

FY 2021 High Risk Rural Roads FAQ

What roads are eligible under the High-Risk Rural Roads Program?

Major collectors, minor collectors, and local roads which are rural in nature regardless of ownership or maintenance responsibility, that have a “significant safety risk” as defined by the 2017 Alabama Strategic Highway safety Plan.

What types of projects can be submitted for consideration?

Any project intended to reduce crashes on Rural Roads with a Significant Safety Risk are deemed eligible by federal regulation. Projects including but not limited to: general roadway safety projects, intersection improvements, traffic control devices, and unshielded bridge end upgrades.

What types of projects will be the most competitive?

Projects which utilize the FHWA Low Cost Proven Safety Countermeasures are recommended. It is also recommended that projects focus on reducing high severity Rural Roadway Departure crashes.

Rural Roadway Departure Crashes are considered to be any crash initiated by the vehicle leaving its travel lane. This includes not only roadside collisions and rollover crashes, but also centerline crossover head-on crashes.

What types of projects are considered not eligible?

Projects which in the judgement of the selection committee are deemed to be primarily maintenance in nature, and do not prove to have significantly overrepresented safety risks are ineligible. Such types of activities include but are not limited to items such as standard striping projects, maintenance clearing activities, etc.

Can multiple locations be included in a single application?

Yes. Multiple locations may be included in one project application. However, all required information must be provided for each location, and each location should be identified by a unique site number and prioritized.

Can an agency submit multiple applications?

Yes, a single agency may submit multiple applications.

What is the maximum award amount per project?

There is no maximum amount of federal funding that may be requested for the FY 2021 program. However, projects with low cost proven safety countermeasures and those where the sponsoring agency is contributing greater than the required 10% match may be more competitive than other costlier projects.

Are projects that require right-of-way acquisition eligible?

Projects requiring ROW acquisition will not be eligible under this program due to the time constraints placed on FHWA authorization.

Are projects that require utility relocation eligible?

Projects that have minor utility relocations are eligible if included as part of construction contract let through state services. The scope and estimate for utility relocations must be included in the project application.

Note: Utility relocation will not be eligible for projects utilizing force account work.

Do all of the items on the application have to be filled out?

No, but all of the information requested will be used in risk analysis. Items not provided will be given a minimum value which may not accurately reflect the appropriate risk present at your project location, and therefore will ultimately affect an applications ability to compete for funding

How long is funding available?

HRRR funds must be authorized before the end of the fiscal year or they will be rescinded by FHWA. Therefore, any project not authorized by **June 1, 2021** will be subject to rescission by ALDOT in order to reallocate funding and prevent the loss of federal funds.

What methods are available to construct projects under this program?

Projects may be either let to contract through state services or performed by force account. Applicants should specify which method shall be used in the application. Applicants seeking approval for force account reimbursement must follow the **ALDOT Guidance & Regulatory Requirements for Force Account Safety Projects** dated 08/07/2017.

What is a systemic approach and how is it different from the way projects were selected in the past?

The systemic approach to safety is a data-driven process that involves analytical techniques to identify sites for potential safety improvement and suggests projects for safety investment not typically identified through the traditional site analysis approach. The intent of this complementary approach is to supplement traditional site analysis and provide a more comprehensive and proactive approach to preventing the most severe crashes. The systemic approach identifies “problems” based on systemwide data by correlating characteristics (e.g. geometry, volume, or location) frequently involved in severe crashes. These characteristics are considered to be risk factors and indicate the potential for future severe crashes. Using this risk-based method allows the program to identify and target those locations with the highest probability of future severe crashes (and hopefully preventing them) as opposed to chasing crashes that have already happened.

What are the risk factors to consider when selecting a project location?

Our office has determined that the following characteristics have the potential to significantly factor into the relative safety of a roadway, and the probability that lane departure crashes may occur:

- the presence of sloped pavement edge
- adequate curve signing
- proper cross-slope
- centerline and/or edge-line markings
- curve delineation
- centerline and/or edge-line or shoulder rumble strips
- paved shoulder width
- graded shoulder width
- adequate clear zones
- high traffic counts

When is the application deadline?

Applications must be submitted (electronically or by mail) no later than the close of business on **August 31, 2020**.

When will applicants be notified of awards?

All applicants will be notified in writing concerning the final status of their applications as soon as possible following project selection. We anticipate selecting projects and notifying sponsors around the start of the fiscal year.