



WASHINGTON STATE
PUBLIC WORKS BOARD
INFRASTRUCTURE IS FUNDAMENTAL

Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27)

Public Works Board Traditional Program Notice of Funding Opportunity/Application Guidelines

Construction Application Window:

- Monday, June 1, 2026 – Friday, July 31, 2026 at 11:59pm

Pre-construction Application Windows:

- Monday, June 1, 2026 – Friday, July 31, 2026 at 11:59pm
- Monday, August 10, 2026 – Friday, October 30, 2026 at 11:59pm
- Monday, November 9, 2026 – Friday, January 29, 2027 at 11:59pm
- Monday, February 8, 2027 – Friday, April 30, 2027 at 11:59pm

Emergency Application Window:

- Applications accepted continuously until funds are exhausted.

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For more information, visit the [Public Works Board Traditional Financing](#) webpage.

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APPLICATION PROCESS

STEP 1: Review eligibility guidelines and determine eligibility.

STEP 2: Review the application instructions and begin an application via ZoomGrants.

STEP 3: Prepare all required materials for a complete application.

STEP 4: Review the application checklist in the instructions to ensure all required materials are included.

STEP 5: Submit the completed application and all required supplemental documents in ZoomGrants.

PART 1: PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Program Purpose

Established in 1985 and authorized by RCW [43.155](#), the Public Works Board (PWB) supports necessary infrastructure projects, promotes public health and safety, protects the environment, promotes community and economic development, and facilitates broadband connectivity through various funding programs.

The Construction funding program focuses on the activities that repair, replace, or create a facility or asset in an eligible system. A construction project may comprise any combination of pre-construction and construction elements.

The Pre-construction funding program accelerates the completion of public works projects by funding project activities such as design engineering, bid-document preparation, environmental studies, right-of-way acquisition, value planning, permits, cultural and historic resources, and public notification. Pre-construction funding may also be used for capital facilities planning. Pre-construction applications are accepted continuously and pooled and awarded quarterly until all funds are exhausted.

The Emergency construction funding program focuses on the activities that repair, replace, and/or reconstruct a facility that will restore essential services and are made necessary by a natural disaster, or an immediate and emergent threat to the public health and safety due to unforeseen or unavoidable circumstances. Applicants for emergency funding must also be able to demonstrate substantial fiscal need. Emergency applications are accepted continuously on a non-competitive, first-come, first-served basis until all funds are exhausted.

Program Eligibility

Applicants must be one of the following:

- A city or town;
- A county;
- A special purpose district; or,
- A quasi-municipal organization.

Ineligible applicants typically include but are not limited to ports, school districts, Tribes, 501(c)3 non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, and homeowner associations.

Eligible projects include the planning, acquisition, construction, repair, reconstruction, replacement, rehabilitation, or improvement of at least one of the following infrastructure systems:

- Bridges
- Domestic water
- Roads/streets
- Sanitary sewer/wastewater
- Solid waste/recycling/organics
- Storm water

For information about the PWB's Broadband funding programs, visit the [Public Works Board Broadband Financing](#) webpage.

Other Threshold Eligibility Requirements

Capital Facilities Plans

All applicants must have adopted a Capital Facilities Plan for all systems they own on or before the application deadline **within 10 years of the date of application**. The following standards are the minimum requirements for a Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) as established by the Board. These may also be called a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

- a. Inventory major system components, show locations and capabilities, and assess the overall capital needs for the specific system(s) involved;
- b. Forecast future needs for the capital facilities, show location, and capabilities of expanded or new capital facilities;
- c. Identify, prioritize, and coordinate major capital improvement projects over a six-year period;
- d. Estimate capital project costs and identify financing alternatives for each project identified. Transportation projects and funding must be consistent with locally-established service standards;
- e. Must be updated on a regular basis;
- f. Must be consistent with the comprehensive plans of neighboring jurisdictions;
- g. Must have provided opportunity for early and continuous public participation; and
- h. Must be consistent with, and an element of, the comprehensive plan formally adopted by the governing body of the local jurisdiction.

For special purpose districts that do not typically create CFP/CIPs, the equivalent planning document for the primary system they are applying for will suffice. For example, a water district must have updated their Water System Plan (or similar) within the past 10 years.

An applicant must be able to show that their CFP/CIP (or similar) is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plans of the local jurisdiction(s) in which they do business.

Greenhouse Gas Policy

[RCW 70A.45.020](#) requires the Board to consider, when awarding funds, whether the entity receiving funds has adopted policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and whether the project proposed for funding is consistent with Washington's limits on GHGs, goals to reduce vehicle miles traveled, and applicable federal emissions reduction standards. The Board identifies a Greenhouse Gas policy as a specific policy adopted by the applicant jurisdiction in which the jurisdiction identifies the policies (broadly or narrowly) that enable reductions in consumption of energy including, but not limited to, the reduction of GHGs.

Growth Management Act (GMA) Compliance & Conformance

All applicants need to be in compliance with the Growth Management Act (GMA) with **no findings** before a Growth Management Hearings Board at the time of application submission to be eligible for funding.

Fully-planning applicants that are not in conformance because their periodic update and/or Critical Areas Ordinance is overdue have five months to be in conformance. Otherwise, their award letter may be withdrawn.

Partially-planning applicants that are not in conformance because their Critical Areas Ordinance and/or other required planning documents adopted by legislative action are overdue have five months to be in conformance. Otherwise, their award letter may be withdrawn.

Applicants not subject to GMA requirements, such as special purpose districts, must be able to show consistency with any applicable comprehensive land use plans of the local jurisdiction(s) in which their service area is located. This also must include a review of household allocations and any upcoming demands for infrastructure due to growth.

For questions, contact the Growth Management Services (GMS) unit within the Department of Commerce at (360) 725-3000.

Puget Sound Partnership: Stormwater and Wastewater Projects

Projects designed to address the effects of stormwater or wastewater on Puget Sound may be funded by PWB only if the project is not in conflict with the action agenda developed by the Puget Sound partnership under [RCW 90.71.310](#).

Real Estate Excise Tax (REET)

For counties, cities, and towns, the applicant must impose the one-quarter of one-percent REET as allowed by [RCW 82.46.010\(2\)](#) at the time of application.

Maximum Awards

The 2025-27 biennium begins on July 1, 2025, and ends on June 30, 2027.

The maximum amount of funding that the Board may provide for any jurisdiction is \$10 million per biennium across all three funding programs. Jurisdictions who experience emergencies during the 2025-27 biennium may receive up to \$2 million in Emergency construction funding beyond the \$10 million cap.

The maximum award for a Construction project is \$10 million.

The maximum award for a Pre-construction project is \$1 million.

The maximum award for an Emergency project is \$1 million except in catastrophic conditions.

Project Solicitation and Available Funding

PWB is soliciting applications for eligible projects during the following windows:

FY27 Construction Funding

The PWB will accept applications for eligible Construction projects from eligible applicants beginning **Monday, June 1, 2026** through **Friday, July 31, 2026 at 11:59pm**. Awards are anticipated to be made at the October 2, 2026 Public Works Board meeting.

There is a **maximum of \$202,025,000** available for Construction funding for fiscal year 2027. However, the Board reserves the right to award less than that amount based on projected funds available in the Public Works Assistance Account at the time of award.

FY27 Pre-construction Funding

The PWB will accept applications for eligible Pre-construction projects from eligible applicants during the following windows:

- Monday, June 1, 2026 – Friday, July 31, 2026 at 11:59pm
- Monday, August 10, 2026 – Friday, October 30, 2026 at 11:59pm
- Monday, November 9, 2026 – Friday, January 29, 2027 at 11:59pm
- Monday, February 8, 2027 – Friday, April 30, 2027 at 11:59pm

Eligible Pre-construction applications received during each period will be pooled and scored as a group each quarter. Awards are anticipated to be made about one month after the close of each application window.

There is a maximum of \$20 million available for Pre-construction projects for fiscal year 2027. However, the Board reserves the right to award less than that amount based on projected funds available in the Public Works Assistance Account at the time of award.

FY27 Emergency Construction Funding

The PWB accepts applications for eligible Emergency construction projects from eligible applicants on an ongoing first-come, first-served basis until funds are exhausted. Contact a PWB staff member to discuss potential Emergency construction funding.

There is \$7.5 million available for Emergency construction projects for fiscal year 2027.

Example Projects

Eligible Construction projects may include but are not limited to:

- Replacing aging domestic water or sanitary sewer conveyance pipes.
- Constructing a new process-specific building at a wastewater treatment plant.
- Renovating a hazardous solid waste processing station.
- Rebuilding a road that includes passive stormwater treatment and conveyance, new water and sewer pipes, and a roundabout.
- Changing a collapsed, fish-impassable culvert to a box culvert under a bridge.
- Responding to a mandatory utility relocation.

Eligible Pre-construction projects may include but are not limited to:

- 60% design for a drinking water reservoir.
- Preliminary engineering and engineering report for replacing a failing bridge.
- 100% design of a "complete streets" remodel of a downtown commercial district.
- A combined storm/sewer separation feasibility study.
- Updating a small water system management plan for submission to the Dept. of Health.
- Land acquisition and cultural resources review for a new water treatment facility site.

Eligible Emergency construction projects may include but are not limited to:

- Repairing a sinkhole caused by a damaged stormwater pipe.
- Replacing a burst sanitary sewer pipe underneath a river.
- Rebuilding a washed-out, impassable road after a flooding event.
- Restoring service after an unforeseen failure at a water treatment facility.

Award Terms and Hardship Criteria

Pre-construction awards are 5-year loan terms.

Construction and Emergency construction are 20-year loan terms.

All awards are presumed to be 100% loans unless an applicant meets the PWB's [hardship criteria](#). For any applicant that meets the Distressed or Severely Distressed criteria, PWB offers reduced interest rates and loan/grant combinations subject to grant funding availability.

To see areas the PWB considers Distressed and Severely Distressed, applicants can [use this map](#). Any jurisdiction in a county or census tract that is considered Distressed or Severely Distressed will also receive that designation. PWB may also review an individual city, town, or place using US Census Bureau data when assessing an applicant's hardship.

For project areas that cross multiple areas of distress, PWB will look at the distress status of at least 51% of the project area.

Applicants may also meet hardship criteria if underwriting determines a level of distress using the affordability index or debt service coverage ratio.

Fiscal Year 2026 All PWB Traditional Funding Programs – Interest Rates and Grants			
Funding Type	Non-distressed	Distressed	Severely Distressed
Loan Term: >5 to 20 years* (<i>Construction and Emergency</i>)	2.31%	1.85%	1.16%
Loan Term: 5 years or less (<i>Pre-construction</i>)	1.16%	0.93%	0.58%
Grant Eligibility	None	Up to 15% of award, \$1m maximum per jurisdiction per biennium	Up to 50% of award, \$2m maximum per jurisdiction per biennium
Local Match Funding:	None		
Loan Fee:	None		
<i>*The loan term cannot exceed the life of the asset being financed.</i>			

PART 2: APPLICATION PROCESS

Application System

All applications and required documents must be submitted via ZoomGrants. Emailed or mailed paper application documents will not be accepted. Construction and Pre-construction projects will use the same application. Emergency projects have a separate application.

- [Construction and Pre-construction Application](#) (ZoomGrants)
- [Emergency Construction Application](#) (ZoomGrants)

For ZoomGrants Technical questions, contact the ZoomGrants Tech Support Desk:

Questions@ZoomGrants.com

(866) 323-5404 ext. 2

Application Overview

The application is divided into the following sections:

- Application Summary
 - General Application Information
 - Project Need
 - Archaeological and Cultural Resources
- Application Questions
 - Community Financial Profile
 - Project Outcomes
 - Local Management Effort
 - Fact-finding Questions
- Tables
 - Project Schedule – Pre-construction Phase
 - Project Schedule – Construction Phase
 - Project Funding – Attempts
 - Project Funding – Secured or Already Spent
 - Contingent or Matched Funds
- Documents

Every question, table, or document may influence the evaluation of an application. Read each question in its entirety before answering to ensure completeness of the application. Leaving a question or portion of a table blank may mean an applicant loses out on critical points.

Even if a question or portion of a table does not apply to an applicant, we recommend that applicants put “n/a” to show that they have considered it. Applicants often only partially

complete the Tables section. **Fully complete each table for your respective application** to maximize points.

Required Documents

Each application must include the following required documents. All document templates are included in the ZoomGrants portal.

- A completed **EZ-1 form**, even if a National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 or Governor Executive Order 21-02 cultural and historic review process has already been completed for the project.
- A signed **applicant certification form**.
- A copy of the applicant's **greenhouse gas (GHG) policy**. Examples of GHG policies are available upon request.
- **Photos** of the project site or asset. For capital facilities planning Pre-construction applications for which there are no photos, a version of the outdated planning document is acceptable.
- A **project contact list** using the template provided.

For Emergency construction projects, the application should also include a copy of the **emergency declaration** by the applicant, if available.

IMPORTANT: Some documents may require approval by the applicant's governing body prior to signature depending on the applicant's internal policies and laws.

Exceptions and Completeness Checks

If an applicant is unable to provide a required form until after the application deadline because a governing body is unable to approve the document in time, the PWB may accept a memo in lieu of a completed document that specifies the anticipated date of review and approval of the document. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide the approved and completed document immediately after the date specified in the memo.

Upon submission of an application, the PWB will perform a review of the completeness and consistency of the required elements of an application limited to:

- Required threshold documents
- Critical application information such as:
 - Name, address, mailing address, primary system type
 - Scope of work
 - Estimated project schedule
 - Estimated costs
 - Anticipated and secured project funding

Applicants may submit required information until the cycle closes. If the staff solicitation coordinator requests any additional material or information after the cycle has closed, the applicant must provide the requested information within 10 business days of notification.

Only specific information identified and requested by PWB staff may be added to the application and not more than 10 days following the request after the close of the cycle. The scoring team will not consider any information provided after the deadlines described in the policy, or information that was not requested.

The PWB does not assume responsibility for problems with an applicant's email or missing information not discovered during the completeness check. If Commerce email or ZoomGrants are not working during critical deadline periods, appropriate allowances will be made.

Additional Documents

Applicants are encouraged to upload any other documents that may assist the PWB in review of the application. These may include, but are not limited to:

- A completed SEPA checklist.
- Regulatory orders, court orders, negotiated letters of agreement, or any other evidence of new requirements to be met through this project.
- Project-specific documents, such as reports about the issue, data, design schematics, etc.
- Non-regulatory letters of support from affected stakeholders, such as residents, businesses, special interest groups, neighborhood associations, etc.
- Evidence of any proactive community engagement completed for the project or system, such as event flyers, notes from an HOA meeting about the issue the applicant attended, photos of facility tours for the community, etc.

Resources

Applicant Questions

A document with all questions received and answered will be published on the [program webpage](#) and linked in ZoomGrants with new questions and answers provided throughout the application period. Questions may be submitted via email to Alison Mitchell at alison.mitchell@commerce.wa.gov.

The staff solicitation coordinator will not answer questions that provide any applicant with specific information related to their project or application except to help determine project or applicant eligibility. All answers will be generalized across applicants and the PWB reserves the right to not answer a submitted question if it would give the applicant an unfair advantage.

Webinars

The PWB will host two repeated, recorded webinar sessions for prospective applicants to learn about the funding program, application, scoring metrics, and important policies to be aware of. The webinars will be hosted via Zoom using the following links:

- [Wednesday, June 10, 2026, from 3:30pm – 5:00pm](#)
- [Thursday, June 11, 2026, from 9:30am – 11:00am](#)

Recordings of these webinars will be published on the [program webpage](#) and linked in ZoomGrants.

Additional Resources

- An additional narrative guidance document will be published on the [program webpage](#) and linked in ZoomGrants a few weeks after the cycle is open.
- [Public Works Board Policies](#)
- [Public Works Board Traditional Program Handbook](#)

PART 3: EVALUATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

Evaluation Criteria

There is a maximum of 106 points possible. A score of 65 points is the minimum threshold to be considered for funding. Emergency construction applications are not scored.

Applications will be evaluated based on five categories: Existing Impacts, Project Outcomes, Documentation, Readiness to Proceed (for Construction applications) and Preparation for Construction (for Pre-construction applications), and Local Management Effort.

In addition to the five evaluation categories listed, applicants may receive up to 6 additional bonus points for meeting specific priorities. See the Evaluation Bonus Category for more information.

Evaluation Categories

The following information covers the complete list of evaluation categories. Review this section carefully.

The PWB will not consider any information referenced but not included in the application as a part of evaluation. Even if a particular question in the application may not seem to apply to the project, applicants are encouraged to **not leave it blank** to ensure as complete an application as possible.

Evaluation Category 1: Existing Impacts | Up to 30 Points

The project application will be evaluated for the severity of the existing impacts the issue is causing to the community, the system, and the organization. The Existing Impacts score accounts for the risk associated with not completing the project and assesses the consequence of the status quo using metrics such as, but not limited to:

- How widespread is the issue?
- Does it affect a majority of the system?
- Is it isolated to a specific area?
- Are the effects more severe for the area impacted, or relatively mild?
- Is there a major health and safety issue?
- Has the issue caused or is it about to cause property damage or environmental degradation?
- Are the dangers – or opportunities – imminent? Or are they potential?

Applications will be given a score of **High** (30 points), **Medium** (25 points), or **Low** (20 points).

Evaluation Category 2: Project Outcomes | Up to 25 Points

Each application will be assessed based on the outcomes the project is expected to achieve upon completion. The Project Outcomes score assigns points across board priorities using a scale. Projects that can show outcomes across more than one priority will receive more points. The outcomes are:

1. **Public health and safety:** To what level does the project solve or prevent public health and safety issues?
2. **Environmental health:** To what level does the project solve or prevent environmental degradation?
3. **System performance:** To what level does the project address existing or prevent future system performance issues?
4. **Economic and housing development:** To what level does the project impact housing or economic development?
5. **Equity:** Does the project have positive impacts in an area identified as a) having a high (7-10) index of health disparity according to the Environmental Health Disparities Map; b) an Overburdened Community; and/or c) the lands or community of a Federally-recognized Tribe?

Evaluation Category 3: Documentation | Up to 10 Points

The Documentation of Situation score assigns points on a scale when the project application provides clear documentation of regulatory orders, negotiated letter of agreement, new permitting requirements, letters of support, evidence of community engagement, and project-specific documentation that supports the rationale for the project.

Evaluation Category 4a: Construction Readiness to Proceed | Up to 25 Points

For Construction applications only: This score assigns points for project readiness of the applicant based on the following criteria:

1. Technical feasibility: design/engineering completeness and regulatory approvals (if applicable)
2. Permitting timeline
3. Projected construction start date
4. Total project funding

Evaluation Category 4b: Pre-construction Preparation for Construction | Up to 25 Points

For Pre-construction applications only: This score assigns points for how the proposed project will support a future construction project based on the following criteria:

1. Whether the project will directly benefit a specific construction project

2. Amount of design/engineering/planning to be completed with the funding
3. Amount of design/engineering/planning already completed
4. Other pre-construction elements to be completed with this funding or already complete, including permitting, environmental review, and regulatory approvals (if applicable)

A primary source of this information is the Tables tab of the application. **To the best of your ability, do not leave any table in this tab blank.**

NEW: Per the PWB's [Performance Incentives](#) policy, for any Construction award after July 1, 2025, awardees are only eligible for performance incentives options C or D if the Notice to Proceed date for the selected general construction contractor is **no more than three (3) months** after the date of the estimated Construction Start Date/Notice to Proceed milestone listed in the original application for funding. Applicants will be asked to confirm their understanding of this policy in the application. Review the [Performance Incentives](#) policy for additional information.

Evaluation Category 5: Local Management Effort | Up to 10 Points

This score assigns points for evidence that the applicant does not have issues managing their own organization or the system for which they are applying:

1. Whether they have any uncured or persistent audit findings from their last 3 audits;
2. Whether any audit findings from the last 3 audits are specific to the primary system for which they are applying;
3. Whether they are missing any filed and published Annual Reports from the prior 3 fiscal years to the State Auditor's Office;
4. Whether the applicant has a clear plan to operate the system, maintain the sustainability of the asset, and ensure its proposed outcomes once the project is complete.

Evaluation Bonus Category | Up to 6 Points

The PWB may award bonus points according to specific priorities it sets for the biennium.

For the 2025-27 biennium, projects may receive 3 points each up to 6 total bonus points if they meet the following priorities:

1. Consolidates or regionalizes a utility system;
2. Addresses a mandatory utility relocation;
3. Supports a proactive, multi-system, multi-jurisdiction dig-once approach;
4. Contribute to recycling or organics management.