

VII. Establishment of a Working Group on Reform

VIII. Future Agenda Items

CONTACT PERSON FOR FURTHER

INFORMATION: Kenneth L. Marcus, Staff Director (202) 376-7700.

Debra A. Carr,
General Counsel.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

DOC has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13.

Bureau: International Trade Administration.

Title: Annual Report from Foreign-Trade Zones.

Agency Form Number: ITA-359P.

OMB Number: 0625-0109.

Type of Request: Regular Submission.

Estimated Burden: 14,330 hours.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 160.

Est. Avg. Hours Per Response: 38 to 211 hours (depending on the size and structure of the foreign-trade zone).

Needs and Uses: The Foreign-Trade Zone Annual Report is the vehicle by which Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) grantees report annually to the Foreign Trade Zones Board, pursuant to the requirements of the Foreign Trade Zones Act (19 U.S.C. 81a-81u). The annual reports submitted by grantees are the only complete source of compiled information on FTZ's. The data and information contained in the reports relates to international trade activity in FTZ's. The reports are used by the Congress and the Department to determine the economic effect of the FTZ program. The reports are also used by the FTZ Board and other trade policy officials to determine whether zone activity is consistent with U.S. international trade policy, and whether it is in the public interest. The public uses the information regarding activities carried on in FTZ's to evaluate their effect on industry sectors. The information contained in annual reports also helps zone grantees in their marketing efforts.

Affected Public: State, local, or tribal governments or not-for-profit institutions which are FTZ grantees.

Frequency: Annual.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to maintain license, mandatory.

OMB Desk Officer: David Rostker, (202) 395-7340.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by calling or writing Diana Hynek, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, (202) 482-0266, Department of Commerce, Room 6625, 14th and Constitution, NW., Washington, DC 20230. E-mail: dHynek@doc.gov.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent via e-mail to

David_Rostker@omb.eop.gov or fax (202)395-7285, within 30 days of publication of this **Federal Register** notice.

Dated: December 21, 2004.

Madeleine Clayton,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 04-28282 Filed 12-27-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Economic Development Administration

[991215339-4345-13]

Solicitation of Proposals for Economic Development Assistance Programs

AGENCY: Economic Development Administration (EDA)

ACTION: Notice and request for proposals.

SUMMARY: The Economic Development Administration (EDA) is soliciting proposals for the following programs: Grants for Public Works and Economic Development Facilities; Economic Development—Support for Planning Organizations; Economic Development—Technical Assistance; Economic Adjustment Assistance; and Economic Development—Trade Adjustment Assistance. EDA's mission is to lead the Federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. EDA fulfills its mission by investing in the following: Public works, infrastructure and development facilities; the crafting and implementation of comprehensive economic development strategies; local, national and University Center-based technical assistance projects; and revolving loan funds. Under separate statutory authority, EDA also provides technical assistance to firms adversely

affected by directly competitive imported products.

DATES: Proposals are accepted on a continuing basis and applications are invited and processed as received. Normally, two months are required for a final decision after the receipt of a completed application invited by EDA that meets all requirements.

ADDRESSES: For applicants in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina or Tennessee, please send proposals to: Economic Development Administration, Atlanta Regional Office, 401 West Peachtree Street, NW., Suite 1820, Atlanta, Georgia 30308-3510, *Telephone:* (404) 730-3002, *Fax:* (404) 730-3025.

For applicants in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma or Texas, please send proposals to: Economic Development Administration, Austin Regional Office, 327 Congress Avenue, Suite 200, Austin, Texas 78701-365, *Telephone:* (512) 381-8144, *Fax:* (512) 381-8177.

For applicants in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio or Wisconsin, please send proposals to: Economic Development Administration, Chicago Regional Office, 111 North Canal Street, Suite 855, Chicago, IL 60606, *Telephone:* (313) 353-7706, *Fax:* (313) 353-8575.

For applicants in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah or Wyoming, please send proposals to: Economic Development Administration, Denver Regional Office, 1244 Speer Boulevard, Room 670, Denver, Colorado 80204, *Telephone:* (303) 844-4715, *Fax:* (303) 844-3968.

For applicants in Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, U.S. Virgin Islands or West Virginia, please send proposals to: Economic Development Administration, Philadelphia Regional Office, Curtis Center, 601 Walnut Street, Suite 140 South, Philadelphia, PA 19106, *Telephone:* (215) 597-4603, *Fax:* (215) 597-1063.

For applicants in Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, California, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nevada, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon or Washington, please send proposals to: Economic Development Administration, Seattle Regional Office, Jackson Federal Building, Room 1890, 915 Second Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98174,

Telephone: (206) 220-7660, Fax: (206) 220-7669.

For a copy of the FFO announcement for this request for proposals, please see the Web site below listed under "Electronic Access."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information or for a paper copy of the FFO announcement, contact the appropriate EDA regional office listed above. EDA's Web site, <http://www.eda.gov> contains additional information on EDA and its program.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Access: EDA is not currently able to accept electronic submission of proposal packages. However, the full funding opportunity announcement for the FY 2005 Economic Development Assistance Programs competition is available through Grants.gov at <http://www.grants.gov>. Additional information is available through EDA's Web site, <http://www.eda.gov>.

Funding Availability: Funding appropriated under Public Law 108-447 is available for economic development assistance programs authorized by the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended (Public Law 89-136, 42 U.S.C. 3121, *et seq.*), and as most recently amended by the Economic Development Administration Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-373), and for trade adjustment assistance authorized under title II, chapters 3 and 5 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2341-2355; 2391), and as further amended by Public Law 107-210. Funds in the amount of \$253,984,652 have been appropriated for FY 2005 and shall remain available until expended.

Statutory Authority: The authority for programs listed below is the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended (Public Law 89-136, 42 U.S.C. 3121, *et seq.*), and as further amended by Public Law 105-393 and 108-373. The authority for the program listed in part II.6 is title II, chapters 3 and 5 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended by Public Law 93-618, 98-120, 98-369, 99-272, 99-514, 100-418, 103-66, 105-277, and 107-210 (19 U.S.C. 2341-2391) (Trade Act).

CFDA: 11.300 Grants for Public Works and Economic Development Facilities; 11.302 Economic Development—Support for Planning Organizations; 11.303 Economic Development—Technical Assistance; 11.307 Economic Adjustment Assistance; 11.313 Economic Development—Trade Adjustment Assistance.

Eligibility: Eligible applicants for and eligible recipients of EDA financial

assistance include Economic Development Districts: Indian tribes or consortia of Indian tribes; states; cities or other political subdivision; institutions of higher education or consortia of institutions of higher education; public or private nonprofit organizations or associations acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a state. Projects eligible for financial assistance include those projects meeting "special needs" criteria, as set forth in Section VIII.B. of the FFO.

Cost Sharing Requirements:

Generally, the amount of the EDA grant may not exceed 50 percent of the cost of the project, unless the project meets the requirements in 42 U.S.C. 3144. Projects meeting the criteria may receive an additional amount that shall not exceed 30 percent based on the relative needs of the area in which the project will be located. *See* 42 U.S.C. 3144. While cash contributions are encouraged, in-kind contributions, fairly evaluated by EDA, may include assumptions of debt and contributions of space, equipment, and services and may provide the non-Federal share of the project cost. 42 U.S.C. 3144. In-kind contributions must be eligible project costs and meet applicable Federal cost principles and uniform administrative requirements. *Id.* EDA may supplement the costs of a project up to and including 100 percent of such project costs where the applicant is able to demonstrate that the project meets the requirements of 42 U.S.C. 3144(c). Potential applicants should contact the appropriate EDA office to make this determination.

Intergovernmental Review:

Applications under this program are subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

Evaluation and Selection Procedures:

Each pre-application proposal is circulated by a project officer to the appropriate regional office staff for review and comments. When the necessary input and information are obtained, the pre-application proposal is considered by the regional office Investment Review Committee (IRC), made up of regional office staff. The IRC discusses the proposal and all pertinent documentation and evaluates it on two levels of analysis. The IRC (a) determines if the proposal meets the program specific criteria provided under 13 CFR 305.2 for Public Works, 13 CFR 306.2 for Planning Assistance, 13 CFR 307.2 for Technical Assistance, 13 CFR 308.2 and 308.4 for Economic Adjustment and 13 CFR 315.5 and 315.6 for Trade Adjustment Assistance for

Firms, and (b) rates each proposal using the general evaluation criteria set forth at 304.2 as further defined by the Investment Policy Guidelines set forth in this notice below. University Center and National Technical Assistance funding proposals will be evaluated pursuant to a separate **Federal Register** notice published in this issue.

After completing its evaluation, the IRC recommends whether or not an application should be invited, documenting its recommendation in the meeting minutes or in the Investment Proposal Summary and Evaluation Form. The IRC analysis of the project's fulfillment of the Investment Policy Guidelines is reviewed at EDA headquarters for quality assurance. After receiving quality control clearance, the Selecting Official (depending on the program, either the Regional Director or the Assistant Secretary) selects the applications to be invited after considering the evaluations provided by the IRC and the degree to which one or more of the Funding Priorities provided below are included (or packaged together) in making his/her decision as to which preapplication proposals should be invited. The Selecting Official then formally invites the successful proponent to submit a formal application. If the Selecting Official declines to invite a full application, he/she provides written notice to the proponent. In the case of a continuation grant, no pre-application proposal is required. Proposals received after the date of this notice will be processed in accordance with the requirements set forth herein until the next annual **Federal Register** is published.

If a successful proponent submits a formal application, it is reviewed by EDA program officials to determine whether it contains any deficiencies under EDA regulations at 13 CFR chapter III. If deficiencies are noted, the applicant is provided a written request to amend the application to resolve any deficiencies. EDA will negotiate with the applicant to resolve any deficiencies. If deficiencies are not resolved 30 days after receipt of the written notice, the application may be rejected. If the full application is accepted, the applicant and EDR are notified and it is forwarded for final reviews and processing in accordance with EDA and DOC procedures.

Evaluation Criteria: EDA investment proposals will be competitively evaluated primarily on their ability to meet or exceed the following Investment Policy Guidelines (each criterion will be given equal weight):

1. *Be market-based and results driven.* An investment will capitalize on a

region's competitive strengths and will positively move a regional economic indicator measured on EDA's Balanced Scorecard, such as: an increased number of higher-skill, higher-wage jobs; increased tax revenue; or increased private sector investment.

2. *Have strong organizational leadership.* An investment will have strong leadership, relevant project management experience, and a significant commitment of human resources talent to ensure a project's successful execution.

3. *Advance productivity, innovation, and entrepreneurship.* An investment will embrace the principles of entrepreneurship, enhance regional clusters, and leverage and link technology innovators and local universities to the private sector to create the conditions for greater productivity, innovation, and job creation.

4. *Look beyond the immediate economic horizon, anticipate economic changes, and diversify the local and regional economy.* An investment will be part of an overarching, long term comprehensive economic development strategy that enhances a region's success in achieving a rising standard of living by supporting existing industry clusters, developing emerging new clusters, or attracting new regional economic drivers.

5. *Demonstrate a high degree of commitment by exhibiting:*

- High levels of local government or non-profit matching funds and private sector leverage;
- Clear and unified leadership and support by local elected officials; and
- Strong cooperation between the business sector, relevant regional partners and local, state and federal governments.

Funding Priorities: Highly rated preapplication proposals may or may not be invited to submit full applications based on the following Funding Priorities. Generally, all EDA proposals and applications should enhance regional competitiveness and support long-term development of the regional economy. Further priority will be given to proposals that:

1. Encourage innovation and regional competitiveness:
 - a. Reflect coordination of strong regional leadership committed to regional cluster development;
 - b. Encourage a formal organization structure and process for working on cluster development and maintaining consensus;
 - c. Encourage a common vision and collaboration among firms, universities,

and training centers to implement a cluster strategy;

d. Establish research and industrial parks that encourage innovation-based competition;

e. Implement cluster-focused and innovation-focused business development efforts; and

f. Develop or implement coordinated economic and workforce development strategies.

2. Upgrade core business infrastructure such as:

- a. Transportation infrastructure;
- b. Communications infrastructure; and
- c. Specialized training program infrastructure.

3. Help communities plan and implement economic adjustment strategies in response to sudden and severe economic dislocation. Specifically, EDA will give highest priority to support manufacturing-impacted communities by:

- a. Helping communities that experience manufacturing job losses (e.g., major layoffs, plant closures or trade impacts); and
- b. Supporting innovation and competitiveness in American manufacturing.

4. Support technology-led economic development, for example, proposals that:

- a. Reflect the important role of research and development capacity of universities in regional development; and
- b. Create and support technology transfers.

5. Advance community and faith-based social entrepreneurship in redevelopment strategies for areas of chronic economic distress.

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the **Federal Register** notice of October 1, 2001 (66 FR 49917), as amended by the **Federal Register** notice published on October 30, 2002 (67 FR 66109), are applicable to this solicitation, and are available on EDA's Web Site, <http://www.eda.gov>.

Paperwork Reduction Act

This document contains collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). The use of Form ED-900P has been approved by OMB under the control number 0610-0094. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any

person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Executive Order 12866

This notice has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866.

Executive Order 13132 (Federalism)

It has been determined that this notice does not contain policies with Federalism implications as that term is defined in Executive Order 13132.

Administrative Procedure Act/Regulatory Flexibility Act

Prior notice and an opportunity for public comments are not required by the Administrative Procedure Act or any other law for this rule concerning grants, benefits and contracts (5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2)). Because notice and opportunity for comment are not required pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 or any other law, the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) are inapplicable. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis has not been prepared.

Dated: December 21, 2004.

David A. Sampson,

Assistant Secretary for Economic Development.

[FR Doc. 04-28374 Filed 12-27-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-24-M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Economic Development Administration [991215339-4347-15]

Solicitation of Proposals for National Technical Assistance

AGENCY: Economic Development Administration (EDA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Notice and request for proposals.

SUMMARY: The Economic Development Administration (EDA) is soliciting proposals for the National Technical Assistance Program for Fiscal Year (FY) 2006. This notice also announces general policies and application procedures for grant-based technical assistance investments that aim to increase prosperity by advancing comprehensive, entrepreneurial, and innovation-based economic development efforts. The mission of EDA is to lead the Federal economic development agenda by promoting