



2021 COMMUNITY MITIGATION FUND GUIDELINES

BD-21-1068-1068C-1068L-_____

Appendix A - Table of Contents

- 1.0 Community Mitigation Fund Grant Program 1
- 1.1 When Is the Application Deadline? 1
- 1.2 Who Can Apply? 1
- 1.3 What Cannot Be Funded? 2
- 1.4 How Much Funding Will Be Available? 3
- 1.5 Joint Applications 4
- 1.6 Limitations/Specific Requirements on Reserve and Planning Applications 5
- 2.0 Grant Categories 5
- 2.1 2015/2016 Reserve Grants 5
- 2.2 Specific Impact Grants 6
- 2.3 Community Planning Grants 7
- 2.5 Transportation Construction Grants 9
- 2.6 Workforce Development Grants 10
- 2.7 Tribal Gaming Technical Assistance Grants 12
- 3.0 Application Requirements 12
- 3.1 What Should Be Included in the Applications? 12
- 3.2 How Will the Commission Decide on Applications? 13
- 3.3 When Will the Commission Make Decisions? 15
- 3.4 Authorization to Approve Requests for Changes to Components of Grant Awards 15
- 3.5 Waivers and Variances 15
- 3.7 Who Should be Contacted for Questions? 15
- 3.8 Where Should the Application be Sent? 16





21

COMMUNITY MITIGATION FUND

2021 COMMUNITY MITIGATION FUND GUIDELINES BD-21-1068-1068C-1068L-_____

1.0 Community Mitigation Fund Grant Program

The Expanded Gaming Act created the Community Mitigation Fund (“CMF”) to help communities and other entities offset costs related to the construction and operation of a gaming establishment. For 2021, the following grant categories are available for communities:

- 2015/2016 Reserve Grant;
- Specific Impact Grant;
- Community Planning Grant;
- Transportation Planning Grant;
- Transportation Construction Grant;
- Workforce Development Grant;
- Tribal Gaming Technical Assistance Grant; and
- Emergency Mitigation Grant.

Each of these categories is further described in Section 2.0 of these Guidelines.

1.1 When Is the Application Deadline?

January 31, 2021

1.2 Who Can Apply?

M.G.L. c. 23K, § 61 and the Commission’s regulations identify a range of eligible entities including, but not limited to:

- communities in the vicinity of the gaming establishment including: host and surrounding communities; each community that entered into a nearby community agreement; any community that petitioned to be a surrounding community; and each community that is geographically adjacent to a host community;
- water and sewer districts in the vicinity of a gaming establishment;
- local and regional agencies involved in education, transportation, infrastructure, housing and environmental issues; and
- public safety agencies, including the office of the county district attorney, police, fire, and emergency services.



Massachusetts Gaming Commission

The Commission's regulations do not limit use of Community Mitigation Funds to only host or surrounding communities.

Applications involving a mitigation measure impacting only one community shall only be submitted by the authorized representatives of the community itself. Governmental entities within communities such as redevelopment authorities or non-regional school districts shall submit applications through such community rather than submitting applications independent of the community.

Private non-governmental parties may not apply for Community Mitigation Funds. Governmental entities may apply to the Commission for funds to mitigate impacts provided that the funding is used for a "public purpose" and not the direct benefit or maintenance of a private party or private parties. The Commission strongly encourages applicants to ensure that the impacts are directly related to the gaming facility and that the public purpose of such mitigation is readily apparent. The Commission will not fund any applications for assistance for non-governmental entities.

Please note that as stated by the Commonwealth's Comptroller's Office: "The Anti-Aid Amendment of the Massachusetts Constitution prohibits 'public money or property' from aiding non-public institutions.... Article 46 has been interpreted to allow the expenditure of public funds to non-public recipients solely for the provision of a 'public purposes' [sic] and not for the direct benefit or maintenance of the non-public entity."

Any governmental entity seeking funding for mitigation is required to ensure that any planned use of funding is in conformity with the provisions of the Massachusetts Constitution and with all applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to, Municipal Finance Law and public procurement requirements.

1.3 What Cannot Be Funded?

2021 Community Mitigation Fund may not be used for the mitigation of:

- impacts that are projected or predicted but that are not occurring or have not occurred by January 31, 2021;
- impacts that are the responsibility (e.g. contractual, statutory, regulatory) of parties involved in the construction and operation of gaming establishments;
- the cost of the preparation of a grant application;
- requests related to utility outages, such as the mitigation of business interruptions; and
- other impacts determined by the Commission.

Please note that the Commission may determine to expand the eligible uses of funds for the 2021 program or other future programs when impacts are more clearly identifiable. The

Commission will also consult with mitigation advisory committees established in M.G.L. c. 23K in determining such uses.

1.4 How Much Funding Will Be Available?

The Commission has determined a target spending amount of \$12.5 million for fiscal year 2021. If the 2021 target is met, the CMF would still have an estimated unallocated balance of over \$1.7 Million from funds generated by December 31, 2020.

Allocation by Region

The Commission intends to allocate 2021 CMF funding based on the proportion of funds paid into the CMF from the taxes and fines generated by the MGM Springfield and Encore Boston Harbor facilities.¹ These include revenues generated during calendar year 2020 as well as unspent monies from previous years.

For the 2021 year, the Commission plans to allocate \$12.5 million between the two regions and the Category 2 facility as follows:

- Region A \$6 million
- Region B \$6 million
- Category 2 \$0.5 million

Category 2 grants will be split equally between Region A and Region B. If the \$0.5 million is not necessary for Category 2 grants, more spending would be available for Region A and Region B.

The Commission determined in grant year 2020, that any unused funds allocated to each Category 1 Region will be set aside for that Region for a period of three years. After the three-year period, the funds shall be allocated back into a combined fund for all regions and for Category 2 impacts. It is the intention of the Commission to count any allocated regional balances first toward 2021 spending targets. The following is the status of the unused funds by calendar year:

CMF Funds Rolled Over from Previous Years

	Region A	Region B
2018		\$ 637,255
2019	\$ 1,285,494	\$ 4,126,667
Total	\$ 1,285,494	\$ 4,763,922

¹ These Guidelines do not describe revenue estimates from the potential Tribal facility in Taunton or the participation of a Region C facility, as no Region C license or Tribal facility has yet been fully authorized.

1.5 Joint Applications

The Commission continues to support regional approaches to mitigation needs and recognizes that some mitigation requires the commitment of more than one community. The 2021 Guidelines allow multiple communities to submit a joint application. If any of the applicant communities has not expended its 2015/2016 Reserve, the application must detail how the reserves will be allocated between the applicant communities to meet any reserve expenditure requirement. For example, transportation planning grants require that reserves be used prior to the receipt of new planning funds. In the event of a joint application for a \$200,000 planning grant, the joint application shall specify how the applicant communities will allocate/use a total of \$100,000 in reserves between the communities. The application must specify which community will be the fiscal agent for the grant funds. All communities will be held responsible for compliance with the terms contained in the grant.

To further regional cooperation, the applications for Transportation Planning Grants and Community Planning Grants that involve more than one community for the same planning projects may request grant assistance that exceeds the limits specified in these Guidelines. The additional funding may be requested only for the costs of a joint project being proposed by more than one community, not similar projects. Eligible communities may request additional funding for joint projects based on the below table.

	Base Funding	Regional Planning Incentive Award	Total Allowable Request
Community Planning Projects Involving Two (2) Communities	\$100,000 for each community	\$10,000	\$100,000 X <u>2 communities</u> <u>\$200,000+\$10,000=</u> <u>\$210,000</u>
Community Planning Project Involving Three (3) or More Communities	\$100,000 for each community	\$15,000*	\$100,000 X <u>3 communities</u> <u>\$300,000+\$15,000=</u> <u>\$315,000</u>
Transportation Planning Projects Two (2) Communities	\$200,000 for each community	\$25,000	\$200,000 X <u>2 communities</u> <u>\$400,000+\$25,000=</u> <u>\$425,000</u>
Transportation Planning Projects Three (3) or more Communities	\$200,000 for each community	\$50,000*	\$200,000 X <u>3 communities</u> <u>\$600,000+\$50,000=</u> <u>\$650,000</u>

*The maximum Community Planning Regional Incentive is \$15,000 and the maximum Transportation Planning Regional Incentive is \$50,000 regardless of the number of communities participating.

Please note that communities can apply for a portion of the planning grants for single community applications while allocating a portion for joint projects. For example, a community could apply for one \$100,000 base Transportation Planning Grant leaving \$100,000 for a joint application involving another community. In this example the community could be eligible for \$100,000 for the single community project, \$100,000 for a joint project, and a \$25,000 Regional Planning Incentive Award amount shared with a second community.

Applications seeking a Regional Planning Incentive Award amount shall allocate at least fifty percent (50%) of the base funding level towards a joint project. For example, at least \$100,000 of a \$200,000 Transportation Planning Grant seeking an additional Regional Planning Incentive Award amount shall be for the joint project with another community. No community is eligible for more than one Transportation Regional Planning Incentive Award. No community is eligible for more than one Community Regional Planning Incentive Award.

1.6 Limitations/Specific Requirements on Reserve and Planning Applications

The Commission will fund no application for any municipal employee for more than two years. The CMF will not pay the full cost of any municipal employee. The municipality would need to provide the remaining amount of any employee cost and certify that all such expenses are casino related. For non-personnel costs, each community applying for planning funds must also provide detail on what it will contribute to the planning project such as in-kind services or planning funds.

The Commission will evaluate requests for planning funds after taking into consideration input the applicant has received from the local Regional Planning Agency ("RPA") or any such interested parties. Although there is no prerequisite for using RPA's for planning projects, consultation with RPA's is required to enable the Commission to better understand how planning funds are being used efficiently across the region of the facility. Please provide details about the applicant's consultation with the RPA or any such interested parties. Applicants should provide detail regarding consultations with nearby communities to determine the potential for cooperative regional efforts regarding planning activities.

2.0 Grant Categories

The following are the grant categories for the 2021 CMF. Applicants may apply for grants in more than one category; however, any individual project may only be included under one grant category.

2.1 2015/2016 Reserve Grants

In 2015 and 2016, a \$100,000 Reserve was established for communities near the gaming establishments.

Communities may continue to access whatever portion of the original \$100,000 that remains unexpended. This Reserve can be used to cover impacts that either have occurred or are

occurring in 2021. It may also be used for planning, either to determine how to achieve further benefits from a facility or to avoid or minimize any adverse impacts.

Funds will be distributed as the needs are identified; applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Communities that utilize the Reserve are not prohibited from applying for funding for any specific mitigation request.

There are still several communities that have not fully expended their Reserves. Since these Grants are at least five years old, the Commission urges communities to consider whether there are any casino related impacts that need to be addressed. The Commission will give these communities until the end of Calendar Year 2021 to commit these funds. Any funding not committed to a project by that time will be rolled back into the CMF and allocated equally between the Regions.

There are some special requirements around the use of the Reserve as follows:

- If a community is applying for a Transportation Planning Grant, Reserve funds must be expended before accessing Transportation Planning Grant funds; and
- If a community is applying for a Specific Impact Grant and has Reserve funds available, the Reserve will be used as an offset against the amount requested for the specific impact. The Reserve amount will be reduced by fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) assuming the specific impact request is at least that amount.

2.2 Specific Impact Grants

Specific impact Grants may be used only to mitigate impacts that either have occurred or are occurring as of the January 31, 2021 application deadline.

No application for a Specific Impact Grant shall exceed \$500,000 unless a waiver has been granted by the Commission as outlined in Section 3 of these Guidelines. No community is eligible for more than one Specific Impact Grant, however, communities may apply for multiple purposes in one application.

The Commission has determined that the funding of unanticipated impacts will be a priority. Thus, the Commission will review funding requests in the context of any host or surrounding community agreement to help determine funding eligibility. The CMF is not intended to fund the mitigation of impacts already being funded in a Host or Surrounding Community Agreement.

Allowable impacts for funding are as follows:

- **Operational Impacts of Gaming Facilities:** The Commission will make funding available to mitigate gaming facility operational impacts that are being experienced or were experienced by the January 31, 2021 application deadline.

Operational impacts include: public safety impacts on the community; increased demand on community and regional water and sewer systems; impacts on the community from storm

water run-off, associated pollutants, and changes in drainage patterns; stresses on the community's housing stock including any projected negative impacts on the appraised value of housing stock due to a gaming establishment; any negative impact on local, retail, entertainment, and service establishments in the community; increased social service needs including, but not limited to, those related to problem gambling; and demonstrated impact on public education in the community.

Although these definitions include the types of operational impacts that may be funded, it is not limited to those. The determination will be made by the Commission after its review.

- **Public Safety Operational Costs:** Grants for public safety operational costs shall not exceed \$200,000 per community, unless a waiver is granted by the Commission in accordance with the waiver requirements outlined in Section 3. All applications for public safety personnel or other public safety operational costs, including relevant training, must demonstrate that CMF funds will supplement and not supplant historical operations funding. Grant funds shall not be used to pay for Gaming Enforcement Unit personnel or operations costs specified or anticipated in the memoranda of understanding between the Massachusetts State Police and host communities' police departments.

Applicants must include detailed hourly estimates for the costs of any public safety personnel costs. Applicants should include the most relevant information describing historical service or staffing levels ("baseline information") in order to demonstrate that all funds will be used to supplement existing efforts. For example, if a community requests funding for additional staffing for a specific time period, the application should include information about the staffing levels that have been used for that same time period during the license term of the gaming facility. In describing any historical service levels, applicants should identify any time limited or "pilot" type operations which may have a bearing upon any determination of how the baseline service levels should be calculated. Applicants are requested to provide as much detailed baseline information as practicable to help the Commission in its review.

Please note that any 2021 public safety grants shall have a duration of only one year, unless otherwise determined by the Commission. Any grant awards issued in **2021 SHOULD NOT** be considered to provide any guarantee or indication of future funding.

2.3 Community Planning Grants

Community Planning Grants are available for all communities that received Reserve Grants and have already allocated and received Commission approval of the use of its reserve. No application for a Community Planning Grant shall exceed \$100,000. Applications involving transportation planning or design are not eligible for the 2021 Community Planning Grant. Communities requesting transportation planning should instead apply for Transportation Planning Grant funds.

Eligible planning projects must have a defined area or issue that will be investigated as well as a clear plan for implementation of the results. The planning project must be clearly related to addressing issues or impacts directly related to the gaming facility. Applicants will be required to submit a detailed scope, budget, and timetable for the planning effort prior to funding being awarded. Each community will also need to provide detail on what it will contribute to the project such as in-kind services or planning funds. Planning projects may include programs created by communities to provide technical assistance and promotion for groups of area businesses.

Communities that utilize this 2021 Community Planning Grant are not prohibited from applying for funding for any specific mitigation request.

2.4 Transportation Planning Grants

The Commission will make funding available for certain transportation planning activities for all communities eligible to receive funding from the CMF.

The total funding available for Transportation Planning Grants will likely not exceed \$1,000,000. No application for a Transportation Planning Grant shall exceed \$200,000.

Eligible transportation planning projects must have a defined area or issue that will be investigated as well as a clear plan for implementation of the results.

Eligible expenses to be covered by the Transportation Planning Grant include, but not necessarily limited to:

- Planning consultants/staff
- Data gathering/surveys
- Data analysis
- Design
- Engineering review/surveys
- Public meetings/hearings
- Final report preparation

The transportation planning projects must be clearly related to addressing transportation issues or impacts directly related to the gaming facility. Applicants will be required to submit a detailed scope, budget, and timetable for the transportation planning effort prior to funding being awarded.

Communities that received the 2015/2016 Reserve Grant must first expend those funds before accessing any Transportation Planning Grant funds. Transportation Planning Grant funds may be sought to expand a planning project begun with reserve funds or to fund an additional project once the reserves have been exhausted.

In addition to the specific impact grant factors further defined in section **“How Will the Commission Decide on Applications?”**, the Commission will also consider whether the applicant demonstrates the potential for such transportation project to compete for state or federal transportation funds.

Applicants may, but are not required, to include a description of how the project meets the evaluation standards for the Fiscal Year 2022 TIP criteria for the Boston MPO Region or the

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission's transportation evaluation criteria, or other regional transportation project evaluation standard, whichever may be most applicable.

2.5 Transportation Construction Grants

The Commission will make funding available for certain transportation construction costs in the 2021 CMF. Since most of these projects will have an ancillary benefit to the community that likely outweighs the mitigation of a casino impact, the Commission anticipates that any CMF assistance provided will only be for a maximum of 1/3 of the total project cost, and that significant other federal, state, local, private or other funding will be available to pay for the remaining costs of any such project. The Commission will consider waiving this requirement if the applicant can affirmatively demonstrate that the cost associated with mitigating the impact exceeds the limit.

Applicants are not prohibited from applying for transportation construction funds in future years for a project included in a 2021 application. However, any 2021 transportation construction project may not rely upon contributions from the CMF in future rounds. Applicants should demonstrate that the financing for the project does not depend upon any future year awards by the Commission. Given the likely complexity of any such transportation construction applications, applicants may consult with Commission staff before and during the CMF review on such projects.

The Commission anticipates authorizing no more than \$4,000,000 in grants for Transportation Construction Grants. The Commission does not anticipate authorizing more than \$1,000,000 for any one award. The Commission may adjust all target spending amounts, including the amounts in this section. Applicants may include a request to use funding from previously awarded CMF Reserves in any description of significant other federal, state, local, or private contributions. There is no minimum application amount.

Applicants must demonstrate that the project will begin construction no later than June 30, 2022. In addition to the criteria for determining grants stated later in these Guidelines, the Commission will evaluate a project's readiness to proceed, the significance of additional funds from other sources, and the potential transportation benefits associated with such projects.

Although the Commission will not authorize any multi-year grants for transportation projects in 2021, the Commission plans to issue request for Statements of Interest in 2021 for transportation construction projects that would require multi-year grants. Such Statement of Interest would help the Commission determine the needs for multi-year grants in preparation for the 2022 CMF funding round. The Statement of Interest would also be utilized to allow for a greater understanding of projects that may be the subject of a future application.

Applicants may, but are not required, to include a description of how the project meets the evaluation standards for the Fiscal Year 2022 TIP criteria for the Boston MPO Region or the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission's transportation evaluation criteria, or other regional transportation project evaluation standard, whichever may be most applicable.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to include a letter of support from the MassDOT with any application.

Transportation Construction Grants are not available for transportation operations costs.

2.6 Workforce Development Grants

The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic in March of 2020 and its impact on the hospitality sector caused the Commission to re-think how workforce grants would be applied. As such, in 2020 the proposals for occupational training in hospitality and culinary were not funded. The Commission did fund portions of the proposals focused on adult basic education programs. Given the uncertainties entering 2021, we encourage applicants to be creative in their grant applications, keeping in mind that training programs must have a direct correlation to impacts from the casino. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that the education and skills training programs proposed are in response to an identified need at the casinos or as a means to provide a sufficient supply of workers to backfill jobs being lost to the casinos. In reviewing these applications, the Commission will need to consider the state of affairs at the time of the review including the condition of the labor market and the general state of the economy.

For fiscal year 2022, the Commission will make available funding for workforce development programs in Regions A and B for service to residents of communities of such Regions. CMF Workforce grant applicants should focus on areas highly impacted by casino operations, while taking into consideration the impacts of the pandemic.

Goals include:

- To mitigate a strain in existing resources and a potential impact to the regional labor market.
- To identify and alleviate gaps and/or challenges regarding equitable access to casino or industry-related jobs.
- To deliver education and career training programs that can be completed in two years or less and prepare program participants for employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations related to the casino.
- To help low-skilled adults earn occupational credentials, obtain well-paying jobs, and sustain rewarding careers in sectors related to hospitality and casino careers.
- To get students with low basic skills into for-credit career and technical education courses to improve their educational and employment outcomes.
- To align and accelerate ABE, GED, and developmental programs and provide nontraditional students the supports they need to complete postsecondary credentials of value in the regional labor market.

The total funding available for workforce grants will likely not exceed \$800,000. The Commission anticipates a base award of no more than \$300,000 in each Region (not including

additional funding for regional cooperation significant regional needs). These additional award descriptions are as follows:

- In an effort to promote administrative efficiencies and greater regional cooperation, applicants that demonstrate regional cooperation between a significant number of workforce agencies may be eligible for \$50,000 in additional regional cooperation funding. One grant is anticipated to be considered for each Region.
- The Commission may authorize an award of up to \$100,000 for significant regional needs.

Each governmental entity applying for workforce development funds will also need to provide details on what it will contribute to the workforce development project such as in-kind services or workforce development funds.

Eligible activities include:

- a program in Region A or Region B that structures intentional connections among adult basic education, occupational training, and post-secondary education programs designed to meet the needs of both adult learners and employers;
- post-secondary vocational programs;
- registered apprenticeships;
- courses leading to college credits or industry-recognized certificates;
- Adult Basic Education (“ABE”) and vocationally based English for Speakers of Other Languages (“ESOL”) training programs; contextualized learning;
- Integrated Education & Training; and industry-recognized credentials.

Proposals may include programming elements such as gaming school scholarships, culinary, hospitality skills, banking, or general customer service training or vocational programs focused on English language/adult basic education, while taking into consideration the impacts of the pandemic.

A consortium application is required. Eligible workforce development proposals must include a regional consortium approach to improve the skills, knowledge, and credential attainment for Region A and Region B residents interested in a casino or casino-related career, focusing on increasing industry-recognized and academic credentials needed to work in the most in-demand occupations related to the expanded gaming industry or a focus on occupations needed by the regional business community impacted as a result of casino hiring. The proposal must also include regional labor market information and evidence of employer partnerships.

Governmental entities eligible to receive funds would include but not be limited to: host communities, communities which were each either a designated surrounding community, a community which entered into a nearby community agreement with a licensee, a community that is geographically adjacent to the host community of a gaming licensee, a community that petitioned to be a surrounding community to a gaming licensee state agencies, state agencies, and regional employment boards. The Commission shall evaluate the use of host community

agreement funds in evaluating funding requests for workforce development program grant funds. Applicants should consider leveraging other funding resources.

The Commission has determined that administrative costs (including but not limited to all indirect and other administrative funding) shall not exceed 7.5% of the total grant allocation. Administrative costs include activities related to management, oversight, reporting and record keeping, and monitoring of the grant program.

2.7 Tribal Gaming Technical Assistance Grants

The Commission may make available no more than \$200,000 in technical assistance funding to assist in the determination of potential impacts that may be experienced by communities in geographic proximity to the potential Tribal Gaming facility in Taunton. Said technical assistance funding may be made through Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (“SRPEDD”), or a comparable regional entity. Such funding will only be made available, after approval of any application by SRPEDD or a comparable regional entity, if it is determined by the Commission that construction of such gaming facility will likely commence prior to or during Fiscal Year 2021. Any such application must demonstrate that any studies of impacts will address the technical assistance needs of the region which may include but not be limited to the communities that are geographically adjacent to Taunton. Such funding shall not be used to study impacts on or provide technical assistance to Taunton, as funding has been provided in the Intergovernmental Agreement By and Between the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and the City of Taunton. Any such program of technical assistance may be provided by SRPEDD itself or through a contract with SRPEDD.

2.8 Emergency Mitigation Grants

The Commission may make available no more than \$200,000 in grant funds to mitigate unanticipated casino related impacts that arise after the January 31, 2021 application date. Any impact must be newly identified and be of an emergency nature that would cause significant harm to the community if it were not remedied in an expeditious fashion. The intent of this grant is to allow the Commission to be more responsive in addressing significant casino related issues that do not fall within the normal CMF timelines. This grant is not intended to circumvent the normal CMF processes. Any applicant for this grant should contact the Community Affairs Division to discuss the impact and the proper way to proceed.

3.0 Application Requirements

3.1 What Should Be Included in the Applications?

Applicants are required to complete the appropriate grant application:

- 2021 Specific Impact Grant Application;
- 2021 Community Planning Grant Application;
- 2021 Transportation Planning Grant Application;

- 2021 Workforce Development Grant Application;
- 2021 Transportation Construction Grant Application; or
- 2021 Reserve/Tribal Gaming Technical Assistance Grant Application.

Applicants may also submit additional supporting materials of a reasonable length.

Applicants will need to fully identify the impact being caused by the casino and describe how the project request will address any claimed impacts and provide justification of any funds requested.

Applicants will need to describe if and how such impacts were addressed or not addressed in any host or surrounding community agreements. Applicants may include a letter of support from the applicable gaming licensee. However, this is not necessary, as the Commission will request the licensee's opinion regarding each Application.

3.2 How Will the Commission Decide on Applications?

The Commission will ask each licensee to review and comment on any requests for funding.

The Commission will evaluate the submittal by the community, any input received from the community and interested parties (such as regional planning agencies), the responses of the licensee, Commission consultant reviews, and any other sources determined by the Commission. Commission Staff may consider information from the report issued by the Lower Mystic Regional Workforce Group in its evaluation of transportation planning grants.

The Commission will evaluate any funding requests in the context of any host or surrounding community agreements. Factors used by the Commission to evaluate grant applications may include but not be limited to:

- A demonstration that the impact is being caused by the gaming facility;
- The significance of the impact to be remedied;
- The potential for the proposed mitigation measure to address the impact;
- The feasibility and reasonableness of the proposed mitigation measure;
- A demonstration that any program to assist non-governmental entities is for a demonstrated public purpose and not for the benefit or maintenance of a private party;
- The significance of any matching funds including but not limited to the ability to compete for state or federal workforce, transportation or other funds;
- Any demonstration of regional benefits from a grant award;
- A demonstration that other funds from host or surrounding community agreements are not available to fund the proposed mitigation measure;
- A demonstration that such mitigation measure is not already required to be completed by the licensee pursuant to any regulatory requirements or pursuant to any agreements between such licensee and applicant; and

- The inclusion of a detailed scope, budget, and timetable for each mitigation request.

Supplemental Guidelines Used to Evaluate Workforce Development Applications

- Does the application develop a workforce development program that seeks to address any claimed impacts?
- Does the proposal include a program in Region A or Region B that structures intentional connections among adult basic education, occupational training, and post-secondary education programs?
- Does the proposal seek to assist low-skilled adults in obtaining education and career training to enable them to join the regional labor market?
- Does the proposal seek to address the anticipated goals of the program (see pages 12 and 13 of these Guidelines)?
- Will the participants receive industry-recognized or academic credentials needed to work in the most in-demand casino-related occupations within the region?
- A governmental entity applying for workforce development funds will also need to provide detail on what it will contribute to the workforce development project such as in-kind services or workforce development funds
- Is the Applicant collaborating with others to provide a regional approach?
- Does the Applicant address issues related to a gaming facility? The Commission may ask Applicants for supplementary materials, may request a meeting with Applicants, and reserves the ability to host a hearing or hearings on any application.

The Commission's deliberations on Community Mitigation Fund policies will also be aided through input from the Gaming Policy Advisory Committee, the Community Mitigation Subcommittee, and the Local Community Mitigation Advisory Committees.

The Commission reserves the ability to determine a funding limit above or below what is detailed in these Guidelines. The Commission notes that it plans to target its funding decisions based on the regional allocations described earlier. However, the Commission reserves the right to make determinations that do not strictly adhere or adhere to such targets. In the event the Commission awards are not in such adherence, the Commission may make appropriate adjustments in future guidelines to bring regional allocations into more congruity with such targets.

The Commission reserves the ability to fund only portions of requested projects and to fund only a percentage of amounts requested. The Commission also reserves the ability to place conditions on any award.

There is limited funding available. The Commission therefore reserves the right to determine which requests to fund based on its assessment of a broad range of factors including the extent of public benefit each grant is likely to produce.

3.3 When Will the Commission Make Decisions?

The Commission anticipates making funding decisions on any requests for grant assistance before July 2021.

3.4 Authorization to Approve Requests for Changes to Components of Grant Awards

The Commission authorized staff to approve requests for changes to components of grant awards provided that staff provides notice of such changes to all Commission members and provided further that such changes shall not exceed 10% of the grant award or \$10,000, whichever is smaller.

3.5 Waivers and Variances

The Commission may in its discretion waive or grant a variance from any provision or requirement contained in these Guidelines, not specifically required by law, where the Commission finds that:

- a) Granting the waiver or variance is consistent with the purposes of M.G.L. c. 23K;
- b) Granting the waiver or variance will not interfere with the ability of the Commission to fulfill its duties;
- c) Granting the waiver or variance will not adversely affect the public interest; and
- d) Not granting the waiver or variance would cause a substantial hardship to the community, governmental entity, or person requesting the waiver or variance.

All requests for waivers or variances shall be in writing, shall set forth the specific provision of the Guidelines to which a waiver or variance is sought, and shall state the basis for the proposed waiver or variance.

The Commission may grant a waiver or variance, deny a waiver or variance, or grant a waiver or variance subject to such terms, conditions and limitations as the commission may determine.

3.6 Rescission of Grants

If a Grantee does not expend the funds in a timely manner or does so in a manner that is inconsistent with the grant, the Commission may rescind all or a portion of the grant and make those funds available in the next grant round for the Region in which the grant originated. Before any grant is rescinded, Commission staff will notify the Grantee that the expenditures on the grant are not timely and establish a timeline for the Grantee to either expend the funds or have the grant rescinded.

3.7 Who Should be Contacted for Questions?

CMF applicants are encouraged to contact the Commission's staff with any questions or concerns. The Commission's Chief of the Division of Community Affairs, Joseph Delaney, can be

reached at (617) 721-9198 or via e-mail at joseph.delaney@massgaming.gov. The Commission's address is 101 Federal Street, 12th Floor, Boston, MA 02110.

3.8 Where Should the Application be Sent?

Applications **must be sent to** www.commbuys.com. An application received by COMMBUYS by January 31, 2021 will meet the application deadline. Applicants that are not part of the COMMBUYS system should contact Mary Thurlow, Program Manager of the Community Mitigation Fund well in advance of the January 31, 2021 deadline to make arrangements for submission of the application by the deadline. Mary Thurlow can be contacted at (617) 979-8420 or at mary.thurlow@massgaming.gov.

If you have any questions or concerns contact the COMMBUYS Help Desk at COMMBUYS@state.ma.us or during normal business hours (8am - 5pm ET Monday - Friday) at 1-888-627-8283 or 617-720-3197.