

***Restoring Interstate Durability for the Economy and Safety 4 Maine
(RIDES 4 ME) Network of Projects***
Maine Department of Transportation

U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)
FY 2026 Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highways Projects
(INFRA) Grant Program

Funding Opportunity Number: NSMFHP-26-INFRA

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

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The Project as a whole, as well as each independent component, satisfies the statutory requirements of the INFRA program. The Project is a Large project (total cost above Maine's \$79 million threshold). The seven statutory requirements are answered below for the Project as a whole; because the Project is a Network of Projects, each component independently has operational utility and meets each requirement.

1. **National or regional economic, mobility, or safety benefits:** The Project serves the state's highest-volume interstate and an NHFN corridor carrying the largest freight volume in Maine. It delivers quantified safety, freight-reliability, and state-of-good-repair benefits.
2. **Cost-effective:** The Project returns a benefit-cost ratio of approximately 2.01 under USDOT 2026 BCA Guidance.
3. **Contributes to a 23 U.S.C. § 150 national goal:** The Project directly advances the following:
 - a) *Safety – achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads:* The pavement resurfacing, the installation of cable median barriers where none currently exist, and the modern guardrails will contribute to a reduction in fatalities and injuries.
 - b) *Infrastructure condition – maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair:* The Project will return the road surface to a state of good repair by restoring and modernizing existing infrastructure and reducing construction and maintenance burdens.
 - c) *Congestion reduction – achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System:* The Project will reduce the likelihood of crashes and temporary fixes that contribute to congestion due to lane closures.
 - d) *System reliability – improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system:* a better road surface will create a more efficient transportation system.
 - e) *Freight movement and economic vitality – improve the National Highway Freight Network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development:* the Project greatly improves the NHFN, supports economic development by improving a key New England freight corridor, and improves the access of rural communities to the transportation system, given that more than 60 percent of Maine residents live in rural communities.
 - f) *Environmental sustainability – enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment:* The new pavement will help workers remove sand from drainage areas; the sand is used to provide vehicles with traction assistance during winter storms.
 - g) *Reduce project delivery delays – reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite the movement of people and goods by accelerating project completion through eliminating delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens and improving agencies' work practices:* The Project funding MaineDOT requests is needed because the longer a Project is held off, the more Project costs rise.

4. **Based on preliminary engineering:** The scopes are informed by roadway surface testing and LiDAR investigation; preliminary engineering is funded by state funding and Other Federal Funding and continues to advance.
5. **Stable and dependable funding, with contingency:** MaineDOT programs the work in its Work Plan and owns and maintains the assets; the non-Federal share is a 20 percent state match from state funds with a 15 percent contingency included in the budget.
6. **Cannot be easily and efficiently completed without federal funding:** Absent INFRA funding, the work would proceed piecemeal over a long horizon while continued deterioration worsens, creating a higher life-cycle cost and sustained crash exposure. The grant delivers four segments as one coordinated program.
7. **Construction begins within 18 months of obligation:** MaineDOT is expected to advertise the Project in Spring 2027 and will be well positioned to meet the September 30, 2027, obligation deadline.

Certifications and Compliance

The Department's Federal grant and formula funds experience includes managing numerous infrastructure projects and associated Federal requirements and regulations, such as compliance with Buy America, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Davis Bacon Act, and the *Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act*. MaineDOT follows all applicable domestic preference laws including Executive Order 14005, *Ensuring the Future Is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers* (86 FR 7475) and ensures the use of products and materials produced in the United States for all infrastructure projects. MaineDOT will provide documentation of ongoing compliance with the following Executive Orders:

- Executive Order 14173 – *Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity*
- Executive Order 14151 – *Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing*
- Executive Order 14168 – *Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government*
- Executive Order 14149 – *Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship*
- Executive Order 14154 – *Unleashing American Energy*

Letters of Support

The Project has received the support of a diverse group of elected officials and stakeholders who understand the significant benefits the Project will generate. The Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) will post all letters of support at <https://www.maine.gov/dot/about/funding/grants/infra> with letters posted to the site as they are received.