

**State of Illinois Uniform Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)  
Summary Information**

Awarding Agency Name	Commerce And Econ Opp
Agency Contact	Greg Mihalich (greg.mihalich@illinois.gov)
Announcement Type	Initial
Type of Assistance Instrument	Grant
Funding Opportunity Number	FY25-1
Funding Opportunity Title	Route 66 Grant Program
CSFA Number	420-25-2758
CSFA Popular Name	Route 66 Grant Program
Anticipated Number of Awards	5
Estimated Total Program Funding	\$4,000,000
Award Range	\$20000 - \$300000
Source of Funding	State
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements	No
Indirect Costs Allowed	No
Restrictions on Indirect Costs	Yes : Only certified Convention & Visitor Bureaus (CVBs) whose purpose is solely to market and promote their specific regions as a travel destination are eligible to apply. Since CVBs are a single purpose entity that are allowed to directly charge all costs to the CVB grants they receive (as outlined in 20 ILCS 605/705-707), allowing indirects for the Route 66 grants could result in double dipping.
Posted Date	08/01/2024
Application Date Range	08/01/2024 - 09/16/2024 : 5:00PM
Grant Application Link	Please select the entire address below and paste it into the browser... <a href="https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/2758-2869.html">https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/2758-2869.html</a>
Technical Assistance Session	No

# Agency-specific Content for the Notice of Funding Opportunity

## Route 66 Grant Program NOFO ID: 2758-2869

For information about grants please visit <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/granteeresources.html>.

### A. Program Description

#### Notice of Funding Opportunity Intent

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (the “Department” or “DCEO”) is issuing this Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”) to award grants to certified convention and visitors bureaus (CVBs) for the development of tourism, education, preservation and promotion of the 100th anniversary of Route 66 in 2026. The Route 66 grant program is made possible by funds appropriated in Public Act 103-0589.

#### Program Description

Since 1926, Route 66 defined a remarkable era in our nation's history and it lives on today in Illinois' many Route 66 roadside attractions, museums and restaurants. Route 66 is one of the most famous roads in America. Generations of travelers have romanticized this highway as a symbol of unlimited mobility and freedom of the road. Its iconic status is enhanced by the unprecedented volume of music, books, films, and other art forms that depict it as the essence of America's highway culture.

It was born in 1926 as part of the new numbered highway network and quickly grew to be the preferred road west for a nation on the move. US Highway 66 was not as old or as long as some other transcontinental routes like the Yellowstone or the Lincoln Highway, but it quickly gained fame as the shortest, year-round route between the Midwest and the coast as it passed through the fabled landscape of the American Southwest. The construction of this thin, ribbon of the road helped to transform the American West from an isolated frontier to an economically vital region of the country and made it accessible to anyone with a car.

Part of the charm of Route 66 is its idiosyncratic personality. Like a giant carnival Midway, this corridor of neon signs and gaudy roadside attractions was embraced by the traveling public as an exciting diversion from ordinary life. A trip on Route 66 promised an exhilarating pilgrimage where one might discover the unknown and experience the unusual. Route 66 is synonymous with fun and adventure.

Route 66 is also synonymous with endless opportunity. As our transportation sector evolves and electrifies, more drivers will be choosing electric vehicles (EVs) to traverse our state's roads and highways. Embracing future tourism trends like electrified transportation and promoting the state's tourism areas as EV destinations will unlock all Route 66 has to offer for EV drivers who want to shop, dine, and explore Route 66's local attractions.

In Illinois we have over 300 miles of Route 66 to travel from its starting point in Chicago to the Chain of Rocks Bridge. This funding opportunity provides the certified convention and visitors bureaus along the route to partner and develop projects which will enhance the Route 66 experience in Illinois.

Preference will be given to projects that:

- Are statewide in nature and benefit the entire Illinois portion of Route 66 from Chicago to Chain of Rocks Bridge.
- Develop new or enhance existing attractions that elevate the Route 66 experience in Illinois for visitors.

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- Support improved wayfinding for visitors traveling Route 66.
- Support projects related to IPW 2025 in Chicago.
- Strengthen future tourism trends that includes electrified transportation (i.e., electric vehicles and preferably super chargers).

Projects for promotional activities must be statewide and we will accept one application for statewide marketing to be determined in partnership with the Illinois Office of Tourism (IOT) not to exceed \$2,400,000.

Projects can be sub-awarded to a statewide entity to serve as lead agency for implementation of the statewide projects but must be approved by DCEO by including in this application or approved during the grant term.

### Program History

This is the fourth year of funding for the Centennial of Route 66 in 2026.

### Performance Goals and Measures

Grantees will be required to report on the expenditure of funds and the successful performance measure outcomes using the periodic financial and performance reporting templates.

The project specific performance measures shall include the following standardized performance:

- 1) Did the deliverables specified lead to the completion of the project as described within the Agreement?
- 2) Given the total amount of Grant funds available, does the percentage currently drawn and expended directly correlate to the percent of the completion of the project to date?
- 3) At the time of award closeout, has the Grantee fulfilled the public purpose of the project outlined?

### Other Information

The applicant that submits the statewide marketing activities application on behalf of the certified convention and visitors bureaus along the route can submit one (1) additional application for their respective bureau's projects.

## **B. Funding Information**

This grant program is utilizing state funds appropriated by Public Act 103-0589-. Total amount of funding expected to be awarded through this NOFO is \$4,000,000. Awards will range from \$20,000 to \$300,000. The Department expects to make seven (7) awards through this NOFO.

Anticipated start date for awards is November 1, 2024. The period of performance is expected to be November 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. All projects for promotional activities and marketing must be included in the statewide application and must be done in partnership with the Illinois Office of Tourism and it shall not exceed \$2,400,000.

Eligible Projects and Activities include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Travel - Travel-related expenses associated with the project scope by the Grantee's employees, as identified within the application;
- 2) Equipment - Purchase and/or lease of equipment to be used or installed as part of the project, including associated labor/installation/training costs, as identified within the application;
- 3) Contractual Services - Specific one-time contracts for provision of services necessary for completion of the Grant-funded project, as identified within the application;
- 4) Consultant (Professional services) - Specific one-time contracts for provision of services necessary for completion of the Grant-funded project, as identified within the application;

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- 5) Construction - Costs associated with construction, renovation, and/or preservation of buildings for creating or enhancing a tourism attraction, as identified within the application;
- 6) Research & Development - Costs associated with any relevant research needed to enhance the Route 66 experience in Illinois and to help with readiness for the route's 100th anniversary, as identified within the application;
- 7) Miscellaneous Costs - Costs necessary for completion of the project which cannot be easily broken out into or covered by other individual/specific budgetary line items, as identified within application;
- 8) Familiarization tours for media and trade on Route 66 as identified within the application;
- 9) Advertising and Marketing Related Costs – Only one (1) single application may be submitted for advertising and marketing costs associated with statewide travel-related promotional materials and advertising on various media types regarding the 100th anniversary of Route 66, as identified within the application, on behalf of all the statewide CVBs along Route 66. This application must be done in partnership with the Illinois Office of Tourism. This may also include project management, trade show booth costs including registration costs for all participants attending to staff the booth as well as costs needed to participate in IPW Chicago in 2025. Any use of the Route 66 Centennial logo must follow the brand requirements. If logo is used for collaborative merchandise, printers/production must be union and/or union-made in America.

Ineligible projects and activities include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Local advertising and marketing costs beyond the one statewide marketing application
- 2) Travel related expenses for any other staff other than the awarded grantee's employees
- 3) Debt refinancing
- 4) Contingency funding
- 5) Normal payroll or operating expenses
- 6) Administrative expenses
- 7) Purchase of alcoholic beverages

Pre-award cost incurred post July 1, 2024 are allowable and can be charged to the grant if the application is awarded the grant.

Applicants must submit a project narrative that describes in detail how the award will be executed. The project narrative should include enough information for DCEO to understand the scope of the project, the budget, including a detailed breakdown of the costs associated with each budget line and any additional necessary detail to enable DCEO to manage the grant agreement activity against planned project performance. The Project Narrative must include evidence of capacity, quality and need as defined in Section E.

**The release of this NOFO does not obligate the Department to make an award.**

### C. Eligibility Information

An entity must be registered in the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>, at the time of grant application. The portal will verify that the entity:

- Has a valid FEIN number (<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/taxpayer-identification-numbers-tin#:~:text=You%20can%20use%20the%20IRS%27s,for%20Individual%20Taxpayer%20Identification%20Number>);
- Has a current SAM.gov registration (<https://sam.gov>), SAM.gov registrations must be marked as “public” to allow the GATA Grantee Portal to expedite the review of the federal information;
- Has a valid UEI number (<https://sam.gov>);

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- Is not on the Federal Excluded Parties List (verified at <https://sam.gov>);
- Is in Good Standing with the Illinois Secretary of State, as applicable ([https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/business\\_services/corp.html](https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/business_services/corp.html));
- Is not on the Illinois Stop Payment list (verified once entity is registered in GATA Grantee Portal); and
- Is not on the Department of Healthcare and Family Services Provider Sanctions list (<https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/oig/Pages/SanctionsList.aspx>).

Entities on the Illinois Stop Payment List and/or the Federal Excluded Parties List at time of application submission will not be considered for an award.

An automated email notification to the entity alerts them of “qualified” status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., not in good standing with the Secretary of State). A federal Debarred and Suspended status cannot be remediated.

Pursuant to the policy of the Illinois Office of the Comptroller, to receive grant funds from the State of Illinois, a grantee must be considered a regarded entity by the IRS for federal income tax purposes. Disregarded entities will not be eligible to receive grant funds.

### **1. Eligible Applicants include:**

Eligible applicants include: convention and visitors bureaus certified by the Department pursuant to 20 ILCS 605/605-707

The Department complies with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to: The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.), The Public Works Employment Discrimination Act (775 ILCS 10/1 et seq.), The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) (42 USC 2000a-and 2000H-6), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), and The Age Discrimination Act (42 USC 6101 et seq.).

### **2. Cost Sharing or Matching.**

No matching funds are required for this program.

### **3. Indirect Cost Rate.**

This opportunity does not allow indirect costs.

### **4. Freedom of Information Act/Confidential Information.**

Applications and accompanying materials are subject to disclosure in response to requests received under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.). Information that could be proprietary, privileged, or confidential commercial or financial information should be clearly identified as such in the application materials. The Department will maintain the confidentiality of that information only to the extent permitted by law.

### **5. Other, if applicable.**

The applicant that submits the statewide marketing application on behalf of the certified convention and visitors bureaus along the route can submit one (1) additional application for its respective bureau's projects.

Applicants may submit one (1) application for this opportunity.

## D. Application and Submission Information

### 1. Address to Request Application Package.

Grant application forms are available at the web link provided in the “Grant Application Link” field of this announcement or by contacting the Program Manager:

Greg Mihalich  
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity  
1011 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> Str.  
Springfield, IL 62704  
Email: [greg.mihalich@illinois.gov](mailto:greg.mihalich@illinois.gov)

### 2. Content and Form of Application Submission.

A standard application package must be submitted to and reviewed by DCEO. Each package must contain the following items:

- Uniform Grant Application in fillable PDF format. Signature page must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application.
- Uniform Budget utilizing the template provided by DCEO for this project. The entire budget with all worksheets included even if the worksheets are not relevant to the grant opportunity must be submitted with the application materials. Signature page must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application.
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure
- Mandatory Disclosures

This Notice of Funding Opportunity also requires the submission of the following other programmatic specific items as part of the application package:

- Program Application

Please note there is a maximum upload of 10 documents in the web form that you submit the application, so combining files may be necessary.

### 3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM).

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

- (i) Be registered in SAM. To establish a SAM registration, go to [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) and/or utilize this instructional link: [How to Register in SAM from the www.grants.illinois.gov Resource Links tab](#). SAM.gov registrations must be “public.”
- (ii) Provide a valid UEI number in the GATA Grantee Portal registration.
- (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal, Federal pass-through or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. The Department will not make a Federal pass-through or State award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Department is ready to make a Federal pass-through or State award, the Department may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal pass-through or State award and use that

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determination as a basis for making a Federal pass-through or State award to another applicant.

### 4. Submission Dates and Times.

Applications for this opportunity must be submitted by 5:00PM CST on Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Application materials must be submitted to the Department via electronic form at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/85bd6af3ea164b64a7a5de2b2a5a339a>

The Department is under no obligation to review applications that do not comply with the above requirements. Failure to meet the application deadline may result in the Department returning application without review or may preclude the Department from making the award.

### 5. Intergovernmental Review, if applicable.

N/A

### 6. Funding Restrictions.

This opportunity does allow reimbursement of pre-award costs. Other restrictions can be found in Sections A., B., and C.

### 7. Other Submission Requirements.

Documents stored in Google Docs or other cloud-based servers are not allowed.

Applicants may confirm receipt of the application and documents by contacting the program contact listed in this NOFO.

## E. Application Review Information

### 1. Criteria.

Grant proposals will be reviewed and scored by a merit review committee on a competitive basis. Each proposal will be scored on a 100-point scale. The Department shall consider the following criteria when evaluating the application submittal: Quality, Capacity and Need.

<b>Need- Identification of stakeholders, facts, and evidence that demonstrate the proposal supports the grant program purpose</b>	
The potential impact the program will have on communities and businesses located along Route 66 in generating more tourism dollars to the area.	10
Need of communities and businesses assisted by the project.	10
<b>Capacity- The ability of the applicant to execute the project according to requirements of the grant program</b>	
The applicant's experience and ability to provide services outlined in the NOFO and successfully complete the project tasks within the proposed grant period.	8
The applicant's ability and quality of systems/methodologies to track and measure the performance of the project.	8
Organizational and/or staff experience receiving State grants and overseeing subgrantees of state grants, if applicable.	4
<b>Quality- The totality of features and characteristics of the project that indicate its ability to satisfy the requirements of the grant program</b>	

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A timeline and budget that are appropriate for the project and that align with the intent of this opportunity.	10
Geographic scope of the services that will be provided to attractions and businesses along Route 66 and have the greatest potential to generate increased tourism to the area.	10
The estimate that this project will have a tourism economic impact on the communities and businesses located along Route 66.	10
Feasibility of the plan for sustainability of the project beyond the grant period.	10
Demonstrated ability to tie in to 100th Anniversary of Route 66.	10
Potential for promoting future tourism trends that include electrified transportation (i.e., electric vehicles).	10

**2. Review and Selection Process.**

Applications will be graded using the Merit Review Process and scored on the criteria specified in Section E.1. The Department will designate an Evaluation Committee to grade each application received for this funding opportunity. The final score of each Committee member will be calculated and an average of all scores will be the final applicant score. Grants will be awarded from highest to lowest score until all funds are exhausted. Geographic dispersion may be considered when determining funding recommendations.

The Merit Based Review process is subject to appeal. However, competitive grant appeals are limited to the evaluation process. Evaluation scores may not be protested. Only the evaluation process is subject to appeal. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Department within 14 calendar days after the date that the grant award notice has been published. The written appeal shall include the name and address of the appealing party, the identification of the grant and a statement of reasons for the appeal. To file an appeal, applicants must submit the appeal in writing and in accordance with the Merit-Based Application Review Appeals Process listed on the Grant Opportunities page of the DCEO website:  
<https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/meritappreview.html>.

**3. Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates, if applicable.**

After the application period is closed, the Department will conduct a merit based review of eligible applications. Successful applicants will receive a Notice of State Award (NOSA) to initiate the grant agreement phase. During this phase, you will be contacted by a grant manager to develop a grant agreement, which can be a months long process depending on complexity, cooperation, and conformity with all applicable federal and state laws.

The Department reserves the right to issue a reduced award, or not to issue any award.

**F. Award Administration Information**

**1. State Award Notices.**

The Notice of State Award (NOSA) will specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the pre-award risk assessments and the merit-based review process. The NOSA must be accepted in the GATA Portal by an authorized representative of the grantee organization. The NOSA is not an authorization to begin performance or incur costs.

**2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.**

**Subrecipients and Subcontractors:** Agreement(s) and budget(s) with subrecipients and subcontractors must be pre-approved by and on file with DCEO. Agreements can be submitted



to DCEO when available. Subcontractors and subrecipients are subject to all applicable provisions of the Agreement(s) executed between DCEO and the grantee. The successful applicant shall retain sole responsibility for the performance of its subrecipient(s) and/or subcontractor(s).

**Grant Uniform Requirements:** The Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/1 *et seq.*) (and its related administrative rules, 44 Ill. Admin. Code Part 7000), was enacted to increase the accountability and transparency in the use of grant funds from whatever source and to reduce administrative burdens on both State agencies and grantees by adopting federal guidance and regulations applicable to those grant funds; specifically, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200).

**Procurement:** Grantees will be required to adhere to methods of procurement per the Procurement Standards (2 CFR 200.317 – 2 CFR 200.327).

### **3. Reporting.**

#### **Periodic Performance Report (PPR) and Periodic Financial Report (PFR)**

Grantees funded through this NOFO are required to submit in the format required by the Grantor, at least on a quarterly basis, the PPR and PFR electronically to their assigned grant manager. The first of such reports shall cover the first three months after the award begins. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.328, Periodic Financial Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.329, Periodic Performance Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Any additional reporting requirements will be disclosed in the NOSA. Grantees are required within 45 calendar days following the end of the period of performance to submit a final closeout report in the format required by the Grantor (See 2 CFR 200.344).

#### **Monitoring**

Grantees funded through this NOFO are subject to fiscal and programmatic monitoring visits by the Department in accordance with 2 CFR 200.337. They must have an open-door policy allowing periodic visits by Department monitors to evaluate the progress of the project and provide documentation upon request of the monitor. Program staff will also maintain contact with participants and monitor progress and performance of the contracts. The Department may modify grants based on performance.

#### **Audit**

Grantees shall be subject to Illinois' statewide Audit Report Review requirements. Terms of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 USC 7501-7507), Subpart F of 2 CFR Part 200, and the audit rules set forth under the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act shall apply (See 30 ILCS 708/65(c)).

## **G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

Grant Help Desk  
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity  
Email: **CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov**

## **H. Other Information, if applicable**

N/A