

Freight Rail Grant Program Project Readiness Checklist

Purpose: This document is intended to provide an initial assessment of your project's readiness to receive MDOT Freight Rail Grant Program (FRGP) funding. Your project does not have to have all components complete at this stage to be considered for funding.

To complete this form, navigate to the Project Phase that coincides with your application, and check off items that have already been obtained/completed for your project. Please fill out the checklist to the fullest extent possible and contact FreightRail@mdot.maryland.gov for questions, support, or to discuss your projects readiness.

Project Name:

Project Description:

Items listed below are required to be submitted and verified prior to applying for the FRGP.

- DESIGN PROJECTS**
For the completion of design plans and feasibility assessments of proposed or potential rail corridor improvements to assess issues such as economic benefits, environmental impacts, right-of-way issues, local support, and cost estimates.
 - Scope of Work/Detailed Project Description
 - Anticipated Schedule/Duration
 - Preliminary Cost Estimate – through design phase only
 - Agreements - MOU/Local Support Letter/ Railroad Support/Cost Sharing or Local Match Agreements

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

For construction or installation of rail corridor improvements. May include sidings/sidetracks, eligible grade crossings, bridges/structures, drainage improvements, and other major projects.

- Scope of Work/Detailed Project Description
- Anticipated Schedule/Duration
- Preliminary Cost Estimate
- Agreements - MOU/Local Support Letter/ Railroad Support/Cost Sharing or Local Match Agreements
- Property Certification – demonstrated control of property for proposed project
- Environmental Permitting– anticipated or obtained environmental permits and documentation on NEPA status
- Final Contracting/Advertisement Plan
- Design Criteria Approval Sheet (if applicable)
- Preliminary Design Plans
- Local Utility Coordination Certification (if applicable)
- Railroad Statement
- Traffic Control Certification (if public roadways are involved)
- ADA Compliance Certification or Waiver
- Final Design Plan Approval
- Third Party Funding Agreements (if applicable)

PROJECT FOCUS AREAS:

Projects should align with the goals and objectives in the Maryland Transportation Plan, Maryland State Freight Plan, and the Maryland State Rail Plan. Project will ideally align with one or more of the following focus areas.

Expansion of Rail Service or Rail Served Businesses

- For the identification, development, and improvement of industrial or commercial sites with the intent to support current or future rail access and service.
 - *Example: A local government can use grant funding to conduct a study to locate industrial sites along railroad lines to prioritize sites improvements and inform land use decisions to encourage increased rail service.*
- For the restoration or expansion of rail; service to existing commercial or industrial sites.
 - *Example: A business can use grant funding to renovate and upgrade a disused rail siding at their facility to restart or improve rail service.*

Safety and Security

- For the implementation of strategies or measures which improve the overall safety of railroad corridors and rail-served properties.
 - *Example: A local government may use grant funding to design and/or build safety improvements such as trespass prevention measures like fencing, signage, or walkways.*

System Preservation and Modernization

- For the implementation or study of innovative technologies that support the goals of the program.
 - *Example: A railroad may use grant funds for introduction of alternative materials such as composite railroad ties to reduce operating costs.*
- For the development of capital improvements that contribute to the ongoing operations of rail corridor or railroad operator.
 - *Example: A railroad may use grant funding to replace or retrofit obsolete infrastructure due to changing uses or site conditions.*

Environmental Protection and Sensitivity

- For improvements that contribute to carbon reduction policies and programs and encouraging mode shift
 - *Example: A business may use grants funds for improvements that converts freight service from trucks to train service.*

Fiscal Responsibility

- For the preservation and rehabilitation of inactive railroad infrastructure assets
 - *Example: A local government may use grant funds for the stabilization or preservation of railroad assets to support future restoration of railroad service.*