



# Five winning strategies for a competitive Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) application

*\*RAISE applications are due February 28, 2023\**

## #1 Assess your project's readiness.

Cities should focus on submitting the highest quality application possible. If your community is interested in a capital investment grant, your city should be able to demonstrate that you are [prepared to obligate](#)<sup>1</sup> all funds by the timeline required by law (September 30, 2027), and show progress toward environmental, planning, and permit approvals from federal, state and local authorities. If your project is not yet at this stage of readiness, you may consider applying for a planning grant instead which can be used to fund pre-construction activities.

Reviewing DOT materials, including [prior awards](#), [RAISE FAQs](#), upcoming webinars on how to create a [competitive application](#), and instructions for [how to apply](#), can also help you determine your project's readiness. For determining how to fund your project's local match, [this resource](#) from the National League of Cities may be helpful.

## #2 Consider a regional coordination strategy.

One of the things that makes RAISE unique is that it can be used for [multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional](#) projects. While coordination among local governments can be complicated, those that are able to coordinate regionally may have stronger applications and will also avoid submitting competing applications.

## #3 Highlight your project's local or regional impact and proactively address racial equity AND climate resiliency.

In their guidance materials for last year's competition, [DOT](#) states that competitive applications will demonstrate the following:

- ❖ Clear, direct, and significant local or regional impacts
- ❖ Climate change and racial equity are explicitly considered in the planning and design stage
- ❖ Emphasizes improved access to reliable, safe, and affordable transportation, particularly for underserved and overburdened communities.

Applications will be most competitive if they show that these considerations have been made proactively, use data to clearly document impacts and expected outcomes, and are meaningfully embedded in the entire design of the project.

## #4 Be explicit about how your project will create good jobs and reduce barriers to opportunity.

DOT has indicated that projects that will result in good-paying jobs will be more competitive for RAISE and other infrastructure grants. They have released a [Checklist for a Strong Workforce and Labor Plan](#) that applicants can use to strengthen the workforce development components of their application for any DOT grant program. More strategies and resources for how to use funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for workforce development can be found [here](#).

## #5 Use data to demonstrate your project's impact.

Transportation policy has wide-ranging impacts on racial equity and [economic mobility](#), including in some ways that are less obvious. For example, there are significant [health implications](#) related to a community's options for accessible, reliable, and safe transportation. A strong application will use local, regional, or even national data to explain the potential economic and broader impacts of their transportation project.

<sup>1</sup> Obligation occurs when a selected applicant enters a written, project-specific agreement, such as a contract, and is generally after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements, including transportation planning and NEPA requirements.