

Community Change Grant (CCG) Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance & Community Strength Plans

Community Change Technical Assistance

WEBINAR SERIES

ENDYNA

March 5, 2024





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Disclaimer

Disclaimer: This webinar is designed to describe and clarify aspects of the Community Change Grants Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). As an EPA technical assistance provider for this program, EnDyna, and its subcontractors, strive to present accurate information and technical assistance about the NOFO. However, none of the statements, advice, or opinions made by EnDyna or its subcontractors during this webinar constitute official EPA advice, interpretations, or positions.

In addition, EnDyna and its subcontractors will not provide any legal advice or interpretations during the webinar. Any legal issues will be sent to EPA for review. You are also free to contact your own outside counsel for legal advice. During this webinar, the presenters will not give individualized advice on specific applications, the merits of specific applications, or how an application may be evaluated and scored by EPA. If you need individualized technical assistance, please visit communitychangeta.org for further information.





Using the Q&A Function

Participant Q&A: Please use the Q&A function for your comments. We will attempt to answer as many questions as we can, but questions specific to an individual applicant or project will be addressed through individual TA.

EPA is regularly updating the *Frequently Asked Questions—Community Change Grants NOFO* (**found on the EPA's CCG Website** <https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/inflation-reduction-act-community-change-grants-program>).

No Soliciting will be allowed.





About This Webinar Series

Community Plans

Creating effective community-level plans, engagement models, and governance strategies

The CCG Program Offers:

- ✓ Unprecedented Opportunity: Funding for changemaking projects for healthier, safer, and more prosperous communities.
- ✓ Historic Support: Significant funding dedicated to overcoming deep-rooted environmental issues and fostering sustainable solutions for immediate and long-term community benefits.
- ✓ Community Engagement: as we will discuss today, grants are designed to foster community engagement





Today's Program

Welcome and Speakers

Community Plans

Summary of Scoring & Evaluation Criteria

References

Q & A Session

Closing Remarks





Featured Presenters



**Timothy
Nichol**
*Associate
Director,
Guidehouse*

- 15+ years experience supporting large scale projects, including federal grant programs, with reporting, budget, and schedule execution.

Webinar Areas: Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan NOFO



**Harrison
Phelan**
*Director,
Guidehouse*

- Oversees community engagement efforts for various people-driven initiatives across the country.
- Extensive experience working with state and local governments.

Webinar Areas: Community Engagement Best Practices



Introduction





The Community and Your CCG Application

Track 1:



Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan

1. Past Community Outreach and Engagement Conducted
2. Community Engagement Plan Implementation
3. Collaborative Governance Structure

NOFO Section I.G.

Track 1:



Community Strength Plan

1. Maximizing economic benefits of projects
2. Displacement Avoidance

NOFO Section I.G.





Track 1 Scoring and Evaluation Criteria



25 pts

Written Application: 155 pts Oral Presentation: 45 pts



Community Engagement & Collaborative Governance Plan

15 points

- Past Community Outreach and Engagement Conducted (4 points)
- Community Engagement Plan Implementation (6 points)
- Collaborative Governance Structure (5 points)

Maximum 10 pages



Community Strength Plan

10 points

- Maximizing Economic Benefits (5 points)
- Displacement Avoidance (5 points)

Maximum 5 pages





Objectives

- **Center Meaningful Community Engagement**
 - Conduct robust community engagement throughout the project — from design to implementation.
- **Build Community Strength**
 - Develop strategies to increase the likelihood that benefits of the investments accrue to existing residents of disadvantaged communities, both immediately and sustainably beyond the grant period.

NOFO Section I.G.





Scenario Applicant and a Proposed Project



- Coastal community prone to tropical storms.
- Disadvantaged Community per EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities Map



Project Team

Lead Applicant: Community based organization
Statutory Partner: Local Government / Community based organization
Collaborating Entities: City Council, Public Transit Authority, Local Community College, Transient Worker Advocacy Non-Profit



Proposed Project

Microgrid Installation for Community Energy Resilience
Climate Strategy:
#4 - Microgrid Installation for Community Energy Resilience
Pollution Strategy:
#2 - Outdoor Air Quality and Community Health Improvements





Microgrid Context

- A microgrid is a self-sufficient energy system that serves a discrete geographic footprint, such as a college campus, hospital complex, business center or neighborhood.
- Within microgrids are one or more kinds of distributed energy (solar panels, wind turbines, combined heat and power, generators) that produce its power. In addition, many newer microgrids contain energy storage, typically from batteries.
- Microgrid provides electricity and possibly heat and cooling for its customers, delivered via sophisticated software and control systems.



Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan





Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan



- This plan should describe how the applicant will engage, educate, and be responsive to community members throughout project development and / or implementation.
- There are three components.
- NOFO Section I.G contains detailed requirements.

1. Past Community Outreach & Engagement Conducted

Demonstrate what outreach and engagement methods were used to engage with the Project Area community

2. Community Engagement Plan Implementation

Demonstrate the specific community engagement methods, as well as how they will mitigate barriers and involve relevant stakeholders

3. Collaborative Governance Structure

Provide details regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Lead Applicant, Collaborating Entities, and community residents and / or community-selected representatives





1. Past Community Outreach & Engagement Conducted



NOFO Highlights:

- Draw from your own experience and describe the outreach and engagement methods used in previous projects to engage the community. Examples include specific neighborhoods or groups.

See NOFO Section I.G for complete requirements

Things to consider during plan development



Reflect on engagement to-date or from previous efforts
How did these methodologies impact or affect the implementation?



Work with community members to help identify the Project Area's most critical needs
Do previous projects and current community feedback inform your plan?



Consider when or how you or your partners last engaged with the community
What were the outcomes?





2. Community Engagement Plan Implementation (1 of 3)

Clear Methods for Engagement & Transparency



NOFO Highlights:

- Methods to involve diverse community participation.
- Transparent mechanisms to provide meaningful accountability to community needs and preferences.
- Community communication channels before, during, and after project implementation.

See NOFO Section I.G for complete requirements

Things to consider during plan development

- A multifaceted approach fosters broader awareness and participation.
- Keep in mind accessibility and select a range of approaches that provide access to all community members.



Communication

Website
Social media
Newsletters
Flyers
Webinars



Consultation

Townhalls
Focus Group
Surveys



Coordination

Summits
Networking
TA



Collaboration

Working Group
Task Force





2. Community Engagement Plan Implementation (2 of 3)



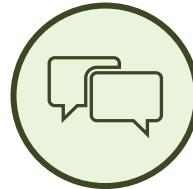
Mitigating Barriers

NOFO Highlights:

- How will the project minimize and mitigate barriers surrounding community participation during project development and implementation.

See NOFO Section I.G for complete requirements

Things to consider during plan development



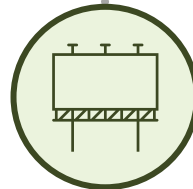
Consider linguistic differences

How will you accommodate for limited-English proficient and hearing-impaired members in the community?



Plan for communication challenges

Will there be a virtual option? How will you accommodate varying schedules?



Address difficulty in reaching all community segments

What platform will be used to advertise engagement opportunities?





2. Community Engagement Plan Implementation

(3 of 3)



Government Involvement

NOFO Highlights:

- Details how the support and involvement of government agencies will lead to successful performance.
- Consider the spectrum of government agencies from the Federal government, State agencies, Localities (county, city, political subdivisions) and Tribal governments.
- (If applicable) the previous collaboration with government agencies and planned activities to include government agencies throughout the project.

See NOFO Section I.G for complete requirements

Things to consider during plan development

- Early identification and engagement with relevant agencies enhances support and impacts awareness of the project.
- To be eligible for funding, Lead Applicant must include in the application a copy of a written and signed Partnership Agreement with the Statutory Partner that is legally binding. (Reference Appendix B for more information)



- There may be plan or policy changes that impact your project.
- Stay tuned to relevant city council/county commissioner/state hearings that may impact your project.



- Reach out to County and Municipal Governments or the Departments of Energy, Water, Public Health, Economic Development.
- Notify the following entities above of the Community Change Grant.





3. Collaborative Governance Structure



NOFO Highlights:

- Establish clear coordination strategies and transparent decision-making processes between the Lead Applicant and Collaborating Entities.
- Diverse outreach methods to ensure equitable participations.
- Processes for replacing Collaborating Entities to maintain project integrity (Requires EPA-Approval).

See NOFO Section I.G for complete requirements

Things to consider during plan development

- Plan for contingencies! How will you evaluate the replacement has comparable skills and community support?

The importance of a Collaborative Governance Structure:

What: An approach that is dedicated to public problem solving. Give community members a setting to express their opinions.

Who: Members of the community and other stakeholders. Create a structure that involves community decision making, debating issues, and cross-collaborating with other stakeholders to produce outcomes that have the power to benefit the community.

How: Create roles and give responsibility to community members and establish regular cadence to discuss project implementation.



Community Strength Plan





Community Strength Plan



- This plan should describe how the applicant will bolster the strength and economic prosperity of a community for the benefit of the residents.
- There are two components.
- NOFO Section I.G contains detailed requirements.

1. Maximizing Economic Benefits of Projects

Demonstrate how to maximize economic benefits for individuals in the Project Area through Business Opportunities, Job Opportunities, and Financial Savings.

2. Displacement Avoidance

Demonstrate an increase in benefits for community members both in the short and long term and assess displacement risks and incorporate mitigation strategies for current and future residents.





1. Maximizing Economic Benefits of Projects (1 of 3)



Business opportunities

NOFO Highlights:

- Steps taken to promote business opportunities within the project area.
- Plan to inform local businesses of open solicitations and encourage them to compete for contracts.
- **Make a “good faith effort” to provide** disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) with an opportunity to compete for contracts in **accordance with EPA’s 40 CFR Part 33** Disadvantaged Business Enterprise rule.

See NOFO Section I.G for complete requirements

Things to consider during plan development

- The Project must follow open (competitive) procurement processes when engaging with private businesses and needs to develop a plan to solicit and review multiple bids.





1. Maximizing Economic Benefits of Projects

(2 of 3)



Job opportunities

NOFO Highlights:

- Propose measures to facilitate the employment and retention of workers from disadvantaged communities on funded projects.
- Propose measures to increase community awareness of job opportunities and the associated skill requirements.
- Describe specific measures that will ensure Project Area residents are developing skills that are necessary to take advantage of existing or future jobs in professions contributing to the reduction of pollutants.

See NOFO Section I.G for complete requirements

Things to consider during plan development



Fund supportive services for workers on grant-funded projects

Consider partnering with local social service providers to support transportation, childcare, mental health for these workers.



Partner with your local workforce development board
The local workforce development board may be able to inform effective recruitment strategies in the Project Area.



Establish goals for hiring individuals from disadvantaged communities

How are you transparently tracking progress towards those goals?



Create high-quality jobs

Consider promoting best practices with contractors on equal opportunity hiring, benefits, organizational culture, and advancement.





1. Maximizing Economic Benefits of Projects

(3 of 3)



Financial Savings

NOFO Highlights:

- **The connection between the community's** direct economic benefits and the Climate Action and Pollution Reduction projects.
- How the project plans to deliver benefits for residents in both the short-term and long-term.

See NOFO Section I.G for complete requirements

Things to consider during plan development



Maximize economic benefits in the project area



Establish economic advantages of project initiatives



Negotiate for both short- and long-term benefits





2. Displacement Avoidance (1 of 2)



NOFO Highlights:

- Potential short-term and long-term risks associated with the proposed projects to residents, small businesses, non-profits, and other community members.
- **Assess the community's vulnerability to rising costs** and its potential impacts and navigate how to mitigate this risk.
- How to ensure benefits are kept within the community.

See NOFO Section I.G for complete requirements


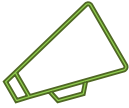






2. Displacement Avoidance (2 of 2)

Things to consider during plan development

- Describe any existing policies, ordinances, programs, or work underway in the Project Area that mitigates risk of displacement.

 <p>Government Collaboration</p>	 <p>Sample Outreach Approach</p>	 <p>Sample Climate Action and Pollution Strategy Approach</p>	 <p>Sample Landlord Approach</p>
<p>Describe how applicant will work with relevant entities, to create policies, plans, or programs to mitigate unintended impacts of EPA-funded investments.</p>	<p>Outreach to residents using information packets and workshops that feature information about tenant rights for a project that may have the unintended effect of raising rents.</p>	<p>A strategy that promotes increased housing density as a tool to reduce emissions could have the co-benefit of reducing housing costs by increasing housing supply.</p>	<p>Securing landlord commitments for EPA-funded property improvements to maintain affordable housing and prevent rent increases.</p>



Summary of Scoring and Evaluation Criteria





Track 1 Scoring and Evaluation Criteria



25 pts

Written Application: 155 pts Oral Presentation: 45 pts



Community Engagement & Collaborative Governance Plan

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Maximum 5 pages





Considerations



Strategize



- Plan early!
- Evaluate project strengths and highlight those, while strengthening weaknesses.

Engage



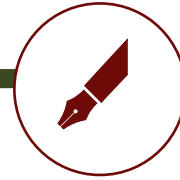
- Plan for community engagement now.
- Engage with community members through town halls, webinars, etc.

Design



- Be realistic with what you can accomplish.
- 3-year project duration.
- Define success and choose metrics.

Construct



- **Don't leave plan writing to the last minute.**
- Be specific, provide details on roles for Lead Applicant, Collaborating Entities, and community residents.
- Keep page limits in mind.

Review



- Evaluate contractual implications.
- De-conflict meetings.



Plans Complete



Resources and priorities aligned



A common vision on the approach moving forward



Engaged and accountable stakeholders

Prepare your applications now!

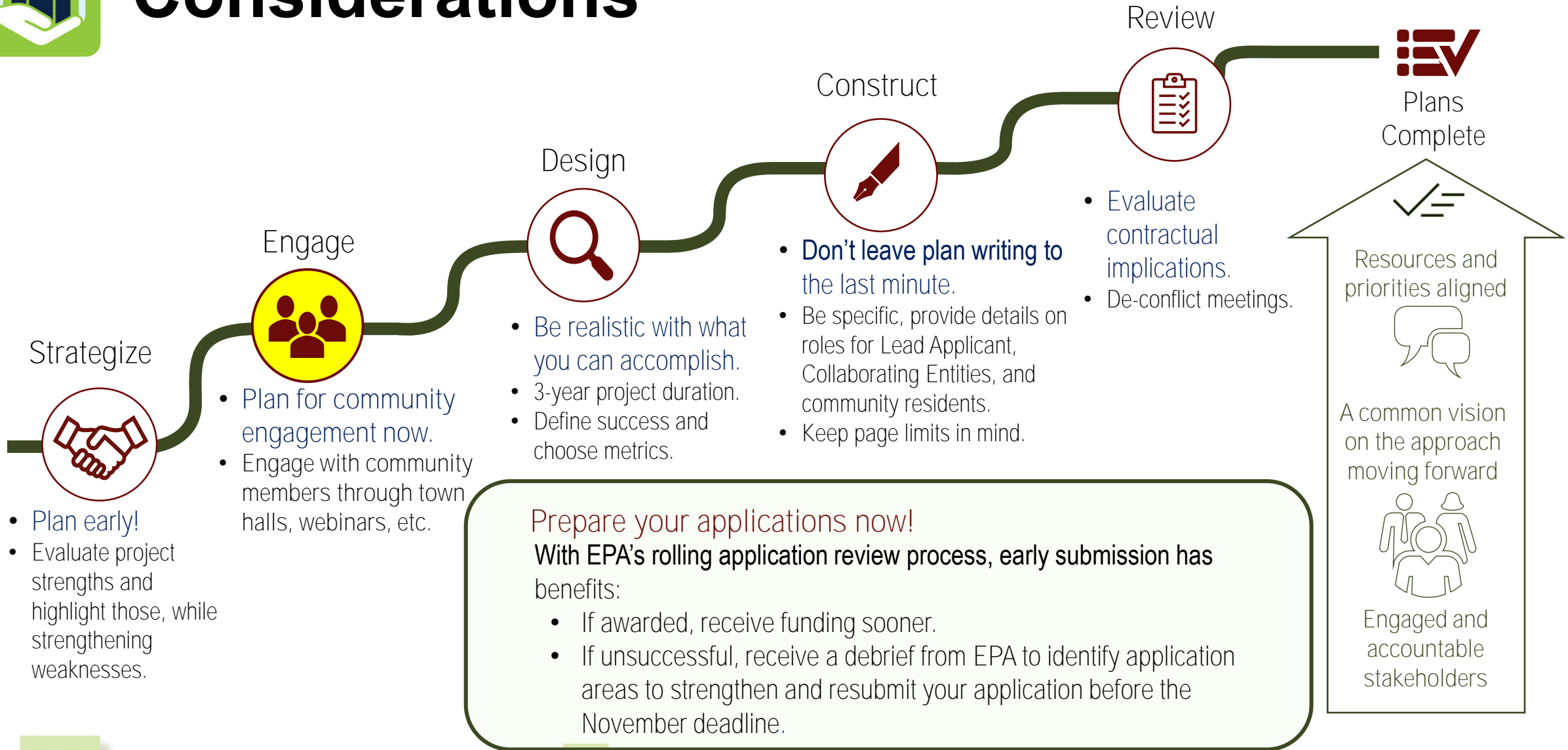
With EPA's rolling application review process, early submission has benefits:

- If awarded, receive funding sooner.
- If unsuccessful, receive a debrief from EPA to identify application areas to strengthen and resubmit your application before the November deadline.



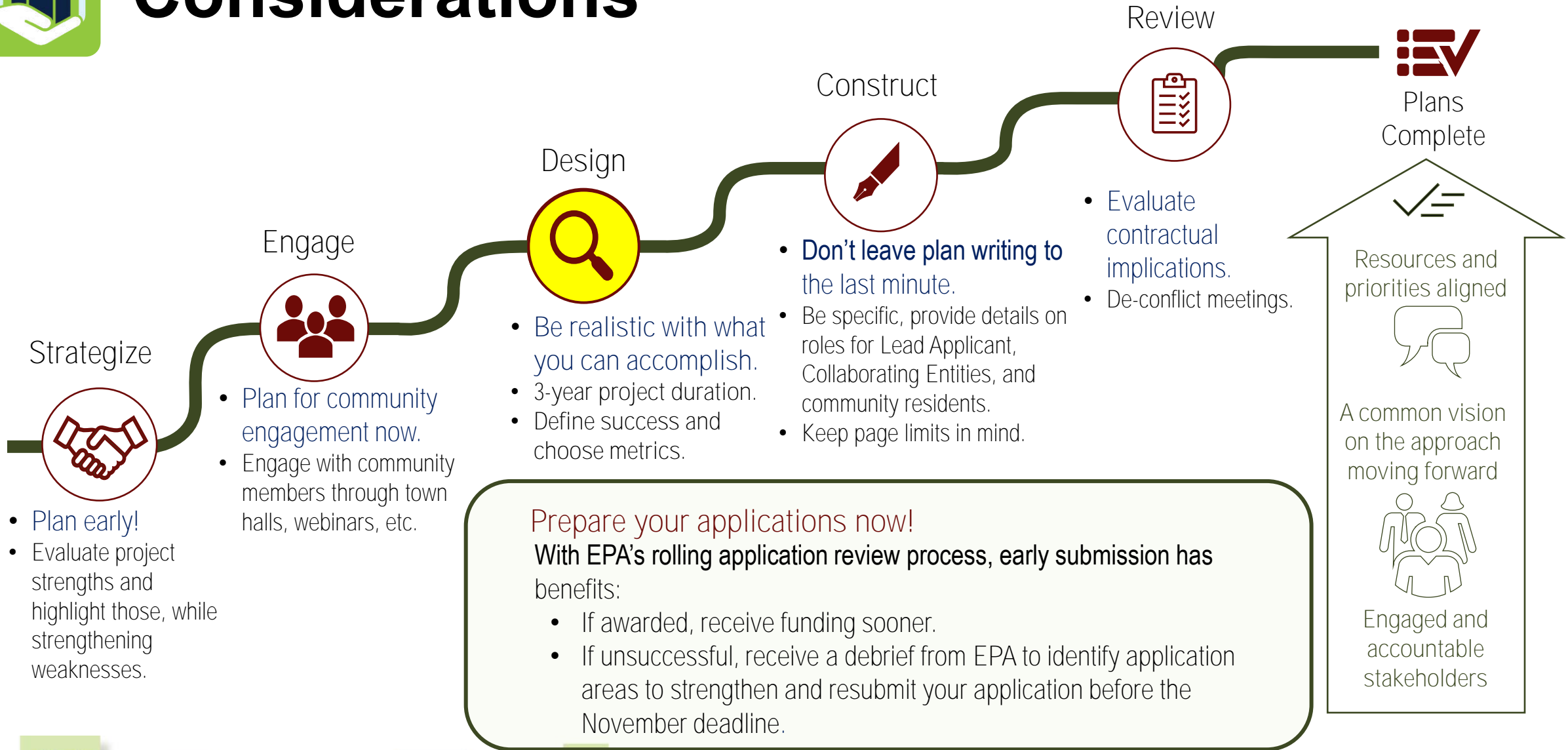


Considerations



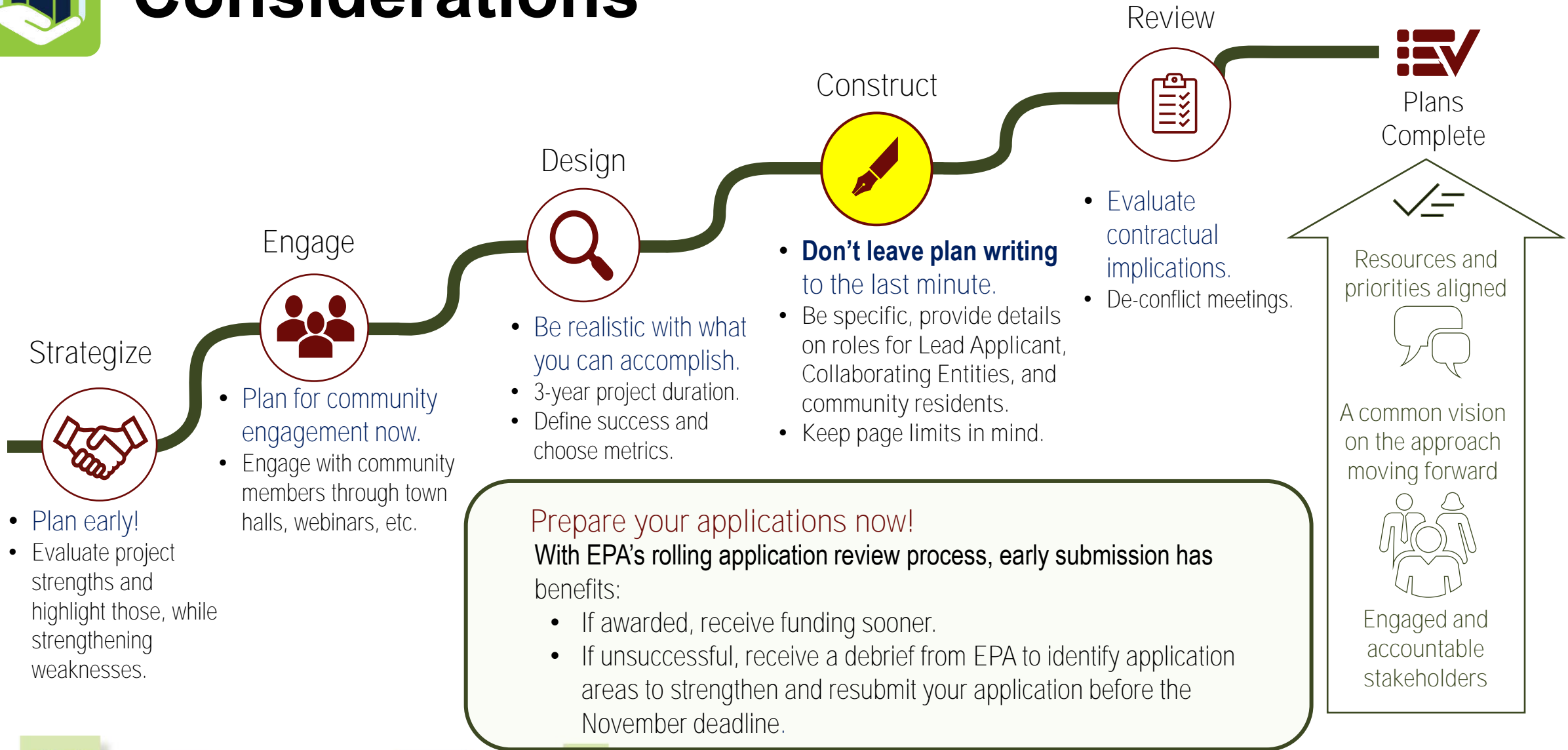


Considerations



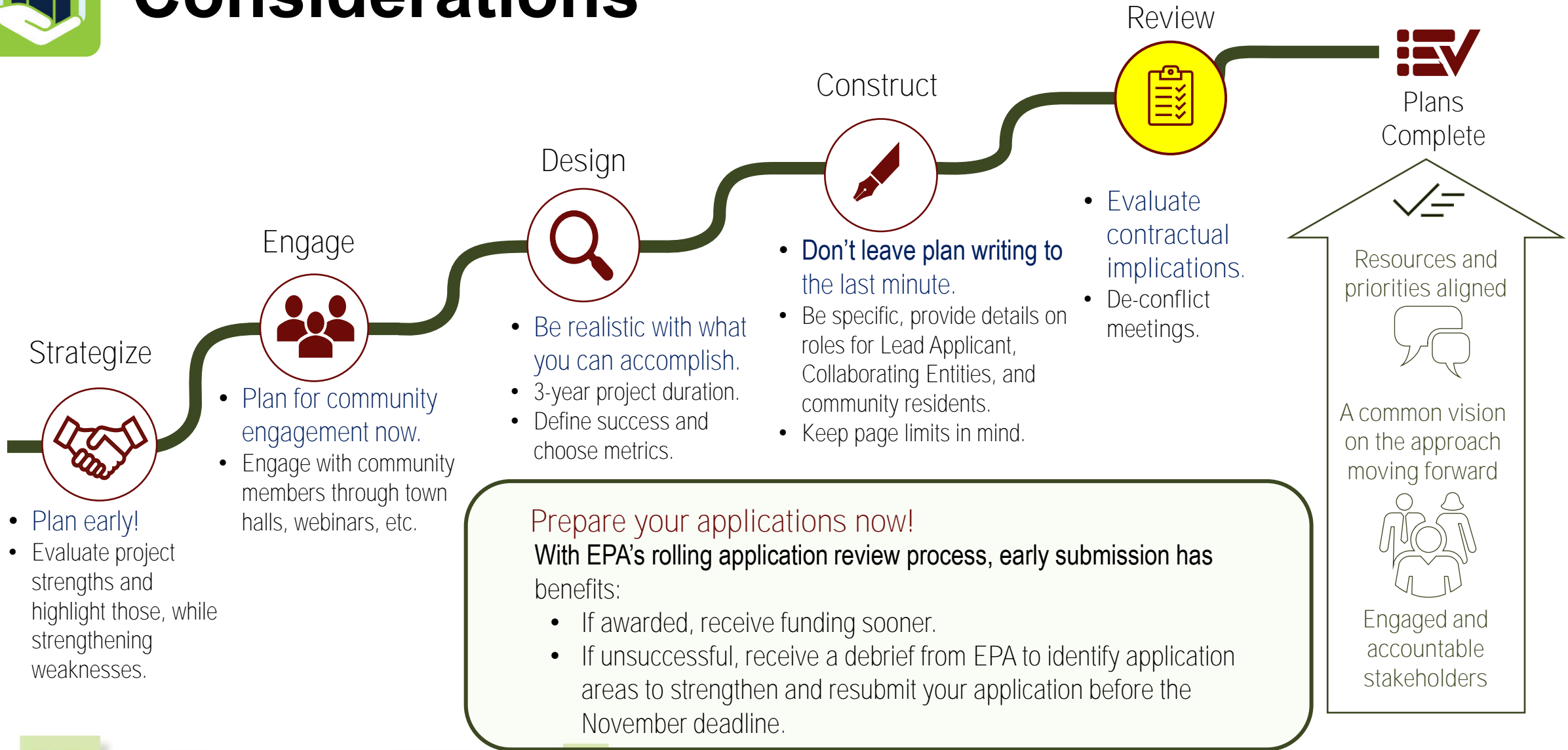


Considerations



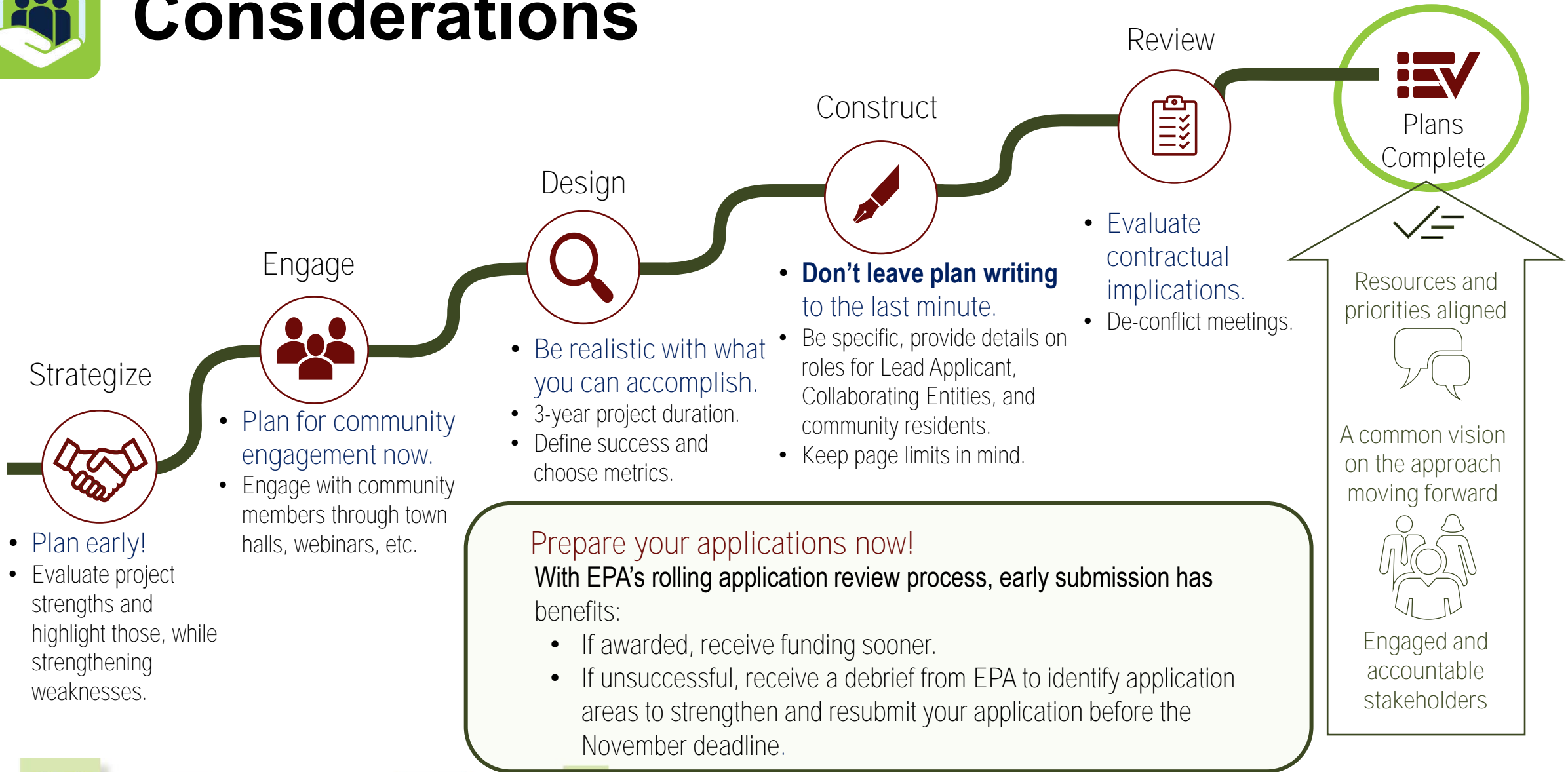


Considerations





Considerations



Prepare your applications now!
 With EPA's rolling application review process, early submission has benefits:

- If awarded, receive funding sooner.
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References





References

Applicants can use following lists for additional guidance and suggestions

CCG NOFO	EPA Community Change Grants Notice of Funding Opportunity <i>(Please note that the current link takes you to the landing page that has the most current version of the NOFO)</i>
Executive Order 14096	Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All
Good Faith Efforts	EPA's 40 CFR Part 33 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise rule
Good Jobs Principles	The Good Jobs Initiative U.S. Department of Labor (dol.gov) <i>(Appendix E)</i>
Office of Grants and Debarment	Guidance on Selected Items of Cost for Recipients
Participant Support Costs	EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs
Subaward FAQs	EPA Subaward Policy Frequent Questions



Q & A

- Use Q & A chat feature
- Selection of FAQs





Selection of FAQs

Does the 20-page limit for the Track I Project Narrative include the Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan and Community Strength Plan or are there separate page limits for the plans?

- This was clarified in the modification to the NOFO that was published on December 21, 2023. The application requirements are described in Section IV.B of the NOFO. The Track I Project Narrative 20- page limit does not include the Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance or Community Strength Plans. There are separate page limits for those plans. Please see the relevant parts of the Section IV.B Track I application requirements.

All FAQs are available online at:

<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-02/community-change-grants-nofo-faq-2.1.2024.pdf>





Selection of FAQs

Can a Track I application include projects with activities that are carried out on a regional, county, or statewide basis?

- While a regional, county, or statewide project may technically be eligible, depending on the specific content of an application, it may be unlikely that such an application would score well and be successful considering the NOFO evaluation criteria, objectives, and requirements. See more info in FAQ.

All FAQs are available online at:

<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-02/community-change-grants-nofo-faq-2.1.2024.pdf>





Questions Submitted During Registration

- *For budgeting under the grant are you looking for evidence of seeking bids from different vendors?*
- *Is there a standard method for the public to express feedback on the quality of a community engagement event?*
- *Is this grant only for disadvantaged communities?*



Closing Remarks

- Key Messages
- TA Update
- Next Steps

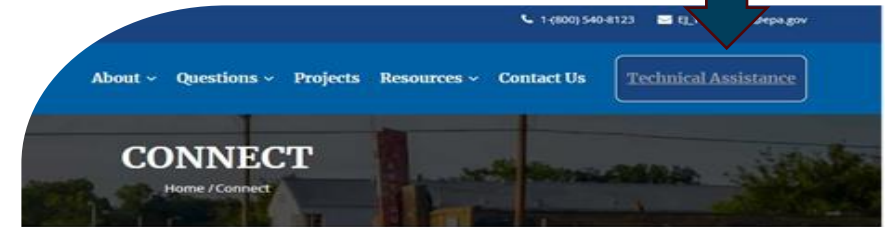


Key Messages

- Review & understand NOFO requirements and evaluation criteria.
- **Make sure to keep in mind “Things to Consider” as you begin drafting your application.**
- Understand the “Why” behind these plans.
- Be cognizant of page limits.



Matching TA Needs with Expert TA Providers



www.communitychangeta.org

Community Change Grants Technical Assistance Request Form

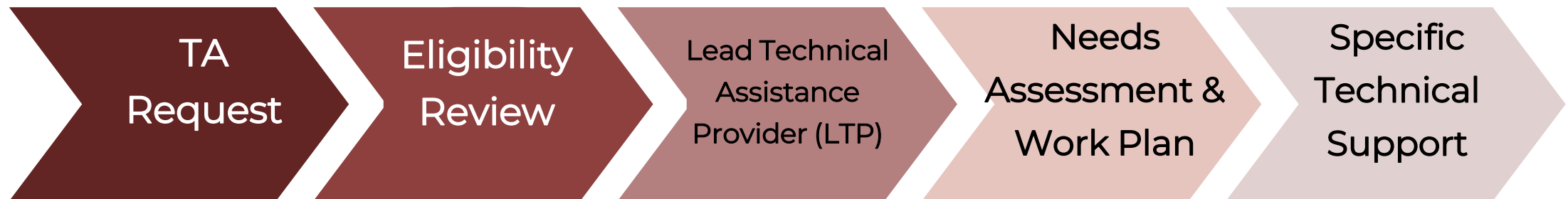
OMB Control No: 2030-0051

Expiration Date: 05/31/2024

This form is to express interest in receiving technical assistance (TA) for the EPA Environmental and Climate Justice Program's [Community Change Grants \(Community Change Grants\)](#).

To request TA for preparing a Community Change Grant application, please fill out this form or call 1 (800) 540-8123 if you have any questions or need help in filling out the form.

Receiving TA does not guarantee that you will receive funding under any EPA program or other program. If you have any questions or concerns about this form, please contact: EL_TechAssist@epa.gov.





Community Change Technical Assistance (CCTA) Webinar Series Schedule

All sessions at 3pm ET, Tuesdays

30 JAN

**Kickoff & Program
Overview**

TA Process, CCG Overview

6 FEB

Eligibility & Partnerships

Applicant Criteria,
Partnership Dynamics

13 FEB

**Defining Disadvantaged
Communities**

Community Mapping, EJ
Indicators

20 FEB

CCG NOFO Track I Overview

Project Strategies,
Community Needs

27 FEB

CCG NOFO Track II Overview

Policy, Capacity Building

5 MAR

**Community Engagement &
Governance**

Engagement Models,
Governance Strategies

12 MAR

**Federal Grants Requirements
& Compliance**

Compliance Requirements

19 MAR

Preparing a Grant Budget

Budgeting Techniques

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Thank You.



- ❑ **CommunityChangeTA.org is LIVE NOW**
 - Visit [CommunityChangeTA.org/webinars](https://www.communitychange.org/webinars) to view a recording of today's webinar, as well as register for upcoming webinars.
 - Today's recording will be posted within 24 hours of today's presentation.

- ❑ ***EPA FAQs - Community Change Grants NOFO***
 - Visit the EPA's CCG Website <https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/inflation-reduction-act-community-change-grants-program>

- ❑ **Still have Technical Assistance questions?**
 - Send your Community Change Technical Assistance questions to EJ_TechAssist@epa.gov or call [1-\(800\) 540-8123](tel:1-800-540-8123)