EDA ARPA Presentation Question List

General Questions

1. **Will MAPC provide assistance to individual communities to help determine eligible projects?**
   - Yes! Please reach out to RGonzalez@mapc.org with your project concept! If you have a fully fleshed out concept, you can begin to populate this online form and select your respective ARPA program.

2. **Where can I find out which Economic Development District represents me?**
   - MAPC's EDD covers the 101 cities and towns within the MAPC region. If your district is outside of the MAPC region, you can find your district here.

3. **Will there be any reporting requirements of grant funding by recipients?**
   - EDA has reporting requirements for each program, which you can find in their respective NOFO, however you can find the general reporting requirements here: https://www.eda.gov/resources/grantee-information/

4. **What recommendations do you have for communities with low percentages of BIPOC populations to be sure that services are provided to those populations that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID?**
   - We ask that you review the definitions of which underserved populations are identified under EDA's Investment Priorities.
   - We also recommend that you reach out to regionally based organizations that work with BIPOC populations to address the regional needs of the BIPOC community in the greater region.
   - Lastly, we ask that you think of what your potential Project Benefit Area would be under your proposed project (for example, the pool of workers that would benefit from your project). For EDA's purposes, a Project provides a "substantial direct benefit" if it provides significant employment opportunities for unemployed, underemployed or low-income residents within the District.

5. **Could municipalities use ARPA funds to establish local or regional revolving loan funds?**
   - RLF's are allowed under these funds, particularly the EAA program, however, it's helpful to keep in mind that your RLF not replicate current EDA-funded RLF providers in the Commonwealth: https://www.eda.gov/archives/2021/news/press-releases/2020/08/21/ma.htm

6. **You said applicants to EDA must be in line with MAPC's CEDS or an equivalent plan. What's an example of an equivalent plan?**
   - We strongly advise that your project align with our CEDS - and if you have questions on whether your application aligns with our CEDS or not, please email us. The 2020-2025 CEDS is a flexible document. However, if you are searching for an alternative document, or if your region does not have a CEDS, you can find out the criteria for alternative plans here.

7. **Is it possible for a nonprofit to be a part of more than one of the grant programs?**
   - Yes! So long as your grant application is not a duplicate. EDA states that they do not want to see the same application within multiple programs. However, if your nonprofit (or any other eligible applicant/co-applicant/partner) is a part of separate and distinct applications, regardless of whether you are the lead or not, it can be a part of different grant programs.

8. **Are we focused today on ARPA funding that will specifically come through EDA?**

- Yes, however MAPC will be holding another webinar for municipalities titled "How Municipalities Can Make Meaningful Investments with ARPA Dollars" on Wednesday, September 15 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m., where you can register here.

9. **What is the EDA and/or ARPA focus/priority on transportation and other infrastructure projects and on affordable housing?**
   - Infrastructure projects, with a strong connection economic development
   - The Good Jobs Challenge includes the needs for wrap-around services such as childcare and transportation.
   - Housing is generally not funded by EDA unless it is part of a larger project.

10. **What would be the best grant for helping finance regional transit service (such as GATRA, MWRTA, etc.)?**
    - Depending on the uses of funding, again making sure that EDA's Investment Priorities, and the goals of individual programs are met, transit services can be eligible for EDA funding. Past awardees include:
      - Tri-County Council, Salisbury, Maryland, to fund the installation of new sewer and water connections to assist in improving the expansion of a mass transit access facility.
      - Central Louisiana Regional Port, Alexandria, Louisiana, to support the upgrade of transportation and transit infrastructure which has been previously vulnerable to disaster floods.
      - Chicago Transit Authority, Chicago, Illinois, to fund a financial feasibility study for the Chicago Transit Authority to redevelop the former Midwest Generation Fisk Power Station as an expansion site for a new bus garage and maintenance facility.

11. **Will there be any reporting requirements of grant funding by recipients?**
    - EDA Grantees will be subject to the requirements stipulated within the Award Conditions agreed upon by EDA and the recipient. Additionally, EDA grants typically require GPRA, Indirect Cost Rate Information, progress reports, financial reports, and other post-approval information in accordance with EDA's Award Conditions and any applicable laws. More information can be found here. MAPC also serves as a resource for questions from EDA grantees on what EDA requires.

Build Back Better Challenge

1. **What are the industries that would be considered in the Build Back Better grant?**
   - When thinking of industries within the BBBC, we must first think of regional growth clusters. A "Regional growth cluster" is defined as several entities working together to grow a regional economy through the growth of an existing and/or creation of a new regional industry or industries. Therefore, a regional growth cluster is a regional concentration of related industries that arise out of the various types of linkages or externalities that span across industries in a particular location. Definition and examples of regional growth clusters and their industries can be found here: www.clustermapping.us/.
   - Therefore, projects should be organized under a singular vision to support unique industry growth across the region. Interested regions should form regional coalitions, in coordination with private sector partners and other partners, that share a common vision for how significant investment from EDA could catalyze wage growth, increased economic growth, the creation of a new industry, and/or the scaling or growth of existing industries in their region. Both the region covered, and the industry targeted by the Build Back Better proposal should be defined by the applicant in their application materials.

2. **What are some examples or definitions of what EDA is envisioning as the parameters of a regional cluster project?**
   - A strong regional growth cluster will identify, make use of, enhance, and/or create regional assets that will support the regional growth cluster's competitiveness. It will also demonstrate strong alignment with existing or prospective industry needs and strong leadership from the private sector, aligned to the coalition's vision. Additionally, they will have a plan to maintain or improve the cluster's economic growth and shared prosperity in the years following the ARPA awards. Lastly, it will ensure that the proposed projects and broader cluster's benefits are shared across all affected communities, both urban and rural, and provides benefits to existing residents.
   - Regional growth clusters may align interconnected projects across state lines and/or across urban, suburban, and rural communities, but they are concentrated in a bounded geography relative to the needs and conditions of the region that ensures maximum collaboration and impact.
   - Regional growth clusters might reflect a hub and spoke model, anchored around a "hub" such as a city, business park, port, educational or research institution, or technology center, and complemented by significant investment strategies in multiple "spokes" that represent demographic and geographic diversity.
   - Examples of projects include:
     - Establishing an artificial intelligence (AI) corridor by funding: (1) planning and feasibility studies to develop critical, modern infrastructure for the corridor; (2) roads and modernized utilities to grow local industrial parks; (3) entrepreneurship and commercialization programs to capitalize on AI innovations; (4) workforce training programs with wrap-around services to support growing technology companies; (5) rural manufacturing supply chain planning to integrate more local manufacturers into the cluster and coordinated skilling efforts for their workforce as they adopt new technologies; (6) a rural energy biomass project; and (7) upgrades to a manufacturing facility owned by an eligible entity to ensure global readiness and competitiveness.
     - An area historically reliant on the automotive industry wants to create a climate-friendly electric vehicle cluster by funding: (1) a new battery and lightweight composite materials research program and associated facilities at a local university; (2) a new non-profit workforce training center that focuses on the skills required by regional battery and automotive manufacturers; (3) an entrepreneurial center that focuses on commercializing new automotive technologies at start-up firms; and (4) programmatic support for a technology seed fund managed by a local CDFI.

Economic Adjustment Assistance Program

1. **Can the EAA grants for technical assistance be used for microgrants to be administered by a local community or regional organization?**
   - EDA disallows the use of passthrough funds. All partnerships and potential uses of funds must be identified within your application.
2. **Can you provide some examples of types of projects that would be appropriate for the Economic Adjustment Assistance program?**
   - The EAA program is EDA's most flexible program. Example projects include:
     - Efforts to broaden the industrial base or local sectoral specialization with diversification initiatives (e.g., moving away from a local or regional economy

overly dependent on one industry that might be susceptible to downturns caused by the pandemic).

- Enhancing business retention and expansion programs to strengthen existing high-growth sectors and industries, development and construction of high-performance and resilient infrastructure and buildings (e.g., broadband, energy, flexible and natural infrastructure, safe development practices, business incubators) to mitigate future risk and vulnerability.
- Comprehensive planning efforts that involve extensive engagement from the community to define and implement a collective vision for economic recovery; and
- Investing and enhancing community human capital development through workforce training to broaden the skills base of the regional workforce.
- A description of previous EDA awardees and their granted projects can be found at: https://www.eda.gov/grants/

Good Jobs Challenge

1. How could the Good Jobs Challenge work with MassHire and/or WIB's?
   - The Good Jobs Challenge consists of a "sectoral partnership" of employers from the same industry who join with other strategic partners to train and place workers into high-quality jobs that employers need filled and intend to fill through the partnership. The partners can also include workforce development organizations such as MassHire and workforce boards, along with other government partners.
   - Additionally, "System Lead Entities" and "Backbone Organizations" should consist of organizations with relationships and credibility with key players in the workforce ecosystem, including employers, governmental entities, and state or local workforce development boards.
2. Is there any sense on what the geographic scope will be for the Good Jobs Challenge applications?
   - EDA will review proposals to the extent to which the project supports EDA's goals of geographic balance in distribution of program funds, project types, organizational type (to include smaller and rural organizations) and the overall portfolio. Additionally, the size of award available under this ARPA Good Jobs Challenge NOFO will depend on the proposed geographic, industry, and occupation coverage of a given regional system or partnership, and applicants should justify their budget requests by reference to those factors.

Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Program

1. **Eligible projects under tourism included a tourism center. Does the tourism center have to be regional to be eligible and if not, should we assume, the application would not be competitive without some regional approach/projects included?**
   - Yes, a tourism center would be more competitive with a regional approach. Here are some additional encouragements from EDA:
     - EDA encourages long-term regional development or redevelopment projects that coordinates collaboratively with state, local and private sector resources.
     - Investments should support strong employment opportunities through workforce development, rehiring laid off workers, creating and retaining union jobs and well-paying jobs with good benefits.
     - Infrastructure and construction projects should produce high-quality infrastructure, avert disruptive and costly delays, and promote efficiency.

- o Construction projects should also promote strong labor standards and community benefit agreements.
- One way to frame your approach is to think about how the tourism center might contribute to your regional tourism economy, which was impacted by COVID.

2. **Would the travel, tourism and outdoor recreation grant help restore cranberry bogs? (Feature of local ecotourism)**
    - Yes, but consideration should be taken so that:
        - o All relevant environmental regulation requirements are met.
        - o EDA encourages long-term regional development or redevelopment projects that coordinates collaboratively with state, local and private sector resources.
        - o Investments should support strong employment opportunities through workforce development, rehiring laid off workers, creating and retaining union jobs and well-paying jobs with good benefits.
        - o Infrastructure and construction projects should produce high-quality infrastructure, avert disruptive and costly delays, and promote efficiency.
        - o Construction projects should also promote strong labor standards and community benefit agreements.