



Instructor RFP for Professional Training Program

Request for Proposals: CaPSA Training Instructors

Issue date: October 13, 2026

Closing date and time: October 27, 2026 by 5:00 pm

Contact person: Michelle Stephens, CALED Program Director, michelle@caled.org

A: Overview

California is facing pressure to deliver infrastructure and housing, redevelop blighted areas, support job-creating economic development uses, as well as enhance California's ability to compete for investment under programs like federal Opportunity Zones and more. As a result, the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) released an RFP to help modernize and improve permitting across the state. In that, GO-Biz proposed the California Permit Streamlining Academy (CaPSA) to deliver technical assistance to local governments and empower permitting teams with the tools, skills, and strategies for continuous improvement.

The California Association for Local Economic Development (CALED) responded to the RFP and was awarded a \$5 million grant from GO-Biz to accelerate permit streamlining efforts across California. This investment is supporting a comprehensive, action-oriented program designed to help jurisdictions modernize permitting.

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to secure instructors for the six CaPSA trainings, the first being held December 1-4, 2026 with the remainder being scheduled over 2027 and early 2028.

Ideal candidates are:

- Current economic development professionals, independent consultants, or other professionals with specialized expertise relevant to permit transparency and streamlining model practices that also have an economic development perspective

We are looking for qualified teams of instructors (no more than 3 people per team) to deliver the curriculum for one day of instruction. The three days to choose from are noted below:

- Day 1: The Permitting Basics (8-hour day, breaks and lunch included)
- Day 2: Transparency & Collaboration to Be Partners in Success (8-hour day, breaks and lunch included)
- Day 3: State-level Regulations & Implementation (4- to 5-hour day, breaks and lunch included)

Curriculum (i.e., a list of major topics that students are expected to gain working knowledge of) for each day has been developed by the CaPSA Advisory Board, CALED, and GO-Biz representatives. It is expected that selected instructor teams for each day will provide any recommended updates to the curriculum, create a detailed agenda for the day of instruction, and develop training materials (e.g. reference documents, reading list) and teaching plan (e.g. slide deck, lecture content) with CALED's input where appropriate.

As CaPSA is grant-funded, CALED will provide instructor teams a stipend of \$7,500 for three trainings, \$15,000 total for the six trainings. Travel and other out-of-pocket expenses (such as air travel, gas) may be reimbursed up to \$500 per instructor. CALED will cover one night of hotel accommodations for each team member (maximum 3 team members). The success of this important program will depend on the willingness of practicing professionals and technical experts to contribute their time to advancing the cause of economic development in California.

General information regarding CaPSA can be found at: <https://capermitacademy.org/>.

B: CaPSA Curriculum Overview

Please see Exhibit A for the CaPSA Curriculum Framework.

C: Scope of Work

CALED is seeking proposals from applicants who are both interested in and highly qualified to collaborate with representatives of CALED to serve as CaPSA instructors.

Respondents shall indicate in their submittal to this RFP in which day they are interested.

The scope of work for selected instructors includes the following for their assigned course(s)—input from CALED will be provided as appropriate:

- Work in collaboration with representatives of CALED to discuss any suggested updates to CaPSA Curriculum;
- Create training materials (e.g. course reference materials, reading list) CALED will be responsible for printing materials or other format to provide to students;
- Develop teaching plan (e.g., agenda for instruction day, presentation materials and lecture content);

- If applicable, create “homework” to be assigned to participants prior to the class (optional, but encouraged to maximize the value of face-to-face instruction time);
- Include methods for team building/group interaction during the class, as applicable.

Selected instructors shall be available for one day of in-person instruction during CaPSA’s first training, scheduled for December 1-4, 2026 and subsequent trainings in 2027 & 2028 (dates TBD) in Central California.

D: Information on Submitting a Reply

Respondents to this RFP should demonstrate their qualifications, capability, capacity, and experience to provide the services under the scope of work and should have experience in the topics covered in the certification coursework.

Respondents should elect to respond in teams of no more than 3 people (allowing for the scope of work to be carried out by multiple individuals). The response should include qualifications and experience of everyone in the team.

Please address the following in your response:

- Day you are interested in teaching at CaPSA training in relation to the scope of work and curriculum listed above.
- Experience in public speaking in a teaching (or comparable) environment

The best-qualified candidates may be called for a phone interview, from which final selections for instructors will be made.

Please respond to this request via email to Michelle Stephens, Program Director, CALED at: michelle@caled.org identified in the subject line as “CaPSA Instructor.”

Please submit your response at the above address by 5:00 p.m. on October 27, 2026.

Responses shall not be more than 5 pages in length. Clarification requests and questions will be accepted by email at: michelle@caled.org.

Exhibit A: CaPSA Curriculum Framework

Day 1: The Permitting Basics (8-hour training day)

30 min opener from CaPSA Administrators

- **Setting the CaPSA Stage**
 - Permitting and the role it plays in your community
 - Understand the purpose of permitting & variations based on type, jurisdictional size, etc.
 - Delays that impact community growth and development, including effects on housing production, business creation, project costs, and overall economic vitality.
 - The basics/the “why” of permitting
 - Identify your partners in permit streamlining success
 - Where do bottlenecks often occur?
 - What are the key concerns in your community?
 - What are you doing well?
- **How your Jurisdiction Measures Up**
 - Understand what your reputation as a jurisdiction is and how it impacts your ability to serve residents, businesses, visitors.
 - Do businesses see your city or county as partners in success?
 - What can a city/county do to build trust in their community?
 - How to publicize the successes and deal with the “failures” that get community traction.
 - How jurisdictional size impacts solutions
 - Complete a process map of your community’s permit processes.
 - Which departments are always at the permitting table?
 - How to identify pinch points or bottlenecks within your existing process.
 - Different types of permits (ministerial v. discretionary)
 - What are model practices in the field, e.g. EIRs & thresholds of significance; reducing review authorities; reducing PUDs/PDs; adding objective standards; & creating pre-approved designs
 - Do you have adopted ordinances to guide specific types of build-out (energy, data centers, advanced manufacturing)?
- **Fees**
 - Understand various ways to calculate fees, how they are used, and how to balance financial constraints on ALL sides.

- How are fees calculated? How is this process communicated to customers?
 - Cost recovery, fee methodology, nexus, and comparison with peer jurisdictions
 - Processing v. Impact Fees
 - Where do fee abatement, delays, and other programs fit into the permitting process?
 - How do policies & programs impact processes? (i.e Safety-first amnesty programs, BRE and the relationship with existing businesses)
- **Customer Service & Building Your Team**
 - Understand the role that all staff play in customer service
 - Customer relationship management & permitting technology to support communication, status updates, and coordination between counter and department staff
 - Understand statutory and locally established review timelines, including completeness review, applicant-caused delays, resubmittals, outside-agency dependencies, extensions, documentation, and escalation procedures
 - Are there potential “Shot Clock” solutions?
 - Identify where and how you can empower all levels of staff to help/intervene.
 - How to train your employees to be partners in projects.
 - Personal Liability Risk
 - Get the right person, right position, & right attitude
 - Develop a “customer service” culture in your community.
 - Reward success within.
 - Building a team that is invested in success.
 - What is needed for front counter workers v. technical experts.
 - Change management strategies to help employees and departments adapt.
 - Recruiting, onboarding, training, and developing effective public-facing staff.
 - Building your organizational pipeline & succession planning
 - How does generational change impact front counter experience?
 - Tactics to identify potential team members
- **1 hour for Cohort Case Study Work**
 - Apply concepts from the day’s instruction

Day 2: Transparency & Collaboration to Be Partners in Success (8-hour training day)

▪ **Permit Process Clean-Up**

- Identify & understand your jurisdictional goals and how that impacts permitting
- Increasing transparency - identify what needs to be visible and readily available to prospective applicants such as fee schedules or calculators, timelines, approval process & component parts
 - What can jurisdictions do to daylight the process within their departments?
- Importance of inter-department communication and increased coordination through reduced or removed silos
 - Identify best practices via strategies to remove silos via staff meetings, pre-dev meetings, other options.
 - Evaluate physical, virtual, and hybrid one-stop service models that improve coordination and give applicants a clear pathway through the process
 - What should be included in pre-development meetings, such as expectations regarding staff attendance & preparation; requirements for pre-applicants who want to get on the agenda; clarify that this is preliminary feedback; notes and follow-up, etc.

▪ **Maintaining Zoning and Building Codes, Policies, and Procedures**

- Understand the role of zoning codes in your permitting process
 - Regular zoning updates to prevent wholesale obsolescence
 - How can zoning codes be reworked to more ministerial or “by right” uses within the goals & culture of community?
 - The variety of actions staff can take based on the specific code, such as jurisdictional, state, or federal.
 - How to identify those differences & communicate them to staff, applicants, & elected officials.
- Identify processes to keep codes up to date with new legislation and techniques.
 - How to keep code on bleeding edge of building technology? (i.e. where do manufacturing homes fit into your community?)
 - Do design standards drive your codes? What department oversees those?

▪ **Technology Solutions for Permitting Delays & Bottlenecks**

- Simplify and standardize the underlying process before automating it

- Identify main permit problems and how they can be solved through technology
 - What resources are available, including permitting software, electronic plan review, AI-assisted tools, online intake, and customer portals?
 - Evaluate where software, AI-assisted tools, and online services can improve customer service and processing efficiency
- Transparency through Technology
 - Importance of making review steps, responsibilities, dependencies, and expected timelines visible to applicants and staff
- Responsible Technology Use—How are you protecting applicants' identities and project information.
- What are the areas that technology cannot help?
 - Share potential pitfalls of AI in the permitting process/where is human reflection and comprehension necessary
- Where does AI fit into your Community & Permitting Process?
 - What are common AI uses in cities & counties, share model practices?
 - How can AI be an extension of employees, not a replacement?
- **1 hour for Cohort Case Study Work**
 - Apply concepts from the day's instruction

Day 3: State-level Regulations & Implementation (4- to 5-hour training day)

This day will include a 3- to 4-hour training section from GO-Biz regarding California State Permitting & Assistance. Instructor applicants will not be expected to provide this training but is encouraged to reference it in their submissions. Below is the content the instructor will be expected to cover.

- **Compliance with New Laws and Interagency Requirements**
 - How do new laws & regulations impact your process?
 - Learn how to search for new rules
 - Training and education to assist with compliance on new rules and laws
 - Include updates on statutory changes and available technical assistance
 - How to determine what other agencies have jurisdiction on a project
 - How to work with large state or regional entities, i.e. CalTrans, Regional Water Boards, AQMD, Coastal Commission
 - Understand where a local jurisdiction can have impact on the larger process.
- **1 hour for Cohort Case Study Work**
 - Apply concepts from the day's instruction
- **Chamber Measure (overview/educational course)** *Only if ballot measure passes & is directly applicable to local permitting.
 - How does the Measure impact California permitting
 - Use this module for timely implementation guidance on enacted requirements.
 - Implementation requirements will be updated based on final enacted language and State guidance.