



Illinois Department of Transportation

Office of the Secretary
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October 16, 2020
CIRCULAR LETTER 2020-16

REVISED GUIDANCE ON REBUILD ILLINOIS BOND FUNDS TO LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCIES

COUNTY ENGINEERS / SUPERINTENDENTS OF HIGHWAYS / MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS / DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC WORKS / MAYORS / METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS – DIRECTORS / TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONERS / CONSULTING ENGINEERS

The purpose of this Circular Letter is to revise the technical guidance provided by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) related to the Local REBUILD Illinois capital program grants which required Local Public Agencies (LPAs) to implement bondable projects.

The administrative direction provided in CL 2020-11 remains the same. Funds received from these REBUILD Illinois (RBI) grants must be deposited into the LPA's MFT account. These grant funds must be separately accounted for and expenditures must be in accordance with purposes authorized in subsection (a) of Section 4 of the General Obligation Bond Act. Projects will need to be a bondable capital improvement. In general, transportation improvement projects with an average useful life of greater than or equal to 13 years will be considered bondable capital improvements. RBI funds may be used in conjunction with MFT, State, or Federal funding.

Previously, the date associated with start of projects was not clearly defined. To be funded with RBI funds, a project or a phase of a project must have been approved after July 1, 2019 (e.g. notice to proceed, contract award, IDOT authorization/approval, etc.) If all previous work has been approved by the department and met the requirements of this program, phases started after July 1, 2019 can qualify for the program. All projects previously approved by IDOT to use the RBI funds are still authorized. This guidance only expands the projects that are eligible to use these funds.

LPA's receiving less than \$45,000 per distribution

No changes are being made to the exception provided to agencies receiving \$45,000 or less per distribution, \$270,000 or less in total. Eligible uses for these agencies must still meet the requirements for MFT funding. LPA's must use their own RBI funds. RBI funds cannot be transferred from one agency to another agency.

MFT funding of General Maintenance activities approved after July 1, 2019 may be replaced or supplemented with RBI funds by means of a revised BLR 14222 or BLR 09150.

All maintenance and construction improvements must meet minimum design requirements in the Bureau of Local Roads and Streets Manual (BLRS Manual).

LPA's receiving more than \$45,000 per distribution

Design Standards shall meet the minimum requirements established in the BLRS Manual. Federal project using bondable matching funds shall meet the minimum Federal requirements established in the BLRS Manual.

RBI funds should be used for the highest and most beneficial transportation infrastructure needs that enhance the overall state and local highway system. Roadway and bridge infrastructures are desirable projects and should be prioritized when planning for the use of RBI funds in your community. Allowable use for RBI funding can include safety improvements such as guardrail, substantial improvement lasting more than 13 years for shoulder widening and/or resurfacing. Traffic signals and other improvements that increase safety and capacity of existing roads will also be considered allowable uses of RBI funds.

Allowable overlays have been questioned by many agencies. HMA overlays that are 2 inches or greater and meet the criteria set in the Local Agency Functional Overlay policy will be considered to meet the bondable requirement of this program. In addition, 1.5-inch HMA overlays will be considered to meet the bondable requirement of this program only for Class III and IV roads and streets (as defined in BLRS Manual Chapter 44) where the existing pavement is structurally sound, has adequate pavement design thickness, and is maintained properly. For all overlays listed above, the pavement shall be prepared for the overlay using patching to remove poor condition layers and/or milling areas that will compromise performance of the overlay.

RBI funding must be authorized through the normal resolution process prior to being utilized on eligible projects.

Stand-alone pedestrian, bicycle, multi-use path and streetscape projects are not eligible for use of the REBUILD Illinois funds. Local agencies wishing to obtain funding for these projects are encouraged to apply for funding under the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP).

LPA's may view their estimated total allotments online at <http://www.idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/mft-distribution/index>

LPA's are strongly encouraged to identify capital bondable projects within the first year of receipt of the first distribution and coordinate with their respective IDOT District staff to ensure project eligibility. Please note that all grants shall be authorized by July 1st, 2025 and identifying eligible projects in a timely

manner will provide ample time for planning and executing projects before the deadline.

If you have questions regarding the use of the REBUILD Illinois grants for specific projects, please contact your IDOT District Bureau of Local Roads and Streets office.

If you have any questions regarding this circular letter, please contact Stephane B.Seck-Birhame, Local Program Development Engineer at (217) 782-3972 or Bablibile.Seck@Illinois.gov

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Osman, J.", is positioned above the typed name.

Omer M. Osman, P.E.
Acting Secretary

Attachment

cc: Arlene Kocher, FHWA – Illinois Division
Duane Ratermann, Illinois Association of County Engineers
Brad Cole, Illinois Municipal League
Bryan Smith, Township Officials of Illinois
Donald Goad, Township Highway Commissioners of Illinois

bcc: Becky Locker
Matt Magalis
Anthony Quigley
Masood Ahmad
Kensil Garnett
Jeff Myers
Keith Roberts