

ALDOT

RAIL-HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAMS

GRADE CROSSING HAZARD ELIMINATION
APPLICATION



REVISED JULY 2021

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Introduction

Title 23, United States Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 23 CFR 646.208 establishes funding for the elimination of hazards at public rail-highway grade crossings. The intent of this program and application is to reduce rail-highway grade crossing fatalities and incidents. The program is a cooperative effort between the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) as well as is in correlation with the ALDOT Rail State Action Plan.

The purpose of the ALDOT Rail-Highway Safety Programs (Rail Programs) Hazard Elimination Application is to strategically provide an opportunity for local agencies, road authorities, ALDOT Region and Area Offices, and railroad companies to identify crossing locations that demonstrate a significant hazard to the traveling public and request funds for rail crossing safety improvements. The application was also developed to create a parallel program option to the Priority Ranking List. The application process will aid in prioritizing locations with hazards identified. The funding and applications shall be administered in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws, regulations, executive orders, policies and procedures, program requirements, and eligibility criteria. Submission of an application does not guarantee or constitute selection or funding from the program.

Process Overview

Applications will be reviewed for eligibility to determine if proposed improvements or other alternative safety measures can be implemented to reduce hazards at public grade crossings. Applications will be ranked based on an evaluation and scoring rubric. Consideration will be given to the crossing's condition, including train and vehicle counts, geometrics, accident history, and existing warning devices. Review [Eligibility](#) section for additional information.

Applications that succeed beyond the initial review phase will be subject to an in-depth diagnostic review, which is an on-site field inspection and analysis. Diagnostic reviews consist of a team of representatives with administrative, advisory, and local responsibilities. The team includes but is not limited to an array of highway traffic, design, and maintenance engineers; railroad safety and operations personnel, administrative officials, and signal engineers; law enforcement, regulatory agency, or any other designated representatives. The team evaluates the location and determines the feasibility of improvements.

Applications that receive funding are programmed at a minimum of one (1) year in advance of the project authorization. The below time frame is to be used as a guide and is subject to change without notice based on funding, federal and state requirements, guidelines, and procedures. ALDOT reserves the authority to remove a project from the program, move a project to an alternative funding year, and/or make adjustments as deemed necessary.

Month	Process
August	Call for applications (1 month)
September – October	Application review, evaluation, location selection (2 month)
October	Conduct diagnostic reviews (1 months)
November – April	Develop projects for each location to be funded (this includes contract agreements, plan development, resolutions, advertisements, etc.) (6 months)
May	Finalize and submit projects for authorization (1 month)

Eligibility

The following section provides guidance for eligible works and impacts that qualify for the elimination of hazards funding. All works are subject to approval.

- Eligible works include but are not limited to:
 - Improvements at public grade crossings to eliminate hazards posed by blocked crossings. Information to be submitted with applications involving blocked crossings include but are not limited to: frequency of crossing blockage (hours, days, blockage per day or month, etc.), cause of blockage (if known), other conditions related to the blockage, impact to community, etc.
 - Crossing consolidation, elimination, or relocation of roadway to eliminate a grade crossing.
 - Installation or upgrade of active and/or passive warning devices at crossings to eliminate hazards. Installation and upgrades include but are not limited to: warning devices, LED lights, interconnection for preemption, active advance warning devices i.e. train activated warning devices or solar powered warning devices, etc.
 - Road improvements include but are not limited to: installation of median barriers at crossings, road geometry to improve approach at crossings, etc.
 - Eliminating hazards through a corridor approach by addressing safety improvements at multiple crossings along the same segment of rail track(s) to include crossing consolidations or eliminations. A corridor shall include a **minimum of five (5)** crossings. In lieu of multiple applications for each individual crossing identified in a corridor, **ONE** application with attached documentation including information from sections A-D of the application for each crossing is acceptable. The conditions set forth are guidelines, and the acceptance of a corridor approach will be at the discretion of ALDOT.
 - This application **may** be used for hazard elimination at a crossing location that is within the limits or near the terminus of a planned ALDOT construction or maintenance project. Applications must be submitted a **minimum of two (2) fiscal years** in advance of the project start or letting date during call for application.
 - Incidental items such as repair or relocation of sidewalks, curbs, gutters, roadway and/or crossings surfaces, and drainage improvements may be considered necessary as a result of the project construction. Consideration is not guaranteed and is subject to project, location, and cost associated with improvements to the overall project.
- Impacts at crossings to eligible works include but are not limited to:
 - High volume of crashes per railroad route mile; increased train volume and/or train speed;
 - Increased pedestrian volume for non-motorized and/or motorized pedestrian traffic;
 - Increased vehicle traffic which include significant increase in volume of truck, school bus, hazard vehicle, or non-motorized vehicle traffic, etc.
 - Other hazard elements impacting the safety of a public at-grade crossing.
 - For all volumes and speed, prior, current, and projected data shall be provided.
- Ineligible works include but are not limited to:
 - Purchase of right-of-way or easements, relocation of railroad track(s) or utilities, rough crossing surfaces related to the maintenance of the crossing, quiet zones, new crossings not a part of crossing consolidation/elimination/relocation of roadway, roadway widening, pre-design studies, street or highway traffic control devices including traffic signals, abandoned or re-opened crossings, private crossings or

- private crossings with public access, private crossings converted to public crossings, crossings with no train traffic, and existing grade separated crossings.
- Funding shall not be used for the purpose of qualifying a crossing for “Quiet Zone” or improvements to a crossing classified as “Quiet Zone”.
- Any costs incurred prior to the execution of a contract agreement will be ineligible for reimbursement.
- Non-program modifications to a crossing implemented by a local agency, road authority, or railroad in conjunction to a program funded location shall be at the expense of the local agency, road authority, and/or railroad.
- Additional works may be determined ineligible without any further notice or inclusion in this document.

Application Submittal

Applications for Grade Crossing Hazard Elimination are accepted on an annual basis during call for applications. A properly completed application provides the most compelling timely data and information for the proposed crossing location. The information presented in the application should define an eligible, cost-effective approach to improve safety at the grade crossing in accordance to federal and state guidelines and standards. Incomplete applications that contain inadequate information or are poorly prepared will not be considered.

All required sections of the application shall be completed upon submittal. It is recommended that the submitting authority include any relevant information and documentation believed to justify the application. Failure to return signed application and documents will delay the review process and cause application to be rejected.

- All completed applications and documentation must be received **no later than 5:00 PM CST** on the due date for consideration. Remit documents to the provided address:

MAILING AND EMAIL ADDRESS:

Alabama Department of Transportation
ATTN: Rail-Highway Programs Group (DESIGN)
1409 Coliseum Boulevard
Montgomery, AL 36110
aldotrail@dot.state.al.us

LETTER RECIPIENT INFORMATION:

Mr. Stanley C. Biddick, P.E.
State Design Engineer
1409 Coliseum Blvd.
Montgomery, AL 36110
ATTN: Rail Programs Manager

- All applications shall be submitted electronically or furnished on digital storage media (compact disc or USB flash drive). Applications submitted using any other form or format will be rejected. The digital storage media used to submit the application shall become the property of the State of Alabama, Department of Transportation.
- Filenames must include the Crossing Inventory DOT Number e.g. 123456A Location Map.pdf; 123456A Detailed Cost Estimate.pdf; ABC Railroad Corridor Multiple Crossing.xlsx, etc.
- Notification of incomplete applications will be provided to the submitting authority.
- Applications and submitted documentations will **NOT** be returned nor copy provided.
- The road authority is responsible for submitting applications. However, railroad companies may submit corridor approach applications directly to the Rail Programs Group.
- Railroad company submittals shall include documentation showing local authorities acknowledgement and support of proposed locations and improvements.

- Separate applications may be submitted for multiple crossings each fiscal year during the call for applications.
- Crossing locations in which ALDOT is the road authority shall be coordinated and submitted through the department's respective Region/Area Offices and Region Railroad Coordinators. Applications should then be submitted to the Rail Programs Group by ALDOT's Region Railroad Coordinators.
- If available and where applicable, additional information that should be submitted with the application includes but is not limited to:
 - Operational characteristics of each crossing:
 - Accident history within most recent 5 years or other form of documented incidents;
 - Location of nearest grade separated;
 - Status of preemption to existing traffic signals;
 - Studies, crossing evaluations, or prior diagnostic reviews; and
 - Studies on significant impact to safety, industry, and traveling public.
 - Physical characteristics of each crossing:
 - Inventory of existing warning devices, condition, and installation date (if known) at crossing location;
 - Provide photos (departure and approach of crossing); and
 - List pavement type and condition, sight distance, railroad right-of-way limits, AADT, known hazards, clear zone obstructions, etc.
 - Cost of each proposed crossing improvement:
 - Railroad force account estimate;
 - Low-cost improvements; and
 - Cost-Benefit analysis.
 - Any other operational or physical characteristic and cost analysis deemed relevant to the location and application.

Funding

Funding under this program is subject to both availability and eligibility of Federal funds in accordance with 23 CFR 130(f)(3) and availability of federal funding obligation authority within ALDOT.

- In accordance with 23 CFR 130(f)(3), federal funding will account for a **maximum** of ninety percent (90%) of the project total cost for Section 130 Rail Safety Program grade crossing safety improvements. A **minimum** ten percent (10%) non-federal funding match of the project total cost is required.
- Each entity contributing to the non-federal funding match is required to provide a commitment letter acknowledging participation, availability of funds, and expectation of funds to be provided upon receipt of invoice from ALDOT. Each letter shall include the crossing inventory number of each crossing made a part of the submitted application(s).
- Failure to provide commitment letters for funding will result in the application being rejected.
- In accordance with 2 CFR 200.306, cost sharing or matching, federal funds cannot be used to match other federal funds. The funding match source cannot be from a federal funding source such as a federal grant unless specific written approval has been granted by the grant administrator and proof submitted with application(s).
- Applicants may contribute above the minimum required non-federal match in order to increase the Benefit-Cost Ratio to the program and improve application selection.

Program, Project Monitoring, and Reporting

ALDOT must be able to demonstrate clearly that the Rail Safety Program resources are being managed in an appropriate manner and that individual projects are being managed within the guidelines and standards of federal and state regulations and procedures. The Rail Programs Group will monitor projects from initiation to final construction and project closeout. The project schedule will be coordinated and followed by all parties involved. Any changes or delays to the scope of work must be reported to the Rail Programs Group as soon as possible for review and approval. The Rail Programs Group and/or designated ALDOT representative may periodically plan and/or attend field inspections or reviews.

Discovery and Admission

This application, collected data, and supporting documentation is compiled, collected and utilized by the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) for research and planning in its hazard elimination and rail-highway crossing safety improvement programs. The data shall not be referenced, disclosed, discussed or otherwise made public other than allowed by ALDOT written consent. The provision of this data shall not be considered as a waiver of the provisions of 23 CFR 148(h)(4) and 409. The use of this data is governed by 23 CFR 148(h)(4) and 409 which state:

- 148(h)(4) Discovery and admission into evidence of certain reports, surveys, and information.
 - “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, reports, surveys, schedules, lists, or data compiled or collected for any purpose relating to this section, shall not be subject to discovery or admitted into evidence in a Federal or State court proceeding or considered for other purposes in any action for damages arising from any occurrence at a location identified or addressed in the reports, surveys, schedules, lists, or other data.”
- 409 Discovery and admission as evidence of certain reports and surveys
 - “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, reports, surveys, schedules, lists, or data compiled or collected for the purpose of identifying, evaluating, or planning the safety enhancement of potential accident sites, hazardous roadway conditions, or railway-highway crossings, pursuant to sections 130, 144, and 148 of this title or for the purpose of developing any highway safety construction improvement project which may be implemented utilizing Federal-aid highway funds shall not be subject to discovery or admitted into evidence in a Federal or State court proceeding or considered for other purposes in any action for damages arising from any occurrence at a location mention or addressed in such reports, surveys, schedules, lists, or data.”
 - Upon submittal of this application, collected data, and supporting documentation the City/County/Governmental Entity/Road Authority/Railroad Company agrees its agents, servants, officers, officials and employees in both their official and individual capacities that the data provided pursuant to this request shall not be discussed, disclosed, used, published, or released without prior written consent of ALDOT. Furthermore, if the data should be released or published without the consent of ALDOT or should an attempt be made to use the data in an action for damages against the State, ALDOT, its officials or employees, the request for access to data shall terminate immediately, the State and ALDOT expressly reserve their right under 23 CFR 148(h)(4) and 409 to object to the use of the data including any opinions drawn from the data and to recover damages caused by the improper and unauthorized release of the data.
 - By submittal of this application, the City, County, Governmental Entity, Road Authority, or Railroad Company is not an agent of ALDOT, its officers, employee’s agents or assigns. The City, County, Governmental Entity, Road Authority, and Railroad Company are independent

entities from ALDOT and nothing in this application creates an agency relationship between the parties.

- Applications under this program shall not be constituted as a debt of the State of Alabama in violation of Article 11, Section 213 of the Constitution of Alabama, 1901 as amended by Amendment Number 26.
- The road authority, railroad, and/or local agency shall coordinate and resolve all utility relocation, right-of-way acquisition, or environmental mitigation conflicts without cost to the Section 130 Rail Safety Program.

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GRADE CROSSING HAZARD ELIMINATION FY2022 APPLICATION FORM

DUE SEPTEMBER 8, 2021 BY 5:00 PM CST

*** Required**

Section A: Crossing Information

* Street/Road Name (Include County/State/US Route)		* Date Submitted
* County	City/Town (In or Near)	* Crossing Inventory Number (DOT # i.e. 123456A)
* Road Authority		
* Railroad Owner (If unknown, include Primary Operating Railroad)		

Section B: Existing Operational and Physical Characteristics

* Provide brief description of existing warning devices (active and passive), site conditions, signage, pavement markings, advance warning signs, etc. (Provide current photos)		
* Provide description of hazard(s) at crossing impacting the public. e.g. blocked crossing, humped crossing, high rate of incidents at crossing, etc. (Provide supporting documentation, if applicable)		
*Detailed Map <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No *Photos of Crossing <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	A detailed map, letter size or no larger than 11" x 17", is required with the crossing located in the center. For rural crossings (4 miles x 4 miles) and urban crossings (1 mile x 1 mile) showing all roads. Please mark each with the letter indicated: schools (s), industrial plants (i), landfills (l), hospitals (h), fire stations (f), Police Stations (p), and ambulatory services (a) within boundaries. Provide most up-to-date photos.	
*Hazardous Material Route <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No *Emergency Vehicle Route <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	*AADT/YEAR _____ / _____	*Percentage of Truck Traffic _____ *School Bus Traffic _____ buses per day (Traffic data provided at the crossing shall be of data collected no later than 2018.)
*Number of Lanes _____ *Road Surface Type _____ *Shoulder Type _____ *Crossing Surface Type _____ *Posted Speed Limit (MPH) _____	Angle of Crossing <input type="checkbox"/> 0-29° <input type="checkbox"/> 30-59° <input type="checkbox"/> 60-90° *Road Width _____ *Shoulder Width _____ *Crossing Surface Width _____	*Curb & Gutter <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there a nearby intersection that could cause queuing over the crossing? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Distance to nearest intersection from crossing (measure from centerline of crossing) _____ ft. Are there traffic control devices within 200' of crossing? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Is the intersection signalized? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Are traffic signals interconnected with existing crossing warning devices? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Train Data		
Type of Train	<input type="checkbox"/> Freight <input type="checkbox"/> Passenger <input type="checkbox"/> Transit <input type="checkbox"/> Shared use transit <input type="checkbox"/> Commuter <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
*Number of Tracks	<input type="checkbox"/> Main _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Siding _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Yard _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Transit _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Industry _____	
*Trains Per Day	<input type="checkbox"/> Main _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Siding _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Yard _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Transit _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Industry _____	
*Train Speed	<input type="checkbox"/> Main _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Siding _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Yard _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Transit _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Industry _____	
Are there other tracks crossing this same roadway within 100 ft. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Provide crossing DOT No. _____ Distance to nearest crossing (measure from centerline to centerline of crossing) _____ ft. If multiple tracks, can two trains occupy crossing at the same time? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Existing Circuitry <input type="checkbox"/> Constant Warning Time <input type="checkbox"/> Motion Detection <input type="checkbox"/> Audio Frequency Overlay (AFO) <input type="checkbox"/> Positive train control (PTC) <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Current (DC) <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ Additional Information:		

Pedestrian & Bicycle Data	
Regular Pedestrian Usage	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Volume of Pedestrians	<input type="checkbox"/> Occasional <input type="checkbox"/> ≤ 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 20-60 <input type="checkbox"/> > 60 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Is sidewalk present on approach?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Which quadrant?	<input type="checkbox"/> Northeast Quadrant <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest Quadrant <input type="checkbox"/> Southeast Quadrant <input type="checkbox"/> Southwest Quadrant
Does crossing surface accommodate pedestrians?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Pedestrian Generators Impact to Crossing	<input type="checkbox"/> School <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment Venues <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses <input type="checkbox"/> Park & Recreations <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Frequency of Impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally Event Dependent <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Regular Bicycle Usage	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Roadway <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated Lane (On Street) <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated Path (Off Street) <input type="checkbox"/> Sidewalk Use Only <input type="checkbox"/> Shared Use Path
Utility Information Impact to Crossing	
<input type="checkbox"/> Gas	<input type="checkbox"/> Cable <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/> Fiber Optic Cable <input type="checkbox"/> Petroleum <input type="checkbox"/> Water <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitary Sewer
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	_____
Utility Provider	_____
Additional Information:	

Section C: Proposed Improvements

Provide brief description of proposed improvements (provide supporting documentation, if applicable)	
Provide brief description of road improvement project/track work planned within the next 3 years at or near crossing location (provide supporting documentation, improvement type, agency, and timeline/completion)	
Any future plans for pedestrian or bicycle routes?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Documented unreported incident history (within last 5 years)	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Not Available
Corridor (provide supporting documentation, if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section D: Crossing Improvement Funding Participation

Preliminary Cost Estimate (If known, provide cost and detailed estimate)	\$ _____
*Funding Source (Required funding share is a minimum ten percent (10%) funding match of project total cost. If proposed project is funded by multiple sources, provide the percentage or dollar amount of total project cost to be paid by each source)	Railroad: _____ % or \$ State: _____ % or \$ City: _____ % or \$ County: _____ % or \$ Other: _____ % or \$
Other: _____	Other: _____ % or \$
*Funding Commitment Letter Attached	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

*The undersigned, as representatives of their respective agency's or company's interest, concurs with this application and agree to comply with the Discovery and Admission section of the application guidelines, failure to do so will result in the rejection of this application. Governed by 23 C.F.R. §§148(h)(4) and 409, should the information be released to or by the City/County/Governmental Entity/Road Authority/Railroad Company be used in an action against the State, Department of Transportation, its officers, officials, agents, servants, and employee for damages, or any other prayer for relief, the undersigned City/County/Governmental Entity/Road Authority/Railroad Company, shall indemnify and hold harmless the State, Department of Transportation, along with its officers, officials, agents, servants, and employees from any claims, causes of action, or damages to the extent allowed by law.

Name (Print)	Signature
Title	Phone Email
Address	City State Zip Code