

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Maritime Administration’s United States Marine Highway Program (USMHP) under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, DOT

ACTION: Notice of Funding Opportunity

SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF KEY INFORMATION: USMHP Discretionary Grant Opportunity	
Issuing Agency	Maritime Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation
Program Overview	This Notice of Funding Opportunity solicits applications for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 USMHP. Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis.
Objective	Through the development and promotion of Marine Highway Transportation, the USMHP assists in funding eligible Projects to relieve landside congestion, reduce air emissions, and generate other public benefits by increasing the efficiency of the surface transportation system.
Eligible Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State• Political subdivision of a State or a local government• United States metropolitan planning organization• United States port authority• Tribal government (as defined in Section A.3. of this notice)• United States private sector operator of Marine Highway Projects or private sector owners of facilities, including an Alaska Native Corporation, with an endorsement letter from the current Marine Highway Route Sponsor. (NOTE: Section C.1 provides additional information)
Eligible Project Types	Marine Highway Transportation Projects or components of Projects that: 1) provide a coordinated and capable alternative to landside transportation; mitigate or relieve landside congestion; promote Marine Highway Transportation; or use vessels documented under Chapter 121; and 2) develop, expand, or promote Marine Highway Transportation or shipper use of Marine Highway Transportation. (NOTE: Section C.3.a provides additional information)
Funding	Up to \$4,850,000 will be available for FY 2024 funding.
Deadline	Applications Due: July 12, 2024

ADDRESSES: Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information concerning this notice, please contact the USMHP staff via email at mh@dot.gov, or call Fred Jones at 202–366–1123. In addition, the Maritime Administration (“MARAD”) may post answers to questions and

requests for clarifications as well as information about webinars for further information at <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/grants-finances/marine-highways/frequently-asked-questions-us-marine-highway-program-usmhp> and <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/grants-finances/2023-us-marine-highway-program-grant-program-webinars>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Each section of this notice contains information and instructions relevant to the application process for the FY 2024 USMHP grants, and all applicants should read this notice in its entirety to ensure they have the information they need to submit eligible and competitive applications.

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A. Program Description

1. Program Overview

The USMHP, codified at 46 U.S.C. 55601, was originally established by Section 1121 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to reduce landside congestion through the designation of Marine Highway Routes. The USMHP statute authorizes the U.S. Department of Transportation (“Department” or “DOT”) to make grants to implement Projects or components of Projects that 1) provide a coordinated and capable alternative to landside transportation; mitigate or relieve landside congestion; promote Marine Highway Transportation; or use vessels

documented under 46 U.S.C. chapter 121; and 2) develop, expand, or promote Marine Highway Transportation or shipper use of Marine Highway Transportation.

Since this program was established, the Department has awarded more than \$103 million through competitive grants to eligible entities for Marine Highway Projects that have supported the development and expansion of documented vessels and port and landside infrastructure. The Department seeks to fund Projects that advance the Departmental priorities of safety, equity, climate and sustainability, and workforce development, job quality and wealth creation as described in the DOT Strategic Plan,¹ Research, Development, and Technology Strategic Plan² and in executive orders.³ FY 2024 USMHP grants will continue to align with these strategic priorities.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Pub. L. 118-42, March 9, 2024) (“FY 2024 Appropriations Act”) appropriated \$5,000,000 for the FY 2024 USMHP. A total of up \$4,850,000 is available in funding for the FY 2024 USMHP after MARAD retains \$150,000 of the funding for grant administration and oversight.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) solicits applications for Projects to be funded under the FY 2024 USMHP. Section E of this notice, which outlines the USMHP selection criteria, describes the process for selecting Projects that further the program’s goal. Section F.3. describes progress and performance reporting requirements for selected Projects, including the relationship between that reporting and the program's selection criteria.

¹ <https://www.transportation.gov/dot-strategic-plan>

² https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2023-01/USDOT%20RDT%20Strategic%20Plan%20FY22-26_010523_508.pdf

³ Executive Order 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad* (86 FR 7619). Executive Order 13985, *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government* (86 FR 7009). Executive Order 14025, *Worker Organizing and Empowerment* (86 FR 22829), and Executive Order 14052, *Implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (86 FR 64335).

2. Changes from the FY 2023 NOFO

The FY 2024 NOFO incorporates the following changes from the FY 2023 NOFO:

- Amends the definitions of Environmental Justice, Historically Disadvantaged Communities, and Marine Highway Transportation Service.
- Adds new definitions for Letter of Financial Commitment and Performance Measures; and deletes the definitions for Overburdened Communities and Underserved Communities.
- Under C.1., Eligible Applicants, clarifies what applicants must provide to demonstrate their authority to plan, carry out, own, operate, or maintain the Project.
- Clarifies that applicants must round budgets up or down to the nearest dollar.
- Clarifies a lead recipient's responsibilities associated with the award and any subawards.
- Adds that, for equipment purchases, applicants provide a description about how the equipment would be used.
- Relocates selected information from Section D, Application Submission Information, to Section E, Application Review Information, to consolidate application requirements and review criteria into the same section.
- Updates guidance related to Merit Criteria to improve the application review process and alignment with USMHP statute (Demonstrating the Need to Develop, Expand, or Promote Marine Highway Transportation or Shipper Use of Marine Highway Transportation, Expanding the Benefits of Marine Highway Transportation, Measuring Project Support, and Leveraging Federal Funding and Financial Viability).
- Updates guidance related to Selection Considerations based on Departmental priorities (Climate Change and Sustainability, Equity and the Justice40 Initiative, and Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation).
- Updates guidance related to the factors that reviewers will consider in Project Readiness evaluations.

- Expands on the need to address compliance with domestic preference requirements as part of the Project Readiness evaluation and removes domestic preference as a standalone evaluation factor.
- Incorporates new LOGINK (or similar platform) funding restrictions.
- Clarifies that MARAD will waive any cost share requirement for local matching funds under \$200,000 for grants to American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, or the Northern Mariana Islands.

Other changes have been made throughout this notice to better illustrate application requirements. Applicants who are planning to re-apply using materials prepared for prior competitions should ensure that their FY 2024 USMHP application fully addresses the selection criteria described in this notice and that all relevant information is updated and submitted in the proper format outlined in Sections D and E.

3. Definitions

Alaska Native Corporation: Any Regional Corporation, any Village Corporation, any Urban Corporation, and any Group Corporation, as those terms are defined under Section 3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1602).

Climate Change: Changes in average weather conditions that persist over multiple decades or longer due to natural or anthropogenic activities, especially from greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change encompasses both increases and decreases in temperature, as well as shifts in precipitation, changing risk of certain types of severe weather events, and changes to other features of the climate system.

Construction activities: Includes construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or acquisition of property (including land related to the Project and improvements to the land) and right of ways, environmental mitigation, construction contingencies, equipment acquisition, vessel acquisition, modification, or rehabilitation, and operational improvements.

Development phase activities: Includes planning, feasibility analysis, revenue forecasting, environmental review, permitting, preliminary engineering and design work, and other preconstruction activities.

Documented vessel: A vessel documented under 46 U.S.C. chapter 121.

Environmental Justice: The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Equity: The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment. More information can be found in Executive Order 13985, *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government* (86 FR 7009).⁴

Facility: A specific location in a port where passengers or commodities are transferred between land and water carriers or between two water carriers, specifically including: wharves, piers, sheds, warehouses, yards, and docks.

Historically Disadvantaged Communities: Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC) are (a) certain qualifying census tracts identified as disadvantaged by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)⁵ due to categories of environmental, climate, and socioeconomic burdens, and (b) any Federally Recognized Tribe⁶ or Tribal entities, whether or not they have land.

Letter of Financial Commitment: A letter that demonstrates the funding source(s) for the non-Federal funds are stable, dependable, and dedicated to the Project and that is signed and certified by an authorized representative of the organization(s) providing the non-Federal funds. The letter

⁴ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/01/25/2021-01753/advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government>

⁵ <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>

⁶ A list of Federally Recognized Tribes or Tribal entities can be found here:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/01/08/2024-00109/indian-entities-recognized-by-and-eligible-to-receive-services-from-the-united-states-bureau-of>

must be submitted on the organization(s) letterhead, specify the exact dollar amount committed to the Project, and include proof that the matching funds (i.e., exact dollar amount specified in the letter) will be available and/or committed prior to obligation of funds, regardless of the source of funding.

Marine Highway Transportation: The carriage by a documented vessel of cargo (including such carriage of cargo and passengers), if such cargo is: 1) contained in intermodal cargo containers and loaded by crane on the vessel; loaded on the vessel by means of wheeled technology, including roll-on roll off cargo; shipped in discrete units or packages that are handled individually, palletized, or unitized for purposes of transportation; bulk, liquid, or loose cargo loaded in tanks, holds, hoppers, or on deck; or freight vehicles carried aboard commuter ferry boats; and 2) is loaded at a port in the United States and unloaded either at another port in the United States or at a port in Canada or Mexico; or loaded at a port in Canada or Mexico and unloaded at a port in the United States.

Marine Highway Transportation Route: A Marine Highway Transportation Route previously designated by the Secretary.⁷

Marine Highway Transportation Route Sponsor: The requester of a Marine Highway Transportation Route designation or modification of a designated route approved by the Secretary. See Appendix A: U.S. Marine Highway Program Routes and Route Sponsors.

Marine Highway Transportation Project: The proposed Project for which the applicant is seeking FY 2024 USMHP funding. The Project must be part of an existing or proposed Marine Highway Transportation Service and must serve a designated Marine Highway Transportation Route.

Marine Highway Transportation Service: The overall Marine Highway Transportation Service and operation that is proposed, expanded, or promoted by the Marine Highway Transportation Project.

⁷ <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/grants-finances/us-marine-highway-route-designation-process>

The service must have a point of origin or destination on a designated Marine Highway Transportation Route.

Performance Measures: Verifiable information to measure the benefits of the Project, such as volumes of cargo (e.g., TEUs, tons, cubic meters, etc.) moved, and contribution to environmental mitigation, safety, reduced vehicle miles traveled, or reduced road maintenance and repair costs.

Rural area: An area located outside a 2020 Census-designated urban area.^{8, 9}

Shipper: The Beneficial Cargo Owner (BCO), i.e., the party that ultimately owns the product or cargo being shipped.

Tribal government: The recognized governing body of any Indian or Alaska Native Tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, community, component band, or component reservation, individually identified (including parenthetically) in the list published most recently, as of the date of enactment of the FY 2023 NDAA, pursuant to Section 104 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5131).

Urban area: An area located within (or on the boundary of) a 2020 Census-designated urban area.¹⁰

4. Additional Information

The USMHP is described in the Federal Assistance Listings under the assistance listing program title “United States Marine Highway Grants” and assistance listing number 20.816.

⁸ For the purpose of this NOFO, the definition of urban and rural is based on the 2020 Census-designated urban and rural areas. A Project located in both an urban and a rural area will be designated as *urban* if the majority of the Project’s costs will be spent in urban areas. Conversely, a Project located in both an urban area and a rural area will be designated as *rural* if the majority of the Project’s costs will be spent in rural areas. For planning Projects, the location of the Project being planned, prepared, or designed will be used for the urban or rural designation.

⁹ This website will be used to determine whether a Project is in an urban or rural area: <https://tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerweb2020/>.

¹⁰ Lists of 2020 urban areas as defined by the Census Bureau are available on the Census Bureau website at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/urban-rural.html>. This website will be used to determine whether a Project is in an urban or rural area: <https://tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerweb2020/>.

B. Federal Award Information

1. Amount Available

The total funding available for awards under this NOFO is \$4,850,000. This amount represents \$5,000,000 in appropriated funding under the FY 2024 Appropriations Act, less \$150,000 for grant administration and oversight as permitted under 49 U.S.C. 109(i). If MARAD does not receive sufficient qualified applications, it will award less than the amount available.

If this solicitation does not result in the award and obligation of all available funds, MARAD may publish additional solicitations.

2. Award Size

For funding awarded under the USMHP, there is no maximum or minimum award size.

3. Availability of Funds

MARAD seeks to obligate FY 2024 USMHP funds by September 30, 2027. Obligation occurs when a selected applicant and MARAD enter into a written grant agreement after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements, including transportation planning and environmental review requirements, such as those under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Unless “pre-award costs” are authorized by MARAD in writing after MARAD’s announcement of FY 2024 USMHP award selections pursuant to 2 CFR 200.458, any costs incurred prior to MARAD’s obligation of funds for a Project are ineligible for reimbursement and are ineligible to count as match for cost share requirements.¹¹ Per 46 U.S.C. 55601(d)(6), MARAD also expects grant recipients to expend funds within five years after obligation. As part of the review and selection process described in Section E.2., MARAD will consider a Project’s

¹¹ Pre-award costs are only costs incurred directly pursuant to the negotiation and anticipation of the USMHP award where such costs are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the scope of work, as determined and pre-approved in writing by MARAD.

likelihood to be ready for obligation of funds by September 30, 2027, and liquidation of these obligations within five years after the date of obligation.

4. Previous USMHP Awards

Recipients of prior USMHP grants (including grants formerly referred to as America's Marine Highway or AMH grants) may apply for funding to support additional phases or components of a Project previously awarded funds under 46 U.S.C. 55601. However, to be competitive, the applicant should demonstrate the extent to which the previously funded Project phase or component has met estimated Project scope, schedule, and budget milestones, as well as how the new phase or component will enhance the ability to achieve the benefits expected for all phases of the Project.

C. Eligibility Information

To be selected for a FY 2024 USMHP discretionary grant, an applicant must be an eligible applicant and the Project must be an eligible Project.

1. Eligible Applicants

An eligible applicant for a FY 2024 USMHP grant is: a State,¹² a political subdivision of a State or a local government; a United States metropolitan planning organization; a United States port authority; a Tribal government (as defined in Section A.3. of this notice); or a United States private sector operator of marine highway Projects or private sector owners of facilities, including an Alaska Native Corporation, with an endorsement letter from the current Marine Highway Route Sponsor (if there are multiple route sponsors, the private sector applicant is only required to submit an endorsement letter from one of the route sponsors). Private sector applicants, including Alaska Native Corporations, should refer to Section D.2.b. for more information on documenting

¹² State means any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any other territory or possession of the United States.

the required route sponsor endorsement and Section D.2.e. on additional application information necessary when submitting an application under this notice. Federal agencies are not eligible applicants for the FY 2024 USMHP.

Eligible applicants are encouraged to develop coalitions, which might include vessel owners and operators; third-party logistics providers; trucking companies; shippers; railroads; port authorities; state, regional, and local transportation planners; environmental organizations; impacted communities; or any combination of entities supporting the Project.

If submitting a joint application, applicants must identify in the application the eligible lead applicant as the primary point of contact, who will also be responsible for financial administration of the Project and ensuring that all funds are expended in accordance with Federal requirements. Joint applications should include a letter of support signed by each applicant as an attachment and include a description of the roles and responsibilities of each entity. If a joint applicant is providing some or all of the required non-Federal matching funds, a Letter of Financial Commitment from that joint applicant must be provided as an attachment to the application. See Section D.2.d. for more information.

To be eligible for award, eligible applicants must provide a brief statement describing their authority to plan, carry out, own, operate, or maintain the grant-funded Project. In the case of joint applications, at least one of the eligible applicants must demonstrate this authority. See Section D.2.b. for more information. Please note that any joint applicants, whether they are public or private entities, must comply with all applicable Federal requirements.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

The Federal share of the total costs of an eligible USMHP Project may not exceed 80 percent; however, per 46 U.S.C. 55601(d)(4)(B), the Secretary may increase the Federal share of costs above 80 percent for: (1) a grant to an eligible entity that is a Tribal government; or (2) a grant for a Project that is located in a rural area. “Rural area” and “Tribal government” are defined in

Section A.3. of this notice. If an applicant requests a Federal share of costs above 80 percent, it must include a brief explanation as to why the increased Federal share is requested. Additionally, consistent with 48 U.S.C.A. 1469a(d), for grants to American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, or the Northern Mariana Islands (collectively, the “Insular Areas”), MARAD will waive any cost share requirement for local matching funds under \$200,000 (including in-kind contributions) that otherwise would have applied to a grant under the USMHP.

Applicants should use the following equation when determining the cost share for their Project:

$$\frac{(\text{USMHP Grant Request} + \text{Other Federal Funds})}{\text{Total Project Cost}} = \text{Federal Cost Share}$$

For the USMHP, Total Project Cost means the sum of future eligible Federal and non-Federal costs that have not yet been incurred. MARAD will not consider previously incurred costs or previously expended or encumbered funds towards the non-Federal cost-share requirement.

Non-Federal sources include State funds originating from programs funded by State revenue, local funds originating from State or local revenue-funded programs, or private funds. The application must demonstrate in its Letter(s) of Financial Commitment, the sources of the non-Federal funds. Unless otherwise authorized by statute, funds used to satisfy the non-Federal cost-share requirements of a different Federal program may not be counted as the non-Federal cost share for both the FY 2024 USMHP grant award and another Federal grant program. All non-Federal cost-share funds are subject to the same Federal requirements described in Section F.2. as awarded funds.

For the purpose of eligibility, the proceeds of Federal assistance under chapter 6 of Title 23, United States Code (“TIFIA”) or Sections 501 through 504 of the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-210) (“RRIF”), as amended, shall be considered to be part of the non-Federal share of Project costs if the loan is repayable from non-Federal funds,

unless otherwise requested by the Project sponsor. See Section C.2 for information about documenting cost sharing in the application.

In addition to these cost-share requirements, cost share will be evaluated according to the “Leveraging Federal Funding and Financial Viability” criterion described in Section E.1.a.(4).

For each Project that receives a USMHP grant award, the terms of the award will require the recipient to complete the Project using at least the level of non-Federal funding that was specified in the application. If the actual costs of the Project are greater than the costs estimated in the application, the recipient will be responsible for increasing the non-Federal contribution. If the actual costs of the Project are less than the costs estimated in the application, MARAD will generally reduce the Federal contribution.

3. Other

a. Eligible Projects

Eligible projects for FY 2024 USMHP grants are Marine Highway Transportation Projects or components of Projects that 1) provide a coordinated and capable alternative to landside transportation; mitigate or relieve landside congestion; promote marine highway transportation; or use vessels documented under Chapter 121; and 2) develop, expand, or promote Marine Highway Transportation or shipper use of Marine Highway Transportation.

This program will not provide funding to improvements to port or land-based infrastructure, including equipment, outside the United States. In addition, this program will not provide funding to raise sunken vessels, construct buildings or other physical facilities, or acquire land, unless the Secretary determines that such activities are necessary to carry out the Marine Highway Transportation Project for which such assistance is provided. If an applicant requests funding to raise sunken vessels, construct buildings or other physical facilities (as “facility” is defined in Section A.3.), or acquire land, it must explain why the activities are necessary to carry out the Marine Highway Transportation Project. Refer to Section D.2.b. of this notice for further

information on documentation needed to justify these activities. Improvements to Federally owned facilities are ineligible under the FY 2024 USMHP.

This program will not fund the purchase or installation of fully automated cargo handling equipment, or the installation of terminal infrastructure that is designed for fully automated cargo handling equipment, if the Secretary determines that such equipment would result in a net loss of good jobs or reduction in the quality of jobs within the port or port terminal. In general, fully automated cargo handling systems transfer materials without the need, or with a significantly reduced need, for human assistance. Such systems may be remotely operated or monitored, with or without the exercise of human intervention or control. Applicants that propose Projects that include the acquisition of eligible cargo handling equipment or terminal infrastructure for cargo handling equipment must indicate in their application whether the equipment is fully automated (or whether the terminal infrastructure is designed for fully automated equipment). If fully automated equipment is proposed to be acquired or terminal infrastructure for such equipment is proposed to be created, the applicant must provide information describing the job changes that will result from the Project, including supporting evidence demonstrating that the Project will not directly result in a net loss of good jobs or degradation of job quality.

Development phase activities—such as planning, feasibility analysis, revenue forecasting environmental review, permitting, preliminary engineering and design work, development of master plans, and other preconstruction work—of eligible USMHP Projects described above in this Section C.3.a. may be eligible Projects if they satisfy all other eligibility requirements and merit criteria described in this notice. However, Projects for development phase activities that do not include any construction activities as defined in Section A.3. will be less competitive than those Projects that will result in construction with FY 2024 USMHP funding.

b. Project Components

An application may describe a Project that contains more than one component and may describe components that may be carried out by parties other than the applicant. MARAD expects, and will impose requirements on fund recipients to ensure, that all components included in an application will be delivered as part of the USMHP Project, regardless of whether a component includes Federal funding. The status of each component should be clearly described (for example, in the Project schedule and budget). MARAD may award funds for a component, instead of the larger Project, if that component: (1) independently meets all eligibility requirements described in Section C; (2) independently aligns well with the selection criteria identified in this NOFO; and (3) meets NEPA requirements with respect to independent utility. Independent utility means that the component will represent a transportation improvement that is usable even if no other improvement is made in the area and will be ready for intended use upon completion of that component's construction. All Project components that are presented together in a single application must demonstrate a relationship or connection among them.

MARAD strongly encourages applicants to identify in their applications the Project components that have independent utility and separately detail costs and requested USMHP funding for those components. If the application identifies one or more independent Project components, the application should clearly identify the applicant's priority for funding among the components, how each independent component addresses the selection criteria and produces benefits on its own, and describe how the full proposal of which the independent component is a part addresses the selection criteria described in Section E.

Applicants should be aware that, depending upon the relationship between Project components and applicable Federal law, DOT funding of some Project components may make other Project components subject to Federal requirements as described in Section F.2.

c. Application Limit

Each eligible applicant may submit no more than one application. If an applicant submits multiple applications, only the last one received by MARAD will be considered.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application materials may be accessed on Grants.gov. Applications must also be submitted to Grants.gov. Instructions for submitting applications can be found at:

<https://www.maritime.dot.gov/grants-finances/how-apply-us-marine-highway-program-grants>.

2. Content and Format of Application Submission

The application must include the Standard Form (SF) 424 (Application for Federal Assistance) and the Project Narrative. Applicants are encouraged to also complete the SF-424C (Budget Information – Construction Programs) if applicable. The SF-424 and SF-424C may be found at Grants.gov.

MARAD expects the Project Narrative to be prepared with standard formatting preferences (a single-spaced document, using a standard 12-point font such as Times New Roman, with 1-inch margins, and the narrative text in one column only). Documents should be submitted in PDF format, unless otherwise specified. The Project Narrative may not exceed 20 pages in length, excluding cover pages and table of contents. The only substantive portions that may exceed the 20-page limit are supporting documents that further substantiate assertions or conclusions made in the 20-page Project Narrative and documentation related to the required determinations. If possible, website links to supporting documents should be provided rather than copies of these supporting materials. It is important to ensure that the website links are currently active and working.

Evaluators are not required to review supporting documents as part of the selection criteria review described in Section E. All supporting documents should be dated and attached to the

application or referenced via website link. MARAD expects appropriately descriptive file names for all attachments and/or links (e.g., “Project Narrative,” “Letters of Support” etc.) using a file naming format of “[Applicant Name_2024USMHP_Descriptive File Name]” where “Applicant Name” reflects the applicant’s legal name, abbreviated as appropriate. If supporting documents are submitted, applicants should clearly identify within the Project Narrative the relevant portion of the Project Narrative that each supporting document supports.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to include a list of any supporting documents provided on the last page of their Project Narrative and to attach, as applicable, the supporting documents to their application package in the following order: Project Narrative; Attachments Form; Project cost; documentation of funding commitments for non-Federal funds; Project schedule; SF-424C form if applicable; letters of support; other documentation.

MARAD recommends that the Project Narrative follow the basic outline below to ensure applications address all applicable requirements and assist evaluators in locating relevant information.

Project Narrative Outline	Section
Introductory Information	See D.2.a
Narrative Section I: Project Description	See D.2.b
Narrative Section II: Project Location	See D.2.c
Narrative Section III: Grant Funds, Sources, and Uses of Project Funds	See D.2.d
Narrative Section IV: Additional Application Information Needed from All Private Sector Applicants	See D.2.e
Narrative Section V: Merit Criteria	See D.2.f
Narrative Section VI: Selection Considerations	See D.2.g
Narrative Section VII: Project Readiness	See D.2.h

The Project Narrative should include the information necessary for MARAD to determine that the Project satisfies requirements described in Sections B and C and to assess the selection criteria specified in Section E. In addition to a detailed statement of work, detailed Project schedule, detailed Project budget, and identification of the Marine Highway Transportation Route(s) served, the Project Narrative should include a table of contents, maps, photographs, and graphics, as

appropriate, to make the information easier to review and the Project location and scope easier to understand. Applicants should provide data and documentation in a form that is verifiable by MARAD. MARAD will evaluate the application based upon the information submitted. MARAD may ask any applicant to supplement data in its application but is not required to do so. Lack of supporting information that substantiates assertions or conclusions made in the Project Narrative negatively affects competitiveness of the application, as described in Section E.

MARAD expects applications that include the following content:

a. Introductory Information

Each application should include a cover page with information about the Project as presented below:

Field Name	Guidance
Name of lead applicant	
Is the applicant applying as a lead applicant with any joint applicants?	If yes, identify by name each of the joint applicants.
Project name	Provide a concise (five- to seven-word) name of the Project.
Project description	Provide a brief (no more than 100 words) description of the Project that focuses on what the Project consists of.
Is the applicant a United States private sector operator of marine highway Projects or private sector owners of facilities, including an Alaska Native Corporation?	If yes, identify the U.S. Marine Highway Transportation Route Sponsor endorsing the application (this should be one of the sponsors as indicated below in “Marine Highway Route served”).
U.S. Marine Highway Route served	Specify the designated U.S. Marine Highway Transportation Route the Project serves and the U.S. Marine Highway Transportation Route Sponsor(s).
Project location address	Specific location of the Project, located on a specific street, in a specific town or city, inside of a specific county, etc. This is not the headquarters, corporate office, or other main office of the applicant. If assistance for Projects in multiple sites is requested, list the address for each site.
Geographic coordinates (in latitude and longitude format)	Provide the coordinates of the approximate geographic center of the Project. The latitude and longitude of the Project are to be reported as decimal degrees with a minimum of 5 decimal places. Coordinates are the location of

Field Name	Guidance
	the Project, not the headquarters, corporate office, or other applicant office. If assistance for Projects in multiple sites is requested, list the coordinates for each site.
Is this Project in an urban or rural area?	Refer to definitions of “urban area” and “rural area” in Section A.3. This designation is the specific location(s) of the Project, not the headquarters, corporate office, or other applicant office. If the assistance for Projects in multiple sites is requested, the designation should be based on whether the majority of funds are being spent in “urban areas” or “rural areas” as defined in Section A.3.
Is the applicant a Tribal government?	Refer to definition of “Tribal government” in Section A.3. of this notice.
Project Zip Code	Identify the zip code that corresponds to the geographic coordinates identified above. If the application is requesting assistance for Projects in multiple sites, list the Zip Code for each site.
Is the Project located in an HDC (as defined in Section A.3 of this notice)?	Answer yes only if the Project is wholly or partially in an HDC. Provide information in support of the claim. For example, census tract number and description. If the application is requesting assistance for Projects in multiple sites, the Project will be designated as an HDC if the majority of the Project’s costs will be spent in the area(s) that qualifies as an HDC.
Has the same Project been previously submitted for AMHP/USMHP funding?	Identify the program and year of the prior submission (such as “AMHP FY 2022”, “USMHP FY 2023”).
Is the applicant applying for other discretionary grant programs in 2024 for the same work or related scope of work?	If so, identify the program, amount of funding requested and scope (such as “PIDP FY 2024, \$25 million, components 1 and 2 of this USMHP Project”).
Has the applicant previously received DOT funding for the same work or related scope of work?	If so, identify the program, amount of funding received and scope (such as Port Infrastructure Development Program FY 2022, \$2 million, phase 1 of this USMHP Project), and status of the NEPA review for the previously funded project.
Has the applicant previously received PIDP, TIGER, BUILD, RAISE, FASTLANE, INFRA or AMHP/USMHP funding?	Identify the program, amount of funding received, and year of the prior award (such as “INFRA FY 2022”).
USMHP FY 2024 Grant Amount Requested	Enter the total amount of USMHP FY 2024 grant funds requested.
Total Project Cost	Total Project Cost will be equal to the Total Future Eligible Project Cost, including the USMHP grant amount requested.
Total Federal Funding	Enter the amount of Federal funding from ALL sources that will be used for this Project

Field Name	Guidance
	(include the amount of USMHP grant funding requested).
Total Non-Federal Funding	Enter the amount of funds committed to the Project from non-Federal sources.
Will RRIF or TIFIA funds be used as part of the Project financing?	Indicate whether RRIF or TIFIA funding will be used for the Project. If so, indicate the amount of funds that will be used.
Does the applicant use LOGINK or a similar logistics platform provided or sponsored by the People’s Republic of China or Chinese state-affiliated entities?	Yes or No. See Section D.5. of this notice.

b. Narrative Section I: Project Description

This section of the Project Narrative should include a detailed statement of work and describe the proposed USMHP Project, focusing on the technical and engineering aspects of the Project as well as the current status of the Project. This section should discuss the Project’s history, including a description of any previously completed components, and be used to place the Project into a broader context of other transportation investments being pursued by the Project sponsor; however, the applicant should make clear which investments are outside the scope of the Project.

If the Project includes the purchase of equipment, the application should provide a description as to how each piece of equipment is intended to be used for the Project and any specific features that the equipment must have to satisfy that intended use (e.g., minimum lifting capacity).

This section should also discuss how the Project promotes, expands, or develops a Marine Highway Transportation Service as defined in Section A.3. This includes a description of the type of cargo moved by the Project or Marine Highway Transportation Service supported by the Project and ports served by the Marine Highway Transportation Service.

If submitting a joint application, applicants should also identify in this section the lead recipient of the award, who will also be responsible for financial administration of the Project and ensuring Project compliance with all Federal requirements, and a description of the roles and responsibilities of each applicant. Applications should include a signed letter of support from all

eligible non-lead joint applicants as an attachment. If the lead recipient determines that a joint applicant is classified as a “subrecipient” as that term is defined at 2 CFR 200.1, the lead recipient must ensure that it complies with the requirements applicable to pass-through entities at 2 CFR 200.331-333.

Applicants should also include in this section citations of authority or other supporting documentation necessary to establish an applicant’s authority¹³ to carry out the Project, so that MARAD can make the statutory determination necessary for award at 46 U.S.C. 55601(d)(7)(C) and discussed further in Section E.1.e. The citations should be of sufficient detail to demonstrate that the applicant is an eligible applicant and to show how the applicant is related to the work on the property where the grant funds will be spent. Examples of information that could assist with making this determination include: the citation of specific sections or chapters of state or local statutory language that demonstrate relevant authority; the inclusion of a narrative outlining the authority of the eligible entity applying for grant funding; or a description of the relationship between the applicant and the owner of the property that links the Project to the authority to carry out the Project (e.g., through a lease agreement).

If an applicant requests funding to raise sunken vessels, construct buildings or other physical facilities (as defined in Section A.3.), or acquire land, it must explain in the application why the activities are necessary to carry out the Project. Funding cannot be awarded for one of these uses unless the Secretary determines that such activities are necessary to carry out the Project.

c. Narrative Section II: Project Location

This section of the application should describe the Project’s location and, if available, include photographs. This section should also describe the Marine Highway Transportation Route served by the Project.

¹³ In the case of a joint application, only one of the joint applicants need demonstrate that they have authority to carry out the Project.

Applicants should submit a Project map with their application that clearly indicates the Project's location in the local area and the State or territory, and its connections to existing transportation infrastructure. The map is needed to verify urban/rural and HDC designations. The location of the Project should only include the direct physical location of the Project. It should not include a broad service area or area of Project impact. The location of the Project is where the requested grant funds will be used, not the headquarters, corporate office, or other office of the applicant. If the Project includes multiple sites, include Project location information for all sites.

This section should clearly identify whether the Project is: located in a rural or urban area (as defined in Section A.3.), and/or located in a HDC (as defined in Section A.3.), including the relevant census tract(s).^{14,15} The description should also include demographic information describing any minority, low income, or limited English proficient communities in the vicinity of, and potentially impacted by, the Project.¹⁶ Applicants must ensure that the location and address of the Project is correctly identified in the application.

d. Narrative Section III: Grant Funds, Sources, and Uses of Project Funds

This section should present the budget for the USMHP Project (i.e., the Project scope that includes USMHP funding and matching funding). The budget should not include any previously incurred expenses that are incurred prior to MARAD's announcement of Project selection. Project budgets should show how different funding sources will share in each activity and present those

¹⁴ This website will be used to determine whether a Project is in an urban or rural area: <https://tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerweb2020/>. Applicants should use the USDOT Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) as the primary tool to identify HDCs: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>.

¹⁵ A Project located in both an urban and a rural area will be designated as *urban* if the majority of the Project's costs will be spent in urban areas. Conversely, a Project located in both an urban area and a rural area will be designated as *rural* if the majority of the Project's costs will be spent in rural areas. For planning Projects, the location of the Project being planned, prepared, or designed will be used for the urban or rural designation. Similarly, a Project located in both HDC areas and areas that are not HDC areas will be designated as HDC if the majority of the Project's costs will be spent in the area that qualifies as HDC and, for planning Projects, the location of the Project being planned, prepared, or designed will be used for the HDC designations.

¹⁶ Applicants are encouraged to utilize EPA's EJScreen tool to identify Project demographics: <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>.

data in dollars, rounded up or down to the nearest dollar, and percentages. The budget should identify other Federal funds the applicant is applying for, has been awarded, or intends to use. Funding sources should be grouped into three categories: non-Federal, USMHP, and other Federal, with specific amounts from each funding source. The Project budget should include total Project Costs for the FY 2024 USMHP Project (see Section C.2. for definition of Total Project Cost); FY 2024 USMHP grant funding request; specific source, amount, type (grant, loan, etc.), and match requirements of any other Federal funds to be used for eligible Project costs; and specific sources and amounts of non-Federal funds, if included, to be used for eligible Project costs.

In order for MARAD to make the determination required by 46 U.S.C. 55601(d)(7)(A) that sufficient funding is available to meet the non-Federal share requirement described in Section C.2, the applicant must demonstrate that the funding source(s) for the non-Federal funds are stable, dependable, and dedicated to this specific Project by attaching or linking to the Letter(s) of Financial Commitment (as defined in Section A.3). This section should reference and summarize the provided Letter(s) of Financial Commitment. That documentation and information will be evaluated as described in Section E.1.a.

If a Project is in two or more census tracts or is located only partially within an urban or rural area, the budget needs to separate the costs between the various census tracts or areas designated as urban and rural.

If an applicant is a Tribal government or has a proposed Project in a rural area, it may request a USMHP Federal share of costs above 80 percent by providing a brief explanation in this section as to why the increased Federal share is requested and needed.

This section should also provide complete information on how all Project funds may be used. For example, if a particular source of funds is available only after a condition is satisfied, the application should identify that condition and describe the applicant's control over whether it is

satisfied. Similarly, if a particular source of funds is available for expenditure only during a fixed time period, the application should describe that restriction. Complete information about Project funds will ensure that MARAD’s expectations for award execution align with any funding restrictions unrelated to MARAD, even if an award differs from the applicant’s request. If a funding source is uncertain, the applicant should state that it is uncertain and describe the source of the uncertainty.

Applicants are encouraged to include the budget table below, filled out with Project details:

	[Component 1]	[Component 2]	Total
USMHP Funds:	[\$XXX]	[\$XXX]	[\$XXX]
Other Federal Funds:	[\$XXX]	[\$XXX]	[\$XXX]
Non-Federal Funds:	[\$XXX]	[\$XXX]	[\$XXX]
Total:	[\$XXX]	[\$XXX]	[\$XXX]

If there is only a single component, remove “Component 2” column. If there are more than 2 components, add columns.

e. Narrative Section IV: Additional Application Information Needed from All Private-Sector Applicants

In addition to the required Marine Highway Transportation Route Sponsor endorsement letter, all private-sector lead applicants, including previous USMHP applicants, must provide the following additional information as attachments to the application:

- (1) A description of the entity including location of the headquarters; a description of the entity's assets (tugs, barges, etc.); years in operation; ownership; customer base; and website address, if any.
- (2) Unique Entity Identifier of the parent company (when applicable).
- (3) The most recent year-end audited, reviewed, or compiled financial statements, prepared by a certified public accountant (CPA), per U.S. generally accepted accounting principles (not tax-based accounting financial statements). If CPA prepared financial statements are not available, provide the most recent financial statement for the entity. Do not provide tax returns.

- (4) Statement regarding the relationship between applicants and any parents, subsidiaries, or affiliates, if any such entity is going to provide a portion of the matching funds.
- (5) Evidence documenting applicant's ability to make proposed matching requirement (loan agreement, commitment from investors, cash on balance sheet, etc.).
- (6) Pro-forma financial statements reflecting financial condition at beginning of period; effect on balance sheet of grant and matching funds (e.g., a decrease in cash or increase in debt, additional equity and an increase in fixed assets); and impact on company's projected financial condition (balance sheet) of completion of Project, showing that company will have sufficient financial resources to remain in business.
- (7) Statement regarding whether during the past five years, the applicant or any predecessor or related company has been in bankruptcy or in reorganization under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code, or in any insolvency or reorganization proceedings, and whether any substantial property of the applicant or any predecessor or related company has been acquired in any such proceeding or has been subject to foreclosure or receivership during such period. If so, give details.
- (8) Additional information may be requested as deemed necessary by MARAD to facilitate and complete its review of the application. If such information is not provided, MARAD may deem the application incomplete and cease processing it.

f. Narrative Section V: Merit Criteria

Within this section, demonstrate the extent to which the Project aligns with the merit criteria. The USMHP merit criteria are: Demonstrating the Need to Develop, Expand, or Promote Marine Highway Transportation or shipper use of Marine Highway Transportation; Expanding the Benefits of Marine Highway Transportation; Measuring Project Support; and Leveraging Federal Funding and Financial Viability.

Guidance describing how MARAD will evaluate Projects against the merit criteria is included in Section E.1.a. of this notice. Applicants are encouraged to describe the merit criteria in the order they are described in that section and address each criterion separately.

g. Narrative Section VI: Selection Considerations

After discussing the merit criteria identified above, this section of the application should discuss how the Project addresses the selection considerations. The USMHP selection considerations are Climate Change and Sustainability; Equity and the Justice40 Initiative; and Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation. Guidance describing how MARAD will evaluate Projects against the selection considerations is included in Section E.1.b. of this notice. Applicants are encouraged to describe the selection considerations in the order they are described in that section and address each consideration separately.

h. Narrative Section VII: Project Readiness

MARAD will consider Project Readiness to assess the likelihood of delivery of a successful Project. Project Readiness consists of two factors: Technical Capacity and Environmental Risk. This section of the application should discuss how the Project addresses Project Readiness as described in Section E.1.c. of this notice.

3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant must: (1) be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (2) provide a valid UEI in its application; and (3) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

MARAD may not make a FY 2024 USMHP grant award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time MARAD is ready to make a USMHP grant award,

MARAD may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a USMHP grant award and use that determination as a basis for making a USMHP grant award to another applicant.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be submitted to Grants.gov by 11:59:59 p.m. E.D.T. on July 12, 2024. Grants.gov attaches a time stamp to each application at the time that submission is complete. Applications with a time stamp after the deadline will not be considered. Accordingly, applicants are discouraged from waiting to submit their application until right before the deadline when a technical error or processing time could result in the application being time stamped after the deadline. MARAD does not accept applications via mailed paper, fax machine, email, or other means. Please note that the Grants.gov registration process usually takes two to four weeks to complete.

5. Funding Restrictions

Assistance provided under this notice may not be used to improve port or land-based infrastructure outside the United States or, unless the Secretary determines that such activities are necessary to carry out the Marine Highway Transportation Project for which such assistance is provided, to raise sunken vessels, construct buildings or other physical facilities, or acquire land. Grant funds may only be used for the purposes described in this notice and may not be used as an operating subsidy.

MARAD will not consider previously incurred costs or previously expended or encumbered funds towards the matching requirement for any Project prior to MARAD's announcement of Project selections. Consistent with 2 CFR 200.458, unless "pre-award costs" are authorized by MARAD in writing after MARAD's announcement of FY 2024 USMHP awards, any costs incurred prior to MARAD's obligation of funds for a Project are ineligible for reimbursement and are ineligible to count as match for cost-share requirements.

As proscribed in Section 825 of the NDAA, no funds may be awarded to any covered entity^{17,18} that utilizes or provides in part or in whole: the national transportation logistics public information platform (commonly referred to as ‘LOGINK’) provided by the People’s Republic of China, or departments, ministries, centers, agencies, or instrumentalities of the Government of the People’s Republic of China; any national transportation logistics information platform provided by or sponsored by the People’s Republic of China, or a controlled commercial entity; or a similar system provided by Chinese state-affiliated entities.

USMHP funds may not be used to support or oppose union organizing. Improvements to Federally owned facilities are ineligible under the FY 2024 USMHP.

6. Other Submission Requirements

a. Submission Location

Applications must be submitted to Grants.gov. To apply through Grants.gov, applicants must:

- (1) Obtain a UEI¹⁹ number.
- (2) Register with the System for Award Management (SAM) at www.SAM.gov.
- (3) Create a Grants.gov username and password.
- (4) Complete Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) registration in Grants.gov.

¹⁷ In Section 825 of the NDAA, the term ‘covered entity’ means—(A) a port authority that receives funding after the date of the enactment of this section under—(i) the port infrastructure development program under section 54301; (ii) the maritime transportation system emergency relief program under section 50308; or (iii) any Federal grant funding program; (B) any marine terminal operator located on property owned by a port authority as described in subparagraph (A) or at a seaport described in subparagraph (D); (C) any agency or instrumentality of the United States Government or that of a State; or (D) a commercial strategic seaport within the National Port Readiness Network.

¹⁸ For more information on LOGINK, including information about potential vulnerabilities to maritime port equipment and networks, see the advisory on Worldwide Foreign Adversarial Technological, Physical, and Cyber Influence on the Maritime Security Communications Industry portal: <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/msci-advisories>.

¹⁹ As of April 4, 2022, the Federal government no longer uses the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to uniquely identify entities. Instead, entities doing business with the Federal government must use a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) created in SAM.gov. If your entity is currently registered in SAM.gov, your UEI has already been assigned and is viewable in SAM.gov. This includes inactive registrations.

The E-Business Point of Contact (POC) at the applicant's organization must respond to the registration email from Grants.gov and login at Grants.gov to authorize the applicant as the AOR. Please note that there can be more than one AOR for an organization.

Please note that the Grants.gov registration process usually takes two to four weeks to complete and that MARAD will not consider late applications that are the result of a failure to register or comply with Grants.gov applicant requirements in a timely manner. For information and instruction on each of these processes, please see instructions at <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs.html>.

If applicants experience difficulties at any point during the registration or application process, please call the Grants.gov Customer Service Support Hotline at 1 (800) 518-4726.

b. Consideration of Applications

Only applicants who comply with all submission deadlines described in this notice and electronically submit valid applications through Grants.gov will be eligible for award. Applicants are strongly encouraged to make submissions in advance of the deadline and to verify that their submissions comply with all requirements in this notice.

c. Late Applications

Any applications that Grants.gov time stamps after 11:59:59 E.D.T. on July 12, 2024, will not be accepted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to make submissions well in advance of the deadline, and applicants facing technical issues are advised to contact the Grants.gov helpdesk as soon as possible.

d. Compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The Department encourages applicants to submit documents that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 508 guidelines are available at <https://www.access-board.gov/ict/>.

e. Sharing of Application Information

Except for the information properly marked as described in Section H.1., the Department may share application information within the Department or with other Federal agencies if the Department determines that sharing is relevant to the respective program's objectives.

E. Application Review Information

This section identifies how MARAD will evaluate applications received for FY 2024 USMHP grant funding. Applications will be evaluated for their alignment with the merit criteria. MARAD will also consider the extent to which applications align with the selection considerations and may give priority to those Projects that align well when selecting among similarly rated applications. Applications will also be reviewed for Project Readiness and compliance with the statutory determinations at 46 U.S.C. 55601(d)(7). Proposed Projects that include construction activities will be more competitive than applications for development phase activities only.

1. Criteria

a. Merit Criteria

The USMHP statutory merit criteria are: Demonstrating the Need to Develop, Expand, or Promote Marine Highway Transportation or shipper use of Marine Highway Transportation; Expanding the Benefits of Marine Highway Transportation; Measuring Project Support; and Leveraging Federal Funding and Financial Viability. Reviewers will assess a Project's alignment with the statutory merit criteria and evaluate whether the benefits of the Project under each criterion are clear, direct, data-driven, and reasonable. Insufficient information to assess any criterion will negatively impact the Project rating. See Section E.2. for more information on the review and selection process.

Planning grant applications will be evaluated against the same merit criteria as capital grants (i.e., construction projects, equipment, and vessels); however, the information does not need to be as driven by data as capital Projects, since data is often an outcome of the Project to be planned.

MARAD will consider how the planning Project, once implemented, will ultimately further the merit criteria.

(1) Demonstrating the Need to Develop, Expand, or Promote Marine Highway Transportation or Shipper Use of Marine Highway Transportation

This section of the application must clearly demonstrate how a Project is needed to develop, expand, or promote Marine Highway Transportation or shipper use of Marine Highway Transportation.

i. Market Need

The application should include a description of specific commodities, markets, and shippers the Marine Highway Transportation Service is attracting or is expected to attract. This can include a discussion of the Marine Highway Transportation Service's market or customer base and the value proposition to customers.

ii. Project Need

The application must document why the Project is needed to attract the specific commodities, markets, and shippers necessary to develop, expand, or promote the Marine Highway Transportation Service. For example, applicants could describe a type of equipment or vessel that would meet the need of moving a specific commodity or increase the ability of a Marine Highway Transportation Service to expand or enter a market. This section should identify existing deficiencies or inefficiencies in the market and discuss how the Project will correct or address them. If applicable, the narrative should also explain how the Project will strengthen the Marine Highway Transportation Service within the larger local, regional, or national supply chain. The application should include Performance Measures to support claims of expected improvements, such as changes in freight volumes (TEU or Tons), CO₂ emission reductions, or other measures as proposed by the applicant.

iii. Project Impact

The application should include a description of the impact, if any, to the development, expansion, or promotion of the Marine Highway Transportation Service if the Project is delayed or not realized. For example, the narrative could describe how existing deficiencies or inefficiencies in the market would increase or expand. It could also describe the impacts to the growth or development of the Marine Highway Transportation Service. If applicable, the narrative should also describe the impacts to the environment, safety, system resiliency and redundancy, and landside infrastructure and congestion if the Project is delayed or not realized.

MARAD will evaluate the extent to which the Project is needed to develop, expand, or promote Marine Highway Transportation or shipper use of Marine Highway Transportation. Reviewers will assign a rating of “high,” “medium,” “low,” or “non-responsive” as further described below.

Non-Responsive	Low	Medium	High
The application contains insufficient information to assess this criterion, or the information provided fails to effectively demonstrate that the Project is needed to develop, expand, or promote Marine Highway Transportation or shipper use of Marine Highway Transportation. An application that receives a non-responsive rating for this criterion will not be considered for award.	The application effectively demonstrates only the Project Need, but the demonstration of Market Need and Project Impact is less clear.	The application effectively demonstrates only Market Need and Project Need, but the demonstration of Project Impact is less clear.	The application effectively demonstrates Market Need, Project Need, and Project Impact.

(2) Expanding the Benefits of Marine Highway Transportation

This section of the application must clearly document the overall benefits gained through the successful implementation of the Project.

The applicant should only describe the benefits directly attributable to the Project, not those attributable to the overall Marine Highway Transportation Service, which would exist with or without the Project. For example, an application for a Project to purchase specific cargo handling equipment should focus on information and data demonstrating benefits that the acquisition of that specific cargo handling equipment will have (e.g., by increasing the volume of freight moved on the Marine Highway Transportation Service, landside congestion in the surrounding area will be reduced), rather than the benefits of the overall Marine Highway Transportation Service.

Applicants should include data and/or well-reasoned analyses when providing inputs on the benefits of a proposed Project, including associated Performance Measures to support claims of current needs and expected improvements. For example, to support a claim of increased efficiency or reliability, the application should include Performance Measures such as the volumes and types of cargo or passengers moved, or the number of vessels served might be used to document increased reliability of cargo operations or increase in market access, particularly where the narrative documents a deficiency in goods movement.

If the Project has multiple independent components, the narrative should include sufficient information to describe the impact of each component on the overall Project. Eligible applicants should organize the public benefits of the Project based on the categories below. The applicant should include a reference to any letters of support from Project partners described below in Section E.1.a.(3) that further support these criteria and those letters may be considered when assigning a rating for these criteria.

i. Landside Congestion and Infrastructure Savings

Describe how the Project results in savings of public or private funds that would otherwise be expended on road or railroad maintenance or repair, including pavement, bridges, tunnels, or related transportation infrastructure. If applicable and available, the applicant should include the amount of projected net savings in dollars per year. This section should also describe how the

Project mitigates or relieves landside congestion, including how the Project results in a reduction of commercial vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

ii. Economic Competitiveness

Describe how the Project measurably results in transportation efficiency and economic gains. Applicants should provide evidence of how improvements in transportation outcomes (such as time savings, operating cost savings, and increased utilization of assets) translate into long-term economic benefits and improve the competitive position of the Marine Highway Transportation Service.

iii. Alternative to Landside Transportation

Describe how the Project provides a coordinated and capable alternative to landside transportation. This description should include how the Project improves resiliency in the transportation network, including how the Project offers an alternative and benefit when other routes are interrupted because of natural or man-made incidents. This section should also include a description of how the Project benefits the larger local, regional, or national supply chain.

iv. Emissions Reductions and Energy Savings

Describe how the Project provides net energy savings or reductions in emissions, now and in the future, over current energy consumption and emissions practices, including greenhouse gas emissions, criteria air pollutants, or other environmental benefits. This section must also include a discussion of how the Project would impact emissions in adjacent communities.

v. Safety Improvements

Describe, in measurable terms, the projected safety improvements that would result from the Project. Applicants should also discuss how the Project measurably mitigates any safety risks resulting from the Project and demonstrate that the Project will not result in any negative impacts to the overall safety of the travelling public. Applicants are encouraged to include data-driven information that demonstrates the extent to which the Project reduces serious injuries related to

operations or incorporates specific safety improvements that are part of a documented risk reduction strategy.

MARAD will evaluate the extent to which the Project will expand the benefits of Marine Highway Transportation. Reviewers will assign a rating of “high,” “medium,” “low,” or “non-responsive” as further described below.

Non-Responsive	Low	Medium	High
The application contains insufficient information to assess this criterion, or the information provided fails to demonstrate how the Project benefits a) Landside Congestion and Infrastructure Savings and b) Economic Competitiveness. An application that receives a non-responsive rating for this criterion will not be considered for award.	The application only demonstrates how the Project benefits a) Landside Congestion and Infrastructure Savings and b) Economic Competitiveness.	The application demonstrates how the Project benefits a minimum of three categories, two of which must be: a) Landside Congestion and Infrastructure Savings and b) Economic Competitiveness.	The application demonstrates how the Project benefits a minimum of four categories, two of which must be: a) Landside Congestion and Infrastructure Savings and b) Economic Competitiveness.

(3) Measuring Project Support

This section of the application must clearly document the supporters of the Project, which may include both private sector and public sector partners, as shown through attached letters of support. For each supporter, there should be a description as to the type of support (e.g., a business commitment from a shipper to increase usage of the Marine Highway Transportation Service following the Project); the level of support (e.g., the expected level of increased usage resulting from the Project); and how that support helps to ensure the objectives and benefits of the Project are realized. Private sector partners may include terminals, vessel operators, shipyards, shippers, trucking companies, railroads, third-party logistics providers, shipping lines, labor, and workforce. Public sector partners may include State Departments of Transportation, metropolitan planning organizations, municipalities, and other governmental entities, including Tribal governments. Applicants should also include any affiliations with environmental groups or civic associations.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit letters of support as supporting documents from all private and public sector partners as part of the application. If an applicant is a private entity, the required endorsement letter from the Marine Highway Transportation Route Sponsor will count as a letter of support under this criterion.

Letters of support for the Project are expected to be current and must be written no later than six months prior to the date of application to the FY 2024 USMHP. Letters of support intended or used for other Federal grant programs aside from USMHP will not be considered. Letters of support that clearly demonstrate a commitment by a public or private sector supporter to continue or expand their usage of the Marine Highway Transportation Service as a direct result of the Project will result in higher ratings for this criterion.

MARAD will evaluate the extent to which the application has documented support for the Project. Reviewers will assign a rating of “high,” “medium,” “low,” or “non-responsive” as further described below.

Non-Responsive	Low	Medium	High
The application does not demonstrate support for the Project by either public or private sector partners.	The application demonstrates support for the Project by either public or private sector partners. Letters of support need not demonstrate a commitment to continue or expand their usage of the Marine Highway Transportation Service as a direct result of the Project.	The application demonstrates support for the Project by both public and private sector partners. Letters of support need not demonstrate a commitment to continue or expand the supporter’s usage of the Marine Highway Transportation Service as a direct result of the Project.	The application demonstrates support for the Project by both public and private sector partners. Letters of support must demonstrate a commitment to continue or expand the supporter’s usage of the Marine Highway Transportation Service as a direct result of the Project.

(4) Leveraging Federal Funding and Financial Viability

This section of the application must clearly document information that may strengthen MARAD’s understanding of the applicant’s effort to improve non-Federal leverage and that demonstrates the financial viability of the Project. As part of this criteria and to satisfy the

determination required by 46 U.S.C. 55601(d)(7)(A), the applicant must demonstrate that the funding source(s) for the non-Federal share is stable, dependable, and dedicated to this specific Project by referencing or linking to a Letter(s) of Financial Commitment (as defined in Section A.3).

The applicant must document that the proposed Marine Highway Transportation Project is financially viable, will remain financially viable for as long as the Project is used for the purposes outlined in the application, and that the funds will be spent or used efficiently and effectively. Applicants should adequately demonstrate that the Project supports a viable Marine Highway Transportation Service, especially if this is a new or proposed Marine Highway Transportation Service. This section may also include a discussion on the applicant's business processes and operations. To the extent that letters of support provided in connection with Section E.1.a.(3) above demonstrate financial viability of the Project (e.g., a letter from a business stating an intent to use or increase usage of the Marine Highway Transportation Service as a result of the Project), the applicant should reference those letters in this section and those letters may be considered when assigning a rating for this criteria.

An unsatisfactory financial viability evaluation may result in a Project dropping in leverage ratings, even with increased non-Federal contributions. An application that demonstrates a strong financial viability evaluation may result in a Project rising in leverage rating, even with reduced non-Federal contributions (while still meeting the statutory 20 percent match in non-Federal funding, unless the applicant qualifies for and, as applicable, requests an increased Federal share). For applications submitted by lead private-sector applicants, reviewers will also assess the financial viability of the Project by reviewing the information submitted by the applicant described in Section D.2.e.

Each application will receive an overall rating for this criterion based on the ratings it receives for two factors: leverage and financial viability. Reviewers will first assign a rating of "high,"

“medium,” “low,” or “non-responsive” for each factor as reflected in the below table. Reviewers will then average the two ratings to determine the overall rating for this criterion. Applications that receive a “non-responsive” rating for either leverage or financial viability will automatically receive a non-responsive rating for this criterion and will be ineligible for award. Projects with higher ratings will be more competitive.

	Non-Responsive	Low	Medium	High
Leverage	The applicant does not meet the 20 percent match requirement and did not qualify for and, as applicable, request a waiver of non-Federal share. Applicants that receive a rating of “non-responsive” will not be eligible for award.	The applicant matches exactly the statutory 20 percent match in non-Federal funding and demonstrates that the non-Federal matching funds are stable, dependable, and dedicated to this specific Project.	The applicant matches more than 20 percent but less than 40 percent of total Project costs in non-Federal funding and the applicant demonstrates that the non-Federal matching funds are stable, dependable, and dedicated to this specific Project.	The applicant matches 40 percent or higher of total Project costs in non-Federal funding and demonstrates that the non-Federal matching funds are stable, dependable, and dedicated to this specific Project; or the applicant qualifies for and, as applicable, requests a waiver of the non-Federal share.
Financial Viability	The applicant has not satisfactorily demonstrated that the Project is, and will remain, financially viable and the funds will be used efficiently and effectively. Applicants that receive a rating of “non-responsive” will not be eligible for award.	The applicant demonstrates a low level of confidence that the Project is, and will remain, financially viable and the funds will be used efficiently and effectively.	The applicant demonstrates a moderate level of confidence that the Project is, and will remain, financially viable and the funds will be used efficiently and effectively.	The applicant demonstrates a high level of confidence that the Project is, and will remain, financially viable and the funds will be used efficiently and effectively.

b. Selection Considerations

After completing the merit review, among Projects of similar merit, MARAD may prioritize Projects based on the extent to which they align with the following selection considerations.

(1) Climate Change and Sustainability

Applications that are rated highest on this criterion will be those that use data-driven and evidence-based methods to demonstrate that the Project will:

- significantly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the transportation sector, as shown through analysis with the DOT Navigator Climate checklist²⁰ or similar tools; and
- incorporate evidence-based climate resilience measures or features, including the objectives contained in the National Climate Resilience Framework.²¹

Projects that typically reduce GHG emissions in the transportation sector may include elements that: increase the use of energy efficient modes of transportation like rail or maritime; support transitioning to clean vehicles, cargo handling equipment, harbor craft, and fuels, including electrification, charging infrastructure, and grid upgrades; use materials and construction methods that have lower embodied GHG emissions; or incorporate carbon-reducing uses of unused areas of a port such as by installing solar arrays or facilitating transmission of electricity from renewables.

When describing the extent to which the Project incorporates evidence-based climate resilience measures or features, applicants may refer to the following, as applicable to the Project: use of best-available climate data sets, information resources, and decision-support tools (including USDOT and other federal resources²²) to assess the climate-related vulnerability and risk of the Project; development and deployment of solutions that reduce climate change risks; demonstration of benefits to communities most vulnerable to climate change impacts; and planning to monitor performance of climate resilience and adaptation measures.

²⁰ <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/checklist-strong-climate-change-mitigation-adaptation-and-resilience-grant>

²¹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/National-Climate-Resilience-Framework-FINAL.pdf>

²² <https://www.transportation.gov/priorities/climate-and-sustainability/climate-adaptation-resources-and-tools>

Reviewers will assign a rating of “high,” “medium,” “low,” or “non-responsive” as further described below.

Non-Responsive	Low	Medium	High
The proposed Project negatively affects the selection consideration, or the application contains insufficient information to assess the selection consideration.	The application discusses how the Project significantly reduces GHG emissions in the transportation sector or incorporates evidence-based climate resilience measures or features; however, the application does not use data-driven and evidence-based methods to demonstrate how the Project will do so.	The application demonstrates, using data-driven and evidence-based methods, either how the Project significantly reduces GHG emissions in the transportation sector or incorporates evidence-based climate resilience measures or features.	The application demonstrates, using data-driven and evidence-based methods, both how the Project significantly reduces GHG emissions in the transportation sector and incorporates evidence-based climate resilience measures or features.

(2) Equity and the Justice40 Initiative

Priority consideration will be given to Projects that support the goals of the Justice40 Initiative.²³ In support of Executive Order 14008, or when “disadvantaged communities” is a statutory designation, applicants are encouraged to use the definition of HDCs as defined in Section A.3. of this notice. CEJST is a tool created by the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), that aims to help Federal agencies identify disadvantaged communities as part of the Justice40 Initiative to accomplish the goal that 40% of overall benefits from certain Federal investments reach disadvantaged communities.

The more of the following four Equity and Justice40 factors that the Applicant can clearly demonstrate are included in the Project, the higher the Applicant will be rated on this criterion:

²³ <https://www.transportation.gov/equity-Justice40>

- The Project will create positive outcomes that will reduce, mitigate, or reverse how a community is experiencing disadvantage through improving health or safety, reducing pollution, connecting Americans to good-paying jobs, fighting climate change, and/or improving quality of life. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the USDOT Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer (arcgis.com)²⁴ to understand how their community or project area is experiencing disadvantage related to lack of transportation investments or opportunities and are encouraged to use this information in their application to demonstrate how their project will reduce, reverse, or mitigate the burdens of disadvantage.
- The applicant identifies and implements programs and policies that ensure the benefits of investments while mitigating economic displacement of economically susceptible residents and businesses. Examples include expanding affordable, safe transportation and mobility options to areas where good jobs are concentrated; and supporting entrepreneurship, and small business growth.
- The applicant will engage the public, including disadvantaged communities, during all phases of the Project, including planning, design, construction, and implementation.²⁵
- The applicant addresses how the Project will include an equity assessment that evaluates whether the Project will create proportional impacts and remove transportation related disparities to all populations in the Project area.

Reviewers will assign a rating of “high,” “medium,” “low,” or “non-responsive” as further described below.

²⁴ <https://www.transportation.gov/priorities/equity/justice40/etc-explorer>

²⁵ For additional information: <https://www.transportation.gov/priorities/equity/justice40/three-major-components-dots-justice40-initiative>

Non-Responsive	Low	Medium	High
The proposed Project negatively affects the selection consideration, or the application contains insufficient information to assess the selection consideration.	The application clearly demonstrates that the Project includes at least one of the listed Equity and Justice40 factors.	The application clearly demonstrates that the Project includes at least two of the listed Equity and Justice40 factors.	The application clearly demonstrates that the Project includes at least three of the listed Equity and Justice40 factors.

(3) Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation

Applications will rate more highly on this criterion if they demonstrate that the Project will include the following Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation factors:

- Create good-paying, safe jobs with free and fair choice to join a union including through the use of a project labor agreement.
- Promote investments in high-quality workforce development programs with supportive services to help train, place, and retain people in good-paying jobs or registered apprenticeships. These programs should have a focus on women, people of color, and others that are underrepresented in infrastructure jobs (people with disabilities, people with convictions, etc.).
- Adopt changes to hiring policies and workplace cultures to promote the entry and retention of underrepresented populations.
- Promote local inclusive economic development and entrepreneurship, such as the utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, Minority-owned Businesses, Women-owned Businesses, or 8(a) firms.

Reviewers will assign applications a “high,” “medium,” “low,” or “non-responsive” rating as further described below.

Non-Responsive	Low	Medium	High
The proposed Project negatively affects the selection consideration, or the application	The application clearly demonstrates that the Project includes at least one	The application clearly demonstrates that the Project includes at least two	The application clearly demonstrates that the Project includes at least three

contains insufficient information to assess the selection consideration.	of the listed Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation factors.	of the listed Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation factors.	of the listed Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation factors.
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c. Project Readiness

MARAD will consider Project Readiness to assess the likelihood of delivery of a successful Project. Each application will receive a Project Readiness rating based on the ratings it receives for two factors: Technical Capacity and Environmental Risk. The Project Readiness rating will be based on the poorest risk rating earned in either Technical Capacity or Environmental Risk. For example, if an application is evaluated as high risk for Technical Capacity and medium risk for Environmental Risk, its Project Readiness rating will be “high risk” since a rating of “high risk” is less desirable than a rating of “medium risk.” The following paragraphs describe how MARAD will evaluate Technical Capacity and Environmental Risk.

(1) Technical Capacity

The applicant should provide information demonstrating its technical capacity to implement the Project based on experience and understanding of Federal requirements. This section may include a description of the applicant’s history of delivering similar Projects or experience completing a Federally supported Project. The application should also demonstrate a Project’s feasibility or constructability and schedule, and how the Project (such as design and construction) will comply with applicable Federal requirements. The narrative should also include information about how and when cost data in the budget was compiled, including information on how it was sourced (such as a cost database, market survey, or fixed-price bid). The discussion should also include information about the degree of design completion used to compile the cost information, if applicable. MARAD will consider the technical capacity of the applicant, including risks to successful completion of the Project, cost information, the proposed schedule identifying all major Project milestones, and the applicant’s overall capacity to manage Project delivery. Reviewers will

also consider the applicant's previous experience working with Federal agencies on grant-funded projects and relevant planning efforts at the local, regional, or State level. Risks do not disqualify Projects from award, but competitive applications will clearly and directly describe achievable risk mitigation strategies. An applicant's lack of previous experience with Federally funded grants will not disqualify a Project from consideration. A Project with mitigated risks is more competitive than a comparable Project with unaddressed risks.

If applicable, the applicant should indicate whether the Project is part of an ongoing planning effort, such as at the local, regional, or State level. Information on whether the Project is included in a local or State Freight Plan, a Freight Investment Plan, a State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), part of a facility or organization strategic plan, or represented in other planning efforts should be provided. Applicants should provide links or other documentation supporting the Project's inclusion in these planning efforts.

Additionally, this section should include a description of whether all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials to be used in the Project are produced in the United States, in accordance with the requirements of the Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. 117-58, Division G, §§ 70901-27) and the guidance set forth at 2 CFR Part 184, as implemented by MARAD. This section should also include an assessment of what, if any, iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials would require a waiver²⁶ of the Build America, Buy America provisions and the applicant's current efforts and planned future efforts to maximize the use of domestic goods, products, and materials in constructing its Project. Applicants are encouraged to document and provide the results of all market research conducted by the applicant to find

²⁶ Please note that the USDOT has approved a "Waiver of Buy America Requirements for De Minimis Costs and Small Grants" that may apply to your Project. The waiver applies to non-compliant products that do not exceed the lesser of \$1,000,000 or 5% of total applicable costs for the Project. "Total applicable project costs" are defined as the cost of materials (including the cost of any manufactured products) used in the Project that are subject to a domestic preference requirement, including materials that are within the scope of an existing waiver, but do not include costs for labor.

domestic sources for the Project, including, if known, the names of the domestic manufacturers and, as applicable, the equipment model numbers. Refer to term B.5 of the Exhibits to FY 2023 USMHP grant agreements to see how MARAD intends to implement the Build America, Buy America Act for FY 2024 USMHP Projects.²⁷ The content of this section of the application is particularly important for Projects that propose the acquisition of cargo-handling equipment, construction components, or bollard and fendering systems. Projects that may require a waiver of the applicable Build America, Buy America requirements but present no plan to maximize domestic content may result in a higher risk rating for Project Readiness.

Project Schedule. The applicant should include a detailed Project schedule that identifies all major Project milestones. For capital Project applications, examples of milestones include State and local planning approvals; start and completion of NEPA, and other Federal environmental reviews and approvals including permitting; design completion; real property and right of way acquisition; approval of plans, specifications, and estimates; procurement; Project partnership and implementation agreements, including agreements with non-governmental entities involved in or impacted by the Project; and construction. For equipment or vessel Projects, examples of milestones include expected solicitation for bidders, expected acquisition, expected delivery, and expected date in-service. For planning Projects, examples of milestones may include start dates, schedule for public engagement, and completion dates. The Project schedule should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate that the Project can begin quickly upon obligation of USMHP funds, and that the grant funds will be spent expeditiously once the Project starts, in order for MARAD to make the determination at 46 U.S.C. 55601(d)(7)(B) and described in Section E.1.e. In the case of a proposed Marine Highway Transportation Service that is not yet operational as of the

²⁷ FY2023 USMHP Exhibits available here: <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/grants-finances/marine-highways/marad-fy-2023-usmhp-exhibits-november-13-2023>.

application, the applicant should (1) identify the date by which the Project will be utilized on an operational Marine Highway Transportation Service; and (2) describe the prior and planned efforts to establish that Marine Highway Transportation Service.

Risk Mitigation. Applicants should include a discussion of Project risks and related mitigation strategies. The discussion should focus on, but need not be exclusively related to, risks related to Project readiness. For example, the applicant should identify risks related to approval or permit delays, procurement delays, compliance with domestic preference requirements, technical challenges in design or construction, potential increases in Project costs, or lack of required approvals that affect the likelihood of successful Project start and completion. In the case of a proposed Marine Highway Transportation Service that is not operational as of the application, any risks associated with delays or challenges in establishing that Marine Highway Transportation Service should also be identified. The narrative should include a discussion that identifies how the Project parties will mitigate or otherwise be able to handle the identified risks.

Technical Capacity ratings will be one of the following: “low risk,” “moderate risk,” or “high risk.” For purposes of this criteria, “risk” shall be defined as an aspect of an application that presents an uncertainty as to the ability of the applicant to successfully carry out the proposed Project, meet the obligation and funds liquidation deadlines, or otherwise comply with Federal requirements.

High Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk
The application does not include a detailed and reasonable discussion about Project risk and the capacity of the applicant to successfully complete the Project. Depending on the severity of the Project risk, any risk may result in a High Risk rating.	The application includes a discussion about Project risk and the capacity of the applicant to successfully complete the Project but does not fully describe the Project schedule or sufficiently explain how the applicant will manage any risks or challenges.	The application includes a detailed and feasible Project schedule and a detailed and reasonable discussion about Project risk and the capacity of the applicant to successfully complete the Project. The applicant has clearly identified Project risk(s) and demonstrates how the risk(s) would be mitigated.

(2) Environmental Risk

This section of the application should include sufficient information for MARAD to evaluate whether a Project is reasonably expected to begin construction or procurement in a timely manner, consistent with all applicable local, State, and Federal requirements. To assist MARAD's Project environmental risk review, the applicant should provide the information requested on anticipated NEPA class of action and status, required approvals and permits, public involvement, and right-of-way acquisition plans (if applicable), each of which is described in greater detail in the following sections.

Information about the NEPA Status of the Project. The applicant should indicate the anticipated NEPA level of review for the Project and describe any environmental analysis in progress or completed. This includes Categorical Exclusion, Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact, or Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision. The applicant should review the Maritime Administration Manual of Orders (MAO) 600-1 (available at <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/sites/marad.dot.gov/files/docs/environment-security-safety/office-environment/596/mao600-001-0.pdf>) prior to submission.

The applicant should be aware that any project that includes in-water work, extensive ground disturbance, and/or potential significant impacts to environmental resources will not be eligible for a Categorical Exclusion and the applicant should endeavor to include the appropriate class of action for the Project.

The application should detail the type of NEPA review underway, where the Project is in the process, and indicate the anticipated date of completion of all milestones and of the final NEPA determination. If the last agency action with respect to NEPA documents occurred more than three years before the application date, the applicant should describe why the Project has been delayed and include a proposed approach for verifying and, if necessary, updating this material in accordance with applicable NEPA requirements.

The applicant should be aware that the final determination of the required NEPA level of review will be made by MARAD after announcement of Project selections. The successful applicant will be responsible for the completion of MARAD's NEPA documentation, in collaboration with MARAD's NEPA Coordinator in the Office of Environmental Compliance, prior to execution of the grant agreement. The applicant should reflect the most conservative NEPA class of action in both the schedule and budget of the application. If applicable, applicants should include a description of discussions with the appropriate MARAD NEPA Coordinator in the Office of Environmental Compliance regarding the Project's compliance with NEPA and other applicable Federal environmental reviews and approvals. Applicants are encouraged to engage with MARAD's Office of Environmental Compliance as part of the application development process to ensure they fully understand MARAD's NEPA process.

Environmental Permits and Reviews. The application should demonstrate receipt (or reasonably anticipated receipt) of all environmental permits and approvals necessary, such as Army Corps of Engineers permits and consultations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, 54 U.S.C. 306108, and Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1531, for the Project to proceed to construction or be in service on the timeline specified in the Project schedule and necessary to meet the obligation deadline, including satisfaction of all Federal, State, and local requirements and completion of the NEPA process. The successful applicant, in collaboration with MARAD, will be responsible for the completion of consultations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act prior to completing NEPA.

Additionally, the application should reference environmental studies or other documents, preferably through a website link, that describe in detail known Project impacts, and possible mitigation for those impacts, and, if applicable, right-of-way acquisition plans, with detailed schedule and compensation plan. The application should also include a description of public

engagement about the Project that has occurred, proactively inclusive of HDCs, including details on compliance with environmental justice requirements and the degree to which public comments and commitments have been integrated into Project development and design.

State and Local Approvals. If applicable, the applicant should demonstrate receipt (or reasonably anticipated receipt) of State and local approvals on which the Project depends, such as State and local environmental permitting and planning. Additional support from relevant State and local officials is not required; however, an applicant should demonstrate that the Project has broad public support.

Information on Environmental Reviews, Approvals, and Permits by Other Agencies. An application should indicate whether the proposed Project requires reviews or approval actions by other agencies²⁸, provide detailed information about the status of those reviews or approvals when such approvals are expected, and demonstrate compliance with any other applicable Federal, State, or local requirements. Applicants should provide a website link or other reference to copies of any reviews, approvals, and permits prepared.

A description of whether the Project is dependent on, or affected by, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers investment and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers planned activities as it relates to the Project, if applicable, should be included. Reviewers will independently assess the NEPA level of review required for the Project and evaluate whether the applicant has demonstrated receipt (or reasonably anticipated receipt) of any necessary environmental permits. Reviewers will also assess the applicant's understanding of the required environmental obligations and scope, as well as the applicant's ability to comply with other environmental reviews, consultations, and approvals (such as the Endangered Species Act and the National Historic Preservation Act). As with risks related

²⁸ Projects that may impact protected resources such as wetlands, species habitat, or cultural or historic resources require review and approval by Federal and State agencies with jurisdiction over those resources.

to technical capacity, environmental risks do not disqualify Projects from award, but competitive applications will include achievable risk mitigation strategies.

Environmental Risk ratings will be one of the following: “low risk,” “moderate risk,” or “high risk.”

High Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk
The application does not include sufficient information, does not clearly document the anticipated NEPA level of review for the Project, does not describe the environmental analysis such that reviewers are able to evaluate whether a Project is reasonably expected to begin construction or be in service in a timely manner, consistent with applicable requirements, and/or does not include the anticipated NEPA schedule.	The application documents the anticipated NEPA level of review for the Project but does not fully describe the environmental analysis in progress or completed and does not effectively demonstrate that the Project is likely to begin construction or be in service in a timely manner, consistent with applicable requirements.	The application clearly documents the anticipated NEPA level of review for the Project, describes the environmental analysis in progress or completed, and demonstrates that the Project is expected to begin construction or be in service in a timely manner, consistent with applicable requirements.

d. Determinations

As required pursuant to 46 U.S.C. 55601(d)(7), MARAD will not award a grant under this notice unless the Secretary determines that:

- (A) sufficient funding is available to meet the matching requirements described in Section C.2.;
- (B) the Project will be completed without unreasonable delay described in Section D.2.h.; and
- (C) the recipient has authority to carry out the proposed Project described in Section C.1.

MARAD will use the information provided in these sections to ensure that all Projects satisfy these three determinations prior to award selection.

2. Review and Selection Process

a. Review Process

The FY 2024 USMHP grant application evaluation process consists of an Intake Review Phase, a Technical Review Phase, and a Senior Review Team (SRT) Phase.

During the Intake Review Phase, the Intake Team will conduct a threshold eligibility screening based on such requirements as: applicant eligibility, applicant authority to carry out the Project, presence of Letter(s) of Financial Commitment for all identified matching non-Federal funds, presence of a route sponsor endorsement letter (if applicable), and satisfaction of non-Federal matching requirement, etc. Applications not meeting the threshold eligibility screening will not be advanced for further consideration, although MARAD reserves the right to request supplemental or clarifying information from applicants prior to determining that an application will not advance.

During the Technical Review Phase, MARAD staff will review applications for their alignment with the Merit Criteria, Selection Considerations, Project Readiness, and Statutory Determinations, consistent with the guidance in this notice.

Applications that receive a “High” rating in Demonstrating the Need to Develop, Expand, or Promote Marine Highway Transportation or shipper use of Marine Highway Transportation; no less than a “Medium” rating in Expanding the Benefits of Marine Highway Transportation; no less than a “Medium” rating in Measuring Project Support; and no less than a “Medium” rating for Leveraging Federal Funding and Financial Viability, will be designated “Highly Recommended” and automatically advance to the SRT Phase. Applications that receive a “Non-Responsive” rating in Demonstrating the Need to Develop, Expand, or Promote Marine Highway Transportation or shipper use of Marine Highway Transportation, Expanding the Benefits of Marine Highway Transportation, or Leveraging Federal Funding and Financial Viability will not be recommended for further consideration.

After the Technical Review Phase, the SRT will review the Highly Recommended applications identified in the Technical Review Phase. In addition, the SRT will review the remaining eligible applications for further consideration as Highly Recommended. The SRT will base its recommendations on how well a Project meets the Merit Criteria and may also consider a

Project's rating on Selection Considerations. A Project that aligns poorly with the selection considerations of Climate Change and Sustainability, Equity and the Justice40 Initiative, or Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation may nevertheless be included in the List of Projects for Consideration. In addition, the SRT may review applications for their alignment with the Project Readiness criteria. Projects with higher Project Readiness risk ratings may still be recommended for award if the risks are properly mitigated.

The SRT will recommend a List of Projects for Consideration to the Maritime Administrator based on its review of the Highly Recommended applications. The Maritime Administrator, based on input from MARAD staff, will then make awards from the List of Projects for Consideration. In making grants, MARAD will take such measures as to ensure an equitable geographic distribution of funds.

b. Follow-up with Applicants

MARAD may ask any eligible applicant to supplement data in its application but is not required to do so. Lack of supporting information provided with the application negatively affects competitiveness of the application. Throughout the review and selection process, MARAD may seek additional information from an applicant related to Project eligibility, whether the Project scope can be completed with a reduced award, or other information needed to complete Project analysis. MARAD will use email when seeking additional information from an applicant and will notify the point(s) of contact listed by the applicant on the SF-424.

3. Additional Information

Prior to obligation of funds, each selected applicant will be subject to a risk assessment as required by 2 CFR 200.206. MARAD must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.²⁹ An

²⁹ <https://sam.gov/content/home>

applicant may review information in SAM and comment on any information about itself. MARAD will consider comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in SAM, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

1. Federal Award Notice

Following the evaluation outlined in Section E, MARAD will announce Projects selected for award by posting a list of selected Projects at <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/grants/marine-highways/marine-highway>. Notice of selection is not authorization to begin performance or to incur costs for the proposed Project. Following that announcement, MARAD will contact the point of contact listed in the SF-424 to initiate negotiation of the grant agreement.

Recipients of a USMHP award will not receive a lump-sum cash disbursement at the time of announcement of Project selection or obligation of funds. Instead, USMHP grant funds will reimburse recipients only after a grant agreement has been executed, allowable expenses are incurred, and a valid request for reimbursement has been submitted and approved by MARAD. USMHP grant recipients must adhere to applicable requirements and follow established procedures to receive reimbursement.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

a. Administrative Requirements

MARAD will determine the period of performance for each award based on the specific Project that was evaluated and selected. MARAD will administer each USMHP grant pursuant to a grant agreement with the grant recipient. Amounts awarded as a grant under this notice that are not expended by the grant recipient shall remain available to MARAD for use for grants under this program.

The grant agreement includes two attachments: one labelled “Exhibits” and one labelled “General Terms and Conditions.” These attachments include most of the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to USMHP grant awards. Please visit <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/grants/federal-grant-assistance/federal-grant-assistance> for the Exhibits and General Terms and Conditions for prior USMHP awards. The FY 2024 USMHP Exhibits and General Terms and Conditions will be similar to the FY 2023 USMHP documents but will include relevant updates consistent with this notice.

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.458, unless “pre-award costs” are authorized by MARAD in writing after MARAD’s announcement of FY 2024 USMHP awards, any costs incurred prior to MARAD’s obligation of funds for a Project are ineligible for reimbursement and are ineligible to count as match for cost-share requirements.

All awards will be administered pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards found in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted by DOT at 2 CFR part 1201. Additionally, other applicable Federal laws, Executive Orders, and any rules, regulations, and requirements of MARAD will apply to the Projects that receive USMHP grant awards.

As expressed in Executive Order 14005, *Ensuring the Future Is Made in All of America by All of America’s Workers* (86 FR 7475), the executive branch should maximize, consistent with law, the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States. Funds made available under this notice are subject to the domestic preference requirement in the Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. 117-58, Division G, §§ 70901-27) and the associated guidance set forth at 2 CFR Part 184, as implemented by MARAD. MARAD expects all applicants to comply with that requirement, and no amounts made available through this NOFO may be obligated for a Project unless all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in the Project are produced in the United States. If selected for an award, grant

recipients will be required to obtain approval from DOT to waive any of these requirements (see Footnote No. 27 regarding DOT's existing de minimis waiver). To obtain that approval, grant recipients must be prepared to demonstrate how they will maximize the use of domestic goods, products, and materials in constructing their Project.

In connection with any program or activity conducted with or benefiting from funds awarded under this notice, recipients of funds must comply with all applicable requirements of Federal law, including, without limitation, the Constitution of the United States; statutory, regulatory, and public policy requirements, including, without limitation, those protecting free speech, religious liberty, public welfare, the environment, and prohibiting discrimination; the conditions of performance, nondiscrimination requirements, and other assurances made applicable to the award of funds in accordance with regulations of DOT; and applicable Federal financial assistance and contracting principles promulgated by the Office of Management and Budget. In complying with these requirements, recipients must ensure that no concession agreements are denied, or other contracting decisions made on the basis of speech or other activities protected by the First Amendment.

Further, financial assistance recipients must comply with health and safety, labor, employment, and equal employment opportunity laws including, but not limited to, the right to organize, proper classification of workers as employees or independent contractors, and the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

If MARAD determines that a recipient has failed to comply with applicable Federal requirements, MARAD may terminate the award of funds and disallow previously incurred costs, requiring the recipient to reimburse any expended award funds.

b. Program Requirements

(1) Civil Rights and Title VI

As a condition of a grant award, grant recipients should demonstrate that the recipient has a plan for compliance with civil rights obligations and nondiscrimination laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and implementing regulations (49 CFR part 21), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, all other civil rights requirements, and accompanying regulations. This should include a current Title VI plan, completed Community Participation Plan, and a plan to address any legacy infrastructure or facilities that are not compliant with ADA standards. MARAD's Office of Civil Rights may work with awarded grant recipients to ensure full compliance with Federal civil rights requirements.

(2) Critical Infrastructure Security, Cybersecurity, and Resilience

It is the policy of the United States to strengthen the security and resilience of its critical infrastructure against all hazards, including physical and cyber risks, consistent with Presidential Policy Directive 21 – Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience, and the National Security Memorandum on Improving Cybersecurity for Critical Infrastructure Control Systems. Each applicant selected for Federal funding must demonstrate, prior to the signing of the grant agreement, efforts to consider and address physical and cyber security risks relevant to the transportation mode and type and scale of the Project. Projects that have not appropriately considered and addressed physical and cyber security and resilience in their planning, design, and project oversight, as determined by the Department and the Department of Homeland Security, will be required to do so before receiving funds.

(3) Federal Contract Compliance

As a condition of grant award and consistent with Executive Order 11246, *Equal Employment Opportunity* (30 FR 12319, and as amended), all Federally assisted contractors are required to make good faith efforts to meet the goals of 6.9 percent of construction project hours being

performed by women, in addition to goals that vary based on geography for construction work hours and for work being performed by people of color. Under Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act and its implementing regulations, affirmative action obligations for certain contractors include an aspirational employment goal of 7 percent workers with disabilities.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) is charged with enforcing Executive Order 11246, Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974. OFCCP has a Mega Construction Project Program through which it engages with Project sponsors as early as the design phase to help promote compliance with non-discrimination and affirmative action obligations. OFCCP will identify Projects that receive an award under this notice and are required to participate in OFCCP's Mega Construction Project Program from a wide range of Federally assisted projects over which OFCCP has jurisdiction and that have a project cost above \$35 million. DOT will require project sponsors with costs above \$35 million that receive awards under this funding opportunity to partner with OFCCP, if selected by OFCCP, as a condition of their DOT award.

3. Reporting

This section of the notice provides general information about the reporting requirements that accompany USMHP grant funding. Potential applicants should review these requirements to ensure that they can satisfy them if they receive an award. A recipient's failure to timely submit required reports may result in termination of an award and a legal requirement for the recipient to return funding to MARAD.

a. Progress Reporting on Grant Activities

Each applicant selected for USMHP grant funding must submit quarterly progress reports and Federal Financial Reports (SF-425) to monitor Project progress and ensure accountability and financial transparency in the USMHP.

b. Performance Reporting

Each applicant selected for USMHP grant funding must collect and report to MARAD information on the Project's observed performance with respect to the relevant long-term outcomes that are expected to be achieved through construction of the Project. Performance Measures will be used to evaluate and compare Projects and monitor the results that grant funds achieve to the intended long-term outcomes of the USMHP. Performance Measures used in the reporting will relate to the merit criteria defined in Section E. Performance reporting continues for three years after Project construction is completed, and MARAD does not provide USMHP grant funding specifically for performance reporting. For each Project selected for award, MARAD, with input from the grant recipients, will identify the measures to be collected. Those measures and the reporting requirements will be formalized in the agreement obligating award funds for the Project.

c. Performance and Program Evaluation

As a condition of grant award, USMHP grant recipients may be required to participate in an evaluation undertaken by DOT or another agency or partner. The evaluation may take different forms such as an implementation assessment across grant recipients, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grant recipients, or a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment. DOT may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation and/or use information available through other reporting. As a part of the evaluation, as a condition of award, grant recipients must agree to: (1) make records available to the evaluation contractor or DOT staff; (2) provide access to program records, and any other relevant documents to calculate costs and benefits; (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the access to relevant information as requested; and (4) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor or DOT staff.

Recipients and subrecipients are also encouraged to incorporate program evaluation including associated data collection activities from the outset of their program design and implementation to meaningfully document and measure their progress towards meeting an agency priority goal(s). Title I of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act), Pub. L. No. 115-435 (2019) urges Federal awarding agencies and Federal assistance recipients and subrecipients to use program evaluation as a critical tool to learn, to improve equitable delivery, and to elevate program service and delivery across the program lifecycle. Evaluation means “an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency” (codified at 5 U.S.C. 311). Credible program evaluation activities are implemented with relevance and utility, rigor, independence and objectivity, transparency, and ethics (OMB Circular A-11, Part 6 Section 290).

d. Reporting of Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

If the total value of a selected applicant’s currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then the applicant during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the SAM that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings described in paragraph 2 of Appendix XII of 2 C.F.R. part 200. This is a statutory requirement under Section 872 of Public Law 110–417, as amended (41 U.S.C. 2313). As required by Section 3010 of Public Law 111–212, all information posted in the designated integrity and performance system on or after April 15, 2011, except past performance reviews required for Federal procurement contracts, will be publicly available.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

For further information concerning this notice please contact the USMHP staff via email at mh@dot.gov, or call Fred Jones at 202–366–1123. In addition, MARAD will post answers to

questions and requests for clarifications at <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/grants-finances/marine-highways/frequently-asked-questions-us-marine-highway-program-usmhp>. To ensure applicants receive accurate information about eligibility or the program, the applicant is encouraged to contact MARAD with questions directly, rather than through intermediaries or third parties. MARAD may also conduct briefings on the USMHP grants selection and award process upon request.

H. Other Information

1. Protection of Confidential Business Information

All information submitted as part of or in support of any application shall use publicly available data or data that can be made public and methodologies that are accepted by industry practice and standards, to the extent possible. If the applicant submits information that the applicant considers to be a trade secret or confidential commercial or financial information, the applicant must provide that information in a separate document, which the applicant may cross-reference from the application narrative or other portions of the application. For the separate document containing confidential information, the applicant must do the following: (1) state on the cover of that document that it “Contains Confidential Business Information (CBI)”; (2) mark each page that contains confidential information with “CBI”; (3) highlight or otherwise denote the confidential content on each page; and (4) at the end of the document, explain why the information you are submitting is CBI. DOT will protect confidential information complying with these requirements to the extent required under applicable law. If DOT receives a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the information that the applicant has marked in accordance with this section, DOT will follow the procedures described in its FOIA regulations at 49 CFR 7.29. Only information that is in the separate document, marked in accordance with this section, and ultimately determined to be confidential under Section 7.29 will be exempt from disclosure under FOIA.

2. Publication of Application Information

Following the completion of the selection process and announcement of awards, MARAD intends to publish a list of all applications received along with the names of the applicant organizations and funding amounts requested. Except for the information properly marked as described in Section H.1., MARAD may make application narratives publicly available or share application information within the Department or with other Federal agencies if the Department determines that sharing is relevant to the respective program's objectives.

[INSERT DATE]

By Order of the Maritime Administrator

Appendix A: U.S. Marine Highway Program Routes and Route Sponsors

Designated Route	Route Sponsor	Contact	Title	Email	Phone
M-2, Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico Ports Authority	Romel Pedraza, P.E.	Assistant Executive Director for Planning, Engineering and Construction	rpedraza@prpa.pr.gov	787-728-8715
M-3, Kaskaskia River	The Kaskaskia Regional Port District (IL)	Ed Weilbacher	General Manager	ed@kaskaskiaport.com	618-282-3807
M-5, Pacific Ocean Coastal Waters	California DOT	Jeffrey Morneau	Senior Transportation Planner	jeffrey.morneau@dot.ca.gov	916-494-3862
	Oregon DOT	John Boren	Freight Program Manager	john.boren@odot.oregon.gov	503-951-0166
	Oregon Business Development Department	Margaret Barber	Ports Programing Coordinator	margaret.barber@biz.oregon.gov	971-719-3606
	Port of Port Angeles (WA)	Paul Jarkiewicz	Executive Director	paul@portofpa.com	360-417-3446
M-5AK, Alaska Coastline	State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities	Judy Chapman	Deputy Director of Planning, Division of Planning & Program Development	judy.chapman@alaska.gov	907-451-5150
M-10, Gulf Coastline	Mississippi DOT	Trung Trinh	Transportation Planner/Freight Coordinator	ttrinh@mdot.ms.gov	601-359-7910
M-11, Alaska Coastal Waters	State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities	Judy Chapman	Deputy Director of Planning, Division of Planning & Program Development	judy.chapman@alaska.gov	907-451-5150
		Katherine Keith	Deputy Commissioner, Office of the Commissioner	katherine.keith@alaska.gov	907-799-1201
M-29, Missouri River	The Port Authority of Kansas City	Richard Grenville	Vice President, Multimodal Logistics	rgrenville@portkc.com	816-559-3726
	Missouri DOT	Levi Woods	Administrator of Freight & Waterways	levi.woods@modot.mo.gov	573-526-5578

Designated Route	Route Sponsor	Contact	Title	Email	Phone
M-35, Upper Missouri River	Illinois DOT	William Murray	Section Chief, Aviation & Marine Transportation Program Planning	BJ.Murray@Illinois.gov	217-782-4118
	Iowa DOT	Samuel Hiscocks	Planning Team Leader	samuel.hiscocks@iowadot.us	515-239-1520
	Minnesota DOT	Patrick Phenow	Ports and Waterways Coordinator	patrick.phenow@state.mn.us	651-366-3672
	Missouri DOT	Levi Woods	Administrator of Freight & Waterways	levi.woods@modot.mo.gov	573-526-5578
	Wisconsin DOT	Mike Halsted	Harbors & Waterways Program Manager	michaels.halsted@dot.wi.gov	608-264-8426
M-40, Arkansas, Verdigris, and White Rivers	Arkansas Waterways Commission	Cassandra Caldwell	Director	cassandra.caldwell@arkansas.gov	501-682-2114
	Oklahoma DOT	Thaddaeus Babb	Branch Manager, Office of Freight Mobility, Multimodal Division	TBabb@odot.org	918-221-1280
M-49, Atchafalaya River and the J. Bennett Johnson Waterway	Louisiana DOT	Randall Withers	Ports and Waterways Director	randall.withers@la.gov	225-379-3065
M-55, Mississippi and Illinois Rivers	Missouri DOT	Levi Woods	Administrator of Freight & Waterways	levi.woods@modot.mo.gov	573-526-5578
	Illinois DOT	William Murray	Section Chief, Aviation & Marine Transportation Program Planning	BJ.Murray@illinois.gov	217-782-4118
M-64, Hampton Roads, Chesapeake Bay and James River	Richmond Regional Planning District Commission	Chet Parsons	Director of Transportation	CParsons@planrva.org	804-323-2033
M-65, Mobile – Black Warrior Rivers and Tombigbee Waterway	Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Development Authority	Mitch Mays	Administrator	mays@tenntom.org	662-328-3286
M-69, Bay Texas Gulf Intracoastal Waterway	Texas DOT	Matthew Mahoney	Waterways Coordinator, Maritime Division	matthew.mahoney@txdot.gov	512-486-5630

Designated Route	Route Sponsor	Contact	Title	Email	Phone
M-70, Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri Rivers	Ohio DOT	Randy Lane	Freight and Maritime Manager	randy.lane@dot.ohio.gov	614-387-2369
	Illinois DOT	BJ Murray	Section Chief, Aviation & Marine Transportation Planning	BJ.Murray@illinois.gov	217-782-4118
	Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Division of Planning	Jeremy Edgeworth	Freight, Rail, and Waterways Coordinator	jeremy.edgeworth@ky.com	502-782-5095
	Missouri DOT	Levi Woods	Administrator of Freight & Waterways	levi.woods@modot.mo.gov	573-526-5578
	West Virginia DOT	Stephen R. Connolly	Deputy Commissioner – Counsel	stephen.r.connolly@wv.gov	304-414-8941
	Ports of Indiana	Eric Powell	Director of Communications	epowell@portsofindiana.com	317-233-6231
	Port of Pittsburgh Commission		Mary Ann Bucci	Executive Director	mary-ann@portpitt.com
Scott Harshman			Marketing & Program Mgr.	scott@portpitt.com	412-201-7334
M-71/77, Lake Erie	<i>For private applicants on the M-71/77 Marine Highway Route, please contact the M-90 Marine Highway Route Sponsor.</i>				
M-75, Detroit River and Lake Erie	Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority	Mark Schrupp	Executive Director	mschrupp@portdetroit.com	313-259-5091
M-79, Alleghany and Ohio Rivers	Port of Pittsburgh Commission	Scott Harshman	Marketing & Program Manager	scott@portpitt.com	412-477-0836
		Matt Pavlovsky	Public Relations Manager	matt@portpitt.com	412-201-7335
	Morgantown Monongalia MPO	Bill Austin	Executive Director	baustin@plantogether.org	304-291-9571
M-84, Columbia, Willamette, and Snake Rivers	The Port of Portland (OR)	Richard Vincent	Senior Waterways Planner	richard.vincent@portofportland.com	503-415-6236
		Fred Meyer	Waterways Manager	fred.myer@portofportland.com	503-415-6542
M-87, Hudson River and Erie Canal	New York State DOT	Ray Hessinger	Director, Freight and Passenger Rail Bureau	raymond.hessinger@dot.ny.gov	518-457-7331
		David Rosenberg	Associate Transportation Analyst	david.rosenberg@dot.ny.gov	518/457-6966
M-90, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway System	Ohio DOT	Randy Lane	Freight and Maritime Manager	randy.lane@dot.ohio.gov	614-387-2369

Designated Route	Route Sponsor	Contact	Title	Email	Phone
M-95, Atlantic Ocean Coastal Waters	The Eastern Transportation Coalition	Marygrace Parker	Director of Freight Program	mgparker@tetcoalition.org	518-852-4083
M-146, Houston Ship Channel, Buffalo Bayou, and Galveston	Chambers County Galveston Bay	Judge Jimmy Sylvia	Chambers County Judge	jsylvia@chamberstx.gov	409-267-2440
M-295, East River, Long Island Sound, and Block Island Sound	Connecticut DOT	Andrew Lavigne	Manager of Business Development and Special Projects	alavigne@ctportauthority.com	860-577-5174
	New York State DOT	David Rosenberg	Office of Policy & Planning	david.rosenberg@dot.ny.gov	518-457-6966
M-495, Anacostia, Occoquan, and Potomac Rivers	Northern Virginia Regional Commission	Robert W. Lazaro	Executive Director	rlazaro@novaregion.org	703-642-4629
M-580, San Joaquin and Sacramento Rivers	Port of Stockton (CA)	Jason Katindoy	Deputy Port Director, Maritime & Real Estate	jkatindoy@stocktonport.com	209-946-0246
M-A1, Matanuska and Susitna Rivers	Matanuska-Susitna Borough (AK)	Dave Griffin	Port Operations Manager	david.griffin@matsugov.us	907-707-4174
		Mike Brown	Borough Manager	mike.brown@matsugov.us	907-861-8689
M-AS1, American Samoa	Port of Pago Pago American Samoa	Pu'amavae Ah-Mai	Harbormaster	puamavae.ahmai@pa.as.gov	684-252-6233
		Tumua Matu'u	Deputy Director Department of Port Administration	tumuamatuu@hotmail.com	684-258-5464
M-GNM1, Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	Port Authority of Guam (PAG)	Christopher Aguon	Planner II	cjaguon@portofguam.com	671-477-5931 ext. 295
	Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA)	Jerra Mae B. Cing	Port of Saipan Manager	jerra.cing@cnmiports.com	670-664-3554
	Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA)	Tanner Kenty	Grants Administrator	tanner.kenty@cnmiports.com	670-664-3554
M-H1, Hawaiian Islands	Hawaii DOT	Dre Kalili	Deputy Director of Harbors	dreanalee.k.kalili@hawaii.gov	808-587-3651
M-V1, U.S. Virgin Islands	Virgin Islands Port Authority (VIPA)	Carlton Dowe	Executive Director	cdowe@viport.com	340-774-1629