

# Readiness Approach Worksheet



Purpose: This worksheet helps applicants write their Readiness Approach attachment.

Track I applicants are required to submit a Readiness Approach (Attachment G). The requirements are stated in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Section I.G. The Readiness Approach has no page limit but should be concise.

## Goals of the Readiness Approach

Under the law, these grants can only last for three years. Since EPA cannot extend the grant, EPA wants to see that you can complete the project within three years. The Readiness Approach is where you show this in your application. You must:

- Demonstrate that you can complete the projects within the three-year period.
- Show that you are prepared to start your proposed projects right away, generally no later than 120 days after receiving the award.

You should address the following factors as part of the readiness approach. If any of these are not applicable, your application should explain why not. You should also include other factors that hinder your ability to start your project on time or complete it within three years. We provide more information on these requirements on the following pages.

- Government approvals: Government approvals may be necessary to implement portions of your project. You must show that you have either (1) already obtained these approvals or (2) will be able to obtain them right after you receive the award so they will not delay your plans.
- Alignment with existing plans: Development plans may already be in place for land within the Project Area. You must show how planned work in the Project Area is consistent with community development, climate resilience, or hazard mitigation plans, as well as any similar government land use restrictions that may exist and apply to your project.
- Site control: You must show that you own or control sites where project work will take place OR that you have legally binding access to or permission to access the site.
- Operations and Maintenance: You must explain how you will ensure the operation and maintenance of infrastructure investments during and after the grant period.
- Federal requirements for construction projects: Federally funded construction projects must comply with various laws and executive orders (NOFO Section VI.B) including the prevailing wage requirement under Davis-Bacon and Related Acts, and the domestic preference requirement under Build America, Buy America.



## Guiding Questions

### Developing a Readiness Approach

While you need to keep Readiness Approach requirement in mind as you develop your application, it is not something that can be done early in the process. As you do community outreach and work with possible partners and collaborating entities you should make sure they are aware of grant limitations so they focus on potential projects that can realistically be completed within the time limit. Once you have a decent sense of your strategies and projects, you can start to develop a Readiness Approach.

1. First, break down each project into all the different steps that you will need to do in order to complete the project.
  
2. Then you should make realistic timelines for each of the steps.

*If you can, have your project timeline reviewed by people who did not help to develop it and have expertise with that type of project. Your lead Technical Assistance Provider (LTP) can help you get outside experts to review the timeline.*

### Project Resources

1. What resources do you need to complete your project?
  - a. People
  - b. Materials
  - c. Land
  - d. Contractors

Do you have them, or can you get them in time?

Can you demonstrate to EPA that you can get them in time?



2. Have you added enough time to complete competitive bidding processes for materials and contractors?

*EPA has [guidance](#) and a [best practice guide](#) on procuring supplies and contractor services.*

## Government Approvals

You may need approval from a governmental entity before you can begin a certain activity. While you do not need to have approval by the time you submit your proposal, you should at least be aware of any necessary approvals, and you should state how and when you will get those approvals shortly after you are awarded the grant. Consider:

1. What types of government approvals are necessary to begin your projects? Some could include:
  - Municipal or County construction permits
  - Municipal or County zoning changes
  - State environmental permits

*Building departments, planning departments, small business development offices, and similar entities may be able to help you identify and apply for any required government approvals. Look to your partners and Collaborating Entities for any expertise they may have.*

2. Have you obtained all government approvals necessary for the project? If not, how will you get the approvals as soon as the grant is awarded?



## Alignment with Existing Plans

1. What existing development plans and policies might dictate or direct the type of activities you pursue within your Project Area?

*For example, a climate plan written by your City, a development plan written by your County transit or planning Agency, a Hazard Mitigation or Disaster Response Plan written by your Emergency Management Agency, or other plans that dictate restrictions on land uses. Check with your local government to see what plans exist and how they may or may not affect your project. Your local government representative may be a good place to start.*

2. How are your proposed projects consistent with the plans and policies you have identified? Would the entity that developed the plan be a strong Collaborating Entity on your proposal?

## Site Control

1. At which location(s) will you conduct projects?
2. Do you or your Statutory Partner/Collaborating Entities have control over all these locations? If you do not have control, do you have guaranteed access? If you do not have it now, can you demonstrate how you will have control or access when you need it for the project?

## Operations and Maintenance

1. Think about any infrastructure projects you are planning. How will you operate and maintain this infrastructure during and after the three-year grant period?

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2. How will you finance these projects?

*Include any information on long-term service costs, fee structures, and detailed information on debt for all properties.*

3. Does your overall operations and maintenance plan demonstrate how you will ensure the continued functioning of these infrastructure investments during and after the grant period?



## Federal Requirements for Construction Projects

Domestic preference requirement under Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act. This act requires that certain products and construction materials used in federally funded projects must be produced in the United States.

1. Have you evaluated which products and construction materials you will need that are most likely to be unavailable domestically?

*During the grant period, you will need to apply for a waiver from EPA before purchasing non-domestic products that are covered by BABA.*

Prevailing wage requirement under Davis-Bacon and Related Acts. These are a collection of labor standards that are applicable to grants involving construction. Are you prepared to comply with the following requirements:

- Post the Davis-Bacon Act poster on workers' rights at all jobsites? It must be posted in an accessible and easy-to-see location, protected from elements.
- Post the project wage rate sheet, which must include each role, how much each role gets paid, fringe benefits, and other details? The wage rate sheet must be posted at all jobsites in an accessible and easy-to-see location, protected from elements.
- Certify and submit weekly payroll.
- Retain all payroll information for three years.
- Regularly perform confidential employee interviews to make sure the work being done is consistent with job titles and wages being reported.

For more information on the Davis-Bacon Act, see the [EPA Davis-Bacon Grant Term and conditions webinar](#).

For more information on Build America, Buy America compliance, see the [CCG Build America Buy America webinar](#).



## Tips to Consider

1. When you are getting community input, make sure community members understand the timing requirement from the beginning. It is an important limitation on what you can do. Be open with them about these and other constraints. This will help you keep the trust of community members.
2. Before committing to any project, think through all the timing implications. Do you have or can you get all the resources, people, materials, land, and approvals you might need to complete the project in three years.
3. Have your project reviewed by people who are not part of the grant process and have expertise in what you are trying to do. Your Lead Technical Assistance Provider (LTP) can help you in the review process.
4. The Readiness Approach is as much about what you can demonstrate as it is about what you can do. You must be able to make a convincing case that you can finish within the three-year time limit.

## Resources

1. Build America Buy America (BABA) Webinar  
Webinar recording and slides on Build America Buy America compliance and waivers. <https://communitychangeta.org/webinar-recordings>
2. Build America, Buy America Act Domestic Preference Overview  
A brief summary document explaining the requirements of BABA. <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-10/Buy%20America%20Preference%20Overview.pdf>
3. EPA Davis-Bacon Term & Condition  
Set of slides summarizing the various requirements for the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA). [https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-03/presentation\\_epa-davis-bacon-tc-march-2024.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-03/presentation_epa-davis-bacon-tc-march-2024.pdf)
4. EPA Grants Management Training for Applicants and Recipients  
Online training course covering key aspects of the entire grant cycle. Module 2: “Demonstrating Financial Management System and Internal Controls Capability,” Module 3: “Applying for a Grant,” and Module 5: “Managing a Grant” are particularly helpful for this stage of the process. <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-grants-management-training-applicants-and-recipients>



5. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program Requirements

Provides a summary of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program and its requirements for grantees. <https://www.epa.gov/grants/disadvantaged-business-enterprise-program-requirements>