Attachment D – Project Narrative Guidance

General Instructions

- The Project Narrative should be no more than 20 single-spaced pages formatted with 1-inch margins. Use Times New Roman (12 point) or a similar font. For tables, a 10-point font can be used. Attachments, including the Optional Supporting Documents, are not included in the page count for the Project Narrative.
- Include a page number in the footer, and the entity and project name in the header.
- To organize your narrative, list the large headers (e.g.*'B. Entity Information')* and numbered subheadings (e.g.*'1. Describe the Entity and Customers Served')*.
- Respond to all questions. If a question does not apply, indicate this to avoid the impression the question was skipped.
- Responses to the questions are not confined to the questions/guidance under each numbered subheading. Feel free to expand upon any aspect of your entity or project that will highlight its strengths, the need for the project, the applicability of the technical approach, or the outcomes.
- Include up to three Optional Supporting Documents that supplement the narrative. See page 10 of the RFP for more information on what can be included.
- When the narrative is supported with additional documentation, clearly reference the document in the narrative to assist staff who are reviewing the application.

Project Narrative Outline

A. Project Summary[1]

In 300 words or less, summarize the following:

- Statement of need
- Project location
- Project objectives
- Technical approach
- Alignment with SEO objectives
- Requested amount and cost match
- Start and end dates
- Planned outcomes

[1] Use the same project summary included in Attachment A, item 13.

Attachment D – Project Narrative Guidance

B. Entity Information

1. Describe the entity and customers served

Describe the applicant organization. Include its size, and the overall service area (in square miles), as well as information about the region of the state, county(ies) and/or city(ies) served. Describe the customers in the overall service area. Utilize county, regional or statewide data, such as the Department of Commerce NC County Distress Rankings.

2. Describe the overall infrastructure in the service area

Describe the electrical grid in your entity service area, and the resiliency and reliability challenges that you are experiencing. Include information such as the average age and characteristics of the infrastructure, and history of problems.

3. Other energy projects

Describe efforts over the past five years by your entity to improve the resilience and reliability of the electrical grid in the service area. Describe the applicant organization's experience managing state or federal grants.

C. Project Location and Customers

1. Description of the project area

Describe the targeted service area that will be the focus of this project. Include boundaries or attach a map (e.g., as a supporting document). Describe cities, towns or communities served, as well as key topographical features and other relevant information.

2. Residential customers in the project area

Describe the *residential customers* in the project area that will benefit from this project. How many customers (in terms of number of meters) will benefit from the project? Are they primarily rural or urban? Are they members of specific ethnic, cultural or age groups, or are they vulnerable or economically disadvantaged?

3. Critical facilities in project service area

List or summarize the primary *critical facilities* in the project area. These include, but are not limited to, hospitals, fire and police stations, facilities for power, water (e.g. wastewater treatment), communications (e.g. 911 dispatch), government offices and facilities, transportation hubs, and shelters. Address their role or importance in the community (e.g. *'two schools in the project area serve as shelters during major weather events'* or *'[entity] provides power to the only hospital in the county'*).

4. Key businesses and industries in the project area

Identify key business, commercial and industrial centers in the project area that will benefit

from the funding. If applicable, briefly describe their role or importance to the local economy, including their number of employees.

D. Infrastructure Needs & Impacts in Project Area

1. Existing infrastructure & historical performance

Describe the existing infrastructure in the project service area and the grid resiliency and reliability challenges addressed by the funded project. Include, for example, the age of poles, lines and transformers, or the lack of modernization. Summarize recent repairs, upgrades or improvements. *Required:* Provide SAIDI, SAIFI, CAIDI metrics for the past three to five years for the project area. Using Attachment E as a guide, discuss 2-3 additional metrics to illustrate issues or challenges to the project segment.

2. Impact of weather or other hazards

Describe the impact of extreme weather or other hazards over the past 3-5 years affecting the project area including, (but is not limited to) hurricanes, wildfires, flooding, extreme heat/cold, cybersecurity attacks, and increasing demand from new users. If a hazardous event has not occurred within the last 3 to 5 years, and the hazard type poses a high risk for the project area, then the applicant may utilize the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Risk Index (NRI) or a similar tool to demonstrate potential risk.

3. Customer impacts

Summarize the impact of grid resilience and reliability issues (described above in C1 & C2) on various customer types (residential, critical facilities, business & industry) in the proposed project area. For example, have there been long term or frequent outages for residential customers? How did this impact businesses, schools or critical facilities. Use examples and metrics to describe the "human" costs resulting from the grid resiliency and reliability challenges in the project area. Examples can include, but are not limited to:

- *Immediate health and safety risks.* Have frequent power outages disrupted essential services like health centers? Have prolonged outages delayed critical treatment, or impacted older adults and people with disabilities or chronic health conditions who may require reliable electricity to maintain their health?
- *Major disruption in essential needs or services.* Have power outages affected heating and cooling or well pumps for families or water treatment facilities? Have communication towers been impacted?
- *Significant hardship or community isolation.* Have power outages disrupted daily life including (but not limited to) closures of schools, shops, houses of worship, libraries or community centers?
- *Economic disruptions.* Have commercial and industrial customers faced interruptions

that have resulted in lost revenue, spoiled goods, and damaged equipment, in addition to increased costs of emergency repairs and backup power solutions?

E. Technical Summary, Implementation & Budget

1. Project technical summary

Provide a detailed technical summary of the proposed technologies, equipment, and installation of the project. Explain how this approach will effectively increase the resiliency and reliability of the electric grid. If applicable, highlight how this project will modernize the grid to make it more resilient using the selected technologies, equipment, and controls.[2] Describe possible alternative approaches and why these methods were not feasible. If applicable, describe how this project aligns with existing community development plans to improve grid resiliency or supports other key initiatives in the area – such as broadband expansion. Address potential risks or negative impacts from the project.

2. Project Implementation

There are two parts to this question:

a) *Workplan*. Create a high level workplan of the project. At a minimum, include a) project duration with estimated start and end dates; b) phase or major task breakdown with a defined timeline; c) key milestones or significant events; and d) project roles with key staff (or job classifications to be hired). Format this as a table.

b) *Implementation narrative*. Provide a high-level summary of the workplan, highlighting various phases. Provide information on how the schedule will be monitored and progress measured. Discuss skills, credentials and/or experience of technical and managerial staff. Review potential risks to the project that could alter the timeline. These might include but are not limited to the need for BABA waivers, supply chain issues, or impacts of extreme weather on project staffing. Describe the readiness of the Applicant to begin the project within three months of contract signing.

3. Project Budget & Justification

There are two parts to this question:

a) Complete the project budget and justification using Attachment C (Federal form SF-424). This form will be uploaded separately (see submission details) and is not included in the narrative page count.

[2] These technologies may include, but are not limited to, advanced sensors that allow operators to assess grid stability, advanced digital meters, relays that sense and recover from faults in the substation automatically, automated feeder switches that re-route power around problems, and batteries that store excess energy and make it available later to the grid to meet customer demand.

b) Provide a concise narrative of the project budget. Summarize the overall costs – both the Federal request and the cost match. Include source(s) of the match and the percentage of the total project cost represented by the match. Describe how project costs will be managed. If applicable, discuss success managing prior or current local, state or Federal awards.

F. Project Outcomes

1. Infrastructure and customer outcomes

Summarize how the proposed project will address all or some of the specific challenges described in Section D. Include ways in which the proposed approach will, for example:

- Strengthen the resilience and reliability of the existing infrastructure and improve the historical performance of the grid as described in D1.
- Mitigate impacts of severe weather or other climate related impacts described in D2.
- Benefit residential customers, critical facilities, and business/industrial customers, drawing on the impacts described in D3.

Provide clear examples of anticipated improvements from this project. These may include, but are not limited to, a reduction in the frequency and duration of power outages, reduced storm- or wildfire-related impacts, increased grid capacity, faster restoration times, increased grid capacity, and cost savings for customers. If relevant, identify secondary benefits that may be realized with this project.

2. Tracking & measuring

Using Attachment E, identify a minimum of three impact metrics that will be tracked. Provide a brief explanation for each metric. Include current 3-5 years of data for the impact metrics that are selected (if available) and propose a new goal value that is anticipated at the conclusion of the project.

G. Community Engagement and Workforce Development

1. Community activities and engagement

Describe how the community will be engaged as a part of this project. This may include, but is not limited to, outreach activities or events to inform the community about the project, or new partnerships that will be developed. Identify any community organization(s) that will be involved in this project, along with their role. If applicable, note if they have a specific role in the workplan and are submitting a *Letter of Support*.

2. Workforce development

Attachment D – Project Narrative Guidance

Describe how this project will support equitable job opportunities, increase the diversity of hired workers, expand training opportunities within the energy sector, and provide jobs with living wages and benefits. Provide information, if available on institutions or certificate programs and the number of people that may be supported through this funding. How many new jobs and apprenticeships are expected to be hired for this project? What are the expected wages and benefits for these new positions?