

Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Qualitative Feedback on Agency Service Delivery” (OMB Control Number: 2105-0573)

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Reconnecting Communities Institute (RCI) Website portal - Collection of baseline information to provide technical assistance to US DOT program participants via the Reconnecting Communities Institute web portal

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this request is for the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to grant the Reconnecting Communities Institute (RCI) a **“Generic Clearance for the Collection of Qualitative Feedback on Agency Service Delivery”** to collect baseline information through a web portal from Build America Bureau program participants which includes The Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP). This information will be used to ensure the RCI can deliver requested Technical Assistance (TA) for program participants.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (H.R. 3684, Public Law No. 117-58) created several new programs at the US Department of Transportation (DOT) that allow local governments, non-profit organizations, tribal governments, and other political subdivisions of state or local governments to apply directly for DOT discretionary grant funding. In response to President Biden’s Executive Order 13985¹ and Executive Order 14008², DOT has included criteria in its notices of funding opportunity to prioritize the needs of disadvantaged communities for many of these new programs.

The Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP) is a U.S. DOT program designed to deliver grant funding for communities, states, local governments, Tribal governments, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and non-profit organizations to help repair historical injustices that resulted from the development of the Nation’s transportation infrastructure by funding transportation reconnection projects. As part of RCP, the Reconnecting Communities Institute (RCI) will deliver technical assistance (TA) to these communities. Communities will have the opportunity to apply for TA, receive TA, and engage in peer-to-peer learning.

The collection of information for the RCI is necessary for underserved and disadvantaged communities to receive the needed technical assistance and capacity building to support their ability to develop funding applications and deliver transformative projects funded by the Department of Transportation. Given the quickly approaching RCP Notice of Funding for FY24,25, and 26 and the number of grantees existing from previous years it is critical that the suite of technical assistance resources to be provided through the RCI can launch quickly.

¹ Executive Order 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government

² Executive Order 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, which established the Justice40 Initiative and supports the Administration’s approach to advancing equity for all in line with Executive Order 13985.

The implementation of the RCI is critical in order to provide direct, coordinated, and placed-based technical assistance and capacity building to underserved and disadvantaged communities. The Department is directed to implement the program as swiftly as possible to support disadvantaged communities in the planning and development of transportation and community revitalization activities that increase mobility, reduce pollution from transportation sources, expand affordable transportation options, facilitate efficient land use, preserve, or expand jobs, improve housing conditions, enhance connections to health care, education, and food security, or improve health outcomes. The Reconnecting Communities and Thriving Communities programs are unique for DOT in that it allows for pre-application technical assistance and planning support. Both are essential to supporting communities that may be applying for FY2024 federal funding. This information collection is critical to allow DOT to support those communities most in need of the assistance provided through these programs.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:

The respondents will include states, local governments, Tribal governments, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and non-profit organizations. Respondents will apply on a voluntary basis, utilizing an electronic platform.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: (Check one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form | ☐ Customer Satisfaction Survey |
| ☐ Usability Testing (e.g., Website or Software | ☐ Small Discussion Group |
| ☐ Focus Group | ☒ Other: <u>Intake form via web portal</u> |

The DOT will collect this information via a short online intake form. The purpose of this data collection is to enable the DOT to deliver capacity building and technical assistance providers to support communities seeking to advance transformative, equitable, and climate-friendly infrastructure projects that benefit disadvantaged communities. ***The Intake form is attached to this application***

Participants will apply for technical assistance through the RCI website portal. The application is planned as a one-time information collection. DOT will utilize an Expression of Interest (EOI) simplified in-take form from communities interested in receiving technical assistance and capacity building through these programs. The intake form to be used by communities seeking technical assistance is estimated 10mins to complete.

CERTIFICATION:

I certify the following to be true:

1. The collection is voluntary.
2. The collection is low-burden for respondents and low-cost for the Federal Government.
3. The collection is non-controversial and does not raise issues of concern to other federal agencies.
4. The results are not intended to be disseminated to the public.
5. Information gathered will not be used for the purpose of substantially informing influential policy decisions.
6. The collection is targeted to the solicitation of opinions from respondents who have experience with the program or may have experience with the program in the future.

Name: Kelley Britt

To assist review, please provide answers to the following question:

Personally, Identifiable Information:

1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected? ☒ Yes ☐ No - Name, email, and phone number will be collected
2. If Yes, will any information that is collected be included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974? ☐ Yes ☒ No
3. If Yes, has an up-to-date System of Records Notice (SORN) been published? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This information collection does not require respondents to submit proprietary information.

Gifts or Payments:

Is an incentive (e.g., money or reimbursement of expenses, token of appreciation) provided to participants? ☐ Yes ☒ No

BURDEN HOURS

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden ³
(3) State, local, or tribal governments	700	10 minutes	116
Totals			116

TOTAL BURDEN HOURS: 116

700 participants x 10 minutes x 1 per year = 116 hours

FEDERAL COST: The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is \$13,688

³ Totals may not add due to rounding.

The cost estimate is based on the mean hourly rate of a General and Operations Manager ⁴. The mean hourly pay for a General and Operations Manager is \$59 (rounded), multiplied by 2 to account for benefits plus other overhead costs such as rent, utilities and office equipment, for a fully loaded hourly wage of \$118.

$$\$118 \times 116 \text{ hours} = \$13,688$$

If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:

No focus group or survey is being deployed. This is not a statistical data collection; it is an online electronic intake form. Therefore, no answers apply to the following questions.

This information collection does not require respondents to submit proprietary information.

The selection of your targeted respondents

1. Do you have a customer list or something similar that defines the universe of potential respondents and do you have a sampling plan for selecting from this universe?
☐ Yes ☐ No

*If the answer is yes, please provide a description of both below (or attach the sampling plan)?
If the answer is no, please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them?*

No focus group or survey being deployed. This is not a statistical data collection; it is an online electronic application.

This information collection does not require respondents to submit proprietary information.

Administration of the Instrument

1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)
☐ Web-based or other forms of Social Media
☐ Telephone
☐ In-person
☐ Mail
☐ Other, Explain:

2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please make sure that all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.

Intake form is attached to this request

⁴ Based on Occupation 11-1021, BLS Occupational Employment Statistics, May 2019. See https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm - 11-0000

Instructions for completing Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback”

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Provide the name of the collection that is the subject of the request. (e.g. Comment card for soliciting feedback on xxxx)

PURPOSE: Provide a brief description of the purpose of this collection and how it will be used. If this is part of a larger study or effort, please include this in your explanation.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS: Provide a brief description of the targeted group or groups for this collection of information. These groups must have experience with the program.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: Check one box. If you are requesting approval of other instruments under the generic, you must complete a form for each instrument.

CERTIFICATION: Please read the certification carefully. If you incorrectly certify, the collection will be returned as improperly submitted or it will be disapproved.

Personally Identifiable Information: Provide answers to the questions. Note: Agencies should only collect PII to the extent necessary, and they should only retain PII for the period of time that is necessary to achieve a specific objective.

Gifts or Payments: If you answer yes to the question, please describe the incentive and provide a justification for the amount.

BURDEN HOURS:

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
		5 minutes	250
GRAND TOTAL BURDEN HOURS			250 hours

Category of Respondents: Identify who you expect the respondents to be in terms of the following categories: (1) Individuals or Households; (2) Private Sector; (3) State, local, or tribal governments; or (4) Federal Government. Only one type of respondent can be selected per row.

No. of Respondents: Provide an estimate of the Number of Respondents.

Participation Time: Provide an estimate of the amount of time (in minutes) required for a respondent to participate (e.g. fill out a survey or participate in a focus group)

Burden: Provide the Annual burden hours: Multiply the Number of Respondents and the Participation Time then divide by 60.

FEDERAL COST: Provide an estimate of the annual cost to the Federal government.

If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:

The selection of your targeted respondents. Please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them. If the answer is yes, to the first question, you may provide the sampling plan in an attachment.

Administration of the Instrument: Identify how the information will be collected. More than one box may be checked. Indicate whether there will be interviewers (e.g. for surveys) or facilitators (e.g., for focus groups) used.

Submit all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.