RAISE Grants
Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity

How to Compete for FY 2022 RAISE Transportation Discretionary Grants

Presented by:

Office of the Under Secretary for Policy

United States Department of Transportation

Welcome: FY 2022 RAISE How to Compete Webinar

Audio	Via Computer – No Action Needed
	Via Telephone - Call 1-888-808-6929
	Passcode: 1203007
Presenters	•Aubrei Barton •Kim Bathrick *Office of the Secretary,* *U.S. Department of Transportation*

2022 **RAISE** Grant Applications

- Notice of Funding Opportunity-
  https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-nofo

- Apply – www.Grants.gov

- Due Date – **April 14, 2022** at **5:00** PM Eastern

+ RAISE GRANTS

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity

- $1.5 billion multimodal, merit-based, competitive discretionary grant program for surface transportation infrastructure

- Supports projects that improve safety, equity, climate and sustainability, and the creation of good-paying jobs, consistent with DOT's strategic goals

- Modal and geographic diversity requirement

What are the Characteristics of the RAISE Grant Program?

- Significant **Local or Regional** Impact

- **Public Entity** Eligibility

- **Merit-Based** Awards

- Encourages projects that address **climate change**, proactively address **racial equity**, and **reduce barriers** to opportunity

- Not more than **50 percent** of funds will be awarded to projects located in **urban and rural** areas, respectively

- At least **$75 million** for eligible **planning and preconstruction** activities

- At least **$15 million** to **Areas of Persistent Poverty** or **Historically Disadvantaged Communities**

+ RAISE Grant Basics

Eligible Applicants	State Governments and the District of Columbia
	Any territory or possession of United States
	Unit of Local Government
	Public agency or publicly chartered authority established by 1 or more states
	Special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, including a port authority
	Federally recognized Indian Tribe or consortium of Tribes
	Transit agency
	A multi-State or multijurisdictional group of entities that are separately eligible
Eligible Projects	Highway, bridge, or other road project
	Public transportation projects
	Passenger and freight rail projects
	Port infrastructure investments (including inland port infrastructure and land ports of entry)
	Surface transportation components of an airport project eligible for assistance under part B of subtitle VII of title 49, USC (the Airport Improvement Program-see NOFO for details)
	Intermodal projects
	Projects to replace or rehabilitate a culvert or prevent stormwater runoff for the purpose of improving habitat for aquatic species
	Transportation projects on Tribal land
	Planning and pre-construction activities for any of the above

*Include but not limited to

+ RAISE Grant Basics (cont'd)

Eligible Cost Share/Match

- Federal cost share up to 80% in urban areas
- Federal cost share up to 100% in:
  - Rural areas
  - Areas of Persistent Poverty
  - Historically Disadvantaged Communities

Minimum Award Size

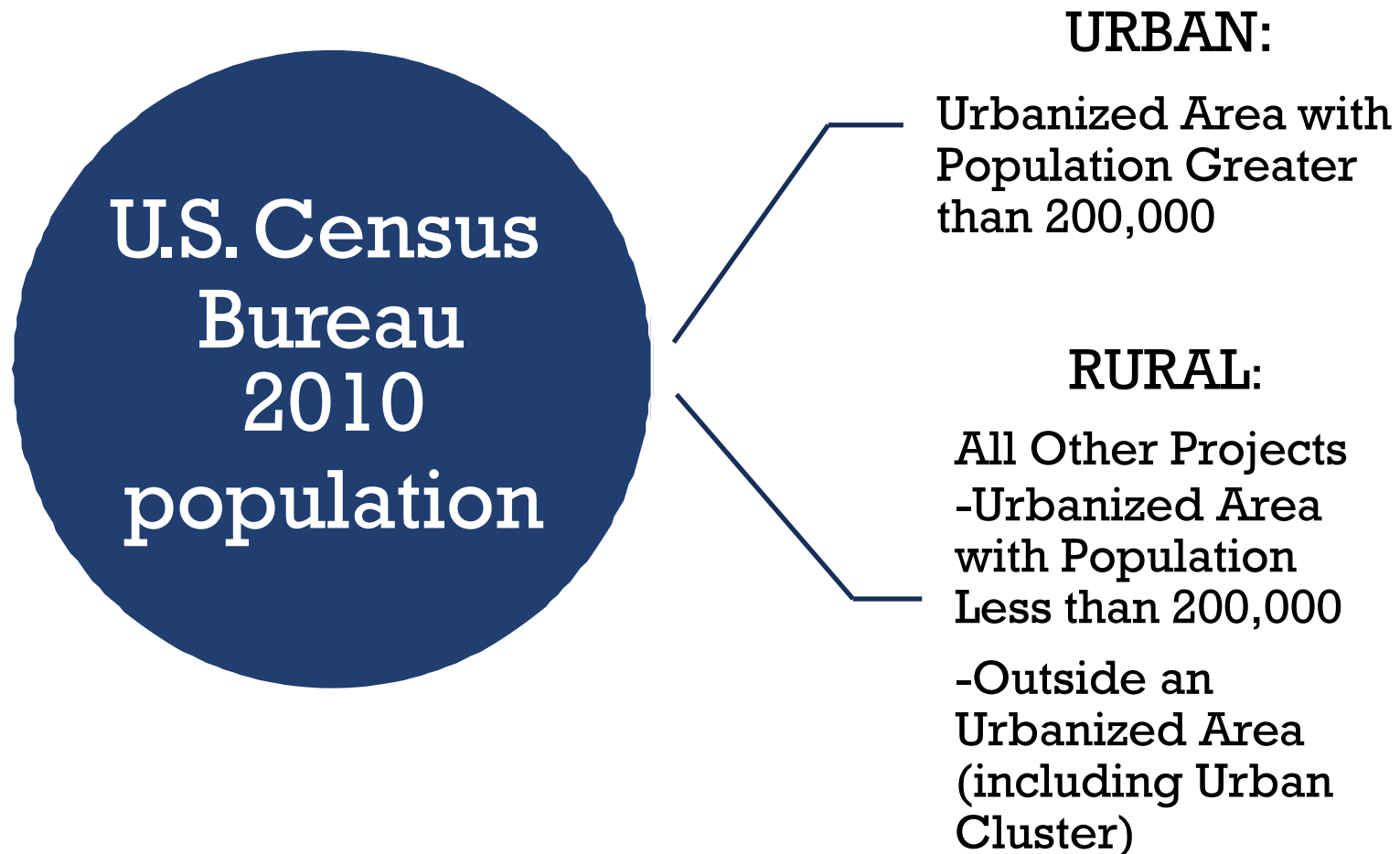- $5 million for projects in urban areas
- $1 million for projects in rural areas

Maximum Award Size

- $25 million per project
- $225 million per State

Not more than 50% of funding will be awarded to projects located in urban and rural areas, respectively

+ Urban & Rural Definitions

U.S. Census Bureau 2010 population

URBAN:

Urbanized Area with Population Greater than 200,000

RURAL:

All Other Projects
-Urbanized Area with Population Less than 200,000

-Outside an Urbanized Area (including Urban Cluster)

Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP) and Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC)

■ At least **$15 million** will be awarded to **Areas of Persistent Poverty** and **Historically Disadvantaged Communities**.

■ The definition of Areas of Persistent Poverty is based on Census Tract **or** County level poverty data, and includes all US territories. The full definition is in the NOFO.

■ The definition of Historically Disadvantaged Communities is based on Census Tract indicators, and includes all US territories.

■ DOT lists all counties and census tracts that meet these definitions: https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-app-hdc

■ Additionally, DOT is providing a mapping tool to assist applicants in identifying whether a project is located in a Historically Disadvantaged Community at: https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-app-hdc

What Projects Compete Well?

Project demonstrates clear, direct, significant, local or regional impacts relative to the merit criteria

Project demonstrates designing or building infrastructure beyond common practice

The benefits appear reasonable and justifiable

Project has reasonable timeline for completion

Presents a clear story walking through the challenges addressed by the project and details the project impact

Results in good-paying jobs, improves safety, applies transformative technology

Explicitly considered climate change and racial equity in the planning and design stage

Emphasizes improved access to reliable, safe, and affordable transportation, particularly for underserved and overburdened communities

*Review the NOFO for the selection criteria. These bullets highlights some new content in the FY2022 NOFO, but these are not the selection criteria.

Application Content

- SF-424

- Project Information Form

- The Department recommends that the project narrative follow the basic outline:
  I. Project Description
  II. Project Location
  III. Grant Funds, Sources, and Use of Project Funding
  IV. Merit Criteria
  V. Project Readiness: Environmental Risk Review (capital projects only)
  VI. Benefit-Cost Analysis with attached supporting documents (capital projects only)

+RAISE Evaluation Considerations

Does the project align well with the merit criteria?

- Is the information clear, credible, and data-driven?
- Does it have significant local and regional impact?

How do the project's benefits compare to its costs?

Does the project demonstrate readiness in terms of:

- Environmental risk and permitting
- Technical Assessment of feasibility and capacity to deliver project
- Financial Completeness
  - Obligating funds by September 30, 2026

RAISE 2022 Evaluation Teams

Considerations for DOT Evaluation Teams:	Merit Criteria Review
	Project Readiness (Technical, Financial, Environmental)
	Economic Analysis
	Senior Review

Final funding awards are decided by the Secretary

+Planning Grants

- What are they and what activities can they fund?
  - Pre-construction activities that do not directly lead to construction
  - Design, engineering, local or regional plans, statewide studies, etc.

- How will they be evaluated?
  - Merit Criteria Evaluation
  - Financial Completeness Review
  - No BCA
  - No Environmental Risk Analysis

- How many planning awards will be made?
  - Department will award at least $75 million in planning grants.

- Minimum award size for urban is $5 million, and for rural $1 million

RAISE Merit Criteria

Applications should address each criterion or expressly state that the project does not address the criterion.

Safety
Environmental Sustainability
Quality of Life
Mobility and Community Connectivity
Economic Competitiveness
State of Good Repair
Partnerships and Collaboration
Innovation

RAISE Merit Criteria Evaluation

- Each of the eight criteria receive a rating of "high," "medium," "low," or "non-responsive" based on the **rubric in the NOFO**.
- Generally, the ratings are structured as follows:
  - **High:** primary project purpose, significant benefits, beyond standard, common practice.
  - **Medium:** primary project purpose, clear and direct benefits, aligned with common practice for the project type
  - **Low:** benefits may be ancillary or incidental (rather than a primary purpose) or there may be limited information to assess the benefits
  - **Non-responsive**: Project negatively affects the criterion or for the application does not contain sufficient information to assess the criterion.

RAISE Merit Criteria Evaluation

- Each of the eight criteria receive a rating of "high," "medium," "low," or "non-responsive" based on the **rubric in the NOFO**.

- Those ratings will inform one overall rating:
  - **Highly Recommended** if 5/8 ratings are "high" and none are "non-responsive"
  - **Recommended** if 1-4 ratings are "high", <3 of the merit criteria ratings are "low", and none are "non-responsive."
  - **Acceptable** if there are no "high" ratings and no more than 2 "non-responsive" ratings, or there are "high" ratings, but four or more "low" ratings, and no more than two "non-responsive" ratings
  - **Unacceptable** if there are three or more "non-responsive" ratings.

+ Merit Criterion: Safety

The application should demonstrate the extent to which the project:	Mitigates systemic safety issues to improve safe movement of goods and people
	Reduces occurrence of crashes, injuries, and fatalities, including for underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities
	Protects motorized and non-motorized travelers from health and safety risks
	Supports actions and activities identified in USDOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy

+ Merit Criterion: Environmental Sustainability

The application should demonstrate the extent to which the project:

Reduces air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, or incorporates lower-carbon pavement and construction materials

Explicitly considers climate change and environmental justice in the planning and design stage, particularly in communities that disproportionally experience climate change consequences

Incorporates electrification or zero emission vehicle infrastructure

Reduces air or water pollution, recycles or redevelops brownfield sites

Results in a modal shift that reduces emissions

Promotes energy efficiencies

Improves the resilience of at-risk infrastructure, including upgrade of projects in floodplains

+ Merit Criterion: Quality of Life

The application should demonstrate the extent to which the project:	Increases transportation choices and affordability, proactively address equity for individuals
	Reduces transportation and housing cost-burdens by supporting public transportation near mixed-income developments, rural main streets, etc.
	Removes physical barriers for individuals and communities
	Proactively addresses racial equity and barriers to opportunity, including automobile dependence as a form of barrier

+ Merit Criterion: Mobility and Community Connectivity

The application should demonstrate the extent to which the project:	Increases affordability and accessibility for users, particularly non-motorized travelers (those with disabilities, walking, cycling, or using transit)
	Encourages individuals and communities to move around freely with or without a car
	Proactively incorporates Universal Design
	Increases mobility for freight movement and improves supply chain

+ Merit Criterion: Economic Competitiveness

The application should demonstrate the extent to which the project will:

Improve long-term efficiency, travel time reliability or affordability in the movement of workers or goods, especially for supply chain bottle necks

Increase affordable transportation options and system connectivity to revitalize communities

Increase access to location-efficient affordable housing, reduces burdens of commuting to employment centers

Increase tourism opportunities

Increase the economic productivity of land, capital, or labor, and improving the economic strength of regions and cities;

Result in long-term job creation by supporting good-paying jobs directly related to the project, and/or implement local hire agreements or the use of registered apprenticeship

Help the United States compete in a global economy by facilitating efficient and reliable freight movement

Bridge service gaps in rural areas, promotes greater public and private investments in land-use productivity, including rural main street revitalization or supports equitable development.

+ Merit Criterion: State of Good Repair

The application should demonstrate the extent to which the project will:	Restore and modernize core infrastructure assets
	Address current and projected vulnerabilities that, if left unimproved, will threaten future transportation network efficiency, mobility of goods or accessibility and mobility of people, or economic growth
	Include a plan to maintain the infrastructure in a state of good repair

+ Merit Criterion:
Partnership and Collaboration

The application should demonstrate the extent to which the project will:	Collaborate with other public and private entities, including DBEs
	Ensure that equity considerations for underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities are meaningfully integrated into planning, development, and implementation
	If applicable, include a right-of-way acquisition plan that minimally disrupts communities and maintains community cohesion.
	Support the expansion of high-quality, good paying jobs through workforce development
	Coordinate with greater economic development such as commercial and mixed-income residential development near public transportation, along rural main streets or other walkable neighborhoods projects, water and waste infrastructure, power and electric infrastructure, broadband and land plans and policies, or other community development efforts

+ Merit Criterion: Innovation: Technology, Delivery, Financing

The application should demonstrate the use of innovative strategies related to:	Technologies that drive safety, equity, climate and resilience, or economic outcomes
	Environmental permitting methods that accelerate project delivery and achieve improved outcomes for communities and the environment
	Funding and finance, including by use of private sector financing or congestion pricing

+ Project Readiness-Environmental Risk Review

- The applicant should include a detailed project schedule that identifies all major project milestones.

- Applicant should provide information on required approvals and permits such as NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) and other State or local environmental and planning approvals.

  - Demonstration that the applicant has sought **meaningful** community input through public involvement, particularly engaging environmental justice communities or disadvantaged communities that may be affected by the project where applicable.

- Applicants are encouraged to provide environmental studies or other documents (preferably through web link) that describe the known project impacts.

- Applicants should describe environmental risk mitigation strategies.

  - If applicable, right-of-way acquisition plans, with detailed schedule and compensation plan.

+ Project Readiness- Financial Completeness Review

- The applicant should include a detailed project budget that identifies all sources of funding, including RAISE funds, other Federal funds, and non-Federal funds.

- Applicant should include what percent design the funding estimates are based upon (e.g. 30% design), and whether contingency is included.

- All applicants, including those requesting 100 percent grant funding, should describe a plan to address potential cost overruns.

- Applicant should demonstrate through letters of support, STIP/TIP documents, or other means, that the funding arrangement is certain and the project will be able to meet the deadline for obligation, **September 30, 2026.**

+ Project Readiness- Technical Assessment

- Reviews the applicant's capacity to deliver this project in a manner that satisfies Federal requirements.

- Based on:

  - Applicant's history of delivering projects of similar scope and scale;

  - Project's feasibility or constructability;

  - Applicable Federal requirements, including compliance with Title VI/Civil Rights requirements, ADA, Buy American, among others;

  - Acquisition plan for right-of-way acquisition

Benefit-Cost Analysis

- In the Project Narrative, the applicant should identify, quantify, and compare expected benefits and costs relative to a "no-build" baseline.

- Documentation for a benefit-cost analysis (BCA) must be included as an appendix to the Project Narrative. (Planning grant applications are exempt from providing a BCA)

- Further guidance on BCA for DOT Discretionary Grant Programs- www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/additional-guidance

- BCA Webinars will be provided. Please check this link for dates: https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/outreach

+ Application Pitfalls

Ineligibility: applicants and projects	Priorities/outcomes not aligned with merit criteria	Lack of evidence substantiating project outcomes claims in narrative
Insufficient evidence of project readiness	Not providing statutorily-mandated match (for urban projects)	Uncertain urban/rural designation
	Unclear APP/HDC designation	

+ Designating Project Location

■DOT lists all counties and census tracts that meet the definition of Area of Persistent Poverty (APP) or Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC): https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-app-hdc

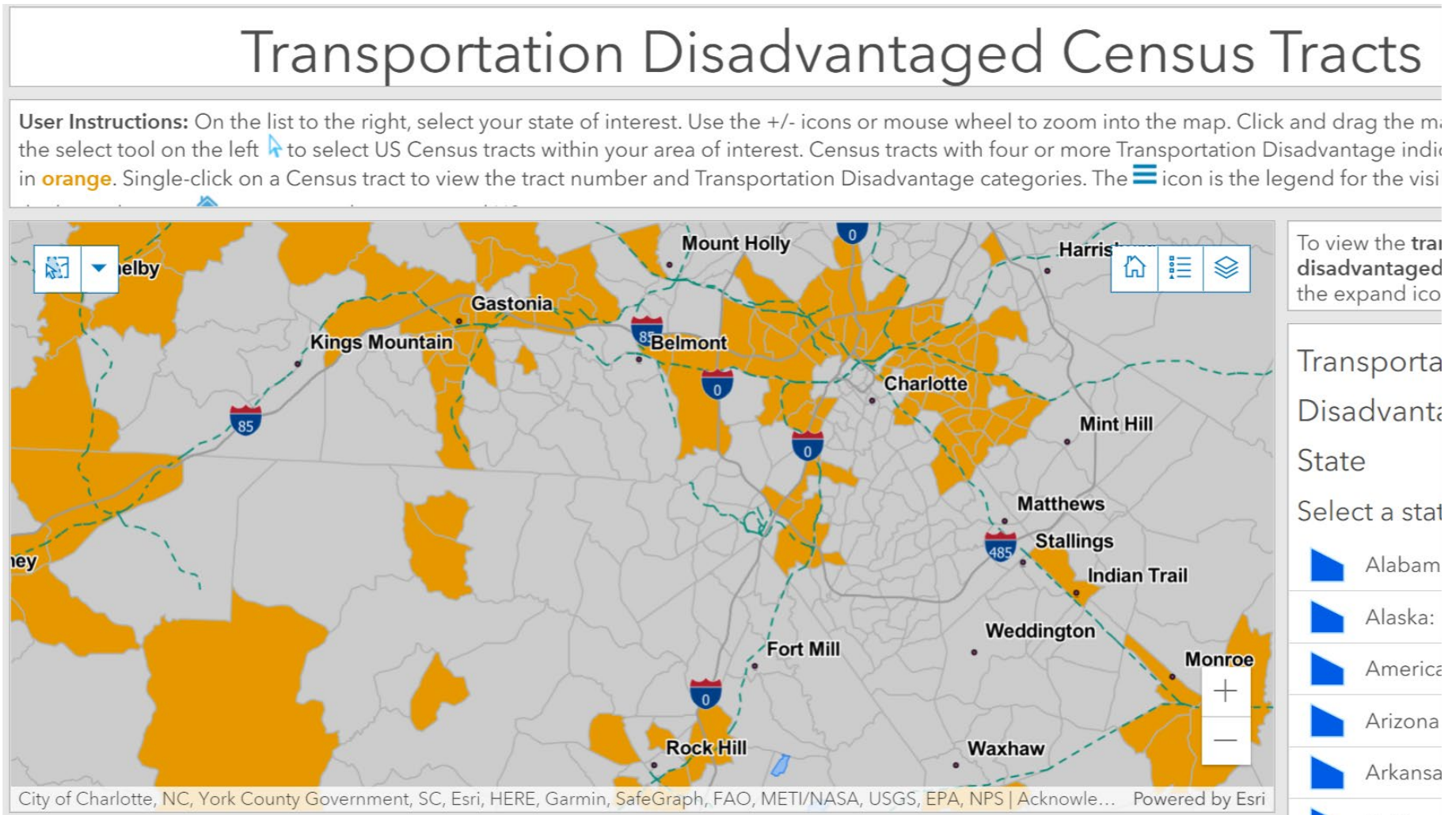To use the tool, filter for your project location.
Please note that projects can qualify as APPs based on **either** County or Census Tract, but may **only qualify for HDC based on Census Tract**.

A. State	B. County	C. Census Tract Name	E. APP - COUNTY Meet...	F. APP - CENSUS TRAC...	G. HDC - CENSUS TRA...
Alabama	Blount County	Census Tract 506.01	No	No	No
Alabama	Blount County	Census Tract 506.02	No	No	Yes
Alabama	Blount County	Census Tract 507	No	No	No
Alabama	Bullock County	Census Tract 9521	Yes	Yes	No
Alabama	Bullock County	Census Tract 9522	Yes	Yes	Yes
Alabama	Bullock County	Census Tract 9525	Yes	No	Yes
Alabama	Butler County	Census Tract 9527	Yes	Yes	Yes

+ Designating Project Location (cont'd)

■ It is **optional** to use DOT's new mapping tool to assist in identifying whether a project is located in a Historically Disadvantaged Community

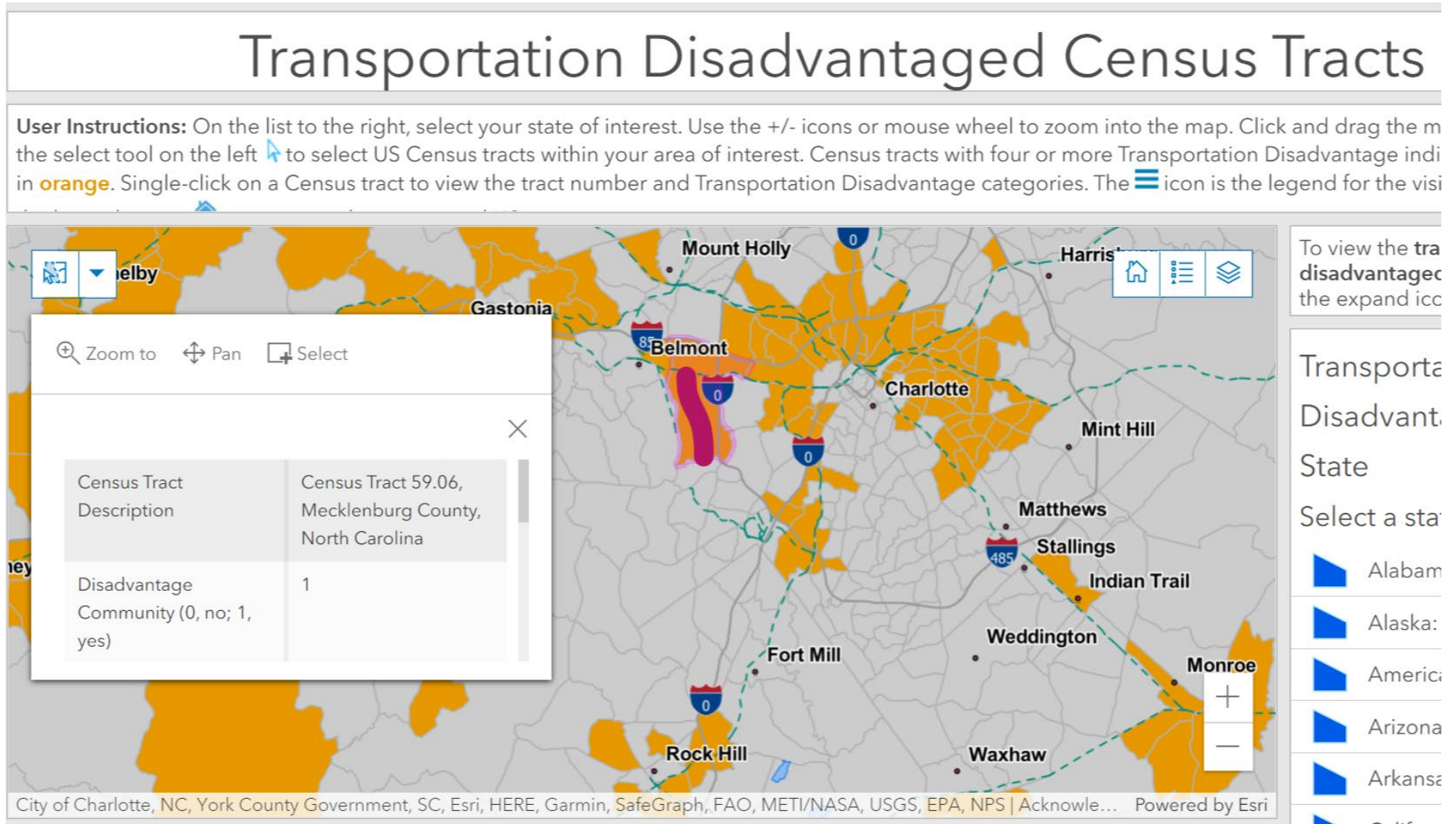Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts

User Instructions: On the list to the right, select your state of interest. Use the +/- icons or mouse wheel to zoom into the map. Click and drag the ma[...] the select tool on the left ↖ to select US Census tracts within your area of interest. Census tracts with four or more Transportation Disadvantage indi[...] in **orange**. Single-click on a Census tract to view the tract number and Transportation Disadvantage categories. The ☰ icon is the legend for the visi[...]

■ MAP TOOL ASSISTANCE: GMO@DOT.GOV

✛ Designating Project Location (cont'd)

■**Step 1**: Draw or find your project location.

Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts

User Instructions: On the list to the right, select your state of interest. Use the +/- icons or mouse wheel to zoom into the map. Click and drag the ma[...] the select tool on the left ⤧ to select US Census tracts within your area of interest. Census tracts with four or more Transportation Disadvantage indic[...] in **orange**. Single-click on a Census tract to view the tract number and Transportation Disadvantage categories. The ☰ icon is the legend for the visib[...]

- Point
- Rectangle
- Lasso
- Circle
- Line

To view the **tra[...]**
disadvantaged
the expand icor[...]

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- Alabama
- Alaska: 3
- America[...]
- Arizona:[...]
- Arkansas[...]
- Californ[...]

City of Charlotte, NC, York County Government, SC, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS | Acknowle...   Powered by Esri

■MAP TOOL ASSISTANCE: GMO@DOT.GOV

+ Designating Project Location (cont'd)

■**Step 2:** If project is in yellow, it is in a Historically Disadvantaged Community.
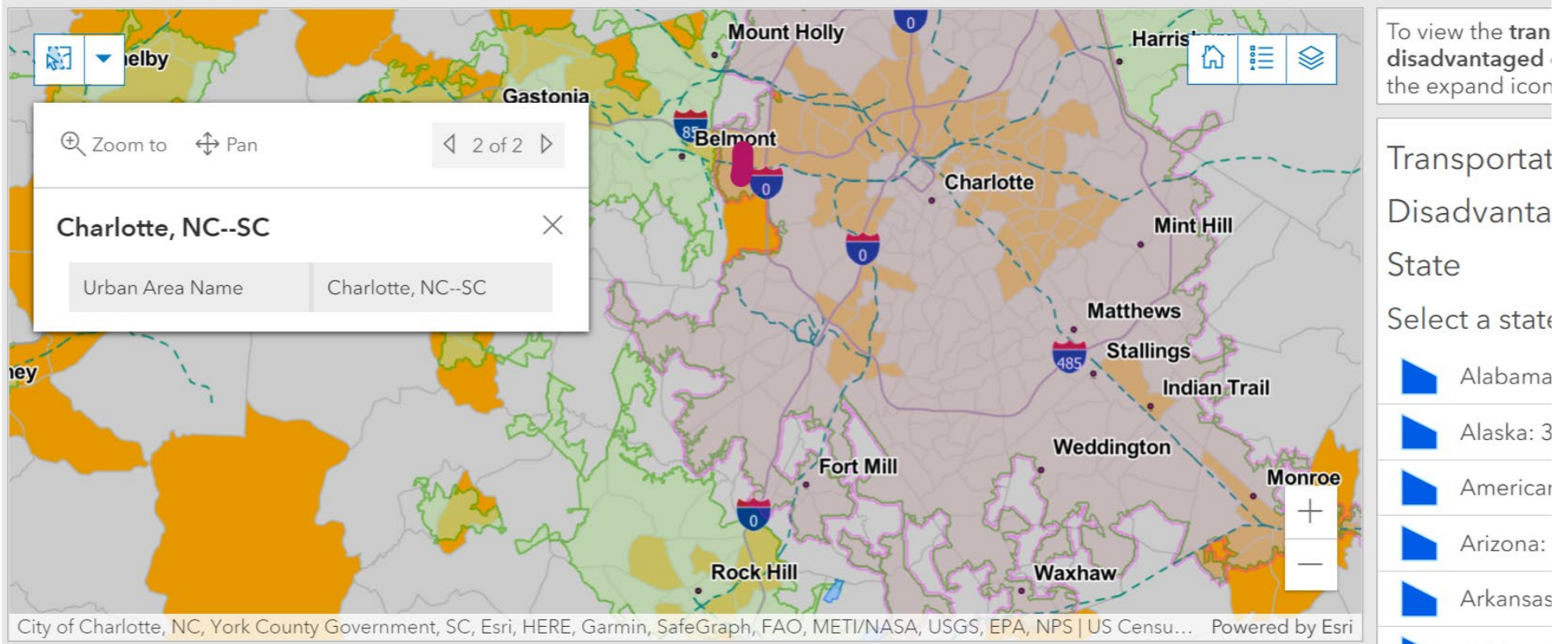■Click the project location to find more information, like the census tract number.

■MAP TOOL ASSISTANCE: GMO@DOT.GOV

+ Designating Project Location (cont'd)

■This map may also be helpful for the urban/rural designation. If the population of an Urbanized Area (green) is greater than 200,000, then the project is urban for the RAISE program. The information box shows the Urbanized Area name.

Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts

User Instructions: On the list to the right, select your state of interest. Use the +/- icons or mouse wheel to zoom into the map. Click and drag the ma[...] the select tool on the left ⬆ to select US Census tracts within your area of interest. Census tracts with four or more Transportation Disadvantage indic[...] in **orange**. Single-click on a Census tract to view the tract number and Transportation Disadvantage categories. The ☰ icon is the legend for the visib[...]

City of Charlotte, NC, York County Government, SC, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS | US Censu... Powered by Esri
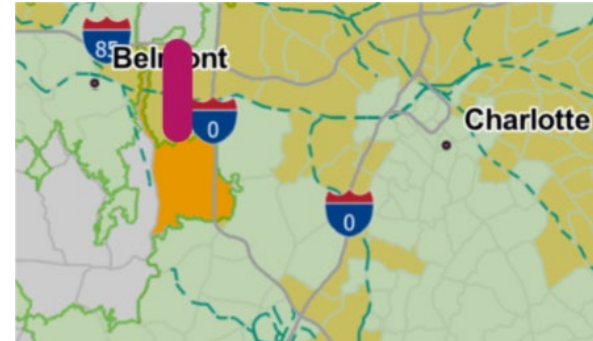
■MAP TOOL ASSISTANCE: GMO@DOT.GOV
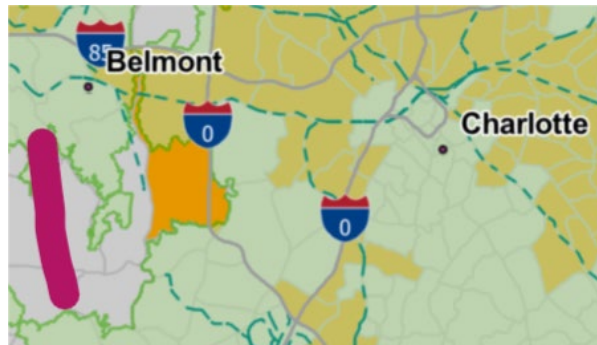
+ Designating Project Location (cont'd)

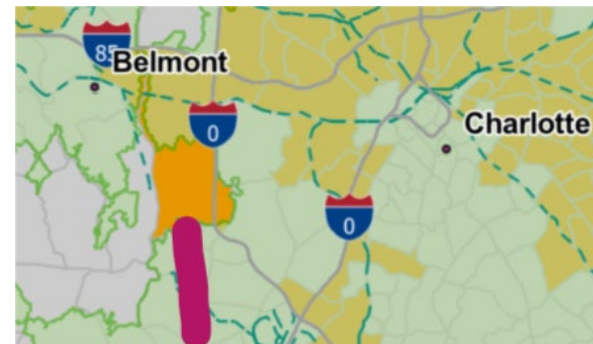■This project is in an HDC, and is NOT in an Urbanized Area.
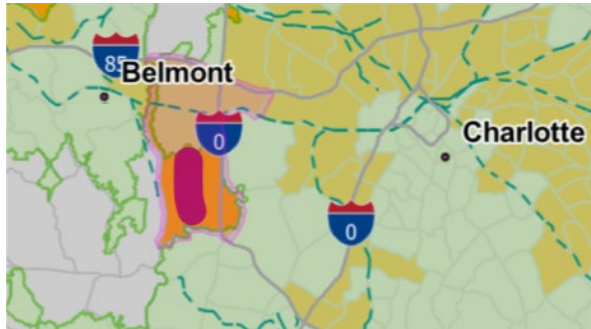
■This project is in an HDC and an Urbanized Area.

■This project is NOT in an HDC, and is NOT in an Urbanized Area.

■This project is NOT in an HDC, but is in an Urbanized Area.

■ For projects crossing boundaries of HDCs and non-HDCs, the designation is based on the location of the majority of project costs. PLEASE MAKE THIS CLEAR IN THE APPLICATION.

■MAP TOOL ASSISTANCE: GMO@DOT.GOV

+ Designating Project Location (cont'd)

■ For **projects crossing boundaries** of HDCs and non-HDCs, the **designation is based on the location of the majority of project costs**. PLEASE MAKE THIS CLEAR IN THE APPLICATION (IN THE BUDGET TABLE AND USING SUPPORTING MAPS).

■It is ESSENTIAL to identify the correct project location designations. Applications that request 100% grant funds but are not eligible to do so based on location will be considered ineligible. There will not be follow up.

■List of Urbanized Areas with population greater than 200,000 (URBAN): https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/urbanized-areas

■Please address questions on the mapping tool GMO@DOT.GOV.

Project Delivery: What Should Successful Applicants Expect

RAISE 2022 Announcements by August 12, 2022

RAISE 2022 Modal Project Assignments Negotiations Initiated

This is not a lump sum award; this is a reimbursement program

Sign/Execute Grant Agreement (obligation)

Any costs incurred prior to DOT's obligation of funds are ineligible for reimbursement unless authorized by DOT in writing after DOT's announcement of FY 2022 RAISE awards
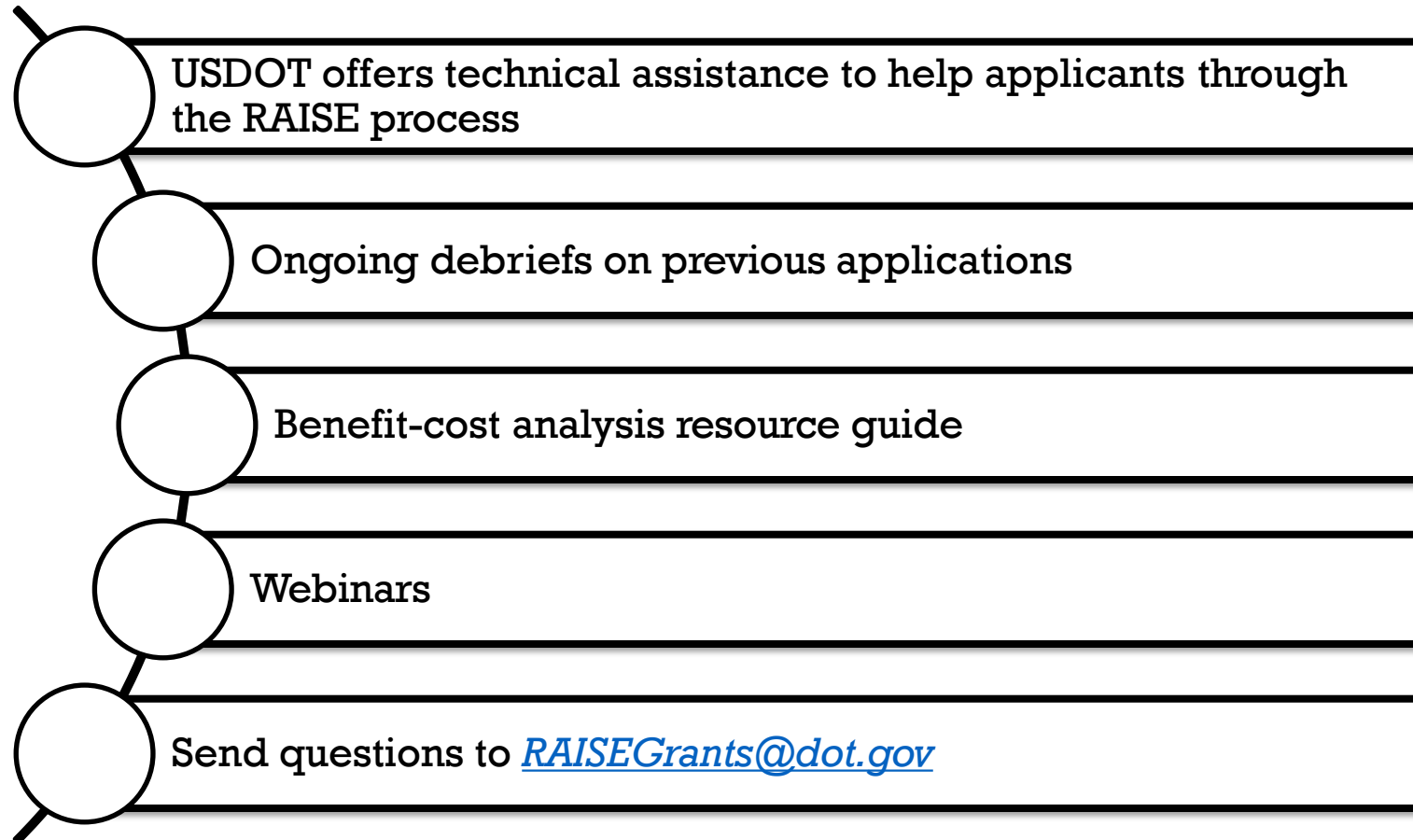
Reporting Requirements/Project Modifications

Project Completion/Close-Out Performance Monitoring

Technical Assistance

USDOT offers technical assistance to help applicants through the RAISE process

Ongoing debriefs on previous applications

Benefit-cost analysis resource guide

Webinars

Send questions to *RAISEGrants@dot.gov*

Additional Application Help

- RAISE Website:
  www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants

- Preparing a Benefit-Cost Analysis for a RAISE Grant: https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/additional-guidance

- Mapping Tool Assistance: GMO@dot.gov

- Frequently Asked Questions:

  - www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-application-faqs

+ Question and Answer Session
RAISEgrants@dot.gov

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