

Electrification of Transportation Systems CEF ETS 2022 Q&A

Submit all questions to the RFA Coordinator at CEF@commerce.wa.gov. **Commerce will post answers weekly through 09/08/2022.** Questions must be submitted by 09/07/2022.

Questions received through 08/08/2022:

- 1) Q: Does any of the money for EVs and EV infrastructure appropriated by the legislature in the 2021-23 and 2022 supplemental budgets enable more electrification of public vehicle fleets?**

A: The Commerce CEF ETS 2022 program does not include funding for vehicle fleet electrification, but such opportunities will be coming available. More information from both Commerce and the Department of Ecology will be available at a later date as those programs continue to develop.

- 2) Q: Can we apply for an electric vehicle?**

A: Funding must be used to identify, design, or install capital assets or infrastructure upgrades to manage and integrate load in preparation to expand EVSE. Direct purchases for EVs themselves are not eligible.

- 3) Q: Does the new Washington Health Disparities Map version 2.0 update affect sources and methods for reporting health disparities or other metrics associated with the map?**

A: It does not. The map has been updated to incorporate new data, but this does not affect how to use it to report community metrics. While the version number has changed, all links and instructions for using the map in the RFA remain accurate.

- 4) Q: Is the minimum grant amount \$100,000 and what is the rationale?**

A: Yes the minimum award is \$100,000. This amount was chosen after consulting with subject matter experts on the typical cost of a consultant study, engineer design, direct investment, or combination. It is important to keep in mind too that internal staff time and project development/management is also an eligible expense, as is external communications, education and outreach. Adding in the employee time for the grant management over its lifetime can add up pretty quickly, and once you add to that the external cost for the project itself and all other overhead, the price tag can increase pretty rapidly.

5) Q: Are there EV charger specifications? Are Agencies who have received grants through Commerce eligible to apply again?

A: EV chargers themselves are not included in this RFA. Work funded through this RFA is for early stage development and there will be a separate solicitation for EV charging infrastructure specifically later this year. Agencies who have previously received commerce grants are still eligible to apply, but there are additional points available for applicants who have never received a grant from a previous Commerce CEF ETS solicitation.

6) Q: Can eligible applicants submit multiple applications if they request \$400,000 or less in funding, or are eligible applicants limited to one application? Would an eligible applicant partnership with another organization allow the applicant to secure more than \$400,000 in funding?

A: Eligible applicants may submit multiple applications if they so choose, but applications that do not involve at least one partnership with another eligible applicants may not apply for more than \$150,000. Applications involving partnerships between multiple eligible applicants may apply for up to \$400,000 but not more.

7) Q: Are pre-contract expenses eligible for funding, or should applicants implement projects post-award/post-contract?

A: Applicants should plan to implement projects post-award. While it is possible on a case-by-case basis to backdate contracts to when the award was first announced, thus allowing for expenses incurred during contract negotiation before finalization to be eligible, it is not something that should be relied on as a given.

8) Q: The RFA indicated that funding available would be competitively awarded. Does this indicate that the program is first-come, first-served?

A: No, the program is not first-come first-served. All PHASE ONE applications received any time before the cutoff of 5:00pm on September 15th will receive equal consideration according to the evaluative criteria listed in SECTION 4 of the RFA.

9) Q: Can this program be stacked with local, state, and federal incentives?

A: Match provided by the applicant may not come from other state sources, but federal funds may be used for match expenses. Applying for this RFA does not prohibit applicants from applying for other sources of funding.

10) Q: Does the current grant phase application with Phase One Applications due September 15 include funding for charging infrastructure or if that is an upcoming funding cycle not yet out.

A: Funding for EVSE infrastructure itself will not be included in this opportunity but will be the focus of the next CEF ETS 2022 program released later this year.

11) Q: Does a bidder mean the same thing as an applicant?

A: For the purposes of the “bidder’s conference” yes it does mean the same thing.

12) Q: Can State funds be used as match funds?

A: State funds may not be used for match funds.

13) Q: Would an eligible expense include capital asset(s)? For example, a solar canopy to charge EVs where a private entity works with a local government and/or small utility, and the capital asset(s) would be installed on privately owned land?

A: Yes that collaboration is encouraged.

14) Q: How are you defining “gaps” for the first round? Is it 50 miles like highway charging efforts?

A: For PHASE ONE, we are just asking for qualitative information describing existing gaps in EVSE availability that will be evaluated based on the narrative. PHASE TWO will include more quantitative reporting requirements to define any gaps.

15) Q: If an applicant is awarded funding from this \$970,000 pot, would this award restrict or promote a subsequent application and award to the 1.94M pot?

A: Applicants may apply to both rounds of funding. An award from the first round will neither promote nor restrict an award from the second round.

16) Q: To verify: chargers that include internal battery storage to allow for using 240v input, such as the Freewire Level 3 charger, would be eligible in round 2 (not round 1).

A: That is correct, all charging infrastructure itself is reserved for round two.

17) Q: Is independent battery storage itself eligible for round one?

A: Yes, provided that it is specifically needed to construct or expand charging infrastructure.

18) Q: Can you give a definition of “EV charging infrastructure?”

A: EV Charging infrastructure is any unit of fueling infrastructure that supplies electric energy for the recharging of electric vehicles. For round two, further specification on preferred technologies will be provided in the RFA.

19) Q: Where is the definition for "small utility?"

A: As defined in [RCW 19.29A.010\(25\)](#).

20) Q: Is public transit BEB charging Infrastructure eligible, or is this program more for public facing EV infrastructure?

A: Yes, infrastructure upgrades or installations needed to construct or expand charging infrastructure for public transit is eligible and encouraged.

21) Q: If we are planning for electric infrastructure for future build out, when you talk of community impact, do you specifically mean a town/city? I ask because we have prisons, and the charging stations would be open to staff/family of incarcerates, etc. and not the whole community due to security risks. So we would be impacting the community of the prison facilities, who need this infrastructure to get these locations in remote areas.

A: The “community” in question means any community or communities who will be receiving benefits from, or are otherwise affected by, the project. Applicants should define affected communities and describe engagement with and projected benefits to them as outlined in the PHASE ONE application. Applications should also include benefits to any vulnerable communities affected by the project in terms of health disparities, income levels and economic opportunity, and access to and cost of transportation.

22) Q: Similar to the question above, what about infrastructure for fleet vehicles if the fleet is for a Tribal Government?

A: As far as community impacts and engagement go, the answer from the last question stands. Applicants should define the community or communities receiving benefits from or otherwise impacted by the project for the purposes of reporting community need, engagement, and any benefits to vulnerable communities. In response to fleet vehicles, this RFA does not provide funding for the purchasing of vehicles but may be used to finance needed upgrades or asset investments to build or expand charging infrastructure for fleet vehicles.

23) Q: Would a small utility be able to partner with a public transit agency for infrastructure upgrades in round 1?

A: Yes, there are no restrictions on project partners.

24) Q: If a local agency doesn't have an ETS “plan” like as a high-level planning document that covers goals, needs, inventory, future impacts, and potential improvements, can these funds be used to create that formal plan? Or are funds intended to be used for plans, specs, estimates that end in an infrastructure improvement?

A: Yes funding is eligible to create such plans. However, any plan created must at least identify needed capital assets or infrastructure upgrades. The project does not necessarily need to invest in those upgrades, but must at least produce plans that identify them.

25) Q: Would lot paving, to prepare a site for Level 3 EV charging, be an eligible expense in round 1?

A: All projects must be directly for or to plan for electrical load integration and management.

26) Q: Would local and community projects funds (non-competitive funds) be allowed as matching funds? Direct appropriation from the Washington State leg During session

A: Match finding may not come from any state sources. If the specific project being proposed has already been appropriated funding from the Washington State Legislature, it would not be eligible. However, adjacent projects that are both needed but separate would be eligible as long as the one being applied for in this RFA does not currently have funding from the Legislature.

27) Q: Has this funding program, or something similar, been available in the last 5-10 years?

A: Not for early stage market transformation work. The last time Commerce was authorized ETS monies for competitive appropriation was in the 17-19 biennial budget.

28) Q: How is commerce defining rural?

A: Rural Community: Projects not located in a city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants and the urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to such a city or town, as defined by the USDA Rural Energy Pilot Program.

29) Q: If we are not sure if our entity has applied for this specific grant before, should we e-mail the CEF e-mail address to ask?

A: New awardees, the bonus in the PHASE ONE application, is for any applicant who has not successfully received a grant from previous Commerce ETS grant rounds. Applicants who have previously applied but not been awarded will still count as new awardees. On the PHASE ONE application, there is an option if the applicant is unsure that will trigger the review team to confirm with our records.

Questions received through 08/16/2022:

30) Q: Are there plans to offer grants to purchase EVs?

A: The purchase of EVs is not included in this RFA, however future programs run through the department of Commerce and Ecology are suited to that.

31) Q: Could a project partner with a federal agency that is helping finance the project?

A: Yes, State funds may not be used as match, but federal dollars are eligible.

32) Q: If we have 2 facilities where we would do the same infrastructure work, would we need to do 2 separate apps because they are two different facilities, or can we combine in one app since they are the same work?

A: You can combine them, a single project may have multiple sites.

33) Q: Are Ports eligible to apply for this RFA?

A: Yes, Ports count as local governments and are eligible.

Questions received through 08/23/2022:

34) Q: Are transit authorities eligible for funding to build out infrastructure to electrify their fleets?

A: Yes, transit authorities are eligible and this kind of project is also eligible.

35) Q: Could you please provide a definition and potentially some examples of what you mean by “demand-side load integration and management”?

A: Demand-side load integration and management means any behavioral, software, hardware or other strategy and related investments needed for communities to manage and/or integrate the expected demand for electricity from new or expanded EVSE. It should be for anything that communities need in order to install or expand EVSE and related usage, and must be related to tangible capital assets or infrastructure upgrades. Examples may include (but are not limited to) any of the following: On-site generation or storage, where the technology directly supplies electricity to the EVSE; Electric grid distribution system infrastructure upgrades, where the upgrade is needed as a result of installed or planned EVSE; Consultant studies that lead communities to identify needed upgrades or capital assets to integrate or manage expected electrical demand; or any other study, engineer design, or direct investment that enables communities to handle increased electrical demand from new and planned EVSE.

Questions received through 08/30/2022:

36) Q: The Walla Walla Public School district has bought 3 new electric school buses and we are currently in the planning and design phase for the charging system infrastructure. We were hoping to apply for this grant to expand the project to include solar generation and possibly flow battery storage to charge these buses with. Is this an allowable project type?

A: Yes, this project qualifies as load management in order to install or expand EVSE and is eligible.

37) Q: In a few sentences, what do potential applicants need to know about Commerce’s Electrification of Transportation Systems (ETS) grant program? Why should this funding be a priority for local jurisdictions?

A: When it rains it pours, and any local jurisdictions in Washington state out looking for funding to support transportation electrification should make sure to bring an umbrella. The Federal Infrastructure Bill, IRA, state programs from WSDOT, Ecology and Commerce, and over \$100 Million new dollars appropriated from the Washington Legislature in recent years provide ample opportunities to electrify transportation markets. Just like rainfall in Washington, however, this funding is not always equally distributed equally across the state.

The biggest focus so far has been major transit corridors. Both the federal NEVI program and WSDOT's recent opportunities strongly emphasize the ability for EVs to travel up and down major highways without worrying about gaps in charging infrastructure. Thus, grants have largely been awarded to communities within a mile of Interstate 5, Interstate 90, and other priority corridors as set out in the NEVI 90-day guidance for States.

The ETS program at Commerce is instead designed to address apparent gaps in funding opportunities by helping rural and underserved communities participate in and benefit from the growing transportation electrification market transformation. Awards will be distributed to applicants with limited capacity for widespread transportation electrification and who have not previously been targets for public funding. ETS grants provide funding for local governments, federally recognized Tribal governments, small utilities, and state agencies to integrate and manage electrical load from electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE). Funding covers innovative projects that prepare communities to construct and/or expand EVSE through early-stage consultant studies, engineer designs, or direct capital asset investments and infrastructure upgrades. Any local jurisdiction who feel they are not a priority for corridor charging efforts should feel encouraged to apply for any early-stage developmental work all the way up to installing and operating charging infrastructure.

38) Q: ETS will offer two rounds of funding: one that came out in early August, with applications due September 15, and the other likely coming out later this year. What is each round of funding trying to do? And will there be two rounds of funding in the future?

A: Both rounds, while distinct, work to broaden electric transportation markets in Washington by widening the diversity of communities participating in them. Round one is focused on early-stage development and will award grants to projects that identify, design, or install capital assets or infrastructure upgrades to integrate and manage electrical load. In other words, round one targets communities that are not ready to install charging infrastructure and funds the needed upgrades and early-stage studies to prepare them to do so.

Round two is narrower and will provide funding for charging infrastructure in rural communities specifically. Where round one targets communities just getting started, round two will focus on those who are ready to install EVSE and helps them construct or expand their systems. Round two will focus on projects where charging infrastructure gaps exist in rural communities.

39) Q: What's required to apply for funding in Round 1? What bonuses are available to potential applicants? (NB: Nick, this is where you could mention partnering, or being a first-time applicant.)

A: To answer the question directly, what is initially required is a 550-650 word cover letter submitted by September 15. Now let's take a step back and understand the logic.

Applying for a public grant is a lot of work. Moreover, the primary targets for this ETS program tend to face capacity and resource constraints that make applying even harder. Commerce is working to dismantle these barriers, primarily employing three strategies:

1. Two-Phase Application:

Applications for Round One (that opened on August 1 on the [Website](#)) will be accepted in two phases. Due on September 15 is the first phase application, a 550-650 word cover letter. Just a page or so. Commerce will evaluate these one-pagers for basic administrative requirements and the criteria listed in the Phase One application and in the RFA (both documents found on the website). All applicants will be given a “discourage” or “encourage” notice via email by October 10, and from there may decide to pursue the full application in Phase Two, or not. Applicants who choose to fill out the full application must submit them by November 21.

2. Reduced Match Requirements

If time is the first resource constraint, money is certainly the second. Especially for small and rural communities, meeting strict match requirements is a common informal disqualifier. ETS Round One will include significant match reductions based on the primary applicant and any partnerships. If the primary applicant is a Tribal government, the project is subject to a 1:10 match ratio, where Commerce contributes \$10 for every \$1 from the applicant. If the primary applicant is a small utility, local government, or state agency, and is partnering with another small utility or Tribal government, the project is subject to a 1:5 match ratio. Partners must submit letters of support as part of the full Phase Two application to qualify.

3. Scoring preference

To further elevate target communities, evaluative criteria are designed to favor first-time applicants and vulnerable communities. Some examples include: increased preference for applicants who have not previously received a grant award for ETS projects, addition points for locations that have not initiated market transformation efforts, requirements regarding climate change impacts, air pollution exposure, and economic opportunity in rural communities, preference for strong community need and engagement, requirements for reporting specific community benefits, preference for projects that demonstrate a strong need for funding, and others included in the RFA. Additionally, Commerce will not be scoring match funding. Applicants are required to provide it, but those with greater capacity to provide match will not receive preference because of it.

40) Q: When we think about electrifying transportation systems, we often think about cities. But what about rural areas? How should they be thinking about ETS funding?

A: The name of the game in rural Washington is community benefits. Projects should generate economic activity in local communities, increase transportation access and decrease cost, and meet community-specific needs. That said, each community is unique and serves a variety of end-users. In rural communities especially, local commuting tends to cover a much wider area and charging should be designed to accommodate these long travel times for locals. Where possible, chargers should be installed near amenities and shops to bring increased tourism and revenue to local businesses. Electric public

transportation is also incredibly important to provide services to those who do not have or can't afford an EV.

Funding opportunities need to be designed for rural communities with as few strings attached as possible. We should be trying things even if they aren't perfect. There is a chicken and egg scenario with the rollout of EVs and EVSE, where one cannot exist without the other. But we have to begin somewhere, and the key is to just get started.

41) Q: What's the next step for those interested in applying?

A: Round one, Phase one applications are due on September 15. At this stage, applicants should develop a solid project concept and do their best to answer the questions laid out in the phase one application on the website. Completed phase one applications should be mailed to cef@commerce.wa.gov.

42) Q: What is your definition of a tribal partnership? Is it a letter of support or does it require active participation on their part? The same question in regards to our small utility partner. They meet the definition of a small utility from both a meter per mile, (<5) and number of total meters, their participation will be to provide the net metering connection. With the letter of support from their board, does that make them a partner from the application perspective?

A: For the PHASE ONE application, any entity that has committed to submitting a letter of support as part of the full PHASE TWO application counts as a project partner and may be listed as such on the application. PHASE ONE does not require applicants to explain the nature of the partnership, but during the PHASE TWO application partnerships will be evaluated based on the criteria outlined in RFA SECTION 4.

43) Q: I was curious to know if this also applies to adding private EV charging stations to Tribally owned facilities. We are in the planning/startup stages of adding EV charging stations to our Tribal facility. Is this program intended for converting present Fleet vehicles within the public transportation sector over to EVSE or does it also apply to businesses that wish to provide new or additional EV charging capabilities to their visiting clients and guests?

A: Grant funding is not restricted to public fleet end-uses and may be used for load integration and management strategies needed in order to construct EVSE in private businesses for visiting clients and guests.

44) Q: We have a project being conducted by the Parking Commission in Colville Washington that has funding to purchase a lot for 8 EV charging stations. The Parking Commission is partnering with Avista, who is pledging the funding to pay for the charging station units and infrastructure. The only funding gap left is the lot prep and paving. As I read the grant NOFO and the Q/A, I still am not certain if the paving project can be funded by this grant.

A: Funding must be used to identify, design, or install capital assets or infrastructure upgrades to integrate and manage load in order to construct or expand EVSE. This project would not be eligible unless there is a clear load integration or management strategy involved.

45) Q: Is this program slated to be annual?

A: Funding in this program was appropriated out of the 21-2023 capital budget for a one-time grant opportunity. While the Legislature may appropriate further funds in subsequent biennia for ETS-related work through the Clean Energy Fund at Commerce, this specific funding is not annual and this specific RFA will not be re-used.

46) Q: Are government-funded agencies eligible to apply?

A: Any agency that fits the following definition of “State Agency” may apply: Any state board, commission, bureau, committee, department, institution, division, or tribunal in the legislative, executive, or judicial branch of state government.

47) Q: Does this grant cover, or partially cover, the installation of charging stations for electric vehicles?

A: No. Funding in this program may not be used for the procurement or installation of EVSE itself.

48) Q: How many bids for comparison are required?

A: Any eligible applicant is only required to submit one bid, but may submit multiple if desired.

Questions received through 09/07/2022:

49) Q: I see that Section 1.3 requires both a certification of license to do business in Washington and a minimum 5 year lifecycle for assets, but those do requirements do not appear on the phase one application. Are those waived for the first application?

A: All projects are subject to all requirements listed in the RFA, including those. While not reported for the phase one application, they are still minimum criteria for all applications and will be part of the phase two application.

50) Q: Will Phase Two of the (ETS) Grant allow for infrastructure improvements such as drainage and pavement?

A: Funding must be used to identify, design, or install capital assets or infrastructure upgrades to integrate and manage load in order to construct or expand EVSE. This project would not be eligible unless there is a clear load integration or management strategy involved

51) Q: Can round one be used for planning processes (i.e. consultant fees)?

A: Yes, consultant studies are an eligible expense and projects may be for planning. However, all plans need to identify needed capital assets of infrastructure upgrades to manage or integrate electrical load from EVSE.

52) Q: If awarded, how soon would grant recipients receive the funds, and how long do they have to spend the money?

A: From the announcement of awards contract negotiation can take around 6 months, although Commerce is committed to expediting that process and getting projects up and running as fast as possible. Grant funds need to be spent out within the budget and timeline as negotiated on a case-by-case basis, but in general we would like to keep within about two years.

53) Q: The PUD will not charge the full cost for the new DCFC electricity service for a few years so we have time to build up the usership to recover the costs to help pay for the electricity. Are we able to use this as in kind match for the project costs?

A: No. Match funds must be cash that is committed and available at the time of contract execution.

54) Q: Because we are a State agency are we allowed to use state funds as match?

A: Yes. Match provided by a local government or state agency does not count as current Washington State legislative funding and will not disqualify projects as long as it was not already committed to the proposed project prior to this RFA.

55) Q: Does all narrative need to be incorporated within the actual RFA No. CEF ETS 2022 form in the spaces provided thereon or can responses be attached separately and marked with application part # and title of response?

A: All responses should be incorporated within the application form itself. Text boxes will expand to accommodate longer responses. There is no word limit on the text boxes, but responses should be kept as succinct as possible.

56) Q: Does the 650 word limit apply only to the project description portion with other scored sections described therein in addition to that limit or is it all inclusive within this 650 word count?

A: Part C, project narrative, as a complete section should be no longer than 650 words. Keep in mind that this first phase application does not need to include extremely detailed answers or all project information, it is an evaluative tool for the review team to decide which applications Commerce would like to get more information from. Full information will be included in the full application.

57) Q: Questions 2.05 – 2.06 ask if “this project” (emphasis added) will manage or integrate electrical load, etc. They will be applying for the project planning, scoping and design funds to do just that, but since they haven’t done that background work yet they won’t be actually implementing that at this time. Should they answer in the affirmative if that is the end goal even if this specific grant won’t deliver that? These are Pass/Fail criteria. According to the RFA, I think they are on solid ground but I couldn’t reconcile how they should respond to those two questions.

A: Yes, please answer in the affirmative. As long as the study in question will be used to identify or design capital assets or infrastructure upgrades that will be needed for load integration and management for EVSE installation, the project is eligible and counts as “integrating or managing load.”

Questions received through 09/13/2022:

58) Q: we intend to install, design, electrical supply u(p)grades which will become capital assets. Those assets will all be in the category of EVSE but not to include the actual charging hardware which will be paid for using other funds not tied to this grant application. Then (NOTE: EVSE does not count as an eligible asset)? I do not know what this is intended to mean? Does this last sentence turn our yes into a no?

A: EVSE refers to the actual charging infrastructure itself, the electrical supply upgrades mentioned in the question would be eligible under this RFA. This project is eligible based on the information provided.

59) Q: Could you give a bit more explanation about the definition of 'partners' for the grant application? For example, we have over 2 dozen support letters for this project. But I think my assumption is that 'partner' means that another entity is giving something tangible like money, property, donation of time, etc.

A: The only requirement to qualify as a project partner is to turn in a letter of support during the PHASE TWO application outlining the role, commitment, and benefits of the partnership(s). Our priority in evaluating partnerships will be projects where multiple eligible applicants are partnering on a single project (i.e. a Tribe and a local government, or utility and Tribe, or utility and local government, etc.). For the PHASE ONE application, please only list relevant partners where prompted (both eligible applicants and other partners). During the PHASE TWO application, applicants will be asked to provide more detailed information about each partner, the intended benefits of the partnership, and what they are contributing to the project. At that point we will score evaluate partnerships more rigorously, PHASE ONE should just include basic information.

60) Q: Energy Northwest (EN) is the primary applicant and we are partnering with at least one small PUD. My question is does that qualify for a 1:5 match?

A: Yes, you would qualify as long as you include a letter of support from the small PUD during the full phase two application.

61) Q: Section 1.4, Page 10 states "Match funds cannot be in-kind costs...Funds claimed as match must be eligible costs as described in Section 1.2..." In Section 1.2 eligible costs 6th bullet states "All other expenses for personnel time..." Is this a valid match expense?

A: Funds provided to meet match requirements must be cash and cannot be in-kind costs like staff time. However, match and grant funds may be spent on expenses for FTE time managing the contract and grant work. It should read "funds claimed as match must be used for eligible costs as described in section 1.2"

62) Q: Is the language in questions 2.7 and 2.8 of the phase one application specifically directed at the specific project we will be proposing?

A: Yes, these questions are asking only about the specific project for which you are applying.

PHASE TWO Q&A

Questions received through 10/17/2022:

63) Q: Will round 2 be open to State governments?

A: No, round 2 is only open for Tribal governments and local governments in rural communities. However, other entities including state governments may be involved as a project partner.

Questions received through 10/25/2022:

64) Q: The Phase 2 application calls for a scope of technical analysis that requires funding to determine the feasibility of the application. If our applications are successful and are awarded, could the cost for technical analysis be considered part of the matching contribution as it's a required measure to complete the application?

A: We are not able to count expenses from previous time periods as match. However, the community benefits and engagement as well as the long term strategy are weighted more heavily than the technical pieces. This was intentional to try and accommodate smaller entities who may not be equipped to do any extensive technical analysis.

65) Q: Would you share the number of applicants who received an ENCOURAGED invitation to Phase 2 and the total dollar value of those applications?

A: 9 Applicants were ENCOURAGED and the total amount requested among them is \$2,284,000.

66) Q: Our application is for a line extension, new transformer, and electrical upgrades needed to be able to install EVSE. Part of that work is the platform it sits on it. Where is the boundary line between what expenses are eligible and ineligible? Does that work count as part of EVSE and is therefore not eligible?

A: All work up to the actual EVSE charging infrastructure is eligible for reimbursement. As long as those components are necessary for the preparation work in your scope to prepare the site for EVSE, and you are not purchasing or installing any EVSE itself, they can be expensed to the contract.

67) Q: For the Phase 2 application, Project Site Information Template, states provide information on "Tribal Land". There are areas along SR-14 that are *ceded land*, but not tribal reservations. Is the ceded land included in the definition for "Tribal Land" and therefore that information is required for the application?

A: The intention of the site attachment is to get a sense for the income, health disparities, air pollution, and transportation costs for communities impacted by the project. Therefore, the purpose is not to provide information on which land is which but rather to allow applicants to define the affected area if there are not readily available site addresses. Since this project has site addresses, please use those and report the information on the site attachment for those addresses.

68) Q: I want to confirm that this really is a planning grant. As we read the application there is a fair amount of reference to procurement and operations considerations.

A: yes this is a planning grant. But it is also potentially a procurement grant. It was designed to be flexible for folks who just want to do a study and those who are ready to actually install some upgrades to prepare for EVSE, and anything in between. So the language in the application was tricky because it needed to apply to all different kinds of potential projects. To be very clear, however, this money is eligible to be used to develop a TE plan, you do not need to procure or install any physical assets.

69) Q: Must the Lead Applicant be the contractor with Commerce or if successful, can the grant and all contracting and project management responsibilities be assigned?

A: Responsibilities may be assigned but the primary applicant will still need to sign the original contract with Commerce and all subsequent reporting and required documents prepared by any partners on behalf of the project. That does not require them to be the ones managing the contract, but it will mean their name is on the line in the case that the partner or subcontractor managing the grant misses a requirement, or fails to complete the work, etc.