

ATP-3 PROTECT Program Funds

Fiscal Year 2027-28

Program Overview

The PROTECT (Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation) program is a new program created under the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The PROTECT program provides funding to help make surface transportation more resilient to natural hazards, including climate change, sea level rise, flooding, extreme weather events, and other natural disasters through support of planning activities, resilience improvements, community resilience and evacuation routes, and at-risk coastal infrastructure.

ATP-3 has been targeted \$1.34 million in federal PROTECT funding for State fiscal year 2027-28 (July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2028) to award to local applicants with qualifying projects. ATP-3 is currently soliciting candidate projects seeking this funding.

Since PROTECT is a federal program, **PROTECT formula funding requires a 13% local match if a project is listed within the Resilience Improvement Plan (RIP) or a 20% local match if a project is not listed within the RIP.** and have the capacity to cover any additional costs not covered by their federal award that may be necessary to complete their project. If applicant is a non-State Aid city (e.g., city under 5,000 population), they will also be required to seek local sponsorship of their application through the respective county.

To apply, interested applicants are required to complete the ATP-3 PROTECT Letter of Intent by the scheduled deadline. This LOI requests applicants to give a low level overview of their project prior to receiving a project application. This LOI will be reviewed and if the project is deemed acceptable the applicant will receive an official application.

Once the project LOI has been reviewed and approved the applicant will receive a formal application. This application requests applicants to provide general information about their proposed project and address six project qualification factors (e.g., Asset Vulnerability, Past History, Financial Plan, Project Readiness, Project Timeline, and Environmental Justice), which will be used by ATP-3 in its review. Successful projects awarded funding will be included in the FY 2029-2029 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Note, MnDOT has completed its Minnesota Resilience Improvement Plan (RIP). The RIP will be used to set priorities and inform methods for project identification and evaluation for future years of the PROTECT program. Local agencies may request information that is currently available from the RIP process to help come up with possible project submittal ideas.

Eligibility

Most eligible projects involve adding a resilience improvement to an existing project that are in the applicants' 5-year plan. In assessing their project's eligibility, applicants should consider whether the project is in a vulnerable area and whether the tactics being proposed with the project will achieve resilience of the asset being impacted by climate and/or extreme weather events. Eligible projects include, but are not limited to, the following:

Eligible PROTECT Activities (Not Inclusive)	
Incorporation of natural infrastructure	Stabilizing slide areas or slopes
Resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, replacement, improvement, or realignment of an existing eligible surface transportation facility eligible	Installing riprap
The upgrade of an existing surface transportation facility to meet or exceed design standards	Lengthening or raising bridges to increase waterway openings, including to respond to extreme weather
Installation of mitigation measures that prevent the intrusion of floodwaters into surface transportation systems	Increasing the size or number of drainage structures
Strengthening systems that remove rainwater from surface transportation facilities	Installing seismic retrofits on bridges
Upgrades to and installation of structural stormwater controls	Adding scour protection at bridges
A resilience project that addresses identified vulnerabilities described in the eligible entity's Resilience Improvement Plan	Adding scour, stream stability, coastal, and other hydraulic countermeasures, including spur dikes
Relocating roadways in a base floodplain to higher ground above projected flood elevation levels, or away from slide prone areas	Vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, facilitate wildfire control, and provide erosion control
	Any other protective features, including natural infrastructure, as determined by the Secretary

Resource links:

- [FHWA Fact Sheet](#)
- [MnDOT IJJA site](#)

Next Steps

ATP-3 is accepting candidate LOI's for projects for FY 2027-2028 via email until **3 p.m. on Friday, November 1, 2024**. The regional planners will review the LOI's and send out the applications as needed. The ATP-3 Area Transportation Improvement Program (ATIP) Committee, a subcommittee of the full ATP-3 body, will be meeting following the application deadline to review and prioritize submitted PROTECT applications based on their resiliency potential and deliverability. The ATIP Committee will develop a list of priorities to recommend to the full ATP-3 body on April 3, 2025. ATP-3 will consider the recommendations of the ATIP Development Committee and approve a final selection of projects to be awarded funding. Successful applicants will be notified of their award. Staff will work with applicants awarded funding to enter projects into year FY 2027-2028 of the Draft FY 2026-2029 STIP.

If you have a PROTECT federally eligible project that you would like considered for FY 2027-2028 funding, **please complete and submit your ATP-3 PROTECT Letter of Intent by 3 p.m. on Friday, November 1, 2024**, to Jeff Lenz (jeff.lenz@state.mn.us). Please share this announcement with others who you feel may have interest in applying.

Contacts

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