

Local Project Review: Permit Review Process Update Grants

Application Instructions



Contents

Grant overview	3
Grant eligibility, eligible activities, and funding amounts.....	3
Eligibility and Requirements	3
Eligible Activities	4
Funding amounts.....	4
Grant application timeline	4
Application Scoring	4
Jurisdiction responses.....	5
Completing the grant application form	6
Scope of work.....	7
Scope of Work and Project Schedule.....	7
Budget.....	10
Budget and Financial Information.....	10
Letter of commitment	11
Complete Application Contents	11
Other Helpful Resources and Information	12
Contact and Links	12
Debrief and Protest Procedures	12
Award Process.....	13
Pre-Contracting Requirements	13
Contract Execution	13

Grant overview

The Local Project Review Act, RCW 36.70B, was established in 1995 after the passage of the Growth Management Act (GMA), as the statewide framework for local government land use planning review and development permitting. Fundamental land use planning choices made in adopted comprehensive plans and development regulations serve as the foundation for project review.

Major changes were made to the Local Project Review Act with the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 5290 in 2023. Updates and amendments to the Act were intended to consolidate, streamline, and further improve local permit review processes for applicants, customers, planners, builders and designers. This grant is designed to help jurisdictions update their permit review processes.

Purpose and statutory requirements

The purpose of this Permit Review Process Update grant is to provide local governments with funding to update their permit review processes with a focus on reducing residential permit review timelines.

Eligible activities may be funded by this grant starting July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027.

Grant eligibility, eligible activities, and funding amounts

Eligibility and requirements

All counties and cities in Washington may apply for funding for activities related to reducing permit review timelines through process improvements.

The grant application must be submitted by 5:00 p.m., July 31, 2026.

Contracts executed for this grant are “deliverable based” and funds will be distributed according to a schedule provided in the Scope of Work proposed by the applicant and approved by the Department of Commerce. This Scope of Work must indicate the dates during which major work milestones will be accomplished and contain an itemized list of deliverables with due dates and identification of a discrete amount of funding assigned to completion of each deliverable.

This is a competitive grant and scoring will be based upon responses to grant application questions and Commerce calculations based on data from the Office of Financial Management of the number of residential permits issued in the last 5 years. The highest scored applications will be awarded grant funds until a total of \$475,000 has been distributed.

A letter of commitment must be provided by the jurisdiction as part of the application.

Eligible activities

- Project planning and scoping, purchasing software, and implementation of a permitting system capable of processing digital permit applications, virtual inspections, electronic review, and with capacity for picture/video storage. Eligible for jurisdictions fully or partially using paper permitting processes or outdated electronic systems.
- Staff training in newly adopted application and review procedures.
- Contracting with outside assistance to audit development regulations to identify and correct barriers to housing development.
- Changes to development code that helps improve permit review processes.
- Contracting with a third-party business to conduct permit review or add additional inspection staff.

Funding amounts

The maximum award amount for any jurisdiction is \$75,000.

Grant application timeline

- **June 24, 2026:** Grant application released on the [Growth Management Services Grants webpage](#).
- **June 24 to July 15, 2026:** Question and Answer Period. Final Questions and Answers will be posted July 15, 2026.
- **July 8, 2026, 1:00 p.m.:** Pre-application conference [via Teams](#); Attendance is not required but is encouraged. [Use this link to register](#).
- **July 31, 2026, 5:00 p.m.:** Grant application window closes.

[Use this link to access the online grant application](#). Please note that the application form is published through Smartsheet and **will not save your progress**. Therefore, the application must be completed in one session. Once you submit your application you cannot go back and make any changes.

Application scoring

Scoring of applications will be based upon the following data points and questions. The maximum amount of points is 100. Applicants must respond to four questions (3-6). The first two are narrative and the second two are multiple choice.

These questions are intended to prioritize jurisdictions:

- Demonstrating difficulty in reducing their permitting timelines that have a well-developed vision of the process changes necessary to reduce permitting timelines and improve the customer experience.
- With increasing residential permits.
- That have a solid plan for accomplishing their goals and a high likelihood of success in achieving them.

To be calculated by Commerce

Commerce, in an effort to prioritize grant funding to those jurisdictions which have the highest number of residential building permits in the last five years, will calculate and score the data points shown below. These measures of growth pressure are being used to ensure grant funds have the largest impact on the greatest number of housing units produced in the state.

Growth pressure

(1) Commerce will calculate the five-year net change in detached or “one unit housing units” (not inclusive of “mobile home or specials” units) in your jurisdiction according to the April 1 Office of Financial Management housing estimates. The April 1, 2025 housing estimate will be used as the final figure to determine net detached housing growth over the prior five-year period. For counties, Commerce will calculate this estimate based on the unincorporated areas.

a. Points will be awarded to jurisdictions experiencing higher levels of 5-year net increase or change in detached housing as follows:

i.	decrease to 100 units	1 point
ii.	101 units to 200 units	3 points
iii.	201 units to 300 units	5 points
iv.	301 units to 500 units	7 points
v.	501 units to 1,000 units	9 points
vi.	1001 units to 5,000 units	12 points
vii.	above 5,000 units	15 points

(2) Commerce will calculate the five-year net change in attached or “two or more unit housing units” in your jurisdiction according to the April 1 Office of Financial Management housing estimates. The April 1, 2025 housing estimate will be used as the final figure to determine net attached housing growth over the prior five-year period. For counties, Commerce will calculate this estimate based on the unincorporated areas.

a. Points will be awarded to jurisdictions experiencing higher levels of 5-year net increase or change in attached housing as follows:

i.	decrease to 100 units	1 point
ii.	101 units to 200 units	3 points
iii.	201 units to 300 units	5 points
iv.	301 units to 500 units	7 points
v.	501 units to 1,000 units	9 points
vi.	1001 units to 5,000 units	12 points
vii.	above 5,000 units	15 points

Jurisdiction responses

System capacity/vision

(3) Provide a concise description of your current residential permit process. Identify specific challenges or issues you are experiencing in your current process. **Maximum score: 20 points**

(4) How would this grant funding improve your jurisdiction’s residential permit review processes? How would this grant funding improve the permit applicant experience? The answer to this question should include the specific actions funded by these grant dollars. **Maximum score: 25 points**

Readiness to proceed

(5) Is the work being undertaken with this grant funding ready to begin immediately or will there be a lag time for implementation (i.e. hiring a consultant/staff, reorganizing work assignments, getting internal approval from finance/budget, etc.). **Maximum score: 15 points**

- a. Points will be awarded to jurisdictions that are positioned to rapidly begin grant-related work as follows:

- i. Work has already begun **15 points**
- ii. Yes **10 points**
- iii. No **0 points**

(6) Are there future steps that you are aware of that will need to be taken after the conclusion of the grant period in June of 2027 to continue permit process improvements? **Maximum score: 10 points**

- a. Points will be awarded to jurisdictions that will complete their process improvement plan or have a strong plan to achieve that milestone as follows:
- i. We will complete permit process improvement. **10 points**
 - ii. Yes, we have a plan and budget in place to finish the permit process improvements needed to reduce permitting timelines. **5 points (Please attach a description or documentation of that plan for verification purposes)**
 - iii. No, we are not yet aware of the full scope of what will be needed to complete our permit process improvements. **0 points**

Completing the grant application form

[Use this link](#) to access the grant application. Please note that the application form is on [Smartsheet](#). The form will not save your progress. Once you submit your application you cannot go back and make any changes.

Please use this section as a worksheet to prepare your grant application materials before completing the online form.

The grant application must be submitted by 5:00 p.m., July 31, 2026. The maximum award amount for any jurisdiction is \$75,000.

Jurisdiction name: enter the name of your jurisdiction

Jurisdiction County: choose from the dropdown list of counties

Project manager: Provide the name, email, phone, street address and zip code for the primary contact for this grant

Name	
Email	
Phone Number	
Street address	
Zip code	

UBI number 9 digits. A UBI number is sometimes called a tax registration number, a business registration number, or a business license number. Example UBI number: 604-765-509

Statewide vendor number Example SWV number: 0002795-00

Contract signatory: Provide the name, title, and email of the authorizing official who will sign your contract. Submit the email address Commerce should use to route a contract for final signature through DocuSign. Please note: Commerce will only route to one jurisdiction email address. If your jurisdiction has a contract approval process it will need to be administered by your jurisdiction.

Name	
Title	
Email	

Total funding request: enter the total amount you are requesting. The maximum possible award is \$75,000.

Eligible activities: which of the eligible grant activities detailed above will your jurisdiction undertake as part of this grant?

Scope of work

Please upload a Scope of Work to fulfill the following details and requirements.

The application should include a scope of work (SOW) to accomplish the proposed work with clear deliverables and a project schedule. This is a deliverable based contract, therefore jurisdictions will be paid upon satisfactory completion of deliverables rather than hours spent working on the project. Please note this is different than how some consultants currently contract with cities.

Grant applications should include a detailed list of deliverables and funding required for each deliverable under the scope of work. Deliverable milestones may be for intangible achievements such as training or software system activation, but for these types of achievements there must be a verifiable way to document these achievements. If possible, identify the date ranges in which work will occur and the proposed date of completion for each deliverable.

The final due date for all deliverables is June 30, 2027. However, we strongly encourage deliverables to be in by June 15, 2027. Budget managers should be aware that the final distribution of the grant amount is contingent upon completion of the final deliverables.

Scope of Work and Project Schedule

The Scope of Work (SOW) should be itemized into actions, steps and deliverables as explained below. Unless otherwise noted, each of the parts below should have a start and end date. If only a month and year are given, we will assume that the estimated start date is the first day of the first month and the estimated end date is the last day of the last month.

- **“Actions”** refer to the components of the project and typically align with deliverables. They are provided as an organizing element within the scope of work, as shown below.

- **“Steps”** are brief statements about the work activities that this particular portion of the project entails. Steps need an estimated end date. Start dates are optional.
- **“Deliverables”** are the final products that the grant and/or portion of the grant will generate. The applicant will need to deliver these products by the dates indicated in the “End Date” column. Start dates are not needed for deliverables, as the start date is the start of the first step leading to the deliverable.

Example scopes of work are included below, **please note these examples are for illustrative purposes only.**

When developing your SOW, please be aware that:

- The SOW in the grant application will be used to develop a contract when the grant is awarded.
- Applicants are not limited to the number of lines represented on the grant application form. Add additional lines as needed.
- If an action and/or step is currently in progress at the time you are applying for this funding, clearly document progress to date and detail the tasks that will be carried out using grant funds. Grant funds may be used to reimburse for eligible project costs, under the contract, incurred after July 1, 2026.
- **The final due date for Deliverables must be no later than June 30, 2027.**

Simplified example Scope of Work

Grant Objective: Improve permit review processes to reduce permitting timelines and improve the customer experience.			
Steps/ Deliverables	Description	Start Date	End Date
Action 1	Review current timelines barriers	August 2026	June 2027
Step 1.1	Team meetings to identify and refine barriers to reduced permitting timelines	August 2026	August 2026
Step 1.2	Review current permit review procedures and application requirements.	August 2026	Sept 2026
Step 1.3	Team meetings to develop process improvement plan.	August 2026	October 2026
Step 1.4	Necessary legislative approval of process/actions. This can include existing workplans approved by your legislative body.	October 2026	
Deliverable 1	List of identified barriers, correction plan and if applicable any necessary legislative approval.	Oct 15, 2026	Oct 30, 2026
Action 2	Develop and implement communication/organization transition plan for inter-departmental team.	Oct 1, 2026	June, 2027

Step 2.1	Implementation of process improvement plan with internal stakeholders.	Oct 1, 2026	Oct 15, 2026
Step 2.2	Identify strategic dates for regular meetings, key transition points, department contacts, etc.	Oct 15, 2026	Oct. 2026
Deliverable 2.	Work Plan		Oct 30, 2026
Action 3	Track improvement progress	Oct 15 2026	June 2027
Step 3.1	Evaluate progress on proposed corrections and re-position teams if necessary.	Oct 15, 2026	Nov 2026
Step 3.2	Modify work plan if necessary to meet permit review timeline goals.		
Step 3.3	Adopt ordinance to improve permit review procedures if needed.		Dec 2026
Deliverable 3a	Progress report on permit procedures. Itemized to match correction plan.		February, 2027
Deliverable 3b	Final report on permit procedures. Itemized to match correction plan or including a new correction plan.		June 15, 2027

Budget

Budget and financial information

In the budget table, provide detailed information about the project's cost by deliverables in the scope of work. As a performance-based contract, where grant funds are allocated for each deliverable, we recommend the budget for each deliverable be based on the expenses estimated by the jurisdiction and its chosen consultant. If a grant is awarded, budget amounts can be adjusted before the final contract is executed to align with consultant expenses.

Budget managers should be aware that the final twenty percent (20%) of the grant amount for each grant is contingent upon completion of the final deliverables (i.e., final transition report).

Simplified example budget

Deliverable	Amount
Deliverable 1 List of identified process improvements and correction plan	\$15,000
Deliverable 2 Work Plan	\$15,000
Deliverable 3 (a) Progress report on permit process improvement.	\$20,000
Deliverable 3 (b) Final report on permit process improvement and lessons learned.	\$25,000
Total Grant	\$75,000

Letter of commitment

Please upload a Letter of Commitment to fulfill the following details and requirements.

A letter of commitment on official letterhead from the city mayor, county executive, chair of your board of county commissioners, city/county manager or other equivalent positions/person of authority must be uploaded as a part of your application. The letter should include the following language or similar language as modified to your specific grant proposal:

"I, NAME and TITLE_ of __NAME of CITY/COUNTY, authorize the city/county to propose the attached scope of work and budget request for grant funding related to permit review process update grant funding.

*We are committed to the improvement of our permitting review processes to reduce the amount of time permit applications spend in review and improve customer experience. We understand these funds are solely for the improvement of our permitting review processes. *Sentence identifying primary barriers to reducing permitting timelines. Sentence identifying approach to remove these barriers."*

Complete application contents

[The application form is available online.](#) Applicants must respond to, or submit attachments, as detailed below. As noted, applicants may want to use the contents below as a "worksheet" to prepare your information and then transfer it into the Smartsheet application. The online application does not allow users to save your progress and return later.

INTAKE INFORMATION

- Jurisdiction name
- Jurisdiction county
- Project Manager
 - o Name
 - o Email
 - o Phone number
 - o Street address
 - o Zip code
- UBI number
- Statewide Vendor Number
- Contract Signatory
 - o Name
 - o Title
 - o Email
- Total funding request
- Eligible Activities

SCORED QUESTIONS

- Two narrative questions regarding system capacity/vision
- Two multiple choice questions regarding readiness to proceed

SCOPE OF WORK/PROJECT SCHEDULE

- **Upload Scope of Work/Project Schedule (note: attachment upload occurs at the end of the application form)**
 - o Steps/Deliverables
 - o Description
 - o Start Date
 - o End Date

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- **Upload Budget/Financial Information (note: attachment upload occurs at the end of the application form)**
 - o Deliverable(s)
 - o Amount(s)

LETTER OF COMMITMENT

- **Upload Letter of Commitment**
 - o Name/Title/Jurisdiction of Authorizing Person(s)

Other helpful resources and information

Contact and links

- If you have any questions, please contact Ryan Shea, Local Permit Review Program Specialist, at Ryan.Shea@commerce.wa.gov or 509-606-3509.
- For more information about this grant program, visit the Commerce's [Growth Management Services Grants page](#).
- For more information on the Local Project Review Act, visit the [Local Project Review webpage](#).

Debrief and protest procedures

Debrief Meeting

An applicant who submits an application and receives notice that they were not selected for funding, may request a debriefing. The request for a debriefing conference must be submitted by email to ryan.shea@commerce.wa.gov within three (3) business days after the unsuccessful applicant notification is emailed to the applicant. The debriefing will be scheduled by Commerce within three (3) business days of the request, to take place within five (5) business days.

Protests may be filed only by applicants who have participated in a debriefing conference. Upon completing the debriefing conference, protests must be submitted to ryan.shea@commerce.wa.gov within five (5) business days of the debriefing conference. Protests must be received in writing, by email, no later than 5:00 pm on the fifth business day following the debriefing.

Applicants filing a protest shall follow the procedures described below. Protests that do not follow these procedures will not be considered. This protest procedure constitutes the sole administrative remedy available to applicants. The protest must state the program and funding closing date, the grounds for the protest from the list below with specific facts, and complete statements. A description of the relief or corrective action being requested should also be included.

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 an evaluator;
- Errors in computing the score;
- Non-compliance with procedures as described in the application document

Comparisons between applications or evaluations of the other applications is not allowed. Debriefing conferences may be conducted by online virtual meeting or telephone and will be scheduled for a maximum of thirty (30) minutes. COMMERCE reserves the right to modify the debrief meeting schedule as needed.

Protest Process

Upon receipt of a protest, a protest review will be held by Commerce, which will consider the initial application, the written protest, along with 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.

The final determination of the protest shall:

- Find the protest lacking in merit and uphold Commerce's action; or
- Find only technical or minor errors in Commerce's process that would not have changed the final outcome, determine Commerce to be in substantial compliance and reject the protest;
- Find merit in the protest and provide Commerce options which may include:
 - o Correct the error(s) and re-evaluate some or all proposals, or
 - o Make other findings and determine other courses of action as appropriate

Award process

Prior to receiving funds, a contract will need to be executed with Commerce. Award letters with instructions to initiate the contracting process will be emailed to each grant recipient. Emails will be sent to project contacts provided on your application. Included with the award letter will be an overview of steps to access your grant funds and additional information that may be needed to complete pre-contracting requirements:

Step 1. Complete pre-contracting requirements

Step 2. Sign the grant contract

Step 3. Submit reimbursement requests

Step 4. Submit negotiated deliverables and status reports outlined in the Scope of Work

Step 5. Close out your grant contract

Pre-contracting requirements

All pre-contracting requirements must be met prior to executing a contract and before drawing down any grant funds. These will include, but are not limited to, final negotiation of the grant Scope of Work and Budget.

Contract execution

Once all pre-contracting requirements have been met, a contract will be prepared and sent to the grantee for signature via DocuSign. It generally takes two to four weeks to fully execute a contract. Once executed by Commerce, a fully executed copy will be emailed to the jurisdiction and processed by Commerce internally to establish access for funding for grant reimbursement.