2017 USDOT FASTLANE GRANT APPLICATION for the $200 million Merchants Rail Bridge Replacement over the Mississippi River is a model for public-private partnerships.

The Terminal Railroad Association (TRRA) of St. Louis will fund nearly two-thirds of the cost of the project that will greatly improve freight movement in the nation. Once FASTLANE grant funding is secured, construction could start late 2017 and be completed as early as 2021.

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<tr>
<th>TRRA</th>
<th>$ 40 mil (20%)</th>
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<td>Federal Share FASTLANE:</td>
<td>$ 75 mil (37.5%)</td>
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<td>(MODOT/Bi-State Development sponsors)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRRA (RRIF financing loan*)</td>
<td>$ 85 mil (42.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Cost:</td>
<td>$ 200 mil</td>
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* TRRA is not restricted to the RRIF loan and has other available financing options if required.

The Merchants Rail Bridge over the Mississippi River in America’s heartland impacts national freight movement, the future of freight and the future of farmers, manufacturers and distributors who depend on it.

The Merchants Rail Bridge serving the St. Louis Region:
- Links America’s eastern and western freight rail networks
- Carries more than 40 million gross tons annually
- Serves six Class I railroads and Amtrak

The St. Louis Region:
- Is the second largest freight rail interchange location in the nation
- Is the third largest freight rail interchange by tonnage

Without FASTLANE grant funding, the Merchants Rail Bridge will be taken out of service within ten years. Meanwhile, in its current speed restricted, single track capacity, and rising maintenance costs, the bridge will continue to cause disruptions in the nation’s multimodal freight/rail and passenger service networks.
Merchants Rail Bridge (TRRA) Background

The 127-year-old Merchants Rail Bridge spans the Mississippi River between St. Louis, Missouri and Venice, Illinois, and is owned by the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis (TRRA). The Merchants Bridge has rail connections to Amtrak’s St. Louis Station and to six Class I railroads serving BNSF, CSX, Canadian National, KCS, Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific. These Class I railroads serve the St. Louis region’s manufacturing and logistics companies that are part of an interdependent supply chain requiring access to markets on both sides of the Mississippi River, across the United States and internationally, including:

| U.S. Steel  
in Granite City, IL | Conoco Phillips  
(Largest U.S. refining facility in Wood River, IL) | Cargill | ADM |
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<td>World Wide Technologies</td>
<td>General Motors</td>
<td>Hershey’s</td>
<td>Unilever</td>
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<td>Metro East Industries</td>
<td>Bunge</td>
<td>American Milling</td>
<td>Schneider Trucking</td>
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| SCF Lewis & Clark Marine | FedEx | Boeing  
(Defense, Space & Security) | Kinder Morgan |

Economic Impacts of TRRA operations and the Bridge Replacement during construction

TRRA spends an average of almost $80.9 million per year in the St. Louis MSA (metropolitan statistical area, or “region”), for operation support, infrastructure repair and maintenance and employee wages which supports almost $237 million in overall economic activity in the region and 1,094 jobs, including the 254 direct jobs at TRRA. The proposed $200 mil bridge replacement will support an estimated $9.4 mil in wages and 135 full-time equivalent jobs annually over a four-year construction period and the overall economic activity of $237 mil will increase.

Currently, the Merchants Bridge has speed, clearance and weight restrictions. Clearance issues prevent the crossing of two trains simultaneously, limiting the bridge to one track at all times. Since trains cannot pass on the bridge, they often come to a complete stop on or near the approach grades. Weight restrictions do not allow the bridge to accommodate modern train loads, which impose costs of delay, braking and startup.

The Merchants Rail Bridge replacement project includes removal and replacement of the three river-span trusses, seismically retrofitting the existing river piers and improving the east approach. The new double track structure will provide additional capacity for increased freight and passenger rail. The double-track will also provide more reliable movements and reduce grade crossing delays for motorists and emergency vehicles. All of these benefits will also help reduce stress on the National Highway Freight Network that is anticipated to grow by 40 percent over the next three decades.

Project Readiness. If funded, construction could start late 2017 and be completed as early as 2021. Design is 60% complete with 100% completion expected in June 2017. NEPA Categorical Exclusion approval is anticipated in April 2017. RRIF Loan application is in credit-worthiness review and expected to close in the Fall.

Owning the sixth busiest Mississippi rail bridge in the country serving the nation’s third largest rail hub, the TRRA interfaces with the nation’s third and eighth largest inland port systems, the northern most year-round ice-free Mississippi River port providing services to America’s Central Port (with container on barge capacity), Kaskaskia Regional Port District and the St. Louis Port Authority. The Merchants Bridge is in close proximity to four interstate freight corridors I-70, I-55, I-44 and I-64 providing national north-south and east-west access. With improvements to the bridge, an estimated 185,676 truckloads will be diverted from these highways to rail, reducing vehicle miles traveled by trucks by 74 million and saving $63 million in roadway damage over 20 years.

Illinois and Missouri’s impact on national freight movement (2012 AAR):
- Illinois ranked #3 and Missouri ranked #4 in rail tons carried
- Illinois ranked #1 and Missouri ranked #3 in rail cars carried
- Freight Rail Employment - Illinois ranked #2 and Missouri ranked #6