

California Permit Streamlining Academy (CaPSA)

Affinity Partner Program

Program Purpose

The California Permit Streamlining Academy's Affinity Partner Program recognizes organizations and individuals that share CaPSA's commitment to helping California local governments improve their permitting processes. Affinity Partners help expand awareness of CaPSA's programs, training opportunities, Requests for Proposals and Qualifications, tools, and resources. Through this network, CaPSA seeks to reach more communities, encourage the exchange of practical information, and build broader support for transparent, efficient, predictable, and customer-focused local permitting processes.

Definition of an Affinity Partner

A CaPSA Affinity Partner is an organization or individual that believes in the importance of helping California local governments identify and implement practical ways to streamline their local permitting processes.

Affinity Partner status reflects a shared commitment to the goals of permit streamlining and a willingness to help communicate CaPSA opportunities and resources. It does not constitute CaPSA, its managing entity, or funding provider certification, procurement preference, or endorsement of an Affinity Partner's products, services, positions, or activities.

Who May Participate

Potential Affinity Partners may include:

- Professional and trade associations;
- Regional and statewide organizations;
- Economic development organizations;
- Chambers of commerce and business-support organizations;
- Educational and research institutions;
- Nonprofit and philanthropic organizations;
- Public agencies and regional collaboratives;
- Organizations representing local government professionals;
- Private-sector organizations with an interest in improving permitting systems; and
- Individuals with relevant experience or a demonstrated commitment to permit streamlining.

Participation is subject to review and approval by the California Association for Local Economic Development (CALED), CaPSA's managing entity.

Affinity Partner Commitments

At a minimum, each Affinity Partner agrees to:

1. Support the general purpose of CaPSA and the need to help California local governments improve and streamline their permitting processes.
2. Promote relevant CaPSA programs, cohort opportunities, Requests for Proposals, Requests for Qualifications, events, tools, and resources through appropriate communication channels.

3. Encourage local governments, professionals, and other appropriate audiences to visit the CaPSA website and sign up for program updates.
4. Accurately describe its relationship with CaPSA and avoid statements suggesting that CaPSA, CALED, or the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) endorses the Affinity Partner or its products or services.
5. Refrain from using Affinity Partner status to imply preferred access to CaPSA contracts, funding, stipends, cohort selection, technical-assistance assignments, or procurement opportunities.
6. Notify CaPSA of relevant resources, model practices, educational opportunities, or emerging issues that may help local governments improve their permitting processes.
7. Use CaPSA's name and Affinity Partner designation only in accordance with any branding or communications guidance provided by CaPSA.

Optional Partner Activities

Affinity Partners may also elect to:

- Share examples of successful permit streamlining practices;
- Submit templates, guides, research, case studies, or other resources for CaPSA's consideration;
- Participate in educational events, listening sessions, or information exchanges;
- Help identify local government needs and barriers;
- Provide subject-matter insight when requested;
- Introduce CaPSA to communities or professional networks that could benefit from its programs; and
- Share feedback that can help CaPSA continuously improve its training and resources.

Submission of a resource or participation in an Affinity Partner activity does not guarantee that the resource will be published, that the partner will be selected for paid work, or that the partner will participate in a CaPSA program.

CaPSA Commitments to Affinity Partners

In exchange for these commitments, CaPSA will:

1. List the approved organization or individual on the CaPSA website as an Affinity Partner.
2. Provide an approved description of the Affinity Partner designation that may be used in the partner's communications.
3. Provide periodic information about CaPSA programs, resources, RFPs, RFQs, cohort opportunities, and other relevant announcements.
4. Make approved communications materials or website links available to help partners share CaPSA information accurately.
5. Consider information, resources, and feedback submitted by Affinity Partners as CaPSA develops its programs and resource library.
6. Provide opportunities, when appropriate, for Affinity Partners to participate in informational meetings, briefings, or other collaborative activities.

No Endorsement or Procurement Preference

Affinity Partner status is a recognition of shared goals and communications support only.

Participation does not:

- Constitute an endorsement by CaPSA, CALED, or GO-Biz;
- Certify the quality or effectiveness of a partner's products or services;
- Provide preferential consideration in any RFP, RFQ, grant, stipend, cohort, or contracting process;
- Guarantee participation in CaPSA training, technical assistance, events, or programs;
- Authorize an Affinity Partner to speak on behalf of CaPSA, CALED, or GO-Biz; or
- Create a financial, agency, employment, joint-venture, or legal partnership relationship.

Any organization or individual seeking compensated work through CaPSA must participate independently in the applicable competitive selection process.

Political and Advocacy Activities

CaPSA is focused on helping cities and counties improve their local, internal permitting processes and systems. Affinity Partner activities undertaken on behalf of the program may not involve lobbying, political campaigning, or representing CaPSA as supporting or opposing legislation, candidates, ballot measures, or regulatory actions.

An Affinity Partner may engage in its own independent activities but must clearly distinguish those activities and positions from its participation in the CaPSA Affinity Partner Program.

Term and Renewal

Affinity Partner participation will be approved through April of 2028. CaPSA may periodically ask partners to confirm that they:

- Continue to support the purpose of the program;
- Have promoted CaPSA information during the preceding year;
- Continue to comply with the program requirements; and
- Wish to remain listed as an Affinity Partner.

Removal or Withdrawal

An Affinity Partner may withdraw from the program at any time by notifying CaPSA. CaPSA may suspend or remove Affinity Partner status when an organization or individual:

- Misrepresents its relationship with CaPSA;
- Uses the designation to imply endorsement or procurement preference;
- Engages in conduct inconsistent with CaPSA's purpose;
- Does not fulfill the basic partner commitments;
- Uses CaPSA's name or materials without authorization; or
- Creates reputational, legal, ethical, or operational concerns for CaPSA or CALED.

CaPSA may remove a partner from the program or website at its discretion.

Application and Approval

Organizations and individuals interested in becoming an Affinity Partner will complete a brief application that includes:

- Applicant name and contact information;
- Organization name and type, if applicable;
- Website or professional profile;
- Description of the applicant's connection to local government, economic development, permitting, housing, development, infrastructure, or related work;
- Audiences and communication channels through which CaPSA information may be shared;
- Acknowledgment of the Affinity Partner commitments and limitations; and
- Identification of any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

Applications will be reviewed by CaPSA staff. Approval is not automatic, and CaPSA may request additional information before making a determination.