

# From ARPA SLFRF Lessons to Grant Readiness

## Municipal Self-Assessment & Action Planner

This assessment has been created by the Maryland Municipal Technical Assistance Program (MTAP) to identify what ARPA SLFRF taught your municipality, assess current grant-management capacity, and define the next steps needed to strengthen readiness for future federal funding. This tool supports internal reflection and planning only, and is not a substitute for local policy, legal review, or grant-specific guidance.

### Part 1: Self-Assessment

For each area below, choose one rating. Areas that have not yet been established or are not yet in progress can be considered top areas for focus for municipalities.

| Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |
|---------|-------------|-------------------|
|---------|-------------|-------------------|

#### Roles and Responsibilities

|                                                                                              |         |             |                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------------|
| Are grant roles clearly assigned across finance, program, procurement, and leadership staff? | Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |
| Do staff know who approves decisions, tracks spending, and maintains records?                | Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |
| Is there a plan for cross-training or coverage when staff are unavailable?                   | Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |
| What is the most important takeaway from your municipality's answers to the section above?   |         |             |                   |

#### Documentation and Recordkeeping

|                                                                                            |         |             |                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------------|
| Are grant files complete, organized, and easy to locate?                                   | Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |
| Are decisions, approvals, invoices, and supporting documents consistently retained?        | Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |
| Are file storage practices standardized?                                                   | Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |
| What is the most important takeaway from your municipality's answers to the section above? |         |             |                   |

#### Internal Controls and Oversight

|                                                                                                             |         |             |                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------------|
| Are expenditures reviewed before they are charged to a grant? If so, is it understood who must review them? | Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |
| Are reconciliations or monitoring checks completed during the grant period?                                 | Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |
| Are approval steps and oversight responsibilities written down and followed consistently?                   | Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |
| What is the most important takeaway from your municipality's answers to the section above?                  |         |             |                   |

#### Procurement and Contract Management

|                                                                                  |         |             |                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------------|
| Are procurement requirements understood before funds are committed?              | Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |
| Do contracts clearly define deliverables, timelines, and reporting expectations? | Not Yet | In Progress | Fully Established |

|                                                                                                                           |                |                    |                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Are vendors or contractors monitored throughout the project period? If so, is it understood who completed the monitoring? | <b>Not Yet</b> | <b>In Progress</b> | <b>Fully Established</b> |
| <i>What is the most important takeaway from your municipality's answers to the section above?</i>                         |                |                    |                          |

## Part 2: Strategic Priority Scan & Action Plan

After reviewing the sections above, identify where to focus first.

Which area above is of highest priority for my municipality right now, and what resources, tools, or staff support are needed to work toward it?

Looking ahead to the next 30 days: What can we do immediately?

- ☐ Standardize one process.
- ☐ Assign one responsible staff member to handle grants management.
- ☐ Create or update one template, checklist, or workflow.
- ☐ Organize one set of grant records.
- ☐ Other:

What should be in place within 90 days?

- ☐ Formalize one policy or procedure.
- ☐ Cross train staff involved in grants.
- ☐ Test the new process on a current or mock grant application.
- ☐ Review responsibilities and approval paths.
- ☐ Other:

What should be strengthened for long-term readiness over the next 6 months?

- ☐ Incorporate lessons learned into routine operations and procedures.
- ☐ Update internal controls, forms, and training materials.
- ☐ Conduct a full internal review of grant readiness.
- ☐ Build grant administration practices into standard municipal procedures.
- ☐ Other:

## Capacity Commitments

Biggest lesson from SLFRF:

System we need to strengthen most:

As a result, the first thing we do will be:

Person or department responsible for accomplishing this:

Date to review progress toward goal: