

City of McCleary

Grays Harbor County, Washington

FY27 Permit Review Process Update Grant

Washington State Department of Commerce | Growth Management Services

Total Funding Request: \$75,000

Submitted: July 2026

Project Manager

[Your Name] | Building Official, City of McCleary
[Phone] | [Email] | 100 W. 2nd Street, McCleary, WA 98557

Contract Signatory

Mayor Brycen Huff | City of McCleary

Question 3 Current Permit Process & Challenges

Maximum Score: 20 points | System Capacity & Vision

The City of McCleary operates an entirely paper-based residential permitting process. Permit applications are submitted in person at City Hall, received by a single staff member Dalyn Davis who simultaneously serves as permit technician, Public Works planning assistant, conservation program coordinator, and support for multiple other city functions. There is no digital permitting system, no online application portal, no electronic routing, and no centralized tracking of permit status or timelines.

The Building Official position is filled through an interlocal agreement with the City of Elma, providing only **five hours per week** of on-site Building Official coverage. Plan review, inspections, code enforcement, and applicant consultation must all be compressed into that limited window, with after-hours coordination handled informally. There is no backup coverage and no redundancy in the system.

This staffing model has been functional to date because McCleary's permit volume has remained relatively low typically fewer than five residential building permits per month. However, the City is now on the threshold of a significant and documented growth surge that will fundamentally change that reality. The current paper-based process and part-time staffing structure is not designed to absorb what is coming.

Documented Growth Pressure

The City currently has **two active annexation applications** in process:

- The Struder Annexation a 70-lot residential subdivision with engineered street infrastructure (N. 5th Street, E. Bear Street, N. 6th Court, E. Buck Street) was the subject of a public hearing before the McCleary City Council on June 10, 2026, and is now pending before the Grays Harbor County Boundary Review Board. Each of those 70 lots represents an individual building permit, site plan review, plan check, and multiple inspection events.
- A second annexation application for a 42-lot residential development is also in active process.

Additionally, the City has engaged in documented pre-application discussions with Wildcat Land LLC (the Rognlin family development) regarding a **98-acre Master Planned District** a mixed-use development incorporating residential, commercial, and employment uses as confirmed in the City Administrator's staff report to Council on June 10, 2026. The City has already drafted a Master Planned District code chapter (Title 17.XX MMC) in anticipation of this project, and a public planning process is expected to begin in late 2026 following completion of required wetland studies.

In practical terms, the City of McCleary is facing a transition from processing fewer than 60 residential permits per year to potentially processing several hundred over the next three to five years with that ramp-up beginning within the next six to twelve months. The paper-based, single-staff permit process that currently exists has no capacity to absorb this volume without significant reform.

Specific Process Challenges

- No digital intake or tracking: All applications are paper-only. There is no way for applicants to check status, submit documents electronically, or receive automated notifications. Staff must manage status tracking manually.
- Routing delays: Paper plans must be physically routed for review by the Building Official, Public Works, and Fire Marshal, creating sequential delays with no parallel review capability.
- Limited Building Official availability: With only five hours of Building Official time per week, plan reviews and inspections queue behind each other. Any uptick in volume immediately creates timeline failures.
- No inspection scheduling system: Inspection requests are handled informally, creating scheduling conflicts and documentation gaps.
- Staff bandwidth: Dalyn Davis manages permitting alongside numerous other city functions. There is no dedicated permit technician, and no surge capacity exists within current staffing.
- Fee schedule and code gaps: The Building Official has identified the need for fee schedule updates and development code revisions to support efficient processing work that has begun but not yet been completed.

Question 4 How Grant Funding Will Improve Permit Review

Maximum Score: 25 points | System Capacity & Vision

This grant would fund a coordinated, three-part transformation of McCleary's residential permit process moving the City from a paper-based, reactive system with no surge capacity to a digital, professionally supported permit operation ready to absorb the growth already in the pipeline.

1. Digital Permitting System iWorQ or CivicPlus

Grant funds will be used to procure and implement a cloud-based digital permitting platform. The City has already initiated vendor evaluation meetings with both **iWorQ** and **CivicPlus** two platforms commonly deployed by small Washington cities and is positioned to move directly to contract upon grant award. The selected system will provide:

- Online residential permit application submission eliminating the requirement for in-person paper drop-off and allowing applicants to submit 24/7.
- Electronic plan review and routing enabling parallel review by the Building Official, Public Works, and Fire Marshal simultaneously rather than sequentially.
- Digital inspection scheduling and tracking allowing contractors and homeowners to request inspections online and receive automated confirmations.
- Document and photo/video storage creating a permanent, searchable permit record for each project.

- Real-time permit status visibility allowing applicants to check the status of their application without calling City Hall.

For applicants including the homebuilders, contractors, and developers who will be pulling permits on the Struder subdivision and future MPD phases this means a dramatically improved experience. No more driving to City Hall to drop off paper plans. No more calling to find out where their permit stands. No more uncertainty about inspection scheduling. These are exactly the friction points that slow construction timelines and frustrate the building community.

2. Third-Party Community Development Consultant

Grant funds will support contracting with a qualified third-party Community Development consulting firm to provide two distinct services:

Process Audit: The consultant will conduct a structured audit of McCleary's current permit process, development regulations, and application requirements identifying specific regulatory or procedural barriers to residential permit efficiency. This directly addresses Commerce's eligible activity of auditing development regulations to identify and correct barriers to housing development. The audit will produce a written correction plan that will serve as the roadmap for ongoing process improvement beyond the grant period.

Plan Review Capacity Support: As the Struder subdivision (70 lots) moves through annexation and building permits begin to flow, the consultant will provide supplemental plan review and permit processing capacity ensuring that incoming applications receive timely review even as the digital system is being stood up and staff are completing training. This directly addresses the City's core capacity gap and prevents the growth surge from overwhelming the existing system.

3. Staff Training

Grant funds will cover structured training for the permit technician and Building Official on the newly implemented digital permitting platform, including application intake procedures, routing workflows, inspection management, and reporting. Written standard operating procedures (SOPs) will be developed as a training deliverable, ensuring that institutional knowledge is documented and not dependent on any single individual a critical resilience factor for a small city.

Combined Impact on Permit Review Timelines

The combination of digital permitting, third-party consultant support, and staff training will directly reduce residential permit review timelines by eliminating the primary bottlenecks in the current process: sequential paper routing, manual status tracking, informal inspection scheduling, and single-staff dependency. The City anticipates moving from its current informal, undocumented review process to a measurable, trackable system with defined completeness review timelines, parallel routing, and automated applicant communication directly aligned with the requirements of RCW 36.70B as amended by SB 5290.

Question 5 Readiness to Proceed

Maximum Score: 15 points | Readiness to Proceed

Answer: Work has already begun.

The City of McCleary has taken concrete steps toward permit process modernization prior to the submission of this grant application:

- Vendor evaluation meetings have been scheduled and initiated with both iWorQ and CivicPlus digital permitting platforms. The City is actively comparing platform capabilities and pricing in preparation for a procurement decision.

- Meetings have been initiated with a third-party Community Development consulting firm to discuss scope of services for both process audit and plan review support.
- The Building Official has completed a comprehensive update to the City's Building and Planning Department fee schedules documented in the May 2026 staff report to City Council laying the financial framework for increased permit activity.
- The City has drafted a Master Planned District code chapter (Title 17.XX MMC) in anticipation of the 98-acre Wildcat Land LLC development, demonstrating proactive legislative preparation for incoming growth.
- The City Council conducted a public hearing on the Struder Annexation on June 10, 2026, confirming that the 70-lot residential subdivision is actively advancing through the approval process.

Upon grant award, the City is positioned to execute a software contract and consultant agreement within 30 days, with no internal approval delays anticipated. Mayor Huff has been briefed on the grant application and the Letter of Commitment reflects the City's readiness to proceed immediately.

Question 6 Future Steps Beyond Grant Period

Maximum Score: 10 points | Readiness to Proceed

Answer: We will complete permit process improvement.

The City of McCleary views this grant not as a standalone project but as the foundation of a permanent transformation in how the City manages residential development. The improvements funded by this grant digital permitting infrastructure, consultant-supported process audit, and staff training are designed to be self-sustaining and expandable.

Following the conclusion of the grant period in June 2027, the City will continue permit process improvements through the following commitments:

- The digital permitting platform procured under this grant will remain operational and will be expanded to include commercial permitting, code enforcement tracking, and business licensing as budget allows building on the residential foundation established during the grant period.
- The process audit correction plan delivered under Deliverable 2 will serve as a multi-year improvement roadmap. Items not completed within the grant period will be incorporated into the City's annual work plan and budget process.
- The third-party Community Development consultant relationship established under this grant will position the City to expand consultant services as the Wildcat Land LLC Master Planned District advances through the formal application process anticipated to generate the City's most complex and highest-volume permit workload to date.
- The City is actively pursuing additional staffing solutions, including expansion of the interlocal agreement with the City of Elma and exploration of a dedicated part-time permit technician position as permit revenue grows with the Struder subdivision buildout.
- Development code improvements identified in the consultant's process audit will be advanced through the City's planning and legislative process, with the goal of aligning McCleary's development regulations with the streamlined review requirements of RCW 36.70B as amended.

The City of McCleary is not applying for this grant to solve a temporary problem. The growth that is coming 70 lots in the Struder annexation, 42 lots in a second pending annexation, and a 98-acre master planned development on the horizon represents a permanent change in McCleary's development profile. This grant funds the infrastructure to manage that change professionally, efficiently, and in a way that serves both the community and the applicants who will be building it.

Scope of Work & Project Schedule

Grant Objective: Transform McCleary's residential permit process from paper-based to digital, add third-party consultant capacity, and establish the infrastructure to absorb significant incoming residential growth.

Steps / Deliverables	Description	Start Date	End Date
Action 1	Software Selection & Procurement	Aug 2026	Oct 2026
Step 1.1	Evaluate iWorQ and CivicPlus demos; select platform based on cost, feature fit, and implementation timeline	Aug 2026	Aug 2026
Step 1.2	Negotiate and execute software contract; coordinate IT setup and data environment	Aug 2026	Sept 2026
Step 1.3	Obtain City Council budget approval for software expenditure	Sept 2026	Sept 2026
Deliverable 1	Executed software contract, Council approval documentation, and configured digital permitting environment ready for data entry		Oct 15, 2026
Action 2	Process Audit & Barrier Identification	Aug 2026	Nov 2026
Step 2.1	Contract with third-party Community Development consultant to audit current paper-based permit process and routing procedures	Aug 2026	Sept 2026
Step 2.2	Consultant conducts internal interviews with Building Official, permit tech, Public Works, and Fire Marshal to map current workflow and identify bottlenecks	Sept 2026	Oct 2026
Step 2.3	Review existing fee schedule, application forms, routing checklists, and development code for barriers to efficient residential permit review	Sept 2026	Oct 2026
Deliverable 2	Written process audit report identifying specific barriers to permit review efficiency, with prioritized correction plan and recommended code/procedure changes		Nov 15, 2026
Action 3	Digital System Implementation & Staff Training	Oct 2026	Mar 2027
Step 3.1	Configure digital permitting platform with residential application types, routing workflows, inspection scheduling, and document storage	Oct 2026	Dec 2026
Step 3.2	Train permit tech and Building Official on new digital system; develop	Dec 2026	Jan 2027

Steps / Deliverables	Description	Start Date	End Date
	internal SOPs for application intake, routing, and inspection tracking		
Step 3.3	Conduct pilot testing with live permit applications; identify and resolve workflow gaps before full launch	Jan 2027	Feb 2027
Deliverable 3	Fully operational digital permitting system accepting online residential applications; training completion documentation; written SOPs for intake and routing		Mar 1, 2027
Action 4	Third-Party Consultant Capacity Support	Nov 2026	Jun 2027
Step 4.1	Execute interlocal or professional services agreement with third-party Community Development consultant to provide additional plan review capacity during transition and growth surge	Nov 2026	Dec 2026
Step 4.2	Consultant supports residential plan review, completeness checks, and applicant communication for incoming Struder annexation (70 lots) and additional development applications	Jan 2027	Jun 2027
Deliverable 4	Executed consultant agreement; documentation of permit applications processed with consultant support; measured reduction in average permit review timeline		Jun 15, 2027
Action 5	Progress Reporting & Final Documentation	Feb 2027	Jun 2027
Deliverable 5a	Mid-grant progress report: system adoption metrics, permits processed digitally vs. paper, average review timeline before and after implementation		Mar 15, 2027
Deliverable 5b	Final grant report: comprehensive summary of process improvements, lessons learned, measurable outcomes, and roadmap for continued permit process improvement post-grant		Jun 15, 2027

Budget & Financial Information

All grant funds are deliverable-based. The final 20% of the grant (\$15,000) is contingent upon completion of Deliverables 5a and 5b. Budget amounts may be adjusted before final contract execution to align with actual consultant and software costs.

Deliverable	Amount
Deliverable 1 Software contract execution and digital environment setup	\$15,000
Deliverable 2 Process audit report and correction plan (third-party consultant)	\$12,000
Deliverable 3 Digital system implementation, configuration, and staff training	\$18,000
Deliverable 4 Third-party consultant plan review capacity support	\$20,000
Deliverable 5a Mid-grant progress report	\$5,000
Deliverable 5b Final grant report and improvement roadmap	\$5,000
TOTAL GRANT REQUEST	\$75,000

Letter of Commitment

City of McCleary | 100 W. 2nd Street, McCleary, WA 98557

July 2026

Ryan Shea, Local Permit Review Program Specialist

Washington State Department of Commerce

Growth Management Services

Ryan.Shea@commerce.wa.gov

Dear Mr. Shea,

I, **Brycen Huff, Mayor** of the **City of McCleary**, authorize the City to propose the attached scope of work and budget request for grant funding related to the FY27 Permit Review Process Update Grant.

We are committed to the improvement of our permitting review processes to reduce the amount of time permit applications spend in review and to improve customer experience for applicants, contractors, and developers working in our community. We understand these funds are solely for the improvement of our permitting review processes.

The City of McCleary currently processes all residential permit applications through an entirely paper-based system managed by a single, multi-role staff member. Our Building Official serves the City through an interlocal agreement providing only five hours of coverage per week. This structure, while functional at our historically low permit volumes, is wholly inadequate for the growth we are now facing.

The City has two active annexation applications in process a 70-lot residential subdivision (Struder Annexation, public hearing held June 10, 2026) and a 42-lot residential development and is engaged in documented pre-application discussions with Wildcat Land LLC regarding a **98-acre Master Planned District**. These projects represent hundreds of future residential building permits. Our current paper-based system cannot process that volume without immediate, significant reform.

The primary barriers to reducing our permitting timelines are: (1) the complete absence of digital permitting infrastructure, requiring all applications, routing, and tracking to occur on paper; and (2) insufficient staffing capacity to absorb the residential permit volume that is already in the pipeline. Our approach to removing these barriers is to implement a cloud-based digital permitting platform, contract with a third-party Community Development consultant for process audit and plan review support, and train our existing staff to operate the new system with documented procedures.

This grant represents an investment not just in software or consulting hours, but in McCleary's ability to function as a professional, capable local government as our community grows. We are ready to begin work immediately upon award.

Respectfully submitted,

Brycen Huff, Mayor

City of McCleary

100 W. 2nd Street, McCleary, WA 98557