Bridging the Gap: How a Government Capital Strategist Turns Real Estate Vision Into Funded Reality

Helping CRE Developers Access Federal & State Funding for Economic Development Projects

Every commercial real estate developer eventually runs into the same wall: a great project, a strong location, a clear community benefit — and a capital stack that doesn't quite close. Construction costs keep climbing. Conventional debt only stretches so far. And meanwhile, billions of dollars in federal and state economic development funding sit largely untapped, buried in program guidelines most developers never have time to research.

That's the gap I've spent my career closing. As a Government Capital Strategist, my job is to sit at the intersection of private development goals and public funding sources — identifying the grants, tax credits, and public-private partnership structures that can turn a promising project into a fully funded one.

Why Government Capital Matters Now

Municipalities and states are actively competing to attract development that strengthens their tax base, revitalizes underused property, and creates jobs. Programs like Tax Increment Financing (TIF), District Improvement Financing (DIF), Brownfields remediation funds, MassDevelopment and MassWorks infrastructure grants, EDA and CDBG allocations, Historic Tax Credits, New Markets Tax Credits, and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits exist precisely because government wants to be a partner in these projects — not a bystander. The challenge isn't whether the money exists. It's knowing which programs fit your project, how to position your application, and how to layer multiple sources into a coherent capital stack.

What a Government Capital Strategist Actually Does

- ✓ Identify and secure federal and state grant opportunities matched to the specific project type and location.
- ✓ Navigate complex, overlapping government funding programs and their eligibility requirements.
- ✓ Maximize the benefits of public-private partnerships so both sides come out ahead.
- ✓ Turn a one-time investment into long-term, sustainable economic growth for the surrounding community.

Housing and Alternative Energy: Two Growing Priorities

Two categories of projects are seeing an especially strong alignment between private development goals and public funding right now: housing and alternative energy.

On the housing side, affordable and workforce housing developments can draw on Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), state housing trust funds, and local density and permitting incentives, often layered with Historic Tax Credits when the project involves adaptive reuse of an older building. States and municipalities are under real pressure to expand housing stock, which means housing developers who understand how to package these incentives have a real advantage at the negotiating table.

On the energy side, projects that incorporate solar, hydroelectric, geothermal, or other clean energy components can tap into federal clean energy tax credits, USDA REAP grants, DOE and state clean-energy program funding, and PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) financing. For mill and industrial redevelopment sites in particular — many of which sit on rivers with existing hydroelectric infrastructure or dam rights — alternative energy isn't just an environmental add-on. It can become its own revenue stream and a meaningful funding lever for the broader project.

Whether it's a housing component built into a mixed-use redevelopment or a clean energy system layered onto an industrial adaptive reuse project, these are exactly the kinds of details a Government Capital Strategist looks for early — because they often unlock funding sources a standard commercial project wouldn't otherwise qualify for.

Stronger Communities, Brighter Futures

Adaptive reuse of historic mills, self-storage and flex-industrial development, downtown revitalization, mixed-use infill — these are exactly the kinds of projects where public funding can make the difference between a stalled site plan and a ribbon-cutting. When private capital and public investment work together, the result isn't just a completed building. It's a stronger tax base, new jobs, and a community asset that outlasts the construction crew.

With over 50 years of commercial real estate experience and more than $500 million in government funding secured since 1976, I've seen firsthand how the right funding strategy — applied early, applied correctly — changes what's possible for a project.

Let's Unlock the Capital to Build a Stronger Tomorrow

If you're a developer, owner, or investor with a project that could benefit from federal or state funding, let's talk. I work nationwide evaluating deals and building the funding strategy that gets your project across the finish line.

Don Cassano

Government Capital Strategist