Checklist for Appalachian Regional Commission Construction Project Applications

All applicants requesting ARC investment funding should use this checklist to develop a complete project application. The framework for the checklist is based on ARC's Strategic Plan which emphasizes strategic focus, collaboration, sustainability, and measurable impact.

In the column at left, list the page in the application where the required information can be found. Place the checklist in the finished application after the required application forms (Section2). Submit completed applications to the state ARC program office.

SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Provide a 2-page executive summary of project goals and strategies, purpose, key activities, strategic rationale, collaborative partnerships, project sustainability and capacity, and impact measures. See the Executive Summary template for format and guidance.

SECTION 2: REQUIRED APPLICATION FORMS

(See SF-424s and contact your state ARC Program Manager)
Attach the required application forms to the front of application packet, behind the executive summary.

- Federal Standard Form 424: Application for Federal Assistance (Include ARC funds and all matching funds)
- Federal Standard Form 424C (Budget Information)
- Federal Standard Form 424D (Construction Assurances)
- ARC Memorandum of Understanding

SECTION 3: PROJECT NARRATIVE

Formatting instructions: Use the headings below as headings in the project narrative. The suggested length of the narrative is 5-8 pages. Please number the pages.

1. Goals and Strategies

- List the primary ARC goal and the primary ARC objective the project will address (one goal and one objective only). See ARC Strategic Plan for a list of ARC goals and objectives.
- List the primary ARC state strategy the project will address. See pages 9-15 of the West Virginia ARC Technical Assistance Guide.

2. Project Description

- Provide a one- to two- sentence statement that describes the project's overall purpose, main activities, and expected impacts. This statement can also be used as the purpose statement in the Executive Summary.
- Provide a detailed work plan, including a description of all major project activities (what will be done, who will complete each activity) and timelines for each activity during the course of the project.
- Identify the counties where the proposed project will be based and the counties in the project's entire service area. If the project is not county-wide, identify the census tracts of the project's entire service area.
- Attach maps to illustrate the project's service area and detailed maps or schematics that show the route of utility systems, diagrams of building sites, and floorplans of buildings to be constructed.
- Provide, as an attachment, a preliminary engineering report, an architectural report, or a detailed description of all major construction components. Include details, such as linear feet to be constructed, square footage built, acreage served, and timelines for starting and completing each component.
- For projects where energy-efficiency can be improved (in the scope of the project), discuss efforts that may have been made to improve the energy-efficiency and green-building practices of the project, as outlined in the ARC Project Guidelines.

SECTION 3: PROJECT NARRATIVE, cont'd.

- For industrial sites or community facilities, describe approaches to marketing the project to potential users and beneficiaries, including strategic sectors to be pursued and an explanation of who will be responsible for marketing activities. Describe any plans for leasing or transferring ownership of the property, if applicable.

3. Strategic Rationale

- Describe any problems, opportunities, or local/regional demand that the project will address and how these issues impact the community.
- Explain why the proposed project is the most practical, cost-effective, and beneficial way to achieve the desired results when compared to alternative approaches.
- Explain how the proposed project represents progress toward addressing a regional strategy, such as a comprehensive economic development strategy or a local visioning process.
- Describe other project benefits likely to result from the project (e.g., positive impact on future economic development activity in the area).
- Describe how the project addresses the investment impact criteria listed on page 17 of the West Virginia ARC Technical Assistance Guide.
- For residential service projects in non-distressed counties, explain how the project meets the "Policy for Residential Infrastructure Projects" as described on page 8 of the West Virginia ARC Technical Assistance Guide.

4. Collaborative Partnerships

- Describe any partnerships or collaborations with other local community, state, regional, and federal partners in the development of the proposal.
- Provide letters of engagement from partner organizations that commit to undertake specific activities in support of the project.

5. Project Sustainability and Capacity

- Identify the organization or agency that will own improvements and provide maintenance for the completed project.
- Describe strategy for ensuring the project's long-term financial and operational sustainability (e.g., five-year pro forma financial projections).

6. Impact Measures

- List the expected outputs and outcomes of the project. See the Guide to ARC Project Performance Measures for information on identifying outputs and outcomes.
- Provide a credible and established methodology for estimating each impact measure that results from the project.
- If project has "jobs created," "jobs retained," or "leveraged private investment" as an impact measure, attach letters documenting job or investment commitments, if available.
- If the project's performance measurers include a paired outcome such as "businesses, communities, households, organizations, participants, patients, students, or workers/trainees improved," provide a definition of what improvement means and an explanation for how the improvement will be tracked and measured.
- For infrastructure projects, breakdown customers served and improved by residential, commercial, and community.

SECTION 4: BUDGET INFORMATION AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS
1. Engineering or Architectural Budget

- Provide an engineering or architectural budget detailing line item project costs. The project total from the engineering or architectural budget should match the total on Standard Form 424. (Note that for construction projects only, ARC does not require a breakdown of expenditures by funding source)

SECTION 4: BUDGET INFORMATION AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS, cont'd

- Attach the full Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) as an attachment at the end of the application (do not change the original page numbers)
- If the ARC Project is part of a larger, multi-phase project, provide only the detailed budget information that corresponds to the total budget for the ARC and matching funds. Example: a proposed ARC project includes $500,000 of ARC funds and $1.5 million of matching funds. The $2 million project is part of a $10 million multi-phase project. Applicant will provide detailed budget information only for the scope of the $2 million ARC project and will describe the rest of the larger $10 million project in the Project Narrative section.
- If budget includes land or buildings, provide a MAI appraisal or comparable appraisal.

2. Non-ARC Funding Commitments
- Identify each non-ARC funding source as federal, state, local, or private. Include a letter of commitment from each funding source that specifies the amount of funds committed and the kind of funds committed (grant, loan, cash, in-kind, etc.).
- Provide descriptions of in-kind resources, including the methods used to determine their value.

3. ARC Match Rate Calculation
- List each county the project will serve and the economic status of each county. See page 3 of the West Virginia ARC Technical Assistance Guide for county designations and match rates.

4. Additional Documentation
- For infrastructure projects, attach all IJDC review comments behind the PER
- Enclose pertinent supporting materials that will lead to a better understanding of the proposed project.
- Do not include form letters.
- Only include financial audits or utility rate structure information if they are needed to demonstrate project sustainability. Summarized financial statements or pro forma financial projections are preferred.

5. Basic Agency Letter Committing to Administer ARC Funds
- Address the letter to the Executive Director of the Appalachian Regional Commission.
- The letter must state the basic agency's willingness to administer the project if approved by ARC; the ARC grant amount; the total matching funds amount; the total project cost; the primary basic agency contact person(s) for project management and financial management of the grant.
- For projects that will be administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program or CDBG Entitlement program, the HUD certification form is the basic agency commitment letter.

Reference Documents:

ARC Project Guidelines
http://www.arc.gov/publications/ARCProjectGuidelinesContents.asp