



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Key Term	Definition	Corridor Identification and Development	Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements	Federal State Partnership-National	Federal State Partnership-Northeast Corridor	Interstate Rail Compacts	Railroad Crossing Elimination	Restoration and Enhancement	Rail Research and Development Center of Excellence	Railroad State Safety Participation	Special Transportation Circumstances
Apprentice Inspector	An inspector candidate employed by the state participant who has at least the basic knowledge and ability to enter or be enrolled in an OJT program but does not meet the federal regulation-prescribed, discipline-specific inspector requirements, including railroad experience.									X	
Benefit-Cost Analysis or BCA	A systematic, data-driven, and transparent analysis comparing monetized project benefits and costs, using a no-build baseline and properly discounted present values. A BCA requires concise documentation of the assumptions and methodology used to produce the analysis in sufficient detail and transparency to allow the analysis to be reproduced and for sensitivity of results evaluated by FRA. This includes a description of the baseline, data sources used for project outcomes, and values of key input parameters; the basis of modeling including spreadsheets, technical memos, etc.; and presentation of the calculations used. Refer to the updated Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs prior to preparing a BCA. In addition, please also refer to the BCA FAQs on FRA's website for rail specific examples of how to apply the BCA Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs to FRA applications.		X	X							
Capital Cost Estimate	An estimate of the cost to implement the Capital Project. Calculation of the estimate must account for risk to the cost elements and the schedule to complete the project. Implementation includes Project Development through completion of Construction.			X							
Capital Cost Estimate	The aggregate estimated cost for all Lifecycle Stages in year-of expenditure dollars that accounts for inflation and appropriate contingency amounts either calculated by the Project Sponsor or the NEC Commission				X						
Capital Project	A project for acquiring, constructing, improving, or inspecting rail equipment, track and track structures, or a rail facility, including expenses incidental to the acquisition or Construction including pre-Construction activities (such as designing, engineering, location surveying, mapping, acquiring rights-of-way) and related relocation costs, environmental studies, and all work necessary for FRA to approve the project under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); highway-rail grade crossing improvements; communication and signalization improvements; and rehabilitating, remanufacturing, or overhauling rail rolling stock and rail facilities		X	X	X		X				X
Capital Renewal	The reparation, replacement, or modernization of basic infrastructure assets along a corridor section that is executed in accordance with a defined scope, schedule, and budget. Basic infrastructure assets include rails, ties, ballast, communication systems, signaling systems, electric traction power systems, and undergrade bridges.				X						

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Certified Inspector	An inspector candidate employed by the state participant who has completed the assigned training curriculum and has been certified by an FRA discipline specialist in one or more disciplines.									X	
Commuter Rail Passenger Transportation	Short-haul rail passenger transportation in metropolitan and suburban areas usually having reduced fare, multiple rides, and commuter tickets, and morning and evening peak period operations, consistent with 49 U.S.C. 24102(3). This does not include rapid transit operations in an urban area that are not connected to the general railroad system of transportation.		X	X	X		X	X			
Consortium	A meaningful arrangement with all members involved in planning and implementing the proposed activity or activities. A consortium is a long-term relationship between and among the members and will last for the full performance of the activity. A consortium refers to both the arrangement that may exist among members to establish the CoE or the arrangement between entities eligible to receive funding from the CoE.								X		
Construction	The Lifecycle Stage of a Capital Project during which the Capital Project is completely built, installed, and placed into use. Construction activities include, but are not limited to, physical construction and installation of the Capital Project, including testing of equipment, workforce training, and start-up testing. Construction activities occur after a project has completed Final Design. Construction is described in FRA's Capital Projects Guidance.		X	X	X		X				
Corridor Identification and Development Program or Corridor Identification and Development	The FRA intercity passenger rail planning and development program that will help guide development throughout the country and create a pipeline of intercity passenger rail projects ready for Implementation as authorized in 49 U.S.C. 25101(a).			X							
Cost Share Agreement	An agreement between the Project Sponsor and its partner(s) that identifies, for a Shared Benefit Project, the intercity passenger rail share, the commuter rail share(s), and the local share of the eligible project before the commencement of the project. Such agreements must be prepared consistent with the project-based cost sharing requirements of the Northeast Corridor Commuter and Intercity Rail Cost Allocation Policy, as amended, and approved by the NEC Commission; for a Sole Benefit Project, the local or non- Federal share of the eligible project before commencement of the project.				X						

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Deployment of Magnetic Levitation Transportation Projects	Transportation systems employing magnetic levitation that would be capable of safe use by the public at a speed in excess of 240 miles per hour.		X								
Enhancing or Enhance	A project upgrading or modifying the Service currently offered on an Intercity Rail Passenger Transportation Route or train. Examples include adding a station stop, increasing frequency of a train (e.g., tri-weekly to daily train Service or increasing daily train Service frequencies), or modifying on-board Services offered on the train (e.g., food or sleeping accommodations).						X				
Final Design	The Lifecycle Stage of a Capital Project during which the Capital Project design is advanced to be ready for Construction. This is when the agreements necessary to construct and operate the Capital Project are secured, acquisition of right-of-way is completed, final engineering plans and specifications necessary for construction of the project are produced. Final Design activities occur after a Capital Project has completed Project Development, and before a Capital Project can advance to Construction. Final Design is described in FRA's Capital Projects Guidance.		X	X	X		X				
Funding Need	the unfunded portion of the Capital Cost Estimate that is necessary for the Lifecycle Stage(s) the project is scheduled to begin by, or in, the Inventory Period. If a project is listed on this Inventory without a funding need, FRA has determined that there is no anticipated unfunded work within the Inventory Period. However, if the project schedule changes, the sponsor may apply based on the NEC Project Inventory's inclusion of the project.				X						
Grade Separation or Closure	An underpass or overpass to eliminate level crossings between railroad and highway users at an existing highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing, or the closing of a highway-rail grade crossing to vehicular or pedestrian traffic.						X				
Highly Rated	A rating provided for purposes of 49 U.S.C. 24911(g)(2) to those Major Capital Projects evaluated under this NOFO that receive an overall rating of "Recommended" or "Highly Recommended."			X							
Highly Rated	A rating provided for purposes of 49 U.S.C. 24911(g)(2) to those Major Capital Projects identified as Major Backlog on the most recently published iteration of the NEC Project Inventory and all other Major Capital Projects with applications evaluated under this NOFO that receive an overall rating of "Recommended" or "Highly Recommended."				X						

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Institution of Higher Education or IHE	An educational institution in any State that (1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate, or persons who meet the requirements of 20 U.S.C. 1091(d); (2) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (3) provides an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree or provides not less than a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree, or awards a degree that is acceptable for admission to a graduate or professional degree program, subject to review and approval by the Secretary of Education; (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and (5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted pre-accreditation status by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary of Education for the granting of pre-accreditation status, and the Secretary of Education has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time. "Institution of higher education" also includes (1) any school that provides not less than a 1-year program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation and that meets the provision of paragraphs (1), (2), (4), and (5) of 20 U.S.C. 1001(a); and (2) a public or nonprofit private							X			
Intercity Passenger Rail Corridor or Corridor	a. A new intercity passenger rail route of less than 750 miles; b. The enhancement of an existing intercity passenger rail route of less than 750 miles. c. The restoration of service over all or portions of an intercity passenger rail route formerly operated by Amtrak; or d. The increase of service frequency of a long-distance intercity passenger rail route.	X									
Intercity Rail Passenger Transportation	Rail passenger transportation, except Commuter Rail Passenger Transportation. See 49 U.S.C. 24102(3). In this notice, "Intercity Passenger Rail Service" and "Intercity Passenger Rail Transportation" are equivalent terms to "Intercity Rail Passenger Transportation."		X	X	X	X		X			X
Interstate Rail Compact	A legislatively enacted agreement or compact that establishes a formal, legally binding relationship between two or more States to prepare for and provide Intercity Passenger Rail Service.			X		X		X			
Inventory Period	The two-year lifespan of an NEC Project Inventory.				X						

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National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA	(42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) A federal law that requires federal agencies to analyze and document the environmental impacts of a proposed action in consultation with appropriate Federal, Tribal, State, and local authorities, and with the public. Environmental review under NEPA consists of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Environmental Assessment (EA), or Categorical Exclusion (CE). The NEPA class of action depends on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed action. For purposes of this NOFO, NEPA also includes all related federal laws and regulations including the Clean Air Act, Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Additional information regarding FRA's environmental processes and requirements is located at https://railroads.dot.gov/rail-network-development/environment/environment . NEPA consultation and documentation are considered part of the Project Development Lifecycle Stage, as described in FRA's Capital Projects Guidance.		X	X	X		X	X		X	
NEC Planning Documents	the Northeast Corridor Commission's short, mid, and long term capital planning documents (Connect NEC and the Capital Improvement Plan)				X						
Net Operating Cost(s)	Operating Costs incurred minus Revenue for each Service on a Route.							X			
Northeast Corridor or NEC	The main rail line between Boston, Massachusetts, and the District of Columbia; the branch rail lines connecting to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Springfield, Massachusetts, and Spuyten Duyvil, New York; and facilities and services used to operate and maintain these lines. See 49 U.S.C. 24911(a)(3).			X	X						
Operating Assistance	As defined in 49 U.S.C. 22908(a)(2), with respect to any Route subject to Section 209 of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110– 432) (PRIIA), as any cost allocated, or that may be allocated, to a Route pursuant to the cost methodology established under Section 209 of PRIIA or under 49 U.S.C. 24712, as described in the Section 209 policy approved by the State-Amtrak Intercity Passenger Rail Committee. ⁴ Such costs are equivalent to the Section 209 state responsibility or the operating cost obligation allocated to the state under the cost methodology policy.							X			



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Operating Costs	i. With respect to any Route subject to Section 209 of PRIIA, the Operating Assistance associated with the operation of the Service for each Year of Service. Eligible capital costs are limited to capital overhaul (i.e., investment) costs for Amtrak-owned equipment in Service, including locomotives, cab cars, coaches, and food Service cars. ii. With respect to Routes not subject to Section 209 of PRIIA, the expenses associated with the operation of the Service for each Year of Service. Examples of such expenses may include: staffing costs for train engineers, conductors, and on-board Service crew; diesel fuel or electricity costs associated with train propulsion power; station costs such as ticket sales, customer information, and train dispatching Services; station building utility and maintenance costs; lease payments on rolling stock; routine planned maintenance costs of equipment and train cleaning; host railroad access costs; train yard operation costs; general and administrative costs; and management, marketing, sales and reservations costs. Capital costs associated with equipment are not eligible expenses for Routes that are not subject to section 209 of PRIIA.						X				
Pathway-Rail Grade Crossing	A pathway that crosses one or more railroad tracks at grade and that is: (1) explicitly authorized by a public authority or a railroad; (2) dedicated for the use of non-vehicular traffic, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and others; and (3) not associated with a public highway, road, or street, or a private roadway.					X					
Phased Funding Agreement	An agreement under the FSP Program that obligates initial funding from available funds and makes a contingent commitment to obligate future funds when they become available, consistent with 49 U.S.C. § 24911(g)(2). FRA may enter into a PFA with an applicant for highly rated Major Capital Projects under the FSP Program.			X	X						
Planning Studies	Projects which include only planning activities such as railroad transportation market forecasting, operations analysis, fleet planning, cost analysis, station and facility planning, environmental resource consideration, and other similar activities. Planning Studies are planning activities without association to a specific Capital Project in their current form.				X						
Positive Train Control System or PTC	As defined by 49 CFR 270.5 to mean a system designed to prevent train-to-train collisions, overspeed derailments, incursions into established work zone limits, and the movement of a train through a switch left in the wrong position, as described in 49 CFR part 236, subpart I.		X								

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Preliminary Engineering or PE	The engineering design to define a Capital Project, including identification of all environmental impacts and design of all critical project elements at a level sufficient to ensure reliable cost estimates and schedules. The PE development process starts with specific project design alternatives that allow for the assessment of a range of rail improvements, specific alignments, and project designs. PE is considered part of the Project Development Lifecycle Stage, as described in FRA's Capital Projects Guidance		X	X	X		X				
Program Contingency	The amount made available under the NOFO that was not applied for and awarded under the initial NOFO announcement. Program Contingency will be available in subsequent years within the 3-year period of availability to eligible states meeting the criteria described in the NOFO.									X	
Program Participant	A Program Participant includes an Apprentice Inspector, Certified Inspector, Journeyman Inspector, and a State Program Coordinator, each employed by the state participant.									X	
Project Development	Is the Lifecycle Stage of a Capital Project during which the Project Sponsor conducts design, environmental, and other studies to ensure the Capital Project is ready for implementation. Project Development activities occur after a Project Sponsor has completed Project Planning, and before a Capital Project can advance to Final Design. Project Development is described in FRA's Capital Projects Guidance.	X	X	X	X		X				
Project Management Plan	A document developed consistent with FRA's Capital Projects Guidance that describes how the Capital Project will be implemented, monitored, and controlled to help the Project Sponsor effectively, efficiently, and safely deliver the project on-time, within budget, and at the highest appropriate quality. Project Management Plan is described in FRA's Capital Projects Guidance.		X	X	X		X				

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Rail Carrier	Is a person providing common carrier railroad transportation for compensation. See 49 U.S.C. 24102.						X				
Railroad Route Miles	Miles of railroad operated. A mile of single track is counted the same as a mile of double track. Sidings, turnouts, yard switching mileage, and mileage not operated are excluded. Year-to-year changes in miles operated are due to both changes in track mileage and changes in the number of railroads with rights for the same track.									X	
Restoring or Restore	A project reinstating Service to an Intercity Rail Passenger Transportation Route that formerly operated Intercity Rail Passenger Transportation.						X				
Revenue	Is the Revenue attributable to the Service, including but not limited to ticket Revenue and food and beverage Revenue, calculated annually for each Year of Service, consistent with the cost methodology policy required under section 209 PRIIA and further described in 49 U.S.C. 24712, unless otherwise agreed to by FRA and the applicant for Routes not subject to section 209 of PRIIA.						X				
Risk Assessment	Is for a Major Capital Project, an unbiased, risk-based, probabilistic analysis that verifies the accuracy and reasonableness of the current cost estimate and schedule and results in a probability range that represents the project's cost while accounting for the range of potential costs associated with project uncertainties.			X	X						
Route	Is the point-to-point geographic location where a particular Service is being offered.						X				
Rural Area	Is any area not within an area designated as an urban area by the most recent decennial Census.		X			X					X
Rural Project	Is a project in which all or the majority of the project (determined by the geographic location or locations where the majority of the project funds will be spent) is located in a Rural Area.		X								
Service	Is the specific Enhancement activity or activities that are proposed to be funded, or the operation on the Route that is being Initiated or Restored with funding under the NOFO. Examples include: the addition of one or more frequencies or the addition of on-board Services to trains on a Route. Service does not include excursion train Services or short-term Services for the purpose of collecting data.						X				
Shared Benefit Projects	Projects that benefit both intercity passenger rail transportation and commuter passenger rail transportation.				X						

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Step 3	The preparation of documentation to complete Project Development work required to ready the Corridor (or phase of the Corridor) for Implementation, including project designs that are reasonably expected to conform to all regulatory, safety, security, and other design requirements, including those under the American with Disabilities Act. Such work includes the completion of preliminary engineering (PE) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) activities, and other documentation for the Corridor's capital project(s) to advance to Implementation, consistent with FRA's Guidance on Development and Implementation of Railroad Capital Projects.	X									
Systems Planning	The first Lifecycle Stage when planning activities that support the development of a railroad capital plan, a state or regional rail plan, or a corridor service development plan that may identify a Capital Project, are completed. System Planning is described in FRA's Capital Projects Guidance.		X								
Total Project Cost	The sum of FRA Program funding, other federal funding, and the non-federal funding required to complete the Lifecycle Stage(s) of the project for which funding is requested in the application.			X							
Total Project Cost	The sum of FRA Program funding, other federal funding, and the non-federal funding required to complete the Lifecycle Stage(s) of the project for which funding is requested in the application. In general, FRA expects the Total Project Cost to be consistent with the Funding Need for the project, as shown on the Inventory, except for those projects partially funded under previous FSP NOFOs and those projects receiving funding toward the Total Project Cost in the time period between the 2023 submission of project information by Project Sponsors to the NEC Commission to update the NEC Planning Documents and selections made under this NOFO.				X						
Track Relocation	The moving a rail line vertically or laterally to a new location. "Vertical Relocation" refers to raising above the current ground level or sinking below the current ground level of a rail line. "Lateral Relocation" refers to moving a rail line horizontally to a new location.		X								
Track Relocation	The moving a rail line vertically or laterally to a new location to eliminate an existing Highway-Rail Grade Crossing . "Vertical Relocation" refers to raising above the current ground level or sinking below the current ground level of a rail line. "Lateral Relocation" refers to moving a rail line horizontally to a new location.					X					
Transformation	To design for the future, invest in purpose-driven research and innovation to meet the challenges of the present, and modernize a transportation system of the future that serves everyone today and in the decades to come.							X			

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Tribal Lands	Any lands reserved for a federally recognized Native American tribe or tribes under treaty or other agreement with the United States, executive order, or federal statute or administrative action as permanent tribal homelands, and where the federal government holds title to the land in trust on behalf of the tribe.						X				
Year of Service	The 365-day period used for calculating the maximum funding under the Program as well as the period in which costs may be incurred to be eligible for reimbursement. The recipient may choose to start the first Year of Service at any point between the initial incurrence of cost for the Service (including start-up costs) and the first day of Revenue Service.							X			