

§ 268.19

(2) The extent and proportion to which the private sector contributes financially to the project.

NOTE TO §268.17: FRA recognizes that applicants for preconstruction planning assistance may not have detailed information with respect to each of these criteria, and that the purpose of the preconstruction planning assistance is to develop much of this information with respect to a particular Maglev project. The preconstruction planning application requirements of this part 268 are designed to elicit whatever information an applicant may have pertaining to these criteria.

§ 268.19 Evaluation of applications for preconstruction planning assistance.

The FRA will evaluate the applications for their completeness and responsiveness to the requirements listed in §268.15. In addition, applicants are advised that the Maglev Deployment Program contains a number of project eligibility standards (minimum threshold standards) and project evaluation criteria that will guide the FRA's review of the project descriptions produced under the Planning Grants. The FRA's implementation of these standards and criteria appears in §268.11 and §268.17, respectively. Although subject to revision, the information in §268.11 and §268.17 should assist the States in completing their applications in the competition for planning grants, since the project descriptions will need to respond to the standards and criteria. In evaluating the applications for planning grants, FRA will consider how consistent the applicant's project is to the standards and criteria, and the application's likelihood of leading to a project that meets all the standards and criteria.

§ 268.21 Down-selection of one or more Maglev projects for further study and selection of one project for final design, engineering, and construction funding.

(a) Upon completion of Phase III of the Maglev Deployment Program, FRA

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will down-select one or more projects to complete additional environmental studies, investment grade revenue forecasts, and other studies and analyses necessary prior to initiation of construction. Final design and engineering work will also be initiated for the down-selected project(s). To be down-selected a project must appear to meet the project eligibility standards contained in §268.11 (b), rate highly in the project selection criteria specified in §268.17, be judged by FRA to have a good chance of being constructed with the Federal funds authorized for this program, and be successfully operated by a public/private partnership.

(b) Only one project will be selected in Phase IV of the Maglev Deployment Program and be eligible for any Federal construction funds that Congress chooses to make available. That one project must meet each and every project eligibility standard contained in §268.11 (b). If more than one project down-selected in Phase III and funded through Phase IV meets all of these standards, then FRA will evaluate and compare the eligible projects according to the set of project selection criteria contained in §268.17.

(c) In reviewing competing projects under the project eligibility standards and project selection criteria, the FRA will exercise particular vigilance regarding the following elements of the preconstruction planning process, although not to the exclusion of others:

(1) The credibility of the demand and revenue forecasts, cost estimates, and benefit/cost comparisons; and

(2) The credibility of the financial plan.

(d) FRA intends to make periodic reviews of the processes and products of grant recipients. Such reviews may include, at the FRA's option, reviews at key milestones in the preparation of project descriptions.

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