

Northwoods Rail Transit Commission

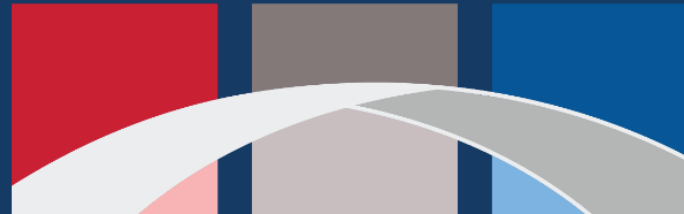
Members: Ashland, Clark, Douglas, Florence, Forest, Iron, Lincoln, Marathon, Marinette, Oconto, Oneida, Price, & Rusk Counties of WI and Baraga, Delta, Dickinson, Gogebic, Houghton, Marquette, Menominee & Ontonagon Counties of MI.

Visit us at: www.ncwrpc.org/NorthwoodsRail/

Submitted June 25, 2025



U.S. Department
of Transportation



BUILD AMERICA BUREAU

Regional Infrastructure
Accelerator (RIA) Program

Agenda

1. What is a Regional Infrastructure Accelerator? (RIA)
2. NWRTC Application
3. Next Steps

2025 Notice of Funding Opportunity

- \$20 Million Available
- Submitted June 25, 2025
- Award – Anticipated before year end
- No match requirement
- Up to \$2 million award over 24 Month Period – option for renewal
- Key Application Elements
 - Multi-State
 - RRIF-TIFIA and PABs
 - Regional Assistance

Build America Bureau

Advancing Investment in America's Transportation Infrastructure

Point of contact and coordination for federal credit programs, transportation expertise, and strategies to access private capital

Financial Assistance

Credit assistance for a wide range of eligible projects, \$100 billion available

Tax-exempt bonds for public-private partnerships, \$5 billion available

Not limited to TIFIA, RRIF and PAB's

Technical Assistance

Grants for project planning and development, and community solutions

Education on innovative project planning, financing tools, and delivery models

Focus on Predevelopment efforts

Eligible Projects & Borrowers

TIFIA

Projects

- Highways, toll roads, vehicular bridges and tunnels
- Land ports of entry
- Public transportation (**including joint development**)
- Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure
- Intercity rail/bus infrastructure and rolling stock
- Intermodal facilities (rail-truck, air-truck)
- Seaports, including access roads
- Airports (airside, landside)
- **Public infrastructure / economic development**

Borrowers

- Government entities
- Government-sponsored authorities
- Private corporations, entities (**developers**) with public sponsorship
- Business or transportation improvement districts
- State infrastructure banks

RRIF

Projects

- Railroad (freight rail and intercity or commuter passenger rail) infrastructure and rolling stock
- Intermodal railroad infrastructure and facilities
- Seaports w/ railroad service
- **Economic development**

Borrowers

- Railroads (Class I, II, III)
- Government entities
- Government-sponsored authorities
- Interstate compacts
- **Entities participating in joint ventures with another RRIF eligible borrower**

Note: TIFIA & RRIF cannot finance operations or maintenance

Federal Involvement

Cooperative Agreement:

- Technical assistance and guidance
- Close monitoring of performance
- Involvement in technical decisions
- Participation in status meetings



Primary Applicant Public Entities' Potential Partners

- Academia
- Councils
- Councils of Governments
- Counties
- Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations
- Multi-State Organizations
- Municipalities
- Political Subdivisions of States or Local Governments
- Port Authorities
- Private Industry
- Regional Transportation Authorities
- Regional Transportation Planning Organizations
- State DOTs
- Special Purpose Districts
- Tribal Governments

Evaluation criteria

- i. Experience and Qualifications
- ii. Partnerships
- iii. Business Model
- iv. Pipeline
- v. Readiness
- vi. Underserved Communities
- vii. Self Sustainability
- viii. Risk
- ix. Alignment with Department Priorities



Experience and Qualifications (i)

- Promoting innovative financing methods
- Providing technical assistance on best practices
- Increasing transparency of project analysis
- Deploying predevelopment capital programs to create a pipeline of projects
- Bundling small-scale and rural projects
- Reducing transaction costs
- Accelerating eligible TIFIA projects

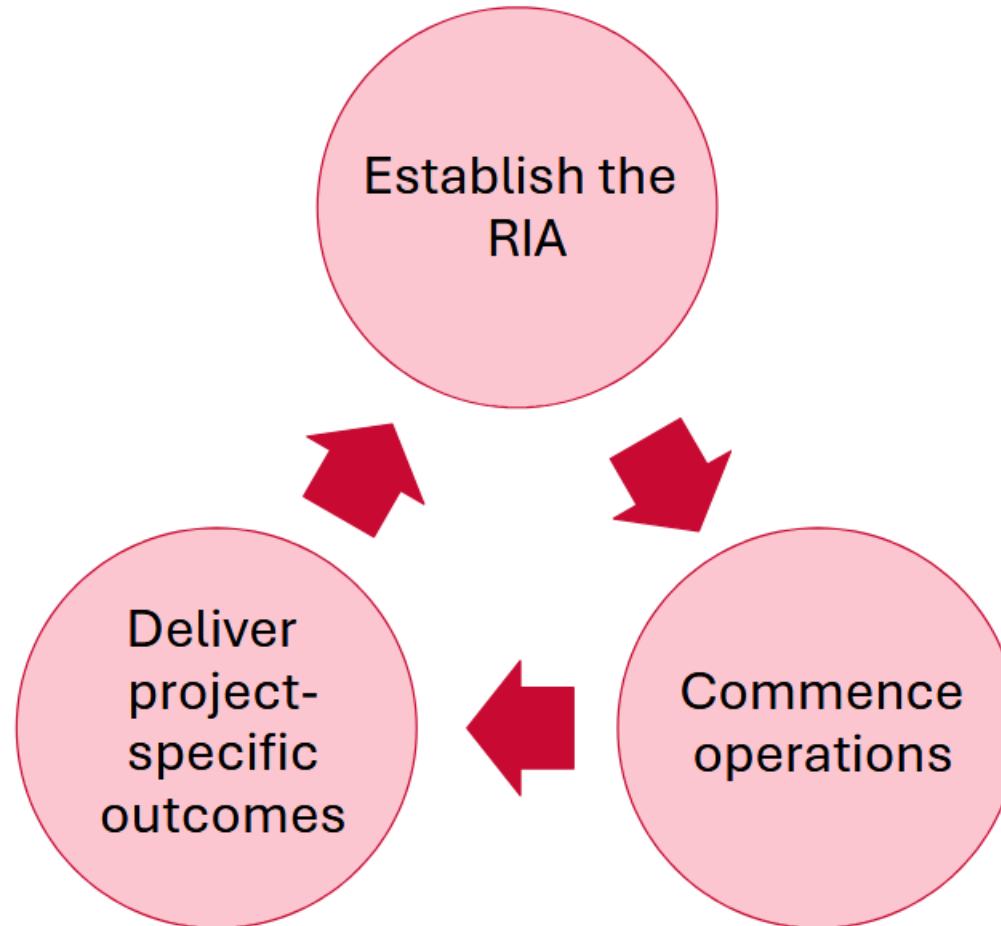


Partnerships (ii)

- Demonstrate strong collaboration
- Involve multiple partners
 - Public Sector
 - Private Sector
 - Academic Entities
- Quickly and effectively develop projects

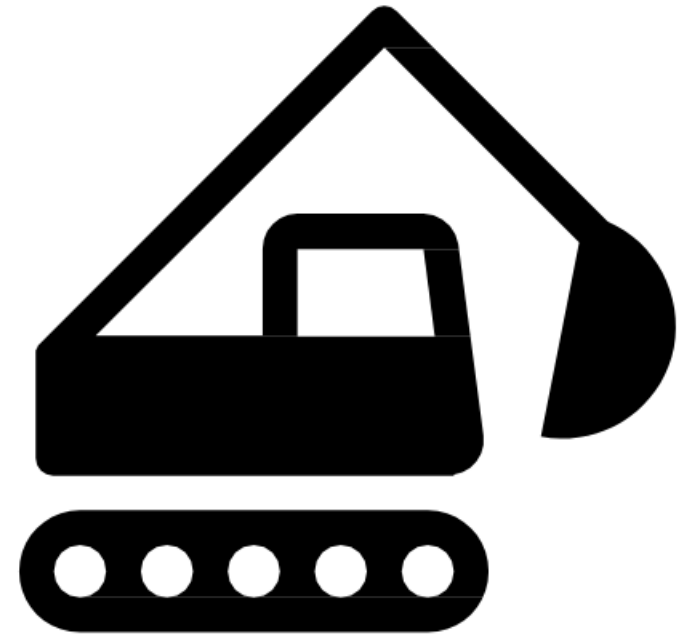


Business Model (iii)



Pipeline (iv)

- Propose a pipeline of projects
 - At least one project must be eligible for TIFIA credit assistance
- Number of eligible projects in pipeline
- Local and regional support of the projects



Readiness (v)



- Demonstrate preparedness to commence operations
- Availability of facilities and equipment
- Existing governance structure
- Existing relationships
- Provide proposed budget
- Provide proposed milestones

Underserved Communities (vi)

- Addressing challenges of underserved communities
 - Rural areas
 - Areas of persistent poverty
- Overcome common barriers to using TIFIA and RRIF credit assistance
- Identify and address challenges

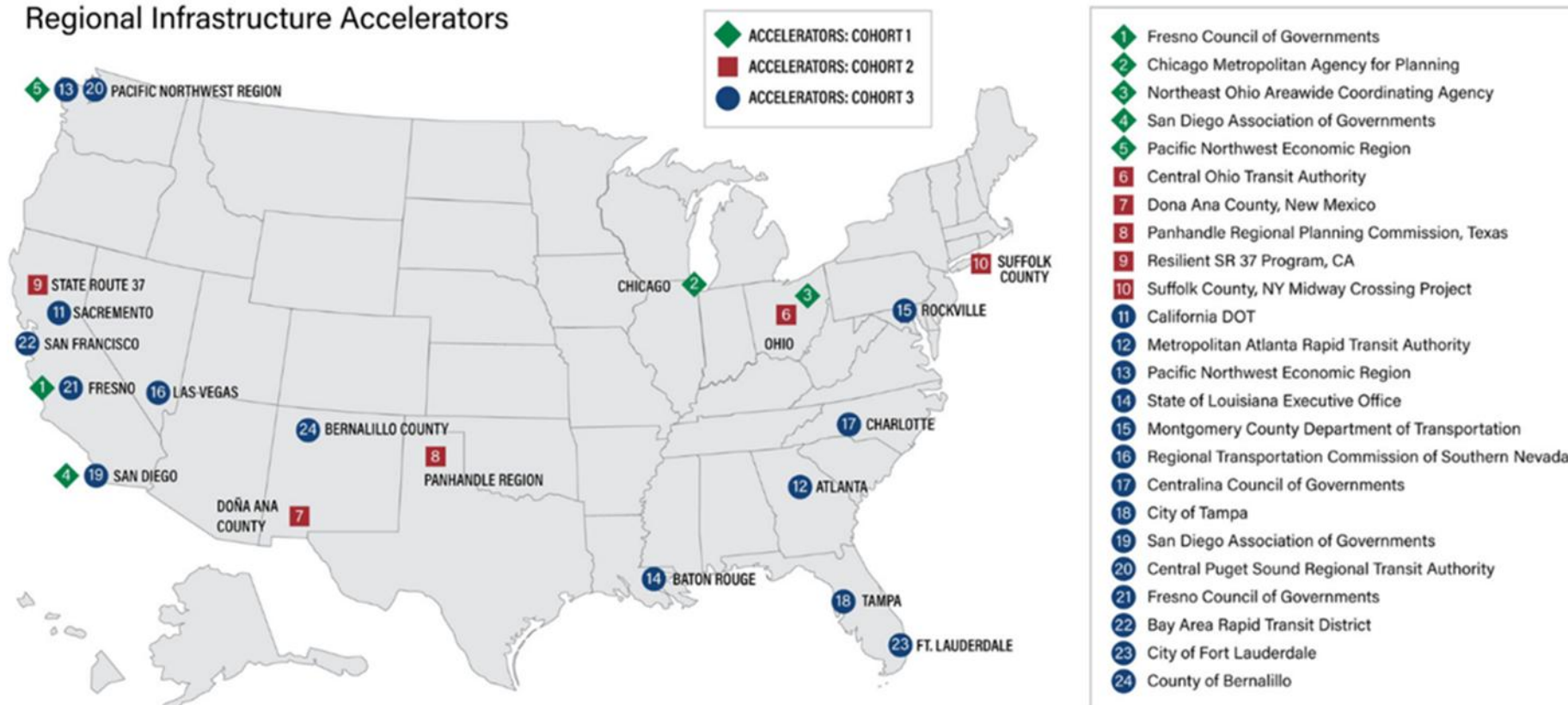
Alignment with Department Priorities

- Foster a safe transportation system
- Consider climate change and environmental justice
- Increase equity and accessibility
- Deploy innovative technologies and practices
- Maintain and upgrade existing transportation systems

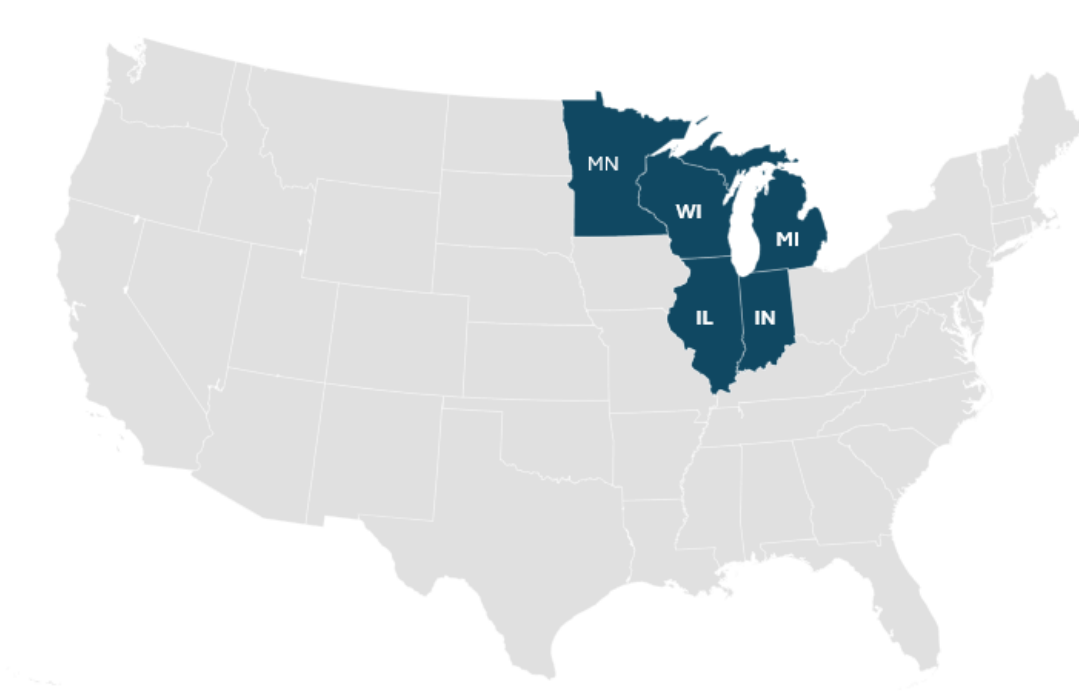


24 Accelerators Have Been Previously Awarded

Regional Infrastructure Accelerators



Northwoods Rail Transit Commission Application Highlights



Partner Resources:

- University of Wisconsin Superior
- Michigan Tech University
- Michigan State University
- University of Michigan
- DePaul University
- Northwestern University

State Support and R.O.U.T.E.S. Program

2023	Number of Railroads	Number of Short Line Railroads	Class 1 RR Miles	Shortline Miles	% Short Line Miles	Total Miles	000 Carloads
Wisconsin	9	5	2,801	1,099	0	3,900	730
Michigan	29	25	1,839	2,223	1	4,062	1,047
Indiana	45	40	3,127	1,820	1	4,947	1,373
Illinois	48	42	7,712	1,824	0	9,536	7,840
Minnesota	19	14	4,435	1,063	0	5,498	2,173
	150	126	19,914	8,029		27,943	13,163

Source: AAR Data

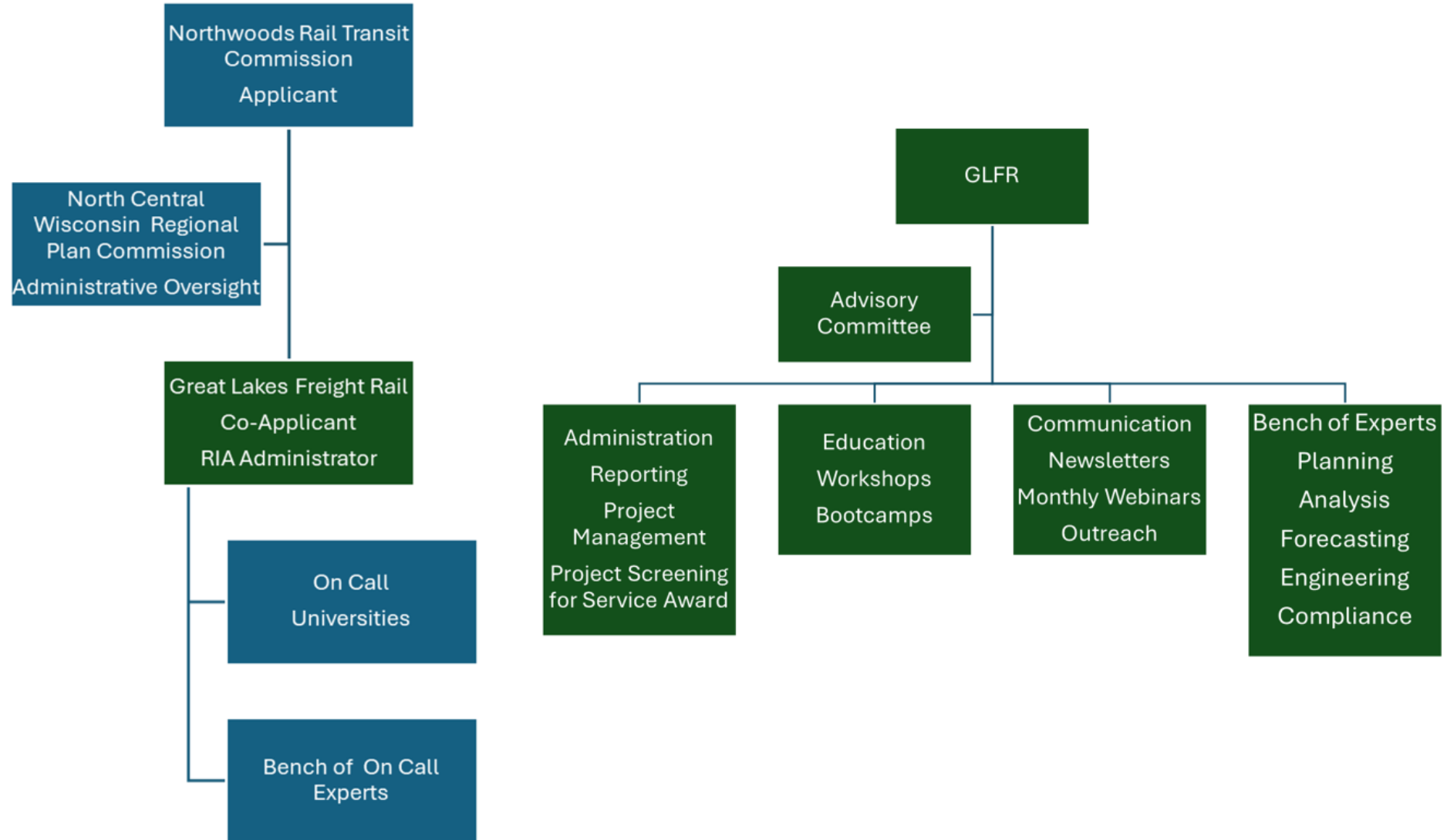
Great Lakes Containerization Initiative

4 Ports initially with potential to expand
 Duluth-Superior, Monroe, Ports of Indiana, Cleveland
 Bulk Port Improvements



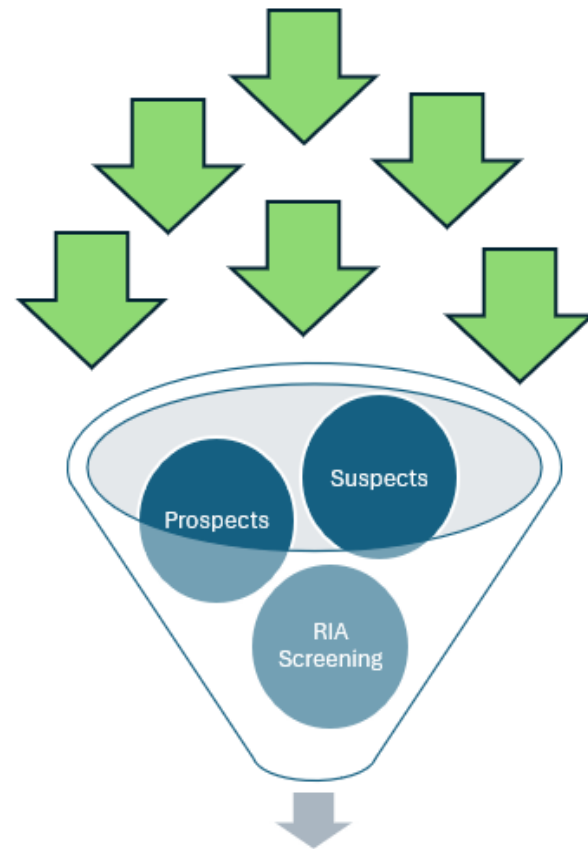
36 Tribal Communities in Region

Organization Structure



Process and Projects

Development of Project Pipeline
Public Planning Documents e.g. Plans and Past Grant Applications
Trade Associations & Freight Committee Members & Presentations
Workshops
Education Sessions and Whitepapers
Newsletters & Podcasts
Website
Word of Mouth



On-Call Project Support

Area of Emphasis

Rail

Intermodal

Regional Ports and Terminals

Preliminary Pipeline

- 20 Seed Projects Initially Identified
- \$934 Million in Projects Need

Work Plan

Tasks	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Project Management and Coordination								
Mobilization								
Stakeholder and Partners Coordination								
Education and Communication	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Pipeline Analysis								
Financial Planning								
Public Benefit Documentation								
Final Report and Evaluation								

Next Steps

- Letters of Support
 - A template letter of support is available
- Continued Development of Project Pipeline
 - Project template available
- Contact your local Congressional Office
- More Information

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