

# EFFECTIVE FEDERAL GRANT WRITING



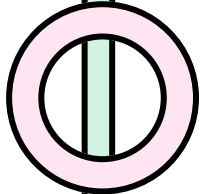
A WEBINAR SERIES FOR  
MUNICIPALITIES

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**PART ONE - WHAT MAKES  
A GOOD PROJECT?**



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# ○ Introduction

- Alison Nichols
  - Director of Policy
  - New Mexico Municipal League
  - 505-470-3931
  - [anichols@nmml.org](mailto:anichols@nmml.org)
- Chuck Thomas
  - Petroglyph Consulting
  - 505-999-7618
  - [chuck@petroglyphconsulting.com](mailto:chuck@petroglyphconsulting.com)





# ○ Session #1 Overview: What Makes a Good Project?

## Objectives

- Use a series of basic questions to identify and explain your project.
- Evaluating the good, the bad and the ugly of the proposed projects.
- Learn the different types of projects that can be funded.
- Prioritizing your projects for funding.



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# ○ Funding Assistance Update

- Federal Appropriations are active in both Houses
  - "Congressionally Directed Spending"
- Together, Senator Heinrich and Luján secured almost \$160 million in Congressionally Directed Spending for more than 75 local projects in New Mexico.
- Lisa Van Theemsche - Funding Specialist  
[Lisa\\_VanTheemsche@heinrich.senate.gov](mailto:Lisa_VanTheemsche@heinrich.senate.gov)
- Assist with funding sources and providing letters of support to applications.

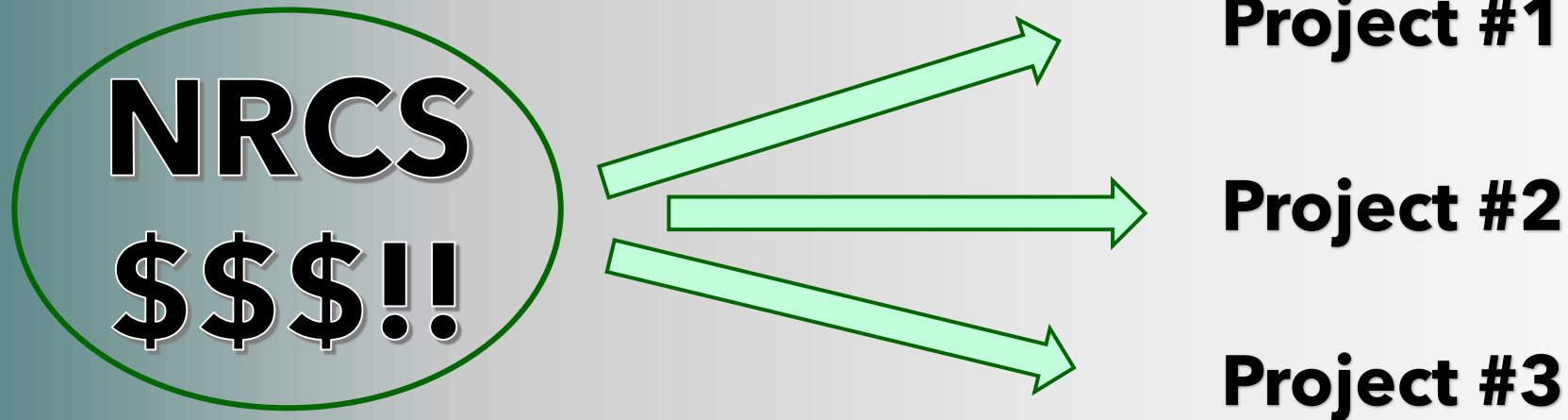


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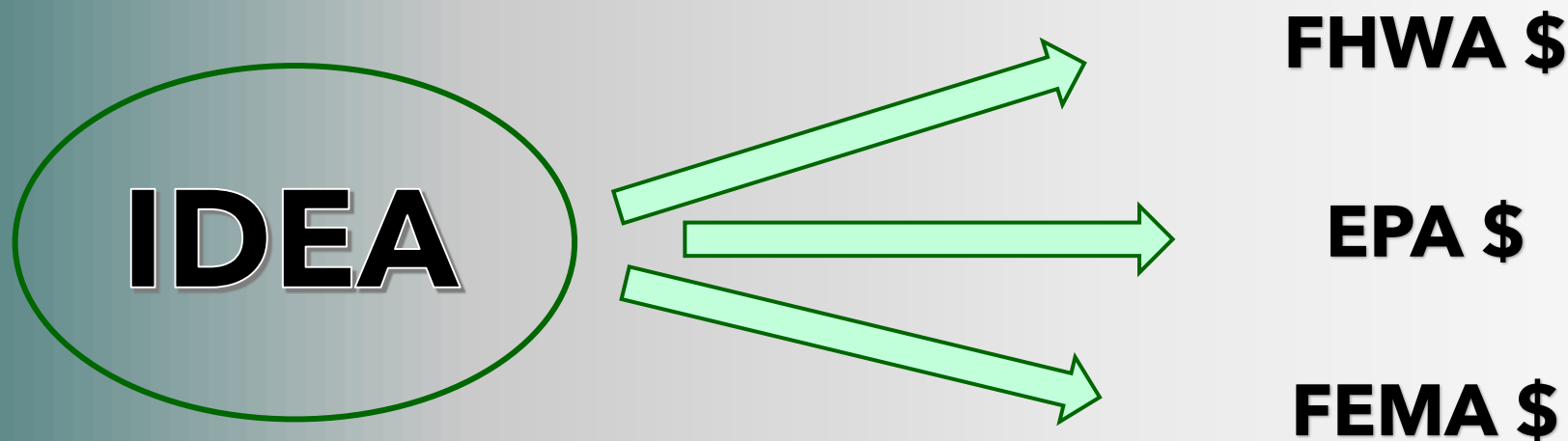
# ○ Funding Application False Starts

- Starting with a Funding Source
  - Trying to select a project from the funding source.



# ○ Funding Application False Starts

- Starting with an Idea Before Vetting
  - Trying to “shoe-horn” a project into a funding source.





# ○ Funding Application False Starts

- Beginning with a "Relaxed Attitude".
  - "If we don't get the funds, no harm, no foul."
  - "It is extra money we wouldn't have anyway."
  - "Our existing budget doesn't depend on it."
- Each application takes internal and external resources
- Each application is reviewed by agency staff and volunteers
- Some projects may have support from others
  - Federal Appropriations



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- What is a “Good Project”?



**“The best project is the one that can be completed.”**







# ○ Types of Projects

- Planning
  - Master Plans
  - Scientific or Economic Studies
- Education & Outreach
- Design
- Construction
- Property Acquisition
  - Footprint for Project
  - Relocations

3/23/2022



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# ○ “Shovel Ready” Projects



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# ○ “Shovel Ready” Projects

- Most Common
  - Right of Way Acquired.
  - Environmental Planning Completed.
- Less Common
  - Conceptual Design Completed.
- Unicorn Level
  - Full Design Completed, Approved & On the Shelf.





# QUESTIONS?





# ○ Develop a Project Portfolio

- Title?
- What is the Project?
- What is the Problem?
- What will the Project Improve?
- What will the Project cost?
- Who will benefit from the Project?
- Who supports the Project?



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# ○ Project Title

- What's in a Name?
- Have a descriptive title for the project.
  - Make sure it won't be confused with a different project.
  - Watch Length
    - Supercalafragalisticexpialidocious Improvements Project.
  - Try to avoid Acronyms or 'database terms'.
    - SWMCA; Pond CA\_03P
  - Be careful with the word "Phase".
    - Perceived as incomplete





# ○ What is the Project?

- Describe the project.
  - Include only features that needed to be funded.
  - Include details about each feature.
    - How long is it? What size? How old?
- Use actions words:
  - Acquire, Plan, Design, Build, Construct
- Use References if available
  - E.g., if the project was included in a planning document.





# ○ What is the Problem?

- What is the problem that you are trying to solve?
  - Describe the problem.
  - Environment? Traffic? Economic?
- Has the current condition caused any disruptions?
  - Has a waterline failed? Has someone gotten hurt?
  - Use history to your advantage.
- What else could go wrong?
  - Look beyond the project area for additional consequences.



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# ○ What will the Project Improve?

- What are the benefits from the Project?
  - Match the benefits to the problems.
- Does it add Resiliency?
  - Provide improved security from future failures/disasters.
  - Create a better back-up for failures elsewhere.
- List advantages of new design/materials/processes
  - Increased capacity for future growth.
  - Increased ability to treat to a higher quality.
  - Reduction in future O&M costs.



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# ○ What will the Project cost?

- Has a Cost Estimate been completed?
  - Use the numbers from the cost estimate
- If No Cost Estimate
  - Look at previous similar projects in your community.
  - Ask other neighboring communities.
  - Contact suppliers/contractors
- Use Cost Ranges
  - < \$500K; \$500K - \$1.5M; \$1.5 - 5M; > \$5M



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# ○ Who will benefit from the Project?

- Local Neighborhoods
  - Commuters
- Critical Service Providers
  - Hospitals
  - Emergency Responders
- Vulnerable Populations
  - Schools
  - Senior Care Facilities
- Outside the Community



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# ○ Who supports the Project?

- Community
- Elected Officials
  - Mayor (Executive Branch)
  - Council/Commission (Legislative Branch)
- Industry/Local Businesses
- Local Interest Groups
- Letters of Support
- Previous Funding



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# QUESTIONS?



# Other Questions

- Who **doesn't** support the project?
  - Community
  - Elected Officials
    - Mayor (Executive Branch)
    - Council/Commission (Legislative Branch)
  - Industry/Local Businesses
  - Local Interest Groups
- Active/Passive Resistance





# ○ Project Preparation/Support

- What have you already done to support the project?
  - Planning Efforts
  - Completed Design (Conceptual or Full)
  - Previous Funding Support
    - Direct or Indirect
- Do you have all the property, easements and permits?
  - Footprint for project.
  - Easements for access and construction.
  - National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)



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# ○ Project Preparation/Support

- Does your community have any "warts"?
  - Outstanding Violations.
    - Unless the Project addresses them.
  - Poor or missing Financial Audits
- Does your Project have any "warts"?
  - Maintenance wasn't completed.
  - Conflict with prior federally funded infrastructure.







# ○ Are You Committed?

- If you get the funding, are you committed to start?
  - Are there other things that need to be done first?
- Will there be a change of Administration before award?
- Will taxes or rates need to be raised?
- Does another project need to be completed first?
- Will new staff resources need to be added?
  - Higher level operator for water or wastewater improvements.



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# QUESTIONS?



# Webinar Schedule



Grant Writing Webinar Series Schedule			
Day	Date	Time	Topic
Wednesday	9-Mar	10 - 11 AM	Introductory Session/Overview of Funding Sources
Wednesday	23-Mar	10 - 11 AM	#1. What Makes a Good Project?
Tuesday	5-Apr	10 - 11 AM	#2. Benefits/Limitations/Considerations of External Public Funding
Tuesday	26-Apr	10 - 11 AM	#3. Project Scoping for Funding
Tuesday	17-May	10 - 11 AM	#4. General Project Development
Thursday	9-Jun	10 - 11 AM	#5. Identifying Matching Funds & Partners
Tuesday	21-Jun	10 - 11 AM	#6. You Got the Money - Now What?



# ○ Key Contacts



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