



Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) | 2024 Community-Centered Transportation Leadership to Curb Carbon (CCTLCC)

PACKET A

Milepost Consulting, SPC

FEBRUARY 16, 2024

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Scoring Criteria 1: Qualifications / Expertise of Firms on Team

A. Professional Qualifications

Firms on Proposed Team

Milepost Consulting, SPC submits the following statement of qualifications as a singular firm that is uniquely equipped with the skills, knowledge, experience, and expertise to deliver WSDOT's desired outcomes for CCTLCC.

Milepost Expertise

As a full-service agency, Milepost has decades of collective experience supporting leaders in the government, utility, and business sectors building and executing initiatives that result in meaningful and measurable change. When working with our team, clients get a business consultancy, a creative agency, and a company that specializes in energy and sustainability all in one. We have expertise in designing, developing, implementing, and promoting purpose-driven initiatives for state and local governments, utilities, and corporations. We help our partners achieve their business objectives, grow positive external and customer relationships, and meet or exceed their sustainability goals.

The once-in-a-generation funding opportunities through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) have created numerous avenues to support clean energy technologies and programs. Milepost's Government Team supports communities, businesses, and government agencies in determining which opportunities advance their goals and help manage the process wherever needed—from writing proposals, designing programs, and engaging the public to managing teams, implementing initiatives, and reporting results.

The Government Team at Milepost is comprised of government professionals, each with five or more years of experience writing and managing grants with State Energy Offices (SEOs), State Departments of Transportation, utilities, local government agencies, and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). Since the passage of IRA and IIJA, the Milepost team has assisted clients with over 30 funding applications with a total value of \$425 million submitted so far, demonstrating that this team has the expertise to lead and/or support complex grant programs.

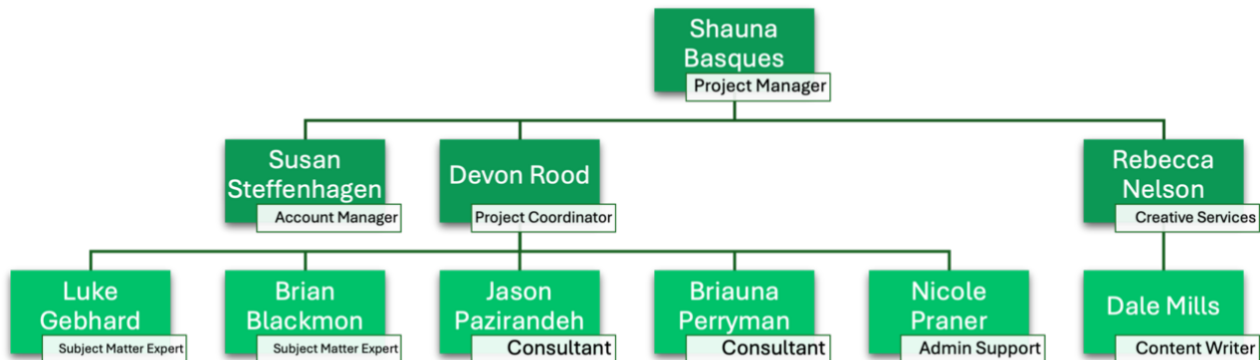
Milepost recognizes WSDOT's commitment to supporting the health of local communities by making environmentally conscious decisions through strategy. In addition to being experts in grant writing, the team is proficient in energy efficiency, electric vehicles, transportation, cybersecurity, and utility spaces. With our expertise and shared commitment to people and the planet, we are uniquely positioned to help WSDOT achieve bold goals.

Organization Chart

The strength of the Milepost team comes from our diverse backgrounds, technical understanding, bold creativity, entrepreneurial spirit, and passionate relationship-building. When it comes to Milepost’s grant work, we have project-based teams structured with the ideal combination of skill and subject matter expertise to produce deliverables.

Several members of the Milepost team have worked either in or with the primary state and federal agencies administering grant funding that is relevant to WSDOTs’ interests – including the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) at the federal level, and multiple State Energy Offices. This gives Milepost a competitive advantage in the funding spaces of interest to WSDOT.

The organization chart below lists the names and roles of each proposed project team member identified to support WSDOT’s 2024 CCTLCC.



B. Proposed Key Project Team Members.

KEY STAFF	HOURS PER MONTH AVAILABLE FOR DURATION OF PROJECT	RESOURCES
Shauna Basques	80	Lead Project Manager
Susan Steffenhagen	90	Lead Account Manager / Subject Matter Expert on DOT Federal Grants and Programs Administration
Devon Rood	80	Project Coordinator & Lead Consultant
Rebecca Nelson	40	Creative Services
Luke Gebhard	60	Subject Matter Expert / Program Design and Stakeholder Engagement
Brian Blackmon	70	Subject Matter Expert / Federal Grants & Programs Administration
Jason Pazirandeh	80	Consultant
Briauna Perryman	80	Consultant

C. Project Experience

Below are relevant project examples showcasing our ability to design, develop, and deploy a grant program such as CCTLCC.

Tennessee Valley Authority School Uplift Program

Timeline: 2021 – Present

Project cost: approximately \$250,000 per year

Through School Uplift, TVA and its partners engage school communities in Strategic Energy Management practices that facilitate energy efficiency through low-investment operational improvements and occupant behavior change. In addition, School Uplift participants are offered two grant opportunities — the Building Energy Upgrades Grant (\$200,000-\$400,000) and the Learning Environment Grant (\$10,000-\$25,000).

The Building Energy Upgrades Grant equips schools to make transformative capital improvements such as building envelopes or replacing aging HVAC equipment. These critical upgrades also provide non-energy benefits, such as improved air quality and comfort. Together, TVA and the State of Tennessee’s Energy Efficient Schools Initiative (EESI) have jointly

awarded 100% of the grants to Tennessee schools above the state median for childhood poverty. Building Energy Upgrade Grant finalists receive fully funded investment-grade audits, valued at \$15,000 each. Audits result in a report that identifies building upgrade opportunities and the associated cost and savings. Schools are encouraged to leverage these findings to incorporate more efficient operations in future planning.

The Learning Environment Grant encourages schoolwide participation in energy-saving behaviors and engagement. Through an innovative gamification model, schools are scored based on activities like attending coaching calls and webinars, energy engagement campaigns, tracking energy performance with ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager (ESPM), and energy savings achieved. Schools that complete the program earn a minimum of \$10,000, with the ten top-performing schools earning \$25,000. These grants prioritize disadvantaged communities by evaluating schools according to USDA data on child poverty and the White House's Justice40 screening tool on socioeconomic, environmental, and climate challenges.

Milepost played an instrumental role in the design, development, and deployment of the School Uplift grants. We created the strategy, developed the draft application forms and participation agreements, supported recruitment strategies, produced scoring and selection criteria, engaged relevant stakeholders throughout the process, and generated external communications related to award announcements. Through the grant application process, we served as technical assistance stewards to answer questions and be a resource for interested applicants.

Completing its fourth year, School Uplift has impacted more than 120,000 students and enabled 220 underserved schools to save an average of 10% on energy costs – resulting in approximately \$13,000 in average annual savings per school. Since 2021, School Uplift has awarded 15 Building Energy Upgrades grants totaling \$4,800,000 and 69 Learning Environment grants totaling \$2,475,957.

Tennessee Valley Authority Clean School Bus Program

Timeline 2022-Present

Project cost: approximately \$95,200 per year

TVA engaged Milepost to lead outreach for EPA's Clean School Bus Program, including the coordination and facilitation of webinars to demystify electric school bus technologies for school districts and utility partners. Additionally, we organized weekly office hours to provide technical assistance and explain EPA guidance regarding the program and rebate application materials. To enable program replication, we supported the TVA team in documenting processes and identifying key challenges and takeaways. For example, the office hours were quite successful, as all 14 school districts that attended and applied were awarded rebates or waitlisted.

Milepost's expertise in electric school bus technical assistance and EPA's Clean School Bus Program enabled us to provide guidance and programmatic translation to school districts and local power companies across seven states. By understanding the nuances of rebate and grant funding cycles of a 5-year IIJA/BIL-funded program, Milepost has positioned itself as a subject matter expert in translating federal guidance at the local level.

In FY2022, Milepost's outreach touched all 175 Prioritized School Districts in TVA's seven-state region, resulting in nearly \$60 million in electric school bus rebates being awarded to school districts in the TVA service area. Despite representing just 3% of the nation's population, TVA's service area claimed an impressive 6.3% of available funding. Milepost is now actively securing funds for additional schools in subsequent CSB funding rounds. View our [project profile](#) and the [Electric School Buses Milestone Report](#), designed for TVA by Milepost.

Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) Program Support

Timeline: 2022 – Ongoing

Project cost: approximately \$500,000 per year

Milepost's support for TDEC has primarily entailed designing programs and associated grant application materials for the State and its partners. This includes securing federal funding via formula and competitive grants, performing research for funding implementation, and creating the documentation and strategy needed to deploy funding programs to local constituents. In 2023, Milepost supported the application for, or design and implementation of, approximately \$450 million in funding programs for TDEC. Below are several highlighted programs:

- **Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant Program:** Milepost led the development of the TN SEO's \$32.2 million application to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) for support of corridor and community electric vehicle charging infrastructure. This included writing a 40+ page project narrative as well as a budget narrative, project merit criteria evaluations, and more. Milepost also assisted with stakeholder engagement, including securing letters of support/commitment, hosting meetings, collecting project feedback, etc. TDEC has provided an evaluation of this project in support of Milepost's proposal.
- **Vehicle Technologies Office Demonstration and Deployment Project:** Milepost coordinated the completion of an application for Middle-West TN Clean Fuels (housed within TDEC) and project partner Oak Ridge National Laboratory to support an artificial intelligence traffic signaling system for Nashville and Chattanooga's most populated intersections. This included facilitating grant application progress, tracking required documentation, writing a Community Benefits Plan for the project, and assembling documents for submission to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

- **Solar For All:** Milepost managed the scoping, design, writing, and submission of TDEC’s \$250 million application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the expansion of residential solar in Tennessee. This included facilitating meaningful stakeholder discussion, liaising between TDEC and its utility and local government partners, performing complex research on solar adoption in the region, translating program goals into measurable outputs and outcomes, and developing and revising an associated written narrative and budget for the multi-year project.
- **Home Energy Rebates:** Since the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, Milepost has liaised between TDEC and its utility implementation partners (e.g., TVA) to design an implementation strategy for Tennessee’s \$160 million in Home Energy Rebates funds. Activities supporting this effort include 1) writing TDEC responses to federal Requests for Information, including those put forward for the Home Energy Rebates Programs as well as the Contractor Training Grants Program (now known as Training for Residential Energy Contractors); 2) performing assessments to estimate the potential reach of Home Energy Rebates Programs (by number of households touched) and potential funding allocation geographically (by county); 3) providing expertise and guidance on Home Energy Rebates program requirements, to assist in program design; 4) communicating TDEC priorities to utility implementation partners to keep program on track and in scope; and 5) leading the writing, revision, and submission of materials to DOE or TDEC to support the Rebates programs.

In addition to the activities above, Milepost generally supports TDEC by:

- Managing the grant application process for all stakeholders, including developing internal timelines, drafting and editing materials, reviewing partner-provided content for completeness and accuracy, compiling and formatting documents, etc.
- Facilitating outreach and providing technical assistance to potential program partners.
- Designing stakeholder materials and reports, including infographics.
- Leading efforts to incorporate equity, Justice40, and other community benefits goals into program implementation activities.

Milepost's support of TVA and TDEC around funding program development showcases our expertise in managing programs from start to finish. Each of these skills is directly applicable to WSDOT needs.

Scoring Criteria 2: Qualifications of Proposed Project Manager

A. Project Manager Experience

Our proposed Project Manager for this engagement is Shauna Basques, Senior Account Manager and Government Accounts Lead for Milepost. Shauna is a subject matter expert in grants program management and a trusted advisor to TVA and TDEC on a wide array of federal funding opportunities. During her 5+ year tenure at the Tennessee State Energy Office, she led several programs supporting alternative fuels adoption, energy modernization, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure development. In addition, she managed public engagement initiatives, led technical assistance offerings targeted at funding program participants, coordinated stakeholder conferences, and monitored grant contract compliance.

Project: TVA/TDEC Home Energy Rebates

Dates: August 2022 – Ongoing

Client/Organization: Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC)

Responsibilities/Tasks: Federal and State program support, design, and implementation, including but not limited to the following responsibilities:

- Liaising between clients (TDEC and TVA) to lead program design and application for Tennessee's Home Energy Rebates Programs.
- Providing subject matter expertise on Home Energy Rebates federal guidance, eligibility, application requirements, etc. This includes representing clients via Home Energy Rebates subcommittees led by the National Association of State Energy Officials.
- Managing overall project work as the client's first point of contact, prioritizing client goals, and communicating priorities to the Milepost team.
- Reviewing work progress, facilitating client meetings, and reviewing written materials before hand-off to the clients.
- Leading discussions regarding program design priorities, including assistance in identifying outputs, outcomes, metrics, and SMART tasks that translate client goals into actionable, replicable program implementation.
- Facilitating outreach to potential program partners, including identifying areas for stakeholder feedback, making plans for the provision of technical assistance, etc. !
- Leading efforts to incorporate equity, Justice40, and other community benefits goals into program implementation activities.
- Overall, managing client relationships and ensuring that client satisfaction is achieved with all Milepost work, products, and services.

Project: United States Virgin Islands Solar for All

Dates: August 2023 – October 2023

Client/Organization: Virgin Islands Energy Office

Responsibilities/Tasks: Federal and State program support, design, and implementation, including but not limited to the following responsibilities:

- Provided subject matter expertise on Solar for All federal guidance, eligibility, application requirements, etc.
- Managed overall project work as the client's first point of contact, prioritizing client goals and communicating priorities to the Milepost team.
- Reviewed work progress, facilitated client meetings, and reviewed written and research materials for Milepost before hand-off to the clients.
- Led discussions regarding program design priorities, including assistance in identifying outputs, outcomes, metrics, and SMART tasks that translate client goals into actionable, replicable program implementation.
- Facilitated outreach to potential program partners, including identifying areas for stakeholder feedback, making plans for the provision of technical assistance, etc. This included orchestrating and hosting stakeholder outreach/feedback sessions, to ensure community partner alignment and buy-in with client program design goals.
- Led efforts to incorporate equity, Justice40, and other community benefits goals into program implementation activities.
- Managed client relationships and ensured client satisfaction with all Milepost work, products, and services.

Shauna led the Milepost team in helping VIEO scope and craft a project proposal requesting \$100 million in competitive funding available under the EPA Solar for All Program. This ambitious project aimed to expand solar accessibility, enhance workforce development, and increase energy resilience across USVI, with a key focus on the islands' most underserved and disadvantaged neighborhoods. The scope of the project included the development of comprehensive solar deployment plans tailored to the unique characteristics of each island, addressing geographic and demographic nuances.

Project: Volkswagen Diesel Settlement Environmental Mitigation Trust (VW Settlement EMT)

Dates: October 2017 – April 2022

Client/Organization: TDEC

Responsibilities/Tasks: Federal and State program support, design, and implementation, including but not limited to the following responsibilities:

- Researched, outlined, and co-wrote the Beneficiary Mitigation Plan describing how Tennessee would spend its VW Settlement EMT allocation of approximately \$45.7 million. This included assessing NOx emissions reduction potential, gathering stakeholder feedback on program design, making and presenting recommendations for funding to be approved by departmental leadership (including the Governor's office), and translating complex program goals into easily understandable stakeholder communication.
- Co-wrote application guidance for several medium- and heavy-duty vehicle replacement and charging infrastructure funding programs developed under Tennessee's VW Settlement EMT allocation.
- Managed all stakeholder presentations and correspondence on funding programs, including the provision of technical assistance with both grant funding platforms and general application understanding and completion.
- Assessed and made recommendations for funding awards under several grant programs.
- Established assessment criteria for grant applications and methodology for selecting winners, dollar amounts, etc.
- Wrote and oversaw the timely completion of corresponding grant contracts under vehicle replacement programs.
- Designed and co-wrote all program implementation guidance for the VW Settlement EMT programs, including instructions on reporting, compliance, procurement, and other requirements binding grant contract recipients.
- Oversaw TDEC communication and management of grant programs after grant contract award. This included designing monitoring/auditing guides, performing subrecipient monitoring visits, approving procurements and invoicing, compiling reports, etc.

B. Project Manager State & Federal Regulations Familiarity

Each responsibility listed above required Shauna's subject matter expertise in program design and state/federal regulations and procedures. Shauna has managed the development of programs in compliance with DOE, EPA, DOT, the VW Settlement EMT, and more, each with unique compliance requirements for program design (e.g., eligibility of recipients, eligibility of costs and activities, procurement processes, reimbursement processes, reporting, etc.). This also includes an understanding of several national program design standards that often impact grant-funded activities, including Build America Buy America equipment and infrastructure sourcing, Davis-Bacon Act prevailing wage law, National Environmental Policy Act assessments and requirements, and more.

As a former state employee who still provides client services in government programming, Shauna also has strong experience in state-led stakeholder outreach, program priority alignment with governmental initiatives, executive and legislative approvals processes, etc.

C. Project Manager Project Management Experience

Shauna's process for funding program/project design work begins with a scope and discovery document for client review and discussion. This document includes program background and requirements, timeline, budget, and roles and responsibilities for all parties (both client and contractor). Once the scope is approved, Shauna manages work for the Milepost team and communicates with the client at regular intervals. For example, the Milepost team uses recurring meetings (often weekly or bi-weekly) with the client to address changes in scope, potential scope creep, risks, and securing client approvals on change orders. These meetings also provide a time for discussing Milepost program spend to date, budget needs should they arise, and forecasting hours and spending dependent on client feedback.

Most importantly, Shauna's philosophy after nearly a decade in funding program application and design is to acknowledge that changes will likely occur during the life of a project. These kinds of changes are normal, especially for initiatives like grant program design and implementation, which require a high level of stakeholder engagement and participation to ensure success. Accordingly, Milepost works hand in hand with clients to make sure that projects and programs have the flexibility to change, adapt, and evolve to meet community and market demand while still ensuring that the final product adheres to the client's targeted budget, timeline, goals, etc.

Scoring Criteria 3: Key Team Member Qualifications

A. Key Team Members

Below are the key team member roles and responsibilities. These include prior relevant projects and an understanding of WSDOT and/or public agency regulations/procedures.

Susan Steffenhagen, Lead Account Manager & Subject Matter Expert in Federal DOT Grant Programs and Administration

8+ years of experience in urban planning with a focus on transit planning, air quality planning, alternative fuels, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

PRIOR RELEVANT PROJECTS	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES	UNDERSTANDING OF WSDOT AND/OR PUBLIC AGENCY REGULATIONS/ PROCEDURES
<p>Account Manager, Milepost Consulting (2022-Present)</p> <p>Responsible for the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) electric vehicle work – primarily related to support of EPA's Clean School Bus Program. Interpreted federal guidance and regulations related to EPA's Clean School Bus Program and Elective Pay (tax credits for tax-exempt entities).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant writing • Stakeholder communication and outreach • Review, interpretation, and application of state and federal regulations, guidance, and requirements • Translation of technical information for communication to regional school districts and local utilities across a seven-state region 	<p>Susan worked for nearly 4 years at TDOT. She brings that passion for sustainability in transportation to this work and will be our subject matter expert for federal DOT grant program development and administration.</p>
<p>Senior Air Quality Planner, Tennessee Department of Transportation (2018-2022)</p> <p>Administered and revised application forms and modified program design for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Grant Program for the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), by way of annual statewide competitive application cycles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant administration, program design, and management • Alternative fuels program design and planning • Communication with local, state, regional, and federal stakeholders for effective program design and administration • Program design in alignment with funding goals and DOTs priorities, to complement existing, overlapping funding programs 	<p>As a past CMAQ Administrator for TDOT, Susan knows how to interpret state priorities/guidance alongside federal regulations in a manner that results in an effective competitive grant program for local communities.</p>

Devon Rood, Project Coordinator & Lead Consultant

6+ years of project management experience in the community and utility sector.

PRIOR RELEVANT PROJECTS	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES	UNDERSTANDING OF WSDOT AND/OR PUBLIC AGENCY REGULATIONS/ PROCEDURES
<p>Lead Project Manager, Arizona Public Service (APS) (2021-2022)</p> <p>Promoted to lead project manager for the APS Connected Communities and all residential, commercial, and multifamily projects. Led a multifaceted team spanning internal coordinators to third-party solar installers. Responsible for financial and regulatory disclosures while continuously updating leadership on project advancement and milestones.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program design in alignment with regulatory requirements • Contractor management • Regulatory and financial reporting • Program application creation • Customer program support • Technical solar knowledge 	<p>Devon has experience working on a program with regulatory requirements. Her role as project manager at APS required quarterly program and financial reporting. Additionally, program design was done within the requirements set by the regulatory body that authorized the program.</p>
<p>Assistant Project Manager, APS (2018-2021)</p> <p>Assisted the lead project manager and took full responsibility of the residential portion of the APS Solar Communities Program. Duties included management of contractors, internal collaboration, and regulatory reporting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program design in alignment with regulatory requirements • Contractor management • Customer program support • Technical solar knowledge 	<p>See above !</p>

Rebecca Nelson, Director of Creative Services

23+ years of experience in graphic design, strategic planning, and marketing communications.

PRIOR RELEVANT PROJECTS	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES	UNDERSTANDING OF WSDOT AND/OR PUBLIC AGENCY REGULATIONS/ PROCEDURES
<p>Director of Creative Services, Milepost Consulting (2022-Present)</p> <p>Served as creative art director and messaging strategist on various projects with the City of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative strategy • Communications strategy • Messaging frameworks • Art direction 	<p>Rebecca is well-versed in regulations and requirements when working with governmental agencies. In her role as a messaging strategist for these clients, Rebecca understands the importance of specific considerations when it comes to messaging. Storytelling</p>

PRIOR RELEVANT PROJECTS	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES	UNDERSTANDING OF WSDOT AND/OR PUBLIC AGENCY REGULATIONS/ PROCEDURES
Seattle, including work with their Office of Sustainability & Environment, Department of Early Education and Learning, Budget Office, and Department of Transportation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branding • Project management • User experience 	through reports, social media posts, website language, and other communication channels is as important as the products themselves.

Luke Gebhard, Subject Matter Expert (Stakeholder Engagement & Program Design) & Consultant

14+ years in the energy industry, including federal and state grant program management.

PRIOR RELEVANT PROJECTS	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES	UNDERSTANDING OF WSDOT AND/OR PUBLIC AGENCY REGULATIONS/ PROCEDURES
<p>Project Manager, Tennessee Valley Authority Smart ! Communities initiative (2015-2017) !</p> <p>Supported design, strategy, and ! administration of \$50M utility initiative supporting community ! grants for smart energy technology and low-income energy efficiency ! initiatives. !</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program design and development • Grant design, planning and administration • Stakeholder facilitation 	As an expert in implementing state and federal regulations at a local level, Luke is familiar with the Smart Communities stipulations governed by US EPA rules and regulations.
<p>Grants Program Manager, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) (2013-2015)</p> <p>Administered the agency's cooperative agreements with the US Department of Energy for State Energy Program (SEP) Annual and Competitive awards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of SEP Formula and Competitive grants for State of Tennessee's DOE-designated state energy office 	Project governed by federal government flow-down provisions and State of Tennessee rules and regulations.
<p>Energy Efficiency Program Director, Office of Environment and Sustainability, Nashville Mayor (2010-2013)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led development and delivery of mayoral program supporting grant-based incentives for residential energy efficiency improvements 	Project governed by federal government flow-down provisions and Metro Nashville of Davidson County's rules and regulations.

PRIOR RELEVANT PROJECTS	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES	UNDERSTANDING OF WSDOT AND/OR PUBLIC AGENCY REGULATIONS/ PROCEDURES
Supported implementation of U.S. ! Department of Energy award to ! provide grant-funded energy ! efficiency rebates to homeowners. !		

Brian Blackmon, Subject Matter Expert

14+ years in governmental climate leadership and decarbonization.

PRIOR RELEVANT PROJECTS	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES	UNDERSTANDING OF WSDOT AND/OR PUBLIC AGENCY REGULATIONS/ PROCEDURES
<p>Sustainability Director, City of Knoxville (2019-2023)</p> <p>Project Manager, City of Knoxville (2014-2019)</p> <p>Applied for and managed formula and competitive federal grants from DOE, FHWA, and FTA. Brian worked on transportation decarbonization projects and Vision Zero traffic safety planning during this time.</p> <p>Program Coordinator, Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (2009-2014)</p> <p>Administered federal Corporation for National and Community Service grants to 20+ community-based organizations focusing on environmental education and conservation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed public-facing government communications strategies for elected and appointed officials • Program design and policy development of decarbonization and transportation alternatives • Stakeholder management and coordination with state, local, regional, federal, and community-based partners • Review, interpretation, and application of state and federal regulations, guidance, and requirements 	<p>Brian has served in government for nearly 15 years across departments and throughout the community to design sustainability and decarbonization strategies. His work in government includes applying for, managing, and administering federal and state grants, including sub-awards to local program implementers. He also has experience with alternative transportation and fuels programs, including co-developing micro-mobility ordinances and permitting programs and developing multiple climate action and decarbonization strategies.</p> <p>With a deep understanding of MUTCD guidelines, Brian has worked to research in-depth regulatory policies and laws. He has also written ordinances and policies to improve systems.</p>

Jason Pazirandeh, Subject Matter Expert (Federal Grants Administration) & Consultant

6+ years of experience in the energy and government sectors.

PRIOR RELEVANT PROJECTS	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES	UNDERSTANDING OF WSDOT AND/OR PUBLIC AGENCY REGULATIONS/ PROCEDURES
<p>Account Manager, Milepost Consulting (2022-Present)</p> <p>Grant writer for the State of Tennessee’s competitive application for funding under DOT Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program.</p> <p>Grant writer for the Virgin Islands Energy Office’s competitive application for funding under EPA’s Solar for All Grant Program.</p> <p>Project manager supporting Tennessee Valley Authority’s (TVA) and Tennessee Office of Energy Programs partnership to implement \$160M+ in DOE Home Energy Rebates formula funding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy sector • State and federal government • Public-private partnerships • Grants management • Professional writing • Program development and evaluation • Energy resilience programming • Disaster preparedness and response for the energy sector, including cyber incidents & natural disasters 	<p>Jason served as an embedded contractor in the Department of Energy for over three years. He assisted in implementing energy resilience and cybersecurity initiatives targeting state and local government agencies, including the TN State Energy Office.</p> <p>He has reviewed applications and provided technical assistance for state energy offices applying for DOE grid resilience and energy efficiency funding. With vast knowledge of the inner workings of the agency, he is a valuable resource for grant applications.</p>

Briauna Perryman, Consultant

6+ years of experience in the utility and consulting industries.

PRIOR RELEVANT PROJECTS	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES	UNDERSTANDING OF WSDOT AND/OR PUBLIC AGENCY REGULATIONS/ PROCEDURES
<p>Senior Consultant, Milepost Consulting 2024-Present</p> <p>TVA Energy Right Renew Americas Schools: Conducted comprehensive research, prepared reports and recommendations on educational institutions, assessed and evaluated eligibility for the Renew Americas Schools grant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting facilitation • Communication strategy and planning • Survey design • Develops written materials, reports, communication materials • Vendor and event management • Strategic planning 	<p>In her role, Briauna is confident reviewing requirements and eligibility criteria for federal funding opportunities. Understanding these criteria is critical for working together with stakeholders on grant funding applications.</p>

PRIOR RELEVANT PROJECTS	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES	UNDERSTANDING OF WSDOT AND/OR PUBLIC AGENCY REGULATIONS/ PROCEDURES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement strategy • Research and data collection and analysis • Financial management 	
<p>Program Coordinator, Alabama EPSCoR 2017-2022</p> <p>Managed the financial distribution of \$100,000 worth of state grant funding to research students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial and program reports preparation for both steering committees and congressional staffers • Communication materials development for state representatives and congressional staffers to demonstrate alignment with standards and goal achievement 	<p>Program governed by federal government agency NSF, distributed through and State of Alabama following state rules and regulations.</p>

Scoring Criteria 4: Project Delivery Approach

A. Work Plan Development & Approach

Our General Approach

Milepost specializes in effective engagement, and we strongly believe in collaboratively designing solutions with our clients and their unique stakeholders. The Milepost team would work with the WSDOT team and their stakeholders to ensure the work plan fits the project appropriately. Below is the general flow of any work plan developed by our team. A more detailed approach to our work follows.

Discovery

Milepost starts every project with a discovery meeting with our client to hear their perspectives, thoughts, ideas, and all critical information needed for a work plan. This phase may also include research outside of the discovery call. The outcomes of this step include setting goals that will inform program design.

Work Plan Development

After the Discovery phase, the team begins to prepare the work plan for the program, which will be presented to WSDOT to ensure alignment and identify any gaps before development begins. The outcomes of this step include clear objectives and measurable deliverables to track progress against.

Project Road Map

Upon confirmation of an approved work plan, our team begins to formally lay out the project timeline with milestones, tasks, due dates, roles and responsibilities, etc. This roadmap helps keep both the team and the client on track to complete deliverables on time.

Project Management

This step is integrated into every aspect of our work. At a high level, this includes tracking deliverables, timelines, budget, and scope. The work plan influences the project management plan and will guide the team working on the program. For additional information regarding risk mitigation, client reporting, and issue resolution, see Section B on page 27.

Grant Program Design

Milepost has deep experience with every aspect of the grant application cycle. We are adept at tracking forthcoming opportunities, writing a compelling narrative, managing awarded grants,

and creating and maintaining grant schedules. Historically, we have helped scale grant processes by supporting the management of the application process, grant committee, and scoring—ensuring grants were equitably distributed using quantitative data from federal sources (e.g. CEJST, EJScreen, or FHWA’s STEAP) and qualitative data from local or regional stakeholders.

Our professionals have unique histories that allow us to tailor grants to better resonate with their administering agencies, giving our clients a competitive advantage. Milepost staffers have served as administrators and copywriters for grant opportunities, worked to ensure grant opportunities were distributed equitably, created grant scoring matrices, and have served on grant review committees.

Our process for designing a pilot or program begins with the end in mind. Defining the problem, establishing goals, and understanding the needs of the target market allows us to create a design that is effective, replicable, and scalable.

Kick-Off Program and Define Success, Goals, And Objectives

As much as possible, Milepost recommends gathering all decision-makers and contributors for one initial kick-off meeting to help guide the project from inception. Our process honors the decisions made during this discussion by documenting and sharing them for review throughout the project.

Milepost supports any kick-off or ongoing stakeholder meeting by developing goals ahead of time, helping identify speakers, creating agendas, and coordinating all meeting logistics. From there, we create two deliverables: a detailed facilitator’s agenda and an overview agenda for participants.

Milepost will assist in creating or compiling PowerPoint presentations or other visual aids for meetings as needed. During the meeting, Milepost support will comprise at least two team members: a facilitator and a dedicated notetaker to document the discussion and action items thoroughly. After the meeting, we will distribute a recap including notes, observations, and next steps for WSDOT to review and distribute.

Attendee Strategy

We work with the client to define the right stakeholders to include in the kick-off meeting. We ask our clients a series of questions to help them think through who should attend. In the same meeting, we review calendars to determine when we can convene, or we send out a Doodle Poll

following the meeting. Once the strategy is finalized, Milepost will set up a virtual meeting space and send out the details using a calendar invitation.

Kick-Off Meeting

We design our kick-off meetings to be efficient, with interactive exercises and lively discussions to keep people engaged. These meetings typically range from 30 minutes to two hours. Throughout the kick-off meeting, the next steps and action items will be captured. These are sent to attendees with reminders of scope and deadlines following the meeting.

Document Review

After the kick-off meeting, we are often provided with new documents for review. This may include market research on target audience(s), or raw content we need to take and refine in later project phases.

Internal Team Brainstorm

After aligning with the stakeholders' vision and reviewing all project resources, the Milepost team will meet to define the target audience and determine if we need to fill in gaps through additional market research. If we have a satisfactory understanding of the target audience, we will brainstorm ideas for strategy and implementation.

Project Charter

Our strategists collect all findings from earlier activities and develop a Creative Brief or Project Charter. Doing so ensures the entire project team is aligned on the project strategy, and any additional project members can be easily onboarded. This brief includes:

- Project mission, vision, or context.
- Target audiences and what we want each group to think, feel, and do through this effort.
- Motivators and barriers for responding to our calls to action.
- Topline messages or key talking points as currently known.
- Anticipated timeline.
- Project team and roles and responsibilities.
- Approval process for the work product.

Stakeholder-informed Program Design

Stakeholder Meetings: Working Groups, Steering Committees, Or Community Input

The objectives of a stakeholder meeting are the same whether the event is in-person or virtual, but the tactics to achieve the same results differ greatly. A skilled, third-party facilitator can substantially improve the outcome of a meeting in either setting by allowing the project team to fully engage in the moment without the stress of running the meeting or note-taking. It also

allows for a neutral party to be the person to diffuse any tension or table any unproductive conversations.

Listening Sessions

Milepost will plan, facilitate, and document stakeholder engagement and listening sessions. Including diverse groups of internal and external stakeholders adds tremendous value to an initiative. These activities will feature a cross-section of expert opinions to troubleshoot challenges, determine shared objectives, and identify partnership opportunities. Building a solid foundation helps define success early on and galvanize teams around a shared vision for strategy execution, implementation, and evaluation.

With WSDOT's input and guidance, Milepost will plan and deliver a series of six (6) in-person and two (2) virtual stakeholder engagement and listening sessions, at dates and locations of WSDOT's choosing, inclusive of the following:

- State of Washington's key departments
- Local and Tribal governments
- Community-based organizations
- Investor-owned, cooperative, and municipal utilities
- Suppliers and vendors

Milepost will provide turnkey facilitation services for stakeholder meetings by developing meeting goals, creating agendas, helping identify speakers and/or facilitation exercises, and producing presentation content and designed slides. Additionally, we support the coordination of all meeting logistics, such as location, date, invitations, and food and beverage (upon request). For these meetings, we typically create at least four deliverables: (1) a highly detailed facilitator's agenda with run-of-show notes, (2) an overview agenda for participants, (3) presentation slides, and (4) a recap documenting discussion notes, decision points, and action items.

Grant Program Materials Development

Following a robust stakeholder scoping and partnership identification process, Milepost will conclude the grant design process with the delivery of draft and final grant program materials to the WSDOT team for approval. Deliverables at this phase will consist of:

- A grant program annual timeline.
- A grant application packet for applicants.
- Grant scoring criteria and recommended point allocation rationale.
- Standardized grant reporting forms.
- Recommended methodology for evaluating carbon reduction.
- Identification of overburdened communities and concerns.

- A communications plan (detailed below).

Communications Plan

We believe all communications should be guided by a clear strategy and a detailed delivery plan. At Milepost, we know writing for an engagement campaign requires an entirely different approach than a GRI-compliant sustainability report. Our team is staffed with writers from various backgrounds in business, marketing, and technical writing. No matter the type, we always give our clients ample opportunity to review, request revisions, and approve all content before moving on to the next stage.

Communications Strategy

We start by confirming the key audiences, objectives, and the right methods and channels to reach them. We then outline what deliverables can be developed, the timeline for issuing, and the best frequency for contact. This can serve a secondary purpose as an action tracker for the team with notes and successes documented.

Messaging Strategy

Once we are clear on objectives and audience targeting, we develop a messaging strategy. This outlines our recommended approach for content development and specifies considerations such as flow, length, format, hierarchy, and whether certain materials should be able to stand alone.

Program Material Development !

With a specific audience in mind, Milepost develops materials to achieve all previously set goals. ! Program materials vary but may include the following: !

- Printed manuals
- One-pagers or project snapshots
- Newsletters
- Posters or signage
- Web content
- Recruitment flyers
- PowerPoint slides or presentations
- Video scripts or storyboards

Whether developing messaging content from scratch or polishing another teammate's draft, we work to make the messaging clear, concise, on-brand, and tailored to your audience. As we move the approved copy to design, whether producing through Milepost's creative team or handing off to another vendor, we work to make sure hand-offs are smooth and the final product is engaging, and appropriate for the audience and channel.

Grantee Application Assistance

Grant Application Webinars

Before the first grant, Milepost will plan and deliver two (2) virtual presentations to explain program requirements to potential applicants that include the following:

- Project goals
- Grant program key dates
- Grant evaluation considerations
- Carbon reduction strategy calculations and requirements
- State-specific program requirements
- Potential federal funding stacking opportunities

Grant Communications Materials

In addition to typical marketing materials that explain the program and timelines, the Milepost team strongly encourages its clients to provide supplemental resources. As a Social Purpose Corporation comprised of former government, utility, and non-profit employees, we have seen firsthand how difficult it can be for community organizations to engage with government contracting or grant programs.

We recommend the development of a full suite of supplemental materials that can provide context and critical insights that make it easier for community organizations to participate. These materials can reduce the barrier to entry for smaller organizations lacking technical expertise, better positioning them to deliver a project with community buy-in. Example materials we would recommend for consideration include:

- Glossary of key terms.
- How-to guide for recommended quantification of carbon reductions.
- Sample project libraries to inspire ideation.
- Federal funding stacking opportunities.

Ad Hoc Application Assistance

Milepost recommends the creation of a program-branded email address for potential applicants to submit both application-stage and ongoing questions. This email would be under the WSDOT domain to align with the program and be accessible to Milepost staff. Milepost support staff members would monitor the email for relevant questions to either answer directly or route through the WSDOT team during regular check-ins.

The single source “hotline” approach has been successful with our clients as it allows multiple team members to monitor and manage communications seamlessly. Continuity and consistency are key for long-term programmatic health.

Grant Program Delivery and Oversight

Client Project Management Strategy

Our Project Managers oversee and deliver the entire project, from initial planning to execution and final delivery. Our methodology involves designating roles and responsibilities for the holistic team, including internal and external partners. To ensure that each project is successful, we employ several project management techniques to guarantee we are aligned, working towards the same goals, and meeting deadlines.

Milepost will provide project strategy and management support to WSDOT's leadership and use proposed hours to conduct a multitude of administrative tasks, including, but not limited to, internal team planning, budget tracking, and monthly invoicing with detailed work activities reports. We will complete the following project management activities for WSDOT:

- Hold weekly or bi-weekly RYG meetings.
- Conduct internal team check-ins and strategy sessions.
- Provide invoice summaries, which include activities performed, billed hours, and any other reimbursable expenses (e.g., travel, printing, stock image acquisition).
- Perform administrative duties, such as internal team planning, budgeting, and time ! tracking. !

Grantee Program Calls

Milepost believes in developing rich engagement by building strong relationships between our customers and their stakeholders/audience. To provide grantee support after the award, we recommend conducting three (3) grantee webinars after grant awards. These webinars would provide critical program updates, reporting reminders, share grantee success stories, and field questions from grantees.

Our team finds regular group cohort calls to not only be efficient, but they ensure the effective delivery of information while developing a greater sense of community. The benefits of a community-driven engagement allow collaborative problem-solving, as peers recommend strategies that are typically more high-touch in their delivery. To support the grantee program calls, Milepost staff will provide:

- Facilitation and note-taking.
- Presentation preparation.
- Action item summaries for WSDOT review.
- An event communications campaign to ensure maximum participation among grantees.

Grant Reporting and Close-Out

Reports !

Milepost will provide a progress report of program development targeting legislators and other key stakeholders. In addition, we will work with core WSDOT staff on communications support, ! talking points, and other strategic materials needed to provide consistent messaging. !

Milepost staff will also provide a detailed annual report to celebrate the program's successes. ! Milepost's creative storytelling capabilities are unmatched by our competitors; while we can ! design to any brand guidelines, we can also develop original, impactful visuals that make routine ! reporting memorable. !

Compile Program Feedback !

Throughout the program implementation, we continually record key learnings, creative ideas, and future program recommendations. Whether gathered in meetings or through review cycles, ! we compile and share all feedback and recommendations in a report or team meeting to inform future program design. !

Evaluate and Iterate

Ongoing assessment and continuous improvement are critical to maintain program effectiveness. We know that a variety of different factors (e.g., changes in audience, evolving stakeholder needs, external variables) can yield adjustments to the design of new and established programs alike. To ensure a program achieves its intended goals and/or objectives, it is imperative to continually evaluate and document areas for improvement. Milepost can help employ a variety of tools and strategies to evaluate the need for program re-positioning.

Surveys

Our team is trained to develop survey questions that result in unbiased and truthful responses. We create a strategy that encourages target audiences to complete the survey and revise our approach as needed by monitoring engagement. After crafting survey questions and revising them based on client feedback, we build out the survey in digital and/or printable format, depending on the deployment strategy. Once the results are in, our team carefully analyzes the responses and reports the results to the project team.

Interviews

Whether interviews are a scheduled call or impromptu at an event, talking to people is a great way to gauge audience priorities, values, and media preferences. We design questions and prompts, hold interviews, and report the findings to the project team.

Focus Groups

Our trained moderators lead 30- to 90-minute discussions with segments of the target audience and garner feedback on developing concepts or marketing campaigns. We will secure the facility, handle all logistics, recruit and enroll participants, moderate the event, capture the feedback, and report key findings to the project team.

Assess Program Metrics

We work with you and the implementation partners to review and analyze the cost or savings metrics. Based on program metrics and market research results, we work alongside you to determine the necessary improvements or changes needed to refine or reposition the program.

Internal Retrospective

A retrospective allows the program team (often consisting of multiple vendors) to identify lessons learned and optimize future project work and planning. A neutral, third-party facilitator allows you to focus on team responses and feedback to improve the program going forward. After a pilot or program is complete, we facilitate a conversation with the program team using the following questions:

- What went well?
- What could have gone better?
- What are the key takeaways or lessons learned?

B. Approach to Resolve Issues

The Milepost team sustains project momentum and addresses roadblocks early by holding regular Red, Yellow, and Green (RYG) meetings with the team. The RYG format allows for a quick analysis of project progress, highlighting any work that might be at risk (red), work that is in a potential risk situation without action (yellow), and work that is full speed ahead (green). The team then gathers crucial information into a report that identifies any barriers to success and recommends the next steps for moving the project forward. This report also contains detailed financial information, including actual and projected run rates and progress to the budget.

Milepost's proactive and flexible project management approach keeps the team moving toward the desired outcomes. Please refer to the [Grant Reporting and Close-Out](#) section for a detailed breakdown of our strategic troubleshooting and course correction methods. While these techniques are part of our standard project evaluation, we employ these methods if/when issues are identified throughout the project lifecycle.

If issues require sustained attention, additional stakeholder meetings or feedback sessions may be held to recenter on priorities and maintain alignment. Utilizing project briefs and strategy documentation, Milepost’s project professionals will expertly facilitate the exploration of misalignment or roadblocks, ensuring all stakeholders feel confident and at ease with the go-forward strategy.

C. Proposed Work Breakdown & Deliverables

Grant Program Design

ACTIVITY	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
Attendee Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30-min meeting • Doodle poll • Calendar invite 	1 day
Kick-off meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators’ agenda • Participants’ agenda • Visual aids • Email with next steps and action items 	2 - 3 days
Document review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email follow up questions as needed 	1 - 3 days
Internal team brainstorm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations for additional market research as needed 	1 day
Stakeholder meetings: working groups, steering committees, or community input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators’ agenda • Participants’ agenda • Visual aids • Meeting notes with next steps and action items • Team Charter, as applicable 	1 day
Listening sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators’ agenda • Participants’ agenda • Visual aids • Meeting notes with next steps and action items 	
Internal team brainstorm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations for additional market research as needed 	1 day
Project charter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project charter 	2 - 3 days
Grant Program Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant Program Timeline • Grant application packet • Grant scoring criteria • Grant reporting forms 	

ACTIVITY	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon Reduction Methodology recommendations • Communications plan 	

Grantee Application Assistance

ACTIVITY	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
Webinars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting logistics • Facilitators' agenda • Participants' agenda • Visual aids • Meeting notes with next steps and action items 	2 - 4 weeks
Resource Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Report • Interview guide • Interview findings 	1 - 4 weeks
Focus groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups logistics • Outreach strategy and implementation • Focus group questions • Key findings 	2 - 4 weeks
Secondary research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research report 	1 - 2 weeks

Grant Program Delivery and Oversight '1

ACTIVITY	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
Project planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal kickoff and check-in meetings • Project success metrics 	Ongoing
Tracking and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RYG reports • Client check-ins • Monthly grant tracking report 	Ongoing
Driving progress and monitoring spend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production timeline • Monthly invoice summaries • Expense reports 	Ongoing
Grantee Program Calls !	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Logistics • Facilitators' agenda • Participants' agenda 	

ACTIVITY	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual aids • Email with next steps and action items 	

Grant Reporting and Close-Out

ACTIVITY	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online or printed survey • Engagement strategy • Communications materials • Survey results and findings 	2 - 4 weeks
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview guide • Interview findings 	1 - 4 weeks
Focus groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups logistics • Outreach strategy and implementation • Focus group questions • Key findings 	2 - 4 weeks
Assess program metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program report • Presentation • Reposition strategy recommendations 	1 - 2 weeks
Internal retrospective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators' agenda • Participants' agenda • Visual aids • Email with next steps and action items 	
Reporting and storytelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program report • Presentation • One pager • Website 	1 - 2 weeks