



U.S. General Services Administration

# U.S. General Services Administration FY 2025 Annual Evaluation Plan

January 5, 2024

## Introduction

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is committed to ensuring a strong culture of evaluation, evidence-building, and learning. GSA's [Learning Agenda](#) and Annual Evaluation Plan (AEP) set a series of agency wide learning targets in alignment with GSA's strategic objectives and in collaboration with varied offices across GSA.

GSA's Learning Agenda includes four priority learning questions:

1. **Real Estate Solutions:** What technologies and solutions does the Federal workforce need to additionally improve effectiveness in a more responsive hybrid work setting?
2. **Acquisition:** What strategies are most effective at increasing participation in procurement and contracting opportunities for underserved communities and small businesses?
3. **Digital Government:** How can GSA Technology solutions support effective service delivery to the public?
4. **Government Operations:** What GSA programs and policies are effective at improving climate adaptation, resilience, and mitigation?

GSA's AEP is a set of priority evaluations that build on the GSA Learning Agenda. The AEP will support progress on the Learning Agenda; however, these efforts will also have additional and independent workstreams and thus not fully overlap. GSA will also continue planning proposed evaluation activities for fiscal year (FY) 2025 as more information becomes available on program implementation. The GSA Evaluation Division is the lead office for developing, coordinating, and implementing the Learning Agenda and AEP. The division works closely with partner program offices within GSA to plan for evaluation and produce evidence to support strategic decision-making.

In developing the AEP, GSA engaged internal and external stakeholders. Internally, this included key stakeholders from across the agency, as they advised and helped develop questions for inclusion in the AEP. Externally, this included hearing insights shared by the Office of Management and Budget partners in the budget, performance, and evidence teams. GSA's Evaluation Officer and team continues to work closely with varied stakeholders with expertise in the program areas to ensure that the AEP is relevant, realistic, and meaningful.

GSA strategically decided to continue prioritizing some of the learning activities started in FY 2024, while also adding new topics that are likely to be relevant in FY 2025. Other priorities will be included in future AEPs as GSA's evaluation capacity grows and we complete the cycle of ongoing, multi-year learning objectives. And new activities may be added off-cycle, as needed and feasible.

The FY 2025 AEP focuses on building evidence to support GSA's service delivery to communities where major modernization projects are taking place, to other government

agencies engaging in contracting, and to members of the public who engage with the Federal Government through GSA digital properties.

GSA's FY 2025 AEP includes three priority evaluation topics, on varied policy and operational areas. These topics include:

- Evaluation Topic 1.1: What are community-level impacts of Land Ports of Entry (LPOE) modernization projects?
- Evaluation Topic 2.1: What strategies enhance the stakeholder experience of the Multiple Award Schedule?
- Evaluation Topic 3.1: How can we improve the user experience for understanding benefits eligibility?

Each priority evaluation topic includes an overview and its associated learning agenda question and [strategic objective](#). For each evaluation topic, we include a table that lists evaluation questions, approaches, data sources, anticipated challenges, and notes on use and dissemination of results.

In line with the [GSA Evaluation Policy](#), we will publicly share evaluation results after review to enable GSA leadership and staff, agency collaborators, policymakers, researchers, and the public at large to learn from the agency's work.

# Evaluation Topic 1.1

What are community-level impacts of Land Ports of Entry modernization projects?

## Learning Agenda Question

This is a new priority not identified on the Learning Agenda.

## Strategic Objective

1.4 Identify and implement modernization projects that positively impact local communities through enhanced economic activity and opportunities for underserved populations.

## Context

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Pub. L. 117-58 (November 15, 2021) (also referred to as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)), makes historic investments in strengthening supply chains, and making improvements for our Nation's ports, airports, rail, and roads. The BIL includes \$3.4 billion for GSA to improve land ports of entry (LPOE) along the United States of America's northern and southern borders. The BIL LPOE program aims to (a) support a secure and well-managed border, (b) facilitate trade and mitigate future supply-chain challenges, (c) create good-paying jobs and grow the economy, (d) improve the human experience at these ports, (e) strengthen community livability and advance community goals, and (f) serve as a model for sustainability, innovation, and climate resilience.

With an average age of nearly 40 years, a majority of the country's LPOEs are outdated and in need of modernization. Billions of dollars in products cross America's borders every day. Commercial capacity at many of our land ports is limited by outdated infrastructure. Recent supply-chain challenges have underscored the importance of strengthening America's ports, waterways and freight networks. The BIL LPOE program will undertake 26 major construction and modernization projects in 11 states across seven GSA regions. Most projects will address deferred maintenance and enhance commercial-processing capabilities. By modernizing and expanding the commercial capacity of these mission-critical facilities, these land port modernization projects will also strengthen local economies and help mitigate against future supply-chain challenges.

In FY 2025, GSA will build off its FY 2023 and 2024 evidence-building activities to better understand community engagement and will continue to plan for rigorous evaluation of

the economic, community, and environmental impacts of LPOE modernization projects at a local (i.e., community) level.

Community engagement is a priority question for GSA, both how to do it well and how to measure impacts. In FY 2023 and FY 2024, GSA is advancing evidence-building activities to better understand, through descriptive studies and implementation analysis, how GSA is currently engaging with local LPOE communities, and identify potential best practices. GSA also is completing the first research opportunity advertised through the Portal Opportunities resource on [evaluation.gov](https://www.evaluation.gov) to better understand the literature on effective community engagement and to develop an evaluation plan for assessing the effectiveness of community-engagement activities. In FY 2025, GSA plans to evaluate the effects of community engagement for LPOE modernization projects. While the outcomes of interest will be refined in FY 2024, some examples could include satisfaction with the projects among members of the community, trust in GSA among community members, and potentially, the use of community input in project execution.

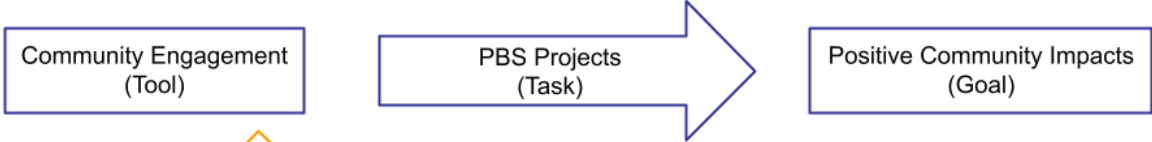
Overall, GSA is planning to evaluate metrics for use in future years, recognizing that many BIL projects have implementation timelines that will not result in measurable outcomes by FY 2025. FY24 evaluation will identify outcome metrics important to both community and agency priorities at select sites. The goal for FY 2025 is to then start refining generalizable outcomes of interest as more projects are underway to identify data and data-collection strategies needed to support observation of important outcomes into the future. Additionally, planning will focus on identifying potential target communities for evaluation and resource needs to support evaluation in future planning years.

While focused on LPOE projects, FY 2025 evaluations will serve to enhance PBS's capacity portfolio-wide as community engagement and community impact continue to be priority areas of focus. Further, the activities listed here can be thought of as a complement to higher-level, economic-impact analyses, with this analysis focusing on local outcomes, such as locally felt economic and environmental benefits associated with implementation of BIL LPOE modernization projects.

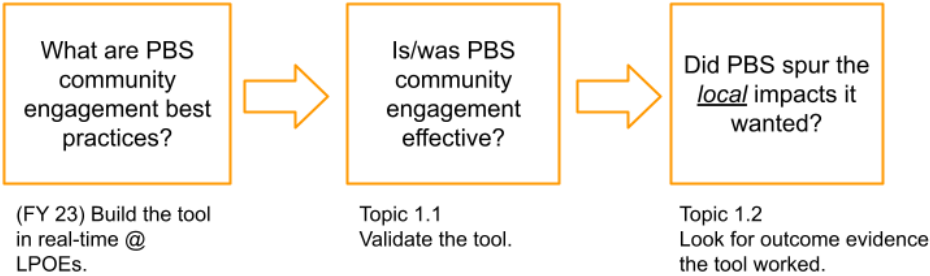


# Community Impact Evaluation in Phases

Theory of Change



Evaluation Phases



Evaluation questions	Evaluation approach	Data sources	Anticipated challenges and solutions	Use and dissemination
How does community engagement change important LPOE outcomes (people, process, project)?	Outcome/impact evaluation will build on implementation analysis to understand to what extent engagement led to changes in LPOE outcomes.	Local leader interviews(n=<9)/ focus groups, online public forum posts, local media articles, letters to the editor, public meeting transcripts	Understanding impacts will rely on collecting accurate data on community engagement, which currently does not exist. Causality will rely on qualitative attribution.	Improve GSA/PBS ability to conduct effective community engagement that demonstrates value to the community and aids in justification for future budget requests.
What are the economic, community, and environmental impacts of modernizing land ports of entry?	Given timelines for project completion, FY 2025 activities likely will focus on establishing an evaluation plan and putting in place data strategies necessary to support analysis in out-years.	Public interviews/focus groups, Survey or PaperWork Reduction Act (PRA)-exempt feedback portal, Real estate transaction data, public filings of construction permits, business permits, traffic volumes (DOT “Border Crossing Entry” data- Public), wait times (CBP- May require special access)	Construction timelines vary, and some locations will not be ready for analysis for multiple years. The more detailed the local analysis, the higher the burden of data collection will likely be. The question will need to be realistically scoped in breadth to be feasible with anticipated evaluation resources.	Understand more localized community impacts to complement analysis of projected economic impact at higher levels of aggregation. Will help with future budget justifications and demonstrating PBS value.

# Evaluation Topic 2.1

What strategies enhance the stakeholder experience of the Multiple Award Schedule?

## Learning Agenda Question

What strategies are most effective at increasing participation in procurement and contracting opportunities for underserved communities and small businesses?

## Strategic Objectives

2.2 Improve stakeholder satisfaction by delivering simplified customer and supplier experiences.

## Context

The GSA Schedule, also known as Federal Supply Schedule, and Multiple Award Schedule (MAS), is a long-term governmentwide contract with commercial companies that provide access to millions of commercial products and services at fair and reasonable prices to the government. MAS makes buying easy and efficient with the use of modern technology to connect government buyers and industry.

MAS offers many advantages to its customers including:

- **Regulatory Compliance** – GSA has negotiated commercial-item terms and conditions, under FAR Part 12, including supply and service specific terms and conditions, and where appropriate, additional clauses that establish a baseline level of protection for the government.
- **Fair & Reasonable Pricing** – Before awarding a GSA Schedule contract, GSA contracting officers (COs) determine that the prices of supplies, fixed-price services, and rates for services offered at hourly rates are fair and reasonable.
- **Faster Order Placement** – Streamlined ordering procedures allow you to purchase commercial supplies and services much faster than buying through open-market procedures.
- **Full Product and Broad Service Offerings** – GSA has an unprecedented depth and breadth of offerings available to buyers. Schedule contractors maintain continuous coverage and offer the latest innovative solutions and technologies.



In total, all of these benefits stem from GSA's excellence in acquisition. This expertise allows other agencies to confidently leverage GSA contracts while shifting their limited resources toward their own missions and mandates—delivering the products, services, and solutions to get things done.

While Evaluation Topic 2.1 is not primarily focused on understanding the experience of underserved communities and small businesses, by better understanding the overall value of MAS, GSA can increase its use, which will provide expanded opportunities to all MAS vendors, including those from underserved communities and small businesses.

Evaluation questions	Evaluation approach	Data sources	Anticipated challenges and solutions	Use and dissemination
<p>What is the average amount of time saved when placing a task order through MAS as opposed to creating an open-market solicitation?</p>	<p>Compare the amount of time required to create and award a requirement through MAS systems to respondents' estimations of doing so in the open market.</p>	<p>eBuy, direct survey or testing</p>	<p>Reliant on outside assessments of time needs, which may not be accurate.</p>	<p>Capture a portion of FAS's value proposition: making acquisition faster and easier</p>

# Evaluation Topic 3.1

How can we improve the user experience for understanding benefits eligibility?

## **Learning Agenda Question**

How can GSA technology solutions support effective service delivery to the public?

## **Strategic Objective**

3.1 Implement inclusive, accessible, and equitable design practices that improve customer experience with technology and digital platforms.

## **Context**

USA.Gov is the official website of the U.S. Government and exists to make Government services easier to find. USA.gov puts GSA in a position to help people from a variety of backgrounds, with a variety of needs, successfully accomplish a range of different actions. One common use of USA.Gov is to find more information and potentially take action (e.g., determine eligibility, enroll, make modifications) on Federal benefits. Providing better information can improve the user experience (e.g., save people time, reduce frustration), reduce mistakes (e.g., reduce the chance that people apply for benefits for which they are not eligible) and reduce administrative burden on Federal agencies (e.g., reduce processing incomplete or ineligible applications, reduce demands on customer service resources like USA.Gov Contact Center). In FY 2025, GSA will focus on learning more about users to improve their Federal benefits experience through USA.Gov.

Evaluation questions	Evaluation approach	Data sources	Anticipated challenges and solutions	Use and dissemination
<p>What benefits-related information enables visitors to USA.gov to more quickly and easily identify and apply for benefits for which they are eligible?</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>Website analytics, possibly new data collection on user experience</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>Improve integration of benefits information on USA.gov, increase benefits access (reduce wasted effort applying for ineligible benefits?); streamline the experience for the public when they are looking and applying for government benefits</p>