

Biden Administration: Announces over \$368 million in grants to improve rail infrastructure, enhance and strengthen supply chains

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) today announced over \$368 million in Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant program funds to 46 projects in 32 states and the District of Columbia. These investments will play a crucial role in modernizing our country's rail infrastructure and strengthening supply chains, helping to reduce congestion and get people and goods where they need to go quickly and more affordably. The program will create good-paying jobs and benefit urban and rural communities across the country.

The selected projects announced today will not only improve and expand passenger rail and fund conventional and high-speed rail, but they will also increase supply chain resilience and fluidity, support short line railroads, invest in new technology and safety advancements, and benefit rail industry workforce development and training activities – helping to create jobs and increase economic growth.

President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has nearly tripled funding for this critical rail infrastructure program – to \$1 billion a year for the next five years. Strengthening supply chains and increasing the productive capacity of the economy are key tenets of President Biden's plans to get goods from ships to shelves more quickly and lower costs for American families.

“Americans deserve a world-class rail system that allows people and goods to get where they need to go more quickly and affordably, while reducing traffic and

pollution on our roads,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. “We’re proud to award these grants to improve passenger rail for riders and strengthen the freight rail that makes our supply chains and our economy work.”

“This round of CRISI grants – one of the largest ever – is a major step forward for the Biden-Harris Administration’s efforts to revitalize and rebuild the country’s infrastructure,” said FRA Administrator Amit Bose. “These awards will allow FRA to support rail projects that lay the groundwork for future economic growth.”

CRISI aims to advance intercity passenger and freight rail projects that promote FRA’s key goals of safety, economic growth, transportation equity, and sustainable and resilient infrastructure. CRISI-funded projects will enhance multi-modal connections, address slow orders, and fix up 100-year-old track to speed up the movement of goods from ports to rail to trucks to shelves. As the nation continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, these upgrades and expansions will help state and local governments and rail carriers meet renewed travel demand and strengthen supply chains.

Examples of projects funded this year [FY2021 Selections](#):

- **Heart of Georgia Americus Sub Upgrade Project (Up to \$6,190,137)** Georgia Department of Transportation
 - The proposed project will replace approximately 18 miles of rail, 2,750 crossties, and make many more rail upgrades between Preston, GA and Cordele, GA. These improvements will accommodate 286,000-pound loads and improve reliability, efficiency, and safety by eliminating slow-orders along 51 miles of Heart of Georgia Railroad (HOG) lines that connect at the Cordele Inland Port.
- **Port of Baltimore Rail Capacity Modernization Project (Up to \$15,680,000)** Maryland Port Administration
 - The proposed project will construct four new working tracks and two crane rail beams within the Port of Baltimore’s Seagirt Marine Terminal in Baltimore, Maryland. The proposed improvements aim to meet demand in intermodal volumes. The Seagirt Terminal supports multi-modal connections with rail, road, and water to both Norfolk Southern and CSX railroad, which support freight traffic to East Coast and Midwest markets. This intermodal connection will help reduce congestion and speed up the movement of goods.
- **Raleigh to Richmond Corridor Infrastructure Engineering & Safety**

- Program (Up to \$57,900,000)** North Carolina Department of Transportation
- The proposed project will perform surveys and complete preliminary engineering for Raleigh to Richmond (R2R) Corridor Program improvements between Raleigh, North Carolina, and Richmond, Virginia. Included in this project is the construction of a grade separation on the S-Line in Wake Forest, NC. The project will advance the next phase of the R2R corridor development, which will eventually result in new intercity passenger rail service on a state-owned route that will access currently underserved and minority rural communities with rail service, as well as improve travel times on the existing Amtrak Silver Meteor service.
- **Southwest Kansas Infrastructure Upgrade Project (Up to \$10,991,971)** Kansas Department of Transportation
- The proposed project will make a series of improvements on the Cimarron Valley Railroad (CVR) in from Dodge City to Hugoton, Kansas. The project will replace approximately 51,618 crossties, relay 3.7 miles of rail in curves, apply new ballast to 67 miles of track, and surface 85 miles of track. These improvements will enable the rail to support biodiesel transport operations as well as local agricultural products, raise the allowable speed from 10 mph to 25 mph, and increase the weight capacity.
- **Florida Panhandle Rural Capacity Expansion Project (Up to \$8,300,000)** Florida Gulf & Atlantic Railroad, LLC
- The proposed project will replace approximately 70,000 ties, install approximately 14,300 new ties, rehabilitate 11 sidings, and makes repairs to 60 grade crossings between Jacksonville and Pensacola, Florida. This project will improve the track structure, which will increase the line capacity in order to serve growing demand.
- **Great Lakes Corridor Improvement (Up to \$21,340,300)** Michigan Department of Transportation
- The proposed project will rehabilitate track and rail assets operated by the Great Lakes Central Railroad (GLC) just north of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Specifically, the project includes installing 4.25 miles of new rail, eliminating joints on an additional 41.25 mainline track miles, replacing or rehabilitating 11 bridges and culverts, and installing approximately 30,000 ties on mainline and siding track. The project will result in fewer track defects, derailments, and other maintenance problems associated with rail joints. The project qualifies for the statutorily required set-aside for rural investment.

- **Development and Implementation of HBCU Based Railroad Engineering Program for Underrepresented Communities (Up to \$4,592,637)** University of Delaware

- University of Delaware will partner with Morgan State University (MSU), a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in Baltimore, MD to create a railroad engineering program. The creation of this program would provide a model for expansion of similar programs to other HBCUs.

By statute, a minimum of 25 percent of this funding must be awarded to rural projects, and this announcement includes nearly double the required investment in rural communities, which underscores the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to addressing the needs of rural communities. In addition, \$87.6 million is for projects that support the development of new intercity passenger rail service, and \$25.7 million is for capital projects or engineering solutions targeting trespassing, exceeding the required statutory minimums. Historically, CRISI has funded projects that improve safety and railroad infrastructure, reduce congestion, relocate rail lines, conduct rail-related research, and enhance multi-modal connections between rail and other modes such as ports or intermodal facilities. Workforce development projects are also eligible to support the education and training needs of rail workers.

The CRISI program has drawn significant interest from states, local communities, and rail stakeholders since its inception, and this year FRA received more than \$1.1 billion in CRISI requests, which far exceeds the available funding. FRA applied rigorous selection criteria to ensure that eligible projects would serve communities by enhancing safety, creating economic opportunities, providing energy efficient transportation options, and helping the country's world-class freight network meet growing demand.

A full list of FY 2021 CRISI grant awards can be found [here](#).