor-wide grade crossing improvements.

#2 Identify the tools you need to leverage data.

Strong RCE applications will lay out a [plan to evaluate](#) their projects from design to implementation – this includes collecting and analyzing data and meaningfully measuring progress over time. But don't worry if your city or town doesn't have all the tools just yet! RCE grant funding can go toward [acquiring the data infrastructure and expertise](#) you need for effective data analysis, performance management, and evaluation.

#3 Tackle inequities and engage key stakeholders.

[Addressing equity](#) is key to crafting successful applications for every Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) program – and successful RCE proposals specifically will meet the Biden Administration's [Justice40](#) Initiative goals, which means at least 40% of your proposal's resources and benefits should flow toward low-income or disadvantaged communities or communities underserved by affordable transportation.

Competitive applications will also conduct meaningful public engagement in both application design and project implementation to ensure underserved communities have an opportunity to be involved in the planning process, demonstrate how your city or town will improve or expand transportation options, mitigate safety risks, and expand workforce development and training opportunities. In addition to community engagement, cities should demonstrate partnerships with railroads and other regional players that control railroad crossing.

#4 Combat climate change.

How will your project reduce greenhouse gas emissions? What are the [innovative ways your city or town will combat climate change](#) and address its impacts? Strong RCE proposals will answer these questions in measurable ways and detail how your city or town will promote energy efficiency, support efficient transportation design, increase climate resilience, support domestic manufacturing, and reduce pollution.

#5 Create jobs.

This one is straightforward. Your project should create [good-paying jobs](#) with free and fair choice to join a union. You should also demonstrate how your city's or town's proposal will grow your local economy in a meaningful way, based on your priorities – examples might include contributing to long-term job creation, investing in vital infrastructure assets, and providing opportunities for families to achieve economic security through rail industry employment.

RCE application deadline: October 4, 2022