

**STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)
RFA NO. 2027-CCI-173-01**

NOTE: Please read this entire document before submitting a response. Responses that do not meet one or more requirements stated herein may be disqualified and not scored.

PROJECT TITLE: Capital Project Capacity-Building Grant Program

RESPONSE DUE DATE: Friday, October 30, 2026 no later than 3:00PM

EXPECTED TIME PERIOD FOR GRANT AGREEMENT/CONTRACT: 6 months, January-June 30, 2027

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY: This funding opportunity is open to those entities which satisfy the minimum qualifications stated herein and are available for work in Washington.

This COMMERCE RFA offers three funding tracks determined by applicant type. Your applicant type determines your track, eligibility requirements, and maximum funding amount.

This funding opportunity is available only to:

Track 1: Local governments as defined by RCW

Track 2: Federally recognized tribal governments

Track 3: Federally designated nonprofit organizations

FUNDING SOURCE AND METHOD: This opportunity is funded by two sources: Washington State Capital Funds (\$1.9M) for eligible local governments and federally recognized tribal governments; and Washington State Operating Funds (\$400K) for eligible federally designated nonprofit organizations. This funding opportunity is open to those entities that satisfy the minimum qualifications stated below.

Funding available: Approximately \$2.3M

Maximum award: \$50,000–\$200,000 depending on applicant type and eligible activities

Funding may support: Technical Assistance and/or Predevelopment activities and deliverables for an identified early-stage capital project to be shovel-ready within five years (by 2031).

CONTENTS OF THE REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS:

1. Introduction
2. General Information
3. Application Contents
4. Evaluation and Award

All documents are separate files located:

[**COMMERCE BOX FOLDER-ALL RFA AND EXHIBIT DOCUMENTS \[LINK\]**](#)

Exhibits:

Exhibit A	Certifications and Assurances
Exhibit B1, B2, B3	Application Forms for Each Applicant Track
Exhibit C	Diverse Business Inclusion Plan
Exhibit D	Workers' Rights Certification
Exhibit E1, E2, E3	Example Capital Agreement or Grant Contract including General Terms and Conditions
Exhibit F	Examples of Technical Assistance and Predevelopment Activities and Deliverables
Exhibit G	Resource: Foundations of Capital Project Readiness

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RFA Exhibits are separate documents and located in the [one Commerce Box Account Folder](#).

Exhibit A	Certifications and Assurances (Mandatory submission- All tracks)
Exhibit B1	Applicant Response- Local Government Application (Mandatory submission for Track 1- Local Governments)
Exhibit B2	Applicant Response- Tribal Government Application (Mandatory submission for Track 2- Tribal Governments)
Exhibit B3	Applicant Response- Nonprofit Application (Mandatory submission for Track 3- Nonprofits)
Exhibit C	Diverse Business Inclusion Plan (Mandatory submission-All tracks)
Exhibit D	Workers' Rights Certification (Mandatory submission-All tracks)
Exhibit E1	Track 1 Local Government - Example Capital Agreement with General Terms and Conditions (For reference only)
Exhibit E2	Track 2 Tribal Government- Example Capital Agreement with General Terms and Conditions (For reference only)
Exhibit E3	Track 3 Nonprofit Organization – Example Grant Contract with General Terms and Conditions (For reference only)
Exhibit F	Examples of Technical Assistance and Predevelopment Activities and Deliverables (For reference only)
Exhibit G	Resource: Foundations of Capital Project Planning and Readiness- Recorded Webinar Series and Tools (For reference only)

0 HOW TO USE THIS RFA AND EXHIBITS

This Request for Applications (RFA) provides the requirements and instructions for this funding opportunity. Applicants should review the entire RFA and all applicable exhibits before completing and submitting an application.

The RFA document explains program purpose, eligibility, eligible activities and costs, funding limits, application and evaluation requirements, contracting requirements, and important dates.

RFA Exhibits:

Exhibit A – Certifications and Assurances: Mandatory submission. Complete and submit with the application.

Exhibit B1, B2, B3 – Applicant Information: Mandatory submission. Complete and submit all required application questions and information. Select the Exhibit B version (B1, B2, B3) for your applicant type.

Exhibit C – Diverse Business Inclusion Plan: Mandatory submission. Complete and submit with the application.

Exhibit D – Workers' Rights Certification: Mandatory submission. Complete and submit with the application.

Exhibit E1, E2, E3 – Example Agreement or Contract with General Terms and Conditions: For reference only. Review the Exhibit E1, E2, or E3 for your specific applicant type to understand the terms and conditions that will apply if selected for funding. Do not submit with the application.

Exhibit F – Examples of Technical Assistance and Predevelopment Activities and Deliverables: For reference only.

Exhibit G - Resource: Foundations of Capital Project Planning and Readiness- Recorded Webinar Series and Tools

Applicants are responsible for submitting all required materials identified in the RFA and Exhibits A–D by the application deadline.

Recommended steps:

- Step 1 Read the entire RFA and all exhibits- located in the official RFA folder in Commerce Box Account
- Step 2 Identify your applicant track for its requirements and funding limits.
- Step 3 Confirm applicant eligibility with minimum qualifications and applicant type specific requirements.
- Step 4: Confirm eligibility for your project location using the Project Location Checker Tool
- Step 4 Decide what capacity-building support your organization and project needs
 - Review eligible activities and deliverables
 - Refer to Exhibit F for Examples of Activities
 - Use the free resource in Exhibit G: Foundations of Capital Project Planning and Readiness
 - Four 1-hour recorded webinars
 - Thirteen tools and materials for reference (Optional, do not submit with application)
- Step 5 Complete and submit one application response by uploading all required attachments

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Washington State Department of Commerce hereafter called "COMMERCE," is initiating this Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit applications from those qualified and interested in grant funding **for organization capacity-building support to advance early-stage capital projects that directly benefit overburdened communities in Washington state.**

Many communities struggle to advance capital projects from concept to implementation due to organizational, technical, or financial barriers. This program supports **local governments, federally recognized tribal governments, and federally designated nonprofits registered in Washington.**

This funding opportunity is designed to help organizations strengthen their own **capacity and to advance early-stage capital projects toward greater readiness.** Through **technical assistance and predevelopment funding,** the program helps organizations strengthen their capacity, better define and assess their projects, address early planning and readiness needs, and prepare to move into later stages of capital project development including **being shovel-ready within five years- by 2031.**

This funding is not intended to duplicate or replace funding typically available through other Commerce capital programs or other state, federal, local, or private funding sources. Rather, it supports the earlier capacity-building and predevelopment work that can help organizations successfully advance into those later funding and project development stages.

This funding opportunity relies on Washington State capital funds and state operating funds being administered by Commerce's Community Capacity Initiative (CCI), a program of the Community Engagement and Outreach Division.

1.2 OBJECTIVES AND ELIGIBILITY

COMMERCE anticipates a highly competitive process and expects to award a limited number of grant contracts through this RFA.

This funding opportunity aims to strengthen the ability of local governments, federally recognized tribal governments, and federally designated nonprofits to plan and prepare capital projects that directly address unmet needs in Washington's overburdened communities.

This funding initiative is designed to:

- Support capital projects that directly benefit overburdened communities in Washington state.
- Address a critical need or next step in an early-stage capital project through targeted technical assistance and/or predevelopment funding.
- Strengthen organizational and project readiness by addressing technical, financial, staffing, planning, or other barriers that may be preventing a viable project from moving forward.
- Advance viable capital projects toward implementation, including positioning applicants to pursue future capital funding and move into later stages of project development **within the next five years (2031).**

Priority will be given to early-stage capital projects that are currently in the concept, pre-planning, planning, or predevelopment stage. Projects should be expected to reach the **shovel-ready stage within five years (by 2031).**

For more information about capital project stages and readiness, see **Exhibit G: Foundations of Capital Project Planning and Readiness webinar series and materials.**

This RFA includes dedicated funding tracks. **An applicant's organization type determines which track applies.**

Track 1: Local Governments

Track 2: Federally Recognized Tribal Governments

Track 3: Federally Designated Nonprofit Organizations

1.2.1 TRACK 1: LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Track 1: Local Government- Eligible Applicants

Track 1 is open to:

Local governments, as defined by RCW 47.06A.010 "Local governments" means cities, towns, counties, special purpose districts, port districts, and any other municipal corporations or quasi-municipal corporations in the state excluding school districts, in Washington state that meet the minimum qualifications of this RFA- see Section 1.3.

Track 1: Local Government- Eligible Capital Project Types

Applicants must identify a specific capital project that advances one or more of the following community needs:

- **Community Housing**
- **Energy**
- **Infrastructure**

Eligible projects may include improvements, renovations, or new construction.

The project must be sufficiently defined for the applicant to identify the specific readiness barriers, activities, and deliverables that would be supported by this grant. Proposals based solely on a general idea or an unidentified future capital project are not eligible.

Track 1: Local Government- Maximum Funding

Track 1 eligible applicants may request **up to \$200,000 total in one application**, consisting of:

- Up to **\$50,000 for eligible technical assistance activities and deliverables;**
and/or
- Up to **\$150,000 for eligible predevelopment activities and deliverables.**

Applicants may request technical assistance, predevelopment, or a combination of both based on the needs and current stage of the identified capital project. Technical assistance may not exceed \$50,000, and predevelopment may not exceed \$150,000.

Track 1: Local Government- Eligible and Ineligible Activities, Deliverables

Eligible Activities- Technical Assistance and Predevelopment

Track 1 Applicants may apply for funding for technical assistance support, predevelopment activities or both.

Technical Assistance Activities

Track 1 applicants may request up to **\$50,000 for technical assistance** that directly supports their ability to prepare for, plan, manage, or advance the identified capital project.

Eligible activities may include project-specific readiness assessment and planning, project management, governance and decision-making, financial planning, funding strategy, procurement and contracting planning, community and stakeholder engagement, partnership planning, risk assessment, operations and sustainability planning, specialized technical consultation, and other eligible project-specific capacity-building activities.

Predevelopment Activities

Track 1 applicants may request up to **\$150,000 for predevelopment activities** that directly advance the identified capital project toward implementation or construction readiness.

Eligible activities may include feasibility analysis, site assessment and due diligence, surveying, environmental or cultural resource review, geotechnical work, utility and infrastructure assessment, architectural and engineering services, conceptual or schematic design, project cost estimating, permitting and regulatory planning, facility or infrastructure condition assessments, accessibility or code analysis, energy or resilience analysis, design development, construction planning, and other eligible professional or technical predevelopment work.

Ineligible Activities

Activities that are in the technical assistance and/or predevelopment categories must be directly connected to the identified capital project. Construction, equipment, routine operations or maintenance, fundraising implementation or grant writing, and other activities identified as **ineligible in this RFA** may not be funded.

Deliverables

Each grant-funded activity must result in a specific deliverable or work product, such as a report, assessment plan, analysis, design document, or other approved product.

Deliverables must be submitted to Commerce with the associated billing and supporting documentation before reimbursement.

See Exhibit F for Examples of Technical Assistance and Predevelopment Activities and Deliverables.

1.2.2 TRACK 2: FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

Track 2: Federally recognized Tribal Government- Eligible Applicants

Track 2 is open to: federally recognized tribal governments in Washington state that meet the minimum qualifications of this RFA- see Section 1.3.

Track 2: Federally recognized Tribal Government- Eligible Capital Project Types

Applicants must identify a specific capital project that advances one or more of the following community needs:

- **Community Housing**
- **Energy**
- **Infrastructure**

Eligible projects may include improvements, renovations, or new construction.

The project must be sufficiently defined for the applicant to identify the specific readiness barriers, activities, and deliverables that would be supported by this grant. Proposals based solely on a general idea or an unidentified future capital project are not eligible.

Track 2: Tribal Government- Maximum Funding

Track 2 eligible applicants may request **up to \$200,000 total in one application**, consisting of:

- Up to **\$50,000 for eligible technical assistance activities and deliverables**; and/or
- Up to **\$150,000 for eligible predevelopment activities and deliverables**.

Applicants may request technical assistance, predevelopment, or a combination of both based on the needs and current stage of the identified capital project. Technical assistance may not exceed \$50,000, and predevelopment may not exceed \$150,000.

Track 2: Tribal Government- Eligible and Ineligible Activities, Deliverables

Eligible Activities- Technical Assistance and Predevelopment

Track 2 applicants may apply for funding for technical assistance support, predevelopment activities or both.

Technical Assistance Activities

Track 2 applicants may request up to **\$50,000 for technical assistance** that directly supports their ability to prepare for, plan, manage, or advance the identified capital project.

Eligible activities may include project-specific readiness assessment and planning, project management, governance and decision-making, financial planning, funding strategy, procurement and contracting planning, community and stakeholder engagement, partnership planning, risk assessment, operations and sustainability planning, specialized technical consultation, and other eligible project-specific capacity-building activities.

Predevelopment Activities

Track 2 applicants may request up to **\$150,000 for predevelopment activities** that directly advance the identified capital project toward implementation or construction readiness.

Eligible activities may include feasibility analysis, site assessment and due diligence, surveying, environmental or cultural resource review, geotechnical work, utility and infrastructure assessment, architectural and engineering services, conceptual or schematic design, project cost estimating, permitting and regulatory planning, facility or infrastructure

condition assessments, accessibility or code analysis, energy or resilience analysis, design development, construction planning, and other eligible professional or technical predevelopment work.

Ineligible Activities

Activities that are in the technical assistance and/or predevelopment categories must be directly connected to the identified capital project. Construction, equipment, routine operations or maintenance, fundraising implementation or grant writing, and other activities identified as **ineligible in this RFA** may not be funded.

Deliverables

Each grant-funded activity must result in a specific deliverable or work product, such as a report, assessment plan, analysis, design document, or other approved product.

Deliverables must be submitted to Commerce with the associated billing and supporting documentation before reimbursement.

See Exhibit F for Examples of Technical Assistance and Predevelopment Activities and Deliverables.

1.2.3 TRACK 3: FEDERALLY DESIGNATED NONPROFITS

Track 3: Nonprofit Organizations- Eligible Applicants

Track 3 is open to federally designated nonprofit organizations registered in Washington state that meet the minimum qualifications of this RFA- see Section 1.3.

Applicants must submit proof of federal tax exemption type such as IRS Determination Letter.

Track 3: Nonprofit Organizations- Eligible Capital Project Types

Applicants must identify a specific capital project. The project must involve the construction, renovation, improvement, or other eligible development of a physical asset such as a building, facility, or infrastructure.

Eligible projects may address housing, energy, infrastructure, community facilities, or another identified community capital need.

The project must be sufficiently defined for the applicant to identify the specific readiness barriers, activities, and deliverables that would be supported by this grant. Proposals based solely on a general idea or an unidentified future capital project are not eligible.

Track 3: Nonprofit Organizations- Maximum Funding

Track 3 applicants may request **up to \$50,000 total** for any combination of eligible technical assistance and/or predevelopment activities. Applicants may request technical assistance, predevelopment, or a combination of both based on the needs and current stage of the identified capital project.

Applicants should request only the amount necessary to complete the proposed activities and deliverables.

Track 3: Nonprofit Organizations- Eligible and Ineligible Activities, Deliverables

Eligible Activities- Technical Assistance and Predevelopment

Track 3 applicants may request up to **\$50,000 for technical assistance and/or predevelopment activities** that directly support their ability to prepare for, plan, manage, or advance the identified capital project.

Technical Assistance Activities

Eligible activities may include project-specific readiness assessment and planning, project management, governance and decision-making, financial planning, funding strategy, procurement and contracting planning, community and stakeholder engagement, partnership planning, risk assessment, operations and sustainability planning, specialized technical consultation, and other eligible project-specific capacity-building activities.

Predevelopment Activities

Eligible activities may include feasibility analysis, site assessment and due diligence, surveying, environmental or cultural resource review, geotechnical work, utility and infrastructure assessment, architectural and engineering services, conceptual or schematic design, project cost estimating, permitting and regulatory planning, facility or infrastructure condition assessments, accessibility or code analysis, energy or resilience analysis, design development, construction planning, and other eligible professional or technical predevelopment work.

Ineligible Activities

Activities that are in the technical assistance and/or predevelopment categories must be directly connected to the identified capital project. Construction, equipment, routine operations or maintenance, fundraising implementation or grant writing, and other activities identified as **ineligible in this RFA** may not be funded.

Deliverables

Each grant-funded activity must result in a specific deliverable or work product, such as a report, assessment plan, analysis, design document, or other approved product.

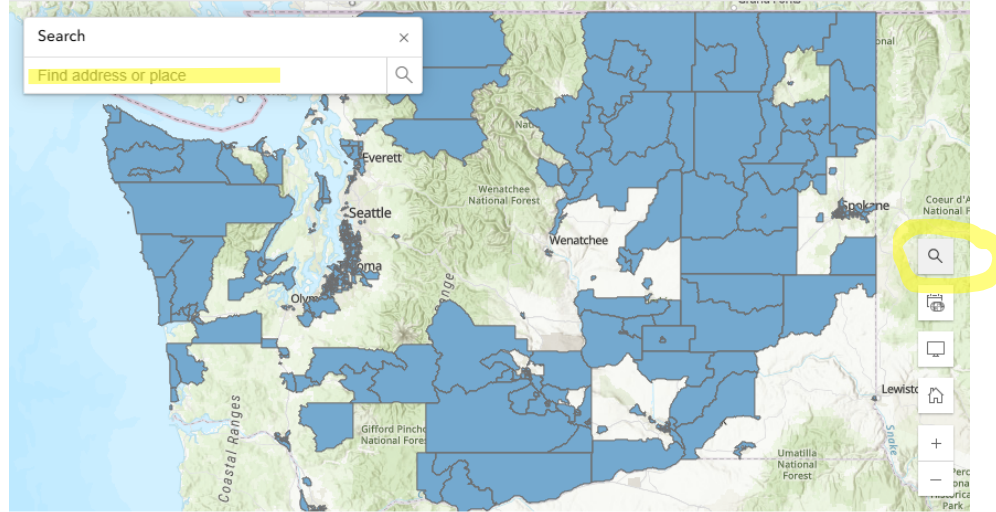
Deliverables must be submitted to Commerce with the associated billing and supporting documentation before reimbursement.

See Exhibit F for Examples of Technical Assistance and Predevelopment Activities and Deliverables.

1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND VERIFICATION SITES

Minimum qualifications for all three tracks include:

- Licensed to do business in the State of Washington or submit a statement of commitment that it will become licensed in Washington within thirty (30) calendar days of being selected as the Apparently Successful Applicant.
 - Verification sites:
 - [Washington State Department of Revenue Business Lookup](#) and/or
 - [Washington Secretary of State Business Name Search](#)
- The proposed capital project must directly benefit an overburdened community in Washington state as described in this RFA. Applicants must identify the project location and applicable designation in the application. Commerce will verify project location and geographic eligibility before making an award.
 - There are three ways to verify eligibility for the capital project directly benefiting an overburdened community:
 - i. Use this [Project Location Checker Tool](#) to see if your project is located in an overburdened Washington community and eligible for this funding opportunity.
 - or**
 - ii. Check your project location eligibility using the [Overburdened Communities Map](#).
Instructions: Click on the Open in Map Viewer in the blue box in upper right corner. Locate the magnifying glass in the bottom right corner of the map. Select the magnifying glass to enter your project location address.



Eligibility results: If your location shows to be in the blue area, your project location is in an overburdened community and eligible for funding.

or

- iii. Explain in your application under Section A. Applicant and Project Information (Eligibility Information) how your capital project directly benefits an overburdened community in Washington.

AND;

- **For Track 1- Local governments** including cities, towns, counties, special purpose districts, port districts, and any other municipal corporations or quasi-municipal corporations in the state excluding school districts. As defined by [RCW 47.06A.010](#)
 - Verification site:
 - [Audit Reports | Office of the Washington State Auditor](#)
- **For Track 2- Federally recognized tribal governments** in Washington State.
 - Verification site:
 - [Federally Recognized Tribes in Washington State | GOIA](#)
- **For Track 3- Federally designated nonprofit organizations** must be registered in Washington State and have proof of IRS federal designation.
 - Verification sites:
 - [Corporations and Charities System](#) and
 - [Tax Exempt Organization Search | Internal Revenue Service](#)
 - Applicants must submit proof of federal tax exemption type such as IRS Determination Letter.

Applications which do not clearly meet or exceed these minimum qualifications will be rejected as non-responsive and will not receive further consideration. Any application that is rejected as non-responsive will not be evaluated or scored.

1.4 FUNDING AND MAXIMUM FUNDING AMOUNTS

1.4.1 Funding Structure and Maximum Award Amounts

A total of approximately \$2.3 million (**\$2,300,000**) is available for grant awards through this funding opportunity. The total combines two funding sources, which have different requirements and funding limits for eligible applicant types. With the two funding sources, up to \$1.9M from State Capital Funds will award local governments and tribal governments and \$400K of State Operating funds will award nonprofit organizations. Commerce anticipates a highly competitive process and a small number of awards.

The maximum amount an applicant may request depends on the applicant type, as shown below.

Applicant Type	Technical Assistance Activities and Deliverables	Predevelopment Activities and Deliverables	Maximum Total Request
Track 1 Local governments	Up to \$50,000	Up to \$150,000	Up to \$200,000
Track 2 Federally recognized tribal governments	Up to \$50,000	Up to \$150,000	Up to \$200,000
Track 3 Federally designated nonprofit organizations	Up to \$50,000 for either or both		Up to \$50,000

Track 1- Local government applicants, the \$200,000 maximum is the total amount that may be requested in one application. An application may include both technical assistance and predevelopment activities, based on the needs and current stage of the identified capital project. Technical assistance may not exceed \$50,000, and predevelopment activities may not exceed \$150,000.

Track 2- Federally recognized tribal government applicants, the \$200,000 maximum is the total amount that may be requested in one application. An application may include both technical assistance and predevelopment activities, based on the needs and current stage of the identified capital project. Technical assistance may not exceed \$50,000, and predevelopment activities may not exceed \$150,000.

Track 3- Federally designated nonprofit organization applicants may request up to \$50,000 for eligible technical assistance activities and/or predevelopment activities and associated deliverables.

Applicants should request only the amount and activities necessary to address the identified capital project's specific readiness needs and next steps.

See the applicable sections of this RFA for minimum qualifications, project and applicant eligibility, eligible uses of funds, eligible activities and deliverables, and other requirements.

1.4.2 Exceeding Maximum Request Amounts

Applications that exceed the maximum funding amount for the applicant type and each category will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated:

For Track 1 Local government applicants: more than \$200,000 total exceeds the maximum amount. Requests must also remain within the applicable maximum of \$50,000 for technical assistance and \$150,000 for predevelopment activities.

For Track 2 Federally recognized tribal government applicants: more than \$200,000 total exceeds the maximum amount. Requests must also remain within the applicable maximum of \$50,000 for technical assistance and \$150,000 for predevelopment activities.

For Track 3- Federally designated nonprofit organization applicants: more than \$50,000 total exceeds the maximum amount.

In the event additional funding becomes available, any contract awarded may be amended to provide for additional related services. Additional funding is not guaranteed.

Any contract(s) awarded as a result of this RFA are contingent upon the availability of funding.

1.4.3 Reimbursement-based funding

This is a deliverables-based reimbursement grant. Grantees must pay eligible expenses in advance and submit the associated deliverable, the grantee billing statement, and required supporting documentation to Commerce for reimbursement. Applicants must have sufficient financial capacity to pay project expenses while awaiting reimbursement.

1.5 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance of any contract(s) resulting from this RFA is tentatively scheduled to begin on or about *January 1, 2027*, and end *June 30, 2027*.

COMMERCE reserves the option at its sole discretion to extend the contract. However, the current funding sources for this opportunity require an end date of June 30, 2027.

1.6 CONTRACTING WITH CURRENT OR FORMER STATE EMPLOYEES

Specific restrictions apply to contracting with current or former state employees pursuant to chapter 42.52 of the Revised Code of Washington. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the requirements prior to submitting a proposal that includes current or former state employees.

1.7 DEFINITIONS

Definitions for the purposes of this RFA include:

Annual Operating Budget: The total annual operating expense of the organization, as reflected in the organization's most recent completed fiscal year budget.

Apparent Successful Applicant/Bidder/Vendor/Grantee/Awardee: The Applicant(s) selected to enter into negotiations leading to a fully executed contract for the work described in this procurement document.

Applicant: Individual, company, organization, or firm submitting an Application in order to attain a contract with COMMERCE.

Application: A complete, formal offer submitted in response to this RFA.

COMMERCE: The Department of Commerce is the agency of the state of Washington that is issuing this RFA.

Contract: A written, legally binding agreement to perform the services proposed, also called a Grant or Interagency Agreement.

Grantee: Individual or organization whose Application has been accepted by COMMERCE and is awarded a fully executed, written contract.

Exhibit: Document attached to this RFA, also referred to as Attachment.

Request for Applications (RFA): Formal procurement document in which needed services are identified and entities are invited to submit their Application to provide those services; this procurement document.

FTE's: Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees is a workforce measurement including all full-time payroll employees plus part-time payroll employees who collectively work at least 30 hours per week.

Additional Definitions specific to this RFA:

Capacity-building: Support that helps an organization build the knowledge, skills, systems, and resources needed to successfully move a capital project forward.

Capital Project: A project involving the construction, renovation, or improvement of physical assets such as buildings, infrastructure, or facilities.

Capital project readiness: How prepared an organization and its project are to successfully move to the next stage of capital project development. This RFA intends to support organizations to become more ready.

Deliverable: A specific document, report, plan, or other work product produced as a result of an eligible activity, which must be submitted to COMMERCE for reimbursement. See Exhibit F for more details and examples.

Eligible Activities: Actions that may be funded under this RFA, including technical assistance and predevelopment, provided they are directly tied to the capital project and result in a deliverable. See Exhibit F for more details and examples.

Federally Recognized Tribal Government: A tribal government recognized by the federal government, eligible to apply for funding under this RFA. Please see Minimum Qualifications section.

Local Government: A city, county, or other municipal entity within Washington State eligible to apply for funding under this RFA. Please see Minimum Qualifications section.

Nonprofit Organization: An entity recognized federally and in Washington state as a nonprofit, eligible to apply for funding under this RFA. Please see Minimum Qualifications section.

Overburdened Community: A community in Washington state identified as being affected by environmental, social and economic factors, having unmet needs or being underserved by capital funding. Often designated as distressed, overburdened, or impacted community on official maps or lists. For this RFA, designated areas are included on the following data maps or lists:

[Overburdened Communities of Washington State - Overview](#)

[The Public Works Board FY25 Broadband Hardship Status Map](#)

[Distressed areas list | Employment Security Department](#)

Also, See Minimum Qualifications section.

Predevelopment: Early-stage activities that move a capital project from planning toward construction readiness, such as feasibility studies, site assessments, design work, and permitting, each resulting in a deliverable submitted to COMMERCE. See Exhibit F for more details and examples.

Reimbursement: The process by which COMMERCE pays for eligible activities after the applicant submits required deliverables and documentation.

Scope of Work: The detailed description of tasks, activities, and deliverables to be completed under the contract.

Technical Assistance: Activities that build an applicant's ability to plan, manage, or advance a specific capital project, including assessments, planning, training, and consultation, resulting in a deliverable submitted to COMMERCE. See Exhibit F for more details and examples.

1.8 ADA

COMMERCE complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Applicants may contact the RFA Coordinator to receive this Request for Qualifications and Quotations in Braille or on tape.

2 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 RFA COORDINATOR

The RFA Coordinator is the sole point of contact in COMMERCE for this RFA. All communication between Applicants and COMMERCE upon release date of this RFA shall be with the RFA Coordinator, as follows:

Name	Paige Coleman
E-Mail Address	capacitybuilding@commerce.wa.gov

Any other communication will be considered unofficial and non-binding on COMMERCE. Applicants are to rely on written statements issued by the RFA Coordinator. **Communication directed to parties other than the RFA Coordinator may result in disqualification. Note:** RFA Coordinator will not serve as an evaluator.

2.2 ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES

Issue Request for Applications	Friday, September 18, 2026
Pre-Application Conferences- See Section 2.3	Wednesday, September 23, 2026
Question & answer period	September 17-October 9, 2026
Answers issued no later than	Thursday, October 15, 2026
Applications due	Friday, October 30, 2026 no later than 3:00PM
Evaluation	November 2- December 7, 2026
Conduct virtual presentations with finalists, if required	November 23-December 3, 2026
Announce "Apparent Successful Applicant" and send notification via e-mail to unsuccessful Applicants	Friday, December 4, 2026
Debrief conference period	Tuesday, December 8, 2026
Negotiate contract	December 7-18, 2026
Earliest date contract may be signed	Monday, December 21, 2026

COMMERCE reserves the right to revise the above schedule.

2.3 PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCES

A Pre-Application Conference, also an Applicants' conference, **will be held for each applicant type and present the RFA overview and requirements specific to the applicant track.** The conference will be virtual-only on a platform such as Zoom. All prospective Applicants are encouraged to attend; however, attendance is not mandatory. A recording of the Applicants' Conference will be available online.

For Local Governments- Wednesday, September 23, 2026 10:00-10:30AM

[Pre-registration link for local governments pre-application conference](#)

For Federally Recognized Tribal Governments- Wednesday, September 23, 2026 1:00-1:30PM

[Zoom link for tribal governments- no registration required. No recording.](#)

For Federally Designated Nonprofits- Wednesday, September 23, 2026 3:30-4:00PM

[Pre-registration link for federally designated nonprofits pre-application conference](#)

COMMERCE will be bound only to COMMERCE written answers to questions. Questions arising at the Applicants' conference must be submitted using the [Capacity Grants Q&A Submission Form Link](#). A copy of the questions and answers will be sent to each prospective Applicant who made the RFA Coordinator aware of its interest in this RFA.

2.4 QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

COMMERCE **will accept questions about this RFA submitted only by using the** [Capacity Grants Q&A Submission Form Link](#) during the period as identified in Section 2.2. Questions should not identify the submitting person or organization. COMMERCE will answer all questions in a Q&A document posted no later than the date identified in Section 2.2.

2.5 SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES

ELECTRONIC RESPONSES ONLY

Applications **must be submitted electronically using the Application Form Submission Link no later than 3:00PM on Friday, October 30, 2026.**

[Submit your complete Application Form using this Submission Link](#)

Required documents must be uploaded and in Microsoft Word format or PDF and any document formats listed within Section 3 Proposal Contents. Zipped files cannot be received by COMMERCE and cannot be used for submission of Applications.

Important notes:

- For Exhibit A-The Certifications and Assurances form must have a signature of the individual within the organization authorized to bind the organization to the offer.
- Track 3- Nonprofit Organizations must provide proof of Federal Nonprofit Designation (upload IRS Determination Letter along with other required documents).

COMMERCE does not assume responsibility for problems with non-COMMERCE e-mail or submission portal. If the Commerce submission portal is not working, appropriate allowances will be made.

Applications may not be transmitted using facsimile transmission or submitted by email.

Applicants should allow sufficient time to complete the electronic submission before the deadline and to ensure timely receipt of the Application by the RFA Coordinator.

Late Applications will not be accepted and will be automatically disqualified from further consideration, unless COMMERCE or non-Commerce submission portal is found to be at fault. All Applications and any accompanying documentation become the property of COMMERCE and will not be returned. Any information received as a result of this RFA may be collected and considered for continuous improvement purposes.

2.6 PROPRIETARY INFORMATION/PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Applications submitted in response to this competitive procurement shall become the property of COMMERCE. All Applications received shall remain confidential until the Apparent Successful Bidder is announced; thereafter, the Applications shall be deemed public records as defined in Chapter 42.56 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW).

Any information in the Application that the Applicant desires to claim as proprietary and exempt from disclosure under the provisions of Chapter 42.56 RCW, or other state or federal law that provides for the nondisclosure of your document, must be clearly designated. The information must be clearly identified and the particular exemption from disclosure upon which the Applicant is making the claim must be cited. Each page containing the information claimed to be exempt from disclosure must be clearly identified by the words "Proprietary Information" printed on the lower right-hand corner of the page. Marking the entire Application exempt from disclosure or as Proprietary Information will not be honored.

If a public records request is made for the information that the Applicant has marked as "Proprietary Information" COMMERCE will notify the Applicant of the request and of the date that the records will be released to the requester unless the Applicant obtains a court order enjoining that disclosure. If the Applicant fails to obtain the court order enjoining disclosure, COMMERCE will release the requested information on the date specified. If an Applicant obtains a court order from a court of competent jurisdiction enjoining disclosure pursuant to Chapter 42.56 RCW, or other state or federal law that provides for nondisclosure, COMMERCE shall maintain the confidentiality of the Applicant's information per the court order.

A charge will be made for copying and shipping, as outlined in RCW 42.56. No fee shall be charged for inspection of contract files, but twenty-four (24) hours' notice to the RFA Coordinator is required. All requests for information should be directed to the RFA Coordinator.

2.7 REVISIONS TO THE RFA

In the event it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFA, addenda will be provided via e-mail to all individuals who have made the RFA Coordinator aware of their interest. Addenda is also published on Washington's Electronic Business

Solution (WEBS), located at <https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/>. Such addenda will also be published anywhere the RFA is posted, including on COMMERCE'S public webpage, located at <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/contracting/>.

You may also send your name and e-mail address to the RFA Coordinator to request to receive any RFA addenda.

COMMERCE also reserves the right to cancel or to reissue the RFA in whole or in part, prior to execution of a contract.

2.8 ACCEPTANCE PERIOD

Applications must provide 60 days for acceptance by COMMERCE from the due date for receipt of Applications.

2.9 COMPLAINT PROCESS

Vendors may submit a complaint to COMMERCE based on any of the following:

- a) The solicitation unnecessarily restricts competition;
- b) The solicitation evaluation or scoring process is unfair; or
- c) The solicitation requirements are inadequate or insufficient to prepare an Application.

A complaint may be submitted to COMMERCE at any time prior to 5 days before the bid response deadline. The complaint must meet the following requirements:

- a) The complaint must be in writing;
- b) The complaint must be sent to the RFA coordinator in a timely manner;
- c) The complaint should clearly articulate the basis for the complaint; and
- d) The complaint should include a proposed remedy.

The RFA coordinator will respond to the complaint in writing. The response to the complaint and any changes to the solicitation will be posted on WEBS. The Director of COMMERCE will be notified of all complaints and will be provided a copy of COMMERCE'S response. The complaint may not be raised again during the protest period. COMMERCE'S action or inaction in response to the complaint will be final. There is no appeal process.

2.10 RESPONSIVENESS

All Applications will be reviewed by the RFA Coordinator to determine compliance with administrative requirements and instructions specified in this RFA. The Applicant is specifically notified that failure to comply with any part of this RFA may result in rejection of the Application as non-responsive.

Disqualified Applicants will be notified at or about the time of disqualification.

Disqualified Applicants will be informed of the reason for disqualification; this shall constitute a debriefing conference for the purposes of Section 4.7, Protest Procedure.

COMMERCE reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor administrative irregularities.

2.11 MOST FAVORABLE TERMS

COMMERCE reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the Application submitted. Therefore, the Application should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms which the Applicant can propose. COMMERCE reserves the right to contact an Applicant for clarification of its Application.

The Applicant should be prepared to accept this RFA for incorporation into a contract resulting from this RFA. Contract negotiations may incorporate some, or all, of the Applicant's Application. It is understood that the Application will become a part of the official procurement file on this matter without obligation to COMMERCE.

2.12 CONTRACT AND GENERAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

The Apparent Successful Applicant will be expected to enter into a contract which is substantially the same as the sample contract and its general terms and conditions attached as Exhibit E. In no event is an Applicant to submit its own standard contract terms and conditions in response to this solicitation. The Applicant may submit proposed edits as allowed in the Certifications and Assurances section, Exhibit A, to this RFA. COMMERCE will review requested edits and accept or reject the same at its sole discretion.

2.13 COSTS TO PROPOSE

COMMERCE will not be liable for any costs incurred by the Applicant in preparation of an Application submitted in response to this RFA, in conduct of a presentation, or any other activities related to responding to this RFA.

2.14 NO OBLIGATION TO CONTRACT

This RFA does not obligate the state of Washington or COMMERCE to contract for services specified herein.

2.15 REJECTION OF RESPONSES

COMMERCE reserves the right at its sole discretion to reject any and all Applications received without penalty and not to issue a contract as a result of this RFA.

2.16 COMMITMENT OF FUNDS

The Director of COMMERCE or the Director's delegate are the only individuals who may legally commit COMMERCE to the expenditures of funds for a contract resulting from this RFA. No cost chargeable to the proposed contract may be incurred before receipt of a fully executed contract.

2.17 ELECTRONIC PAYMENT

The state of Washington prefers to utilize electronic payment in its transactions. The successful Applicant must have or obtain a Statewide Vendor Number (SWV) from the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to be paid by COMMERCE. For more information, visit OFM at www.ofm.wa.gov.

2.18 INSURANCE COVERAGE

The Applicant is to furnish COMMERCE with a certificate of insurance executed by a duly authorized representative of each insurer, showing compliance with the insurance requirements set forth below if requested.

The Applicant shall, at Applicant's own expense, obtain and keep in force insurance coverage, which shall be maintained in full force and effect during the term of the contract. The Applicant shall furnish evidence in the form of a Certificate of Insurance that insurance shall be provided, and, if requested, a copy shall be forwarded to COMMERCE within fifteen (15) days of the contract effective date. Standard insurance requirements are included within the sample contract and its special terms and conditions attached as Exhibits.

3 RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS AND DIRECTIONS

3.1 RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

For an application to be considered responsive, the applicant must:

- ☐ Meet the minimum qualifications and applicable Track 1, 2, or 3 eligibility requirements.
- ☐ Submit the application by the deadline using the required online submission portal.
- ☐ Submit a completed and signed Exhibit A- Certifications and Assurances (with signature)
- ☐ Submit the applicable Exhibit B1, B2, or B3 Applicant Response with application form and complete all required fields.
- ☐ Submit Exhibit C- Diverse Business Inclusion Plan
- ☐ Submit a completed and signed Exhibit D- Workers' Rights Certification
- ☐ Submit proof of federal nonprofit designation- (track 3- Nonprofits only)
- ☐ Request no more than the maximum funding amount allowed for the applicable track and funding category.

Applications that do not meet these requirements may be determined non-responsive and will not be evaluated or scored. COMMERCE reserves the right to waive minor administrative irregularities as described in Section 2.10.

3.2 ELECTRONIC RESPONSES

All required documents and templates are accessible on the [Commerce Box Account Link](#)

Applications must be written in English and submitted electronically using the link to upload the documents.

To Submit Your Application: Fill out the application submission form and upload your application response documents using this online submission portal:

[Capital Project Capacity Grant Applicant Submission Portal](#)

Required documents must be submitted in the order noted below:

1. Exhibit A Certifications and Assurances (with signature)
2. Exhibit B1, B2 or B3 Applicant Response: Application Form (submit one depends on Track-Applicant Type)
3. Exhibit C Diverse Business Inclusion Plan
4. Exhibit D Workers' Rights Certification
5. For Track 3- Nonprofit Organizations Only: Proof of Federal Nonprofit Designation (IRS Determination Letter)

Applications must provide information in the same order as presented in this document with the same headings. This will not only be helpful to the evaluators of the Application, but should also assist the Applicant in preparing a thorough response.

All items marked “mandatory” must be included as part of the Application for the Application to be considered responsive, however, these items are not scored. Items marked “scored” are those that are awarded points as part of the evaluation conducted by the evaluation team.

3.2.1 CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES- EXHIBIT A (MANDATORY with Signature)

The Certifications and Assurances form (Exhibit A) must be signed and dated by a person authorized to legally bind the Applicant to a contractual relationship, e.g., the President or Executive Director if a corporation, the managing partner if a partnership, or the proprietor if a sole proprietorship. Those wishing to submit any proposed contract edits must indicate so on this form (see Section 2.12).

3.2.2 APPLICANT RESPONSE: APPLICATION FORM- EXHIBIT B1, B2, B3 (SCORED)

The Applicant Response: Application Form (Exhibit B1, B2, or B3) must be completed in its entirety. Be sure to select the one application form Exhibit B that is for your Applicant Type. If any question or section does not apply, please enter “N/A” or “None”.

3.2.3 DIVERSE BUSINESS INCLUSION PLAN- EXHIBIT C (MANDATORY)

The Diverse Business Inclusion Plan (Exhibit C) is a communication tool allowing Applicants to inform COMMERCE if diverse business will be involved in the contract if awarded. Participation includes directly (the Applicant) and indirectly, such as any subcontractors or subgrantees who might carry out services chargeable to the contract. In accordance with legislative findings and policies set forth in RCW 39.19, the state of Washington encourages participation in all contracts by firms certified by the office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE), set forth in RCW 43.60A.200 for firms certified by the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, and set forth in RCW 39.26.005 for firms that are Washington Small Businesses. No minimum level of minority- and women-owned business enterprise (MWBE), Washington Small Business, or Washington State certified Veteran Business participation is required as a condition for receiving an award. Any affirmative action requirements set forth in any federal rules included or referenced in the contract documents will apply.

3.2.4 WORKERS' RIGHTS CERTIFICATION- EXHIBIT D (MANDATORY)

The Workers' Rights Certification (Exhibit D) must be signed and dated as described in Section 3.1. Some employers require their employees to waive certain rights. While this is legally permitted, the Washington Governor's Office considers it a harmful and disfavored practice. Executive Order 18-03 requires all state agencies to award bonus points in competitive processes to increase contracting with employers that do not require their employees to sign an individual arbitration clause or waiver of collective or class action. Those Applicants which certify they do not require their employees to waive such rights as a condition of employment will receive an extra 5% of their awarded points added to their final score.

3.2.5 PROOF OF FEDERAL NONPROFIT DESIGNATION

Nonprofit organizations must include proof of their federal nonprofit designation such as a copy of the official IRS Determination Letter. This is for Track 3- Nonprofit Organizations Only who must upload this electronic copy with their application submission.

4 EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD

4.1 EVALUATION PROCEDURE

Complete and responsive Applications will be evaluated strictly in accordance with the requirements stated in this RFA and any addenda issued. The evaluation of Applications will be accomplished by an evaluation team to be designated by COMMERCE, which will determine the ranking of the Applications.

4.2 CLARIFICATION OF RESPONSE

The RFA Coordinator may contact Applicants for clarification of any portion of the Applicant's Application. Submission or alteration of any materials after the due date is prohibited.

4.3 EVALUATION AND SCORING

The following weighting and points will be assigned to the Application for evaluation purposes:

Applications that meet the minimum eligibility and submission requirements will be evaluated and scored based on the criteria below. Reviewers will evaluate the application as a whole and consider how well the applicant's identified need, project readiness, proposed activities, deliverables, budget, and expected results align.

This funding opportunity is intended to help applicants address specific capacity and readiness barriers that are preventing an identified capital project from advancing. A strong application will clearly identify where the project is today, the barriers or next steps that need to be addressed, and how the proposed grant-funded work will meaningfully advance the project.

Application Section	Points	What Reviewers Will Consider
A. Applicant and Project Information	Not scored	Whether the applicant and project meet eligibility requirements and all required information is provided.
B. Community Need and Priority	25	The clarity and status of the proposed capital project; significance and urgency of the community need; who will benefit; and the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the project responds to an identified community need or priority.
C. Applicant Capacity and Readiness Need	25	The applicant's current capacity and the project's current stage; the organizational, financial, technical, staffing, planning, or other needs affecting progress; the applicant's need for grant assistance; and what capacity or readiness needs must be addressed to better prepare the organization and project to move forward.
D. Proposed Capacity-Building Work- Scope of Work and Budget	35	How well the proposed capacity-building, technical assistance, and/or predevelopment activities address the identified needs and fit the organization's needs and the project's current stage; whether the activities and deliverables are clear and achievable during the grant period; and whether the scope and budget are reasonable and appropriate for the proposed work and the applicant's financial capacity.
E. Expected Results and Next Step	15	The extent to which the proposed work is likely to result in meaningful improvements in organizational capacity and project readiness and position the applicant to take a clear and reasonable next steps toward implementation of the identified capital project after the grant ends.
F. Program Participation Acknowledgment	Not scored	Required acknowledgment of grant and participation expectations.
TOTAL	100	
Exhibit D- Workers Rights Certification	5	Organizations that certify that they do not require employees to sign an individual arbitration clause as a condition of employment will receive an additional 5% of their awarded points added to their final score
Total possible points	105	

Additional Scoring Consideration

Organizations that certify that they do not require employees to sign an individual arbitration clause as a condition of employment will receive an additional **5% of their awarded points** added to their final score, as described in Exhibit D- Workers Rights Certification.

COMMERCE reserves the right to award the contract(s) to the Applicant(s) whose Application is deemed to be in the best interest of COMMERCE and the state of Washington.

4.4 VIRTUAL PRESENTATIONS MAY BE REQUIRED

COMMERCE, at its sole discretion, may select the top-scoring Applicant(s) from the written evaluation for a virtual presentation. If so, COMMERCE will contact the top-scoring Applicant(s) to schedule a date and time to meet on a platform such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Commitments made by the Applicant at the virtual presentation, if any, will be considered binding.

If held, the virtual presentation shall determine the Apparent Successful Applicant(s).

4.5 NOTIFICATION TO APPLICANTS

Applicants that are not selected for further negotiation or award will be notified by e-mail.

4.6 DEBRIEFING OF UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Upon request, a debriefing conference will be scheduled with an unsuccessful Applicant. The request for a debriefing conference must be received by the RFA Coordinator (see section 2.1) within three (3) business days after the Notification of Unsuccessful Applicant notice is emailed to the Applicant. The debriefing must be scheduled within three (3) business days of the request.

Discussion at the debriefing conference is strictly limited to the following:

- Evaluation and scoring of that organization's Application;
- Any written comments from evaluators related to that Applicant;
- Review of their final score in comparison with the other final scores **without** identifying the other participants or reviewing their Applications.

Comparisons between proposals or evaluations of the other proposals is not allowed. Debriefing conferences may be **conducted by email. If in the event of demand, debriefs may be by email only.** COMMERCE reserves the right to end a debriefing for any reason.

4.7 PROTEST PROCEDURE

This procedure is available to Applicants who submitted an Application in response to this RFA document and who have participated in a debriefing conference. Upon completing the debriefing conference, the Applicant is allowed five (5) business days to file a protest of the RFA process with the RFA Coordinator. Protests must be received by the RFA Coordinator no later than 5:00pm Pacific time on the fifth business day following the debriefing. Protests must be submitted by email. Applicants may choose to copy COMMERCE'S Central Contracts Office at formalprotest@commerce.wa.gov. Do not copy any other COMMERCE staff.

Anyone protesting this procurement must follow the procedures described below. Protests that do not follow these procedures shall not be considered. This protest procedure constitutes the sole administrative remedy available under this RFA.

All protests must be in writing and signed by the protesting party or an authorized agent. The protest must state the grounds for the protest with specific facts and complete statements of the action(s) being protested. A description of the relief or corrective action being requested should also be included. All protests shall be addressed to the RFA Coordinator.

Only protests stipulating an issue of fact concerning the following subjects shall be considered:

- A matter of bias, discrimination or conflict of interest on the part of the evaluator
- Errors in computing the score
- Non-compliance with procedures described in this procurement document or current COMMERCE policy

Protests not based on procedural matters will not be considered. Protests will be rejected as without merit if they address issues such as 1) An evaluator's professional judgment on or assessment of the quality of an Application, or 2) COMMERCE'S assessment of its own and/or other agencies' needs or requirements.

Scores received are not a valid basis of protest and will be dismissed as without merit unless included with facts supporting bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest on the part of an evaluator.

Upon receipt of a protest, a protest review will be held by COMMERCE. COMMERCE'S Chief Contracts Officer, or other employee delegated by the Director who was not involved in the award process, will consider the record and all available facts and issue a decision within ten (10) business days of receipt of the protest. If additional time is required, the protesting party will be notified of the delay.

In the event a protest may directly impact the actual interest of another Applicant, such Applicant may be given an opportunity to submit its views and any relevant information on the protest.

The final determination of the protest shall:

- Find the protest lacking in merit and uphold COMMERCE'S action, or
- Find only technical or harmless errors in COMMERCE'S acquisition process and determine COMMERCE to be in substantial compliance and reject the protest, or
- Find merit in the protest and provide COMMERCE options which may include:
 - Correct the error(s) and re-evaluate all Applications
 - Reissue the solicitation document and begin a new process
 - Make other findings and determine other courses of action as appropriate

If COMMERCE determines that the protest is without merit, COMMERCE may enter into a contract with the Apparent Successful Applicant(s). If the protest is determined to have merit, one of the options above will be taken.

5 RFA EXHIBITS- Separate Attachments. Location: [Commerce Box Account Link](#)

Exhibit A	Certifications and Assurances
Exhibit B1, B2, B3	Applicant Information and Form: Exhibit B1 For Track 1- Local Governments Exhibit B2 For Track 2- Federally Recognized Tribal Governments Exhibit B3 For Track 3- Federally Designated Nonprofit Organizations
Exhibit C	Diverse Business Inclusion Plan
Exhibit D	Workers' Rights Certification
Exhibit E1, E1, E3	Example Capital Agreement or Grant Contract including General Terms and Conditions
Exhibit F	Examples of Technical Assistance and Predevelopment Activities and Deliverables
Exhibit G	Resource: Foundations of Capital Project Readiness