

May 31, 2022

Subject: Notice of Funding Availability for LIFTS program - \$1.7 million

The Linking Iowa's Freight Transportation program (LIFTS) is a grant funding opportunity to improve Iowa's multimodal freight transportation system.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) (signed 2021, also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act - IIJA) includes eligibility for multimodal freight projects for federal transportation funding through the National Highway Freight Program (NHFP). Up to thirty percent of Iowa's NHFP apportionment may be used on freight intermodal or freight rail projects. The Iowa Transportation Commission has chosen to award up to ten percent of Iowa's NHFP apportionment through the administration of LIFTS, a competitive grant application program. The program will award \$1.7 million in this funding cycle.

The purpose of the LIFTS program is to provide grants for projects that help meet the changing demands on Iowa's multimodal freight system. The program will provide funding for freight projects that have economic and public benefit by enhancing the shipment of freight but are typically ineligible for state or federal highway funding. The funding program is designed to:

- (1) Enhance economic development by improving the multimodal freight transportation system.
- (2) Provide flexible funding for the changing demands of the freight transportation system.
- (3) Enhance the ability to provide competitive transportation options for shipment of products and moving goods.
- (4) Provide incentives to alternate modes for economic development opportunities.

Eligibility Criteria:

The LIFTS program is open to transportation providers/users, cities, counties, planning organizations and any other entity interested in freight transportation. The BIL (aka IIJA) requires that projects funded by the LIFTS program be carried out under the same rules and procedures as a highway project on a federal-aid highway.

Applicants will fall under one of two categories:

- Public applicants or public-private partnerships (note the lead applicant must be public)
 - Eligible for up to 80% grant funding
- Private applicants
 - Eligible for up to 50% grant funding

Application Process and Award Timeline:

Application: Applications will go through a review/scoring process and a recommendation is anticipated to be presented to the Iowa DOT Commission for approval with final awards expected in October 2022. All applicants must submit a Minority Impact Statement along with their application, as well as all the attachments spelled out within the application. Completed applications must be postmarked or emailed by 5:00 p.m. **July 18, 2022.**

To learn more about this grant opportunity and to obtain the application, please visit <https://iowadot.gov/iowarail/financial-assistance/lifts>. For specific questions, please contact Amanda Martin at amanda.martin@iowadot.us or (515)-239-1653 or Tammy Nicholson at tamara.nicholson@iowadot.us or (515)-239-1052.