

Prince George's County  
Planning Department

# Municipal Grant Writing Workshop Series

*Workshop #1: Grant  
Program Planning*

February 18, 2026



# Municipal Grant Writing Workshop

*This workshop is brought to you by the Prince George's County Planning Department's Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities (PAMC) Program, which provides free technical assistance funding for municipalities and communities who are interested in revitalizing and enhancing the appearance and function of their communities.*

# PAMC



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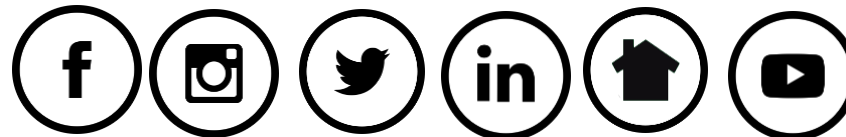
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# Roll Call

- Berwyn Heights
- Bladensburg
- Bowie
- Brentwood
- Capitol Heights
- Cheverly
- College Park
- Colmar Manor
- Cottage City
- District Heights
- Eagle Harbor
- Edmonston
- Fairmount Heights
- Forest Heights
- Glenarden
- Greenbelt
- Hyattsville
- Landover Hills
- Morningside
- Mount Rainier
- New Carrollton
- North Brentwood
- Riverdale Park
- Seat Pleasant
- University Park
- Upper Marlboro



Source: Riverdale Park

# Meet Your Presenters



***Jamie Kendrick, AICP***

- Public agency, non-profit, and private sector planning and consulting experience
- Transportation, land use and community development focused
- Grant program planning and execution



***Sandra Chaney***

- Non-profit strategist, certified empowerment coach, and author with more than 20 years of experience
- Health and human services
- Grant review and compliance



***Jaime Phillips***

- Public agency and private sector planning experience
- Transportation, aviation, and sustainability focus
- Specialist in visuals, communication, and public engagement

# Participant Interviews – What We Heard

## Survey Summary

- **12 municipalities responded by phone or in writing**
- **Respondents included**
  - Dedicated grant writers
  - Councilmembers
  - Other professional staff
- **Most common requests**
  - Long-term grant planning and tracking
  - Grant research and identification
  - Role of grant writer vs. project manager

## Key Funding Needs

- 1 Stormwater & Green Infrastructure**
- 2 Sidewalks & Trails**
- 3 Arts & Culture**
- 4 Parks, Recreation & Playgrounds**



Source: Jaime Phillips



Source: PowerPoint Stock



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Session Descriptions



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## **Grant Program Planning**

- Needs & opportunities
- Capacity to deliver
- Assessing grant opportunities

## **Post-Workshop Session**

MD Department of Transportation



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## **Project Definition & Grant Alignment**

- Purpose & need
- Expected outcomes
- Project delivery
- Grant requirements and evaluation

## **Post-Workshop Session**

MD Department of Housing & Community Development



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## **Writing & Responding**

- Compelling narrative
- Respond to prompts
- Common grant writing mistakes
- Budgets and schedules

## **Post-Workshop Session**

MD Department of Natural Resources



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## **Implementation & Compliance**

- Post-award responsibilities
- Compliance and legal requirements

## **Post-Workshop Session**

TBD based on participant feedback

# This Week's Case Study

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Port Deposit Marina Park



# Port Deposit Marina Park Rehabilitation and Resilience Project

## Site Legacy

In the early 1980s, Marina Park was part of the launch area for the steel tube sections that made up Baltimore's Fort McHenry Tunnel. The south end of Marina Park was home to the Town's Wastewater Treatment Plant.



# Port Deposit Marina Park Rehabilitation and Resilience Project

## Current Use

The former Wastewater Treatment Plant site was never restored and is today used informally for boat trailer parking, fishing, and on occasion, illegal dumping.



# Port Deposit Marina Park Rehabilitation and Resilience Project

## Site Conditions

Today, the site is a hard packed gravel lot with three boat ramps and a picnic table. Access is via MD 222 by crossing an active Norfolk Southern rail, and on foot or by bike the Town promenade extends only to the north end of the park. The stormwater culvert is failing; seawall is falling into the river; and the site frequently floods from storm surge and when the Conowingo Dam opens during heavy rains. **Nevertheless**, there are stunning views of the Susquehanna River and quadruple bridges to the south, abundant fish and wildlife, and 20-minute access to key sites on the Chesapeake Bay.



# Port Deposit Marina Park Rehabilitation and Resilience Project

## The Vision

- Extend promenade to Marina Park
- Include a two-bay boat ramp, trailer parking, fishing pier, living shoreline, scenic overlook and picnic area
- Northernmost boat launch along the Susquehanna and NPS Capital John A. Smith National Water Trail
- Endangered Northern Map Turtle and Great Blue Heron nesting

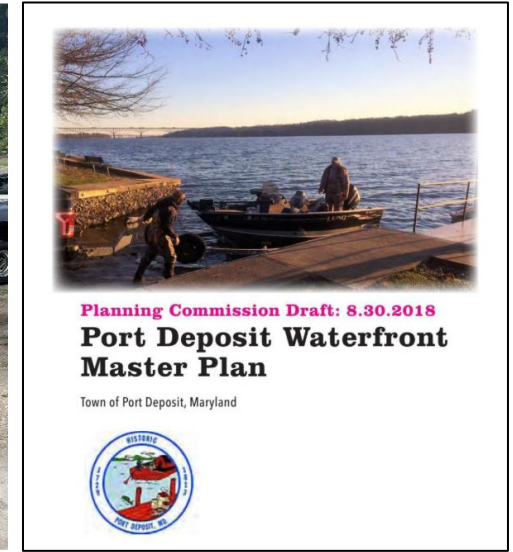


- Estimated budget of \$9.5M inclusive of all construction and related costs
- Opportunities for breakout projects exist but core infrastructure is \$6 - \$7M

# Port Deposit Marina Park Rehabilitation and Resilience Project

## Planning & Design

- **2018:** Funding from NOAA and DNR allowed creation of a *Working Waterfront Master Plan* which initially conceived the vision for a new Marina Park
- **Sept 2024:** The Town was awarded \$750,000 from the SHA/ FHWA Transportation Alternatives Program to fully fund design, permitting and construction documents
- **Mid-2025:** A project advisory committee began to meet and site planning began
- **Dec 2025:** Representatives from MDE, Critical Areas Commission, DNR, USACE, FWS, and others attended a pre-application meeting to begin the permitting process
- **Jan 2026:** 30% design plans submitted to SHA



# Grant Program Planning

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- *The Lifecycle of a Grant*
- *Your Role as a Grant Writer*
- *Opportunity Costs*





Source: PowerPoint Stock

# We need a grant to...

and we need the money in July!

Because the roof is going to cave in!

and it's really important to the Mayor!

Oh, and it's due next Friday!

# What are some of the consequences of applying for a grant?

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RAISE YOUR HAND OR TYPE INTO CHAT BOX



# Grant Planning and Award Consequences

- **Happy community and stakeholders!** (except for the people that don't like the project)
- **Meeting a community need** (but not that community need)
- **Time and effort to prepare and apply** (for this grant and 12 others)
- **Grant programs operate on their own schedule** (not necessarily yours!)
- **May need matching funds** (yes, cash)
- **Someone needs to do the work** (not the grant writer)
- **Project maintenance** (also not the grant writer)
- **Paperwork and compliance** (or you don't get your money)

## Opportunity Cost

The benefit or gain you give up by choosing one option over another.

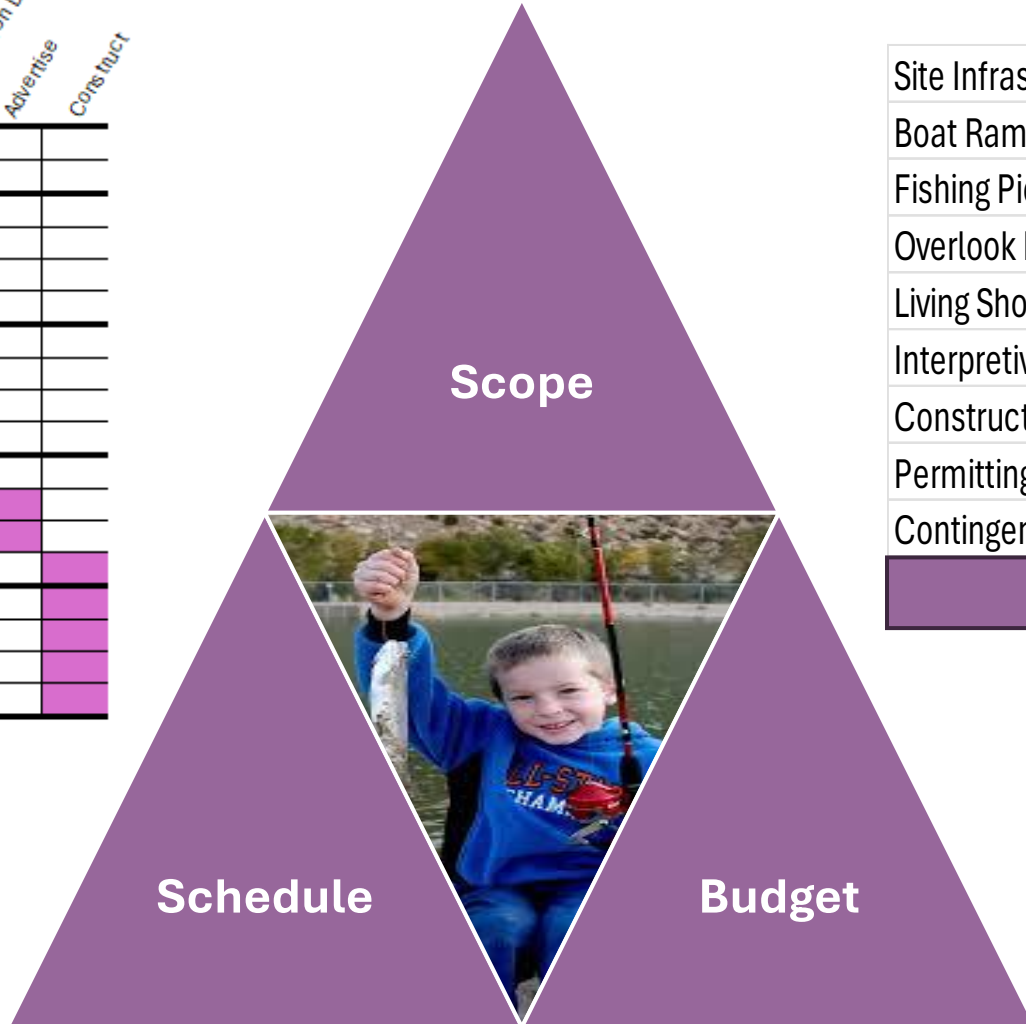
# Grants Have a Full Life-Cycle

The grant writer must:

- Know the project(s) scope, schedule, and budget
- Help prioritize needs and wants
- Know the funder(s) and eligible use(s) of grant funds
- Assess organizational capacity to deliver at all phases
- Create a plan that matches organizational goals with fund sources and uses



# Know The Project



Site Infrastructure (Parking Lot, Utilities, etc.)	\$ 3,500,000
Boat Ramp	\$ 1,200,000
Fishing Pier	\$ 1,200,000
Overlook Pier	\$ 800,000
Living Shoreline	\$ 700,000
Interpretive Exhibits & Public Art	\$ 150,000
Construction Management & Inspections	\$ 700,000
Permitting/Mitigation	\$ 200,000
Contingency	\$ 1,000,000
<b>Total = \$9.5 Million</b>	

# Help Prioritize Needs vs. Wants



# Know Your Funders

1 Federal agencies

2 State agencies

3 County/regional agencies

4 Private foundations

*Each has a different set of expectations and ability to work with you at each phase in terms of...*

- Application preparation or pre-review
- Grant agreement (or debrief, if unsuccessful)
- Scope changes
- Regulatory flexibility
- Compliance processes
- Budget and schedule



# Assess Organizational Capacity To Deliver

- Where does this fit in your comprehensive or strategic plan?
- Is the leadership (staff and/or elected officials) on board?
- Have you performed a project like this before?
- Who will manage the grant?
- Who will perform the work?
- Do you have the matching funds available? Financial stability? What about cost overruns?
- Do you have the systems in place for compliance?



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Your Turn

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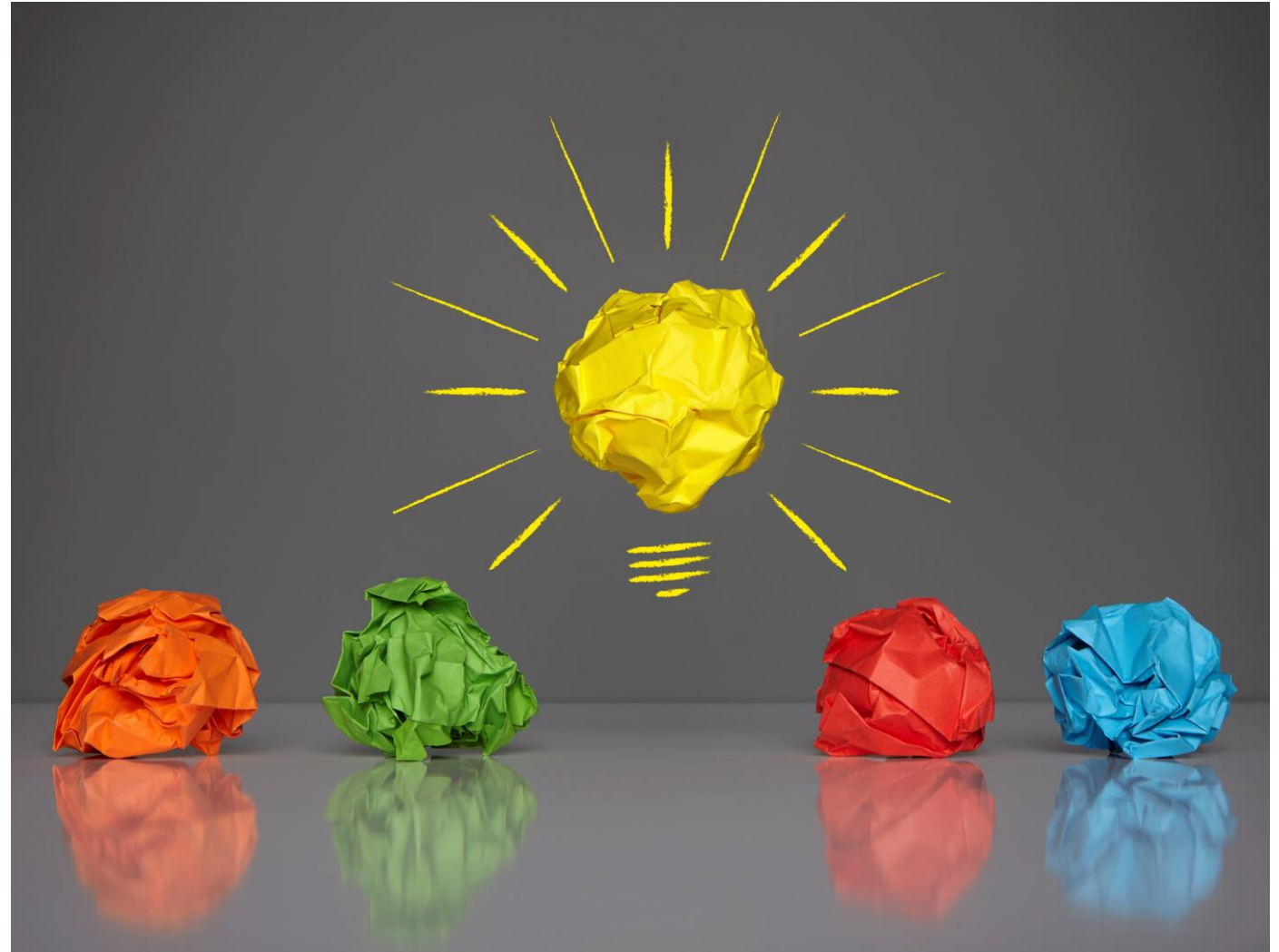
*Let's get to work*



# Individual Exercise

*Identify a project for which your organization might seek a grant.*

- **What is the purpose of the project?**
- **Is it a need or a want?**
- **How much does it cost?**
- **Can the project be phased or segmented?**
- **Who is in charge of the project?**
- **When do you need the money?**
- **Who are the potential funders?**



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Exercise Form #1

<b>GRANT PROGRAM PLANNING</b> Exercise #1 – Defining the Project	
<b>Project description</b>	
<b>Need or want?</b>	
<b>Phases/Segments/Elements?</b>	
<b>Who is in charge of the project?</b>	
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	
<b>When do you want to get started in the project?</b>	
<b>Who are the potential funders?</b>	

# Group Exercise

(We will be broken into 4 group to ask questions)

- **Where did this project originate?**
- **Where is your leadership on the project?**
- **What is the status of planning/design?**
- **Who is in charge of the project?**
- **Have we managed a project like this before?**
- **How much money can your organization contribute vs. how much do you need to raise through grants and contributions?**



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Assessing Grant Opportunities

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*Matching Sources, Uses, and Schedules*





Source: PowerPoint Stock

# I found this grant that...

It's easy to apply for...

And we have plenty of time!

And I know the funder...

But it can only be used for...

# Matching Uses & Sources

## Uses

Site Infrastructure (Parking Lot, Utilities, etc.)	\$ 3,500,000
Boat Ramp	\$ 1,200,000
Fishing Pier	\$ 1,200,000
Overlook Pier	\$ 800,000
Living Shoreline	\$ 700,000
Interpretive Exhibits & Public Art	\$ 150,000
Construction Management & Inspections	\$ 700,000
Permitting/Mitigation	\$ 200,000
Contingency	\$ 1,000,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 9,450,000</b>

Needs

Wants

Cost of Doing  
Business

# Matching Uses & Sources

## Uses

Site Infrastructure (Parking Lot, Utilities, etc.)	\$ 3,500,000
Boat Ramp	\$ 1,200,000
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Contingency	\$ 1,000,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 9,450,000</b>

## Sources

Transpo Alternatives Construction	\$ 5,000,000
Maryland State Arts Council	\$ 50,000
Congressional Earmark	\$ 750,000
State Bond Bill	\$ 250,000
DNR Waterways	\$ 700,000
FHWA Fed Lands Access	\$ 500,000
DNR Shoreline	\$ 500,000
DNR Program Open Space	\$ 750,000
County Contribution	\$ 200,000
Heritage Areas	\$ 50,000
Exelon/Conowingo Settlement	\$ 250,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 9,000,000</b>

### Private/Other Public

Foundations/Corporate	\$ 500,000
Town Capital Budget	\$ 500,000
Sweat Equity/Town Staff	\$ 100,000
Launch Fees/Permits	\$ 25,000
Buy A Brick	\$ 20,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 1,145,000</b>

Needs

Wants

Cost of Doing  
Business

Most  
Flexible

# Matching Uses & Sources

## Uses

Site Infrastructure (Parking Lot, Utilities, etc.)	\$ 3,500,000
Boat Ramp	\$ 1,200,000
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Needs

Wants

Cost of Doing Business

Most Flexible

### Private/Other Public

Foundations/Corporate	\$ 500,000
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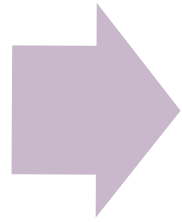
# Matching Uses, Sources, and Schedules

**The most prudent approach is to have all funds in hand at the time of advertisement.**

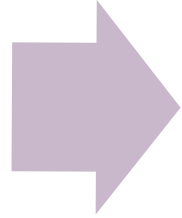
**The application is submitted!**

**We won the grant!**

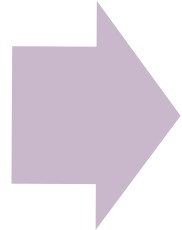
**Why haven't we started yet?**



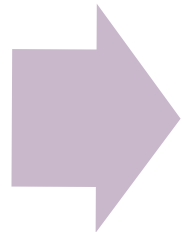
**The more practical approach is to have a project delivery strategy that is flexible.**



**The review process is at least 90 days.**



**You still must process a grant agreement, get permits and approvals, and competitively bid the project! It takes time.**



**Manage expectations. Were you candid about capacity to deliver and readiness?**

# Typical Grant Cycle

2026										2027					
Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Research			NOFO												
			Prep												
						Due									
							Evaluate								
											Agreement				
														Start	

## Who is involved?

Research/Prep	Grant Writer, Project Manager, Leadership
Agreement	Grant Writer, Attorney, Grant Writer, Project Manager, Fiscal Manager, Leadership
Delivery	Project Manager, Fiscal Manager, Leadership, Grant Writer, Compliance Manager

# Master Grant Calendar

	2026												2027												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Transpo Alts Construction	Research	NOFO	Prep	Due	Evaluate			Award	Agreement				Approvals				Start			\$					
Maryland State Arts Council								Research	NOFO			Due	Evaluate	Award	Agreement	Start					\$				
Congressional Earmark	Prep		Due	Evaluate								Award	Approvals	Agreement						\$					
State Bond Bill									Prep	Due	Evaluate		Award	Agreement	Approvals				Start						
DNR Waterways					Research	NOFO	Prep	Due	Evaluate			Award	Agreement	Approvals			Start								
FHWA Fed Lands Access	submitted December 2025																								
DNR Shoreline							Research	NOFO	Prep	Due	Evaluate		Award	Agreement	Approvals				Start						
DNR Program Open Space							Research	NOFO	Prep	Due	Evaluate		Award	Agreement	Approvals				Start						
County Contribution							Prep		Due	Evaluate				Award	Agreement	Start				\$					
Heritage Areas						Research	NOFO		Due	Evaluate	Award	Agreement	Start				\$								
Exelon/Conowingo Settlement	no specific timeline																								

# Your Turn

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*Let's get to work*



# Grant Opportunities for Your Project

- What grant sources are you considering?
- How useful is each grant opportunity?
- How competitive will your project be and why?
- Do you have the time and support to produce a quality application?



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Exercise Form #3

<b>GRANT PROGRAM PLANNING</b> Exercise #3 – Identifying Grant Opportunities	
<b>Grant Program/Agency</b>	
<b>What will we use the funds for?</b>	
<b>Are we eligible to receive the grant?</b>	
<b>When is the grant due?</b>	
<b>How much funding is available?</b>	
<b>How much will we request?</b>	
<b>Is our leadership on board?</b>	
<b>Do we have previous or current grants with the agency?</b>	
<b>What is the project's status?</b>	
<b>How many hours of staff time to prepare the grant?</b>	
<b>Who can provide or needs input into the grant?</b>	

# Grant Considerations

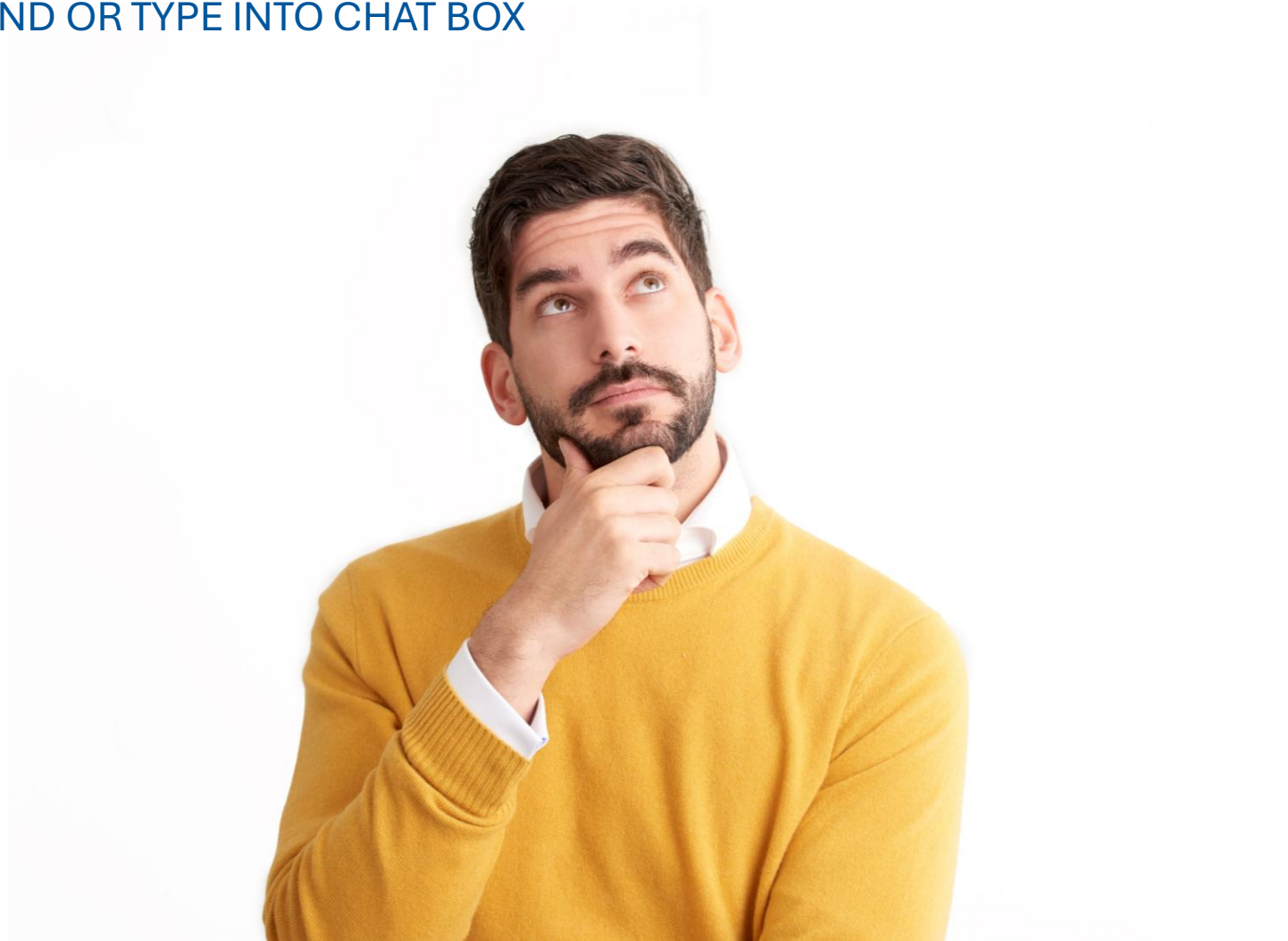
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*Making a Go/No Go Decision*



# What are considerations in whether to pursue a grant?

RAISE YOUR HAND OR TYPE INTO CHAT BOX



Source: PowerPoint Stock



# What are considerations in whether to pursue a grant?

- Amount available & eligible uses
- Grant due date
- Eligibility of organization
- Alignment with grant criteria
- Readiness to execute
- Previous grants from funder
- Level of effort
- Relationship with funder
- External support
- Administrative requirements
- Competitiveness



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Port Deposit: SHA Transportation Alternatives Program

- Annual grant cycle; due in May
- Application is relatively painless
- Alignment with criteria is fair; already awarded \$600,000 for design
- Grants range from \$100,000 to \$6 million
- Minimum 20% cash match
- Project is about 18 months from needing construction funds
- Public agencies only
- Need to show support from local/regional leaders
- Strict design, review, and approval processes
- Federal regulations and permits required



Source: State Highway Administration

# Making a “Go/No Go” Decision on a Grant Opportunity



# Usefulness

- **How much could be awarded?**
- **Will the funding meet a core project need?**
- **How much flexibility does the grant provide?**
- **Does the grant come with administrative and compliance requirements that are at scale with the amount we are seeking?**
- **Once awarded, when will the funds become available? Will we have enough time to spend?**



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Competitiveness

- How much are we seeking relative to the available funding?
- Is there alignment between the grant purpose/criteria and project scope, benefits, and outcomes?
- Do we have a relationship with the funder?
- Do we have external support for the winning this grant?
- Are we ready to execute?



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Thoughtfulness

- **Have we done our homework?**
- **What else is competing for our time and energy?**
- **Is our leadership on board?**
- **Have we previously demonstrated success to the funder?**
- **Who are we competing with?**
- **Are there any intangible considerations?**



Source: Unknown

# Port Deposit: SHA TAP Grant Go/No Go



- Eligibility of agency
- Eligibility of uses
- Leadership support



- Amount available
- Core project function
- Restrictions
- Period of availability
- Administration & compliance



- Alignment with criteria
- Readiness
- Relationship with funder
- External support



- Due date
- Workload/level of effort
- Previous grant status
- Capacity to deliver
- Intangibles

# Wrap Up

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# Key Takeaways

- **Understand the project** and opportunities for phasing and break-out elements to better match sources and uses
- **Know your funder(s)** beyond just the basic grant requirements
- **Develop a grant program plan** for ease of tracking, workload distribution, and prioritization/opportunity costs
- **If the NOFO caught you by surprise**, it may be a No Go
- **Consider the opportunity costs** of pursuing each grant
- **Set a “go/no go” decision point** for each grant you may pursue



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Thank you

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# Next Session – March 4<sup>th</sup>

## *Project Definition & Grant Alignment*

- Purpose & need
- Expected outcomes
- Project delivery
- Grant requirements and evaluation

## *Post-Workshop Session*

MD Department of Housing & Community Development



Source: PowerPoint Stock

Prince George's County  
Planning Department

# Municipal Grant Writing Workshop Series

*Workshop #2:  
Mechanics of Grant  
Writing*

March 4, 2026



# Municipal Grant Writing Workshop

*This workshop is brought to you by the Prince George's County Planning Department's Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities (PAMC) Program, which provides free technical assistance funding for municipalities and communities who are interested in revitalizing and enhancing the appearance and function of their communities.*

# PAMC



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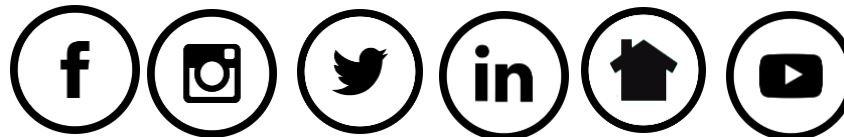
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# Review of Session #1

- **Understand the project** and opportunities for phasing and break-out elements to better match sources and uses
- **Know your funder(s)** beyond just the basic grant requirements
- **Develop a grant program plan** for ease of tracking, workload distribution, and prioritization/opportunity costs
- **If the NOFO caught you by surprise**, it may be a No Go
- **Consider the opportunity costs** of pursuing each grant
- **Set a “go/no go” decision point** for each grant you may pursue



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Grant Cycle



## *The grant writer must:*

- Know the project(s) scope, schedule, and budget.
- Help prioritize needs and wants.
- Know the funder(s) and eligible use(s) of grant funds.
- Assess organizational capacity to deliver at all phases.
- Create a plan that matches organizational goals with fund sources and uses.

# Making a “Go/No Go” Decision



- Eligibility of agency
- Eligibility of uses
- Leadership support



- Amount available
- Core project function
- Restrictions
- Period of availability
- Administration & compliance



- Alignment with criteria
- Readiness
- Relationship with funder
- External support



- Due date
- Workload/level of effort
- Previous grant status
- Capacity to deliver
- Intangibles

# Pop Quiz

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*Grant Essentials*



# Question 1

*How long should you assume is the period between submitting a grant and announcement of grant awards?*

- 2-3 months
- 4-6 months
- 6-9 months
- 9 months or longer



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## Question 2

*Can grant funds be spent as soon as the award announcement is made?*

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Question 3

*On federal grants, an environmental clearance (NEPA) is required....*

- Only for Construction Projects
- For Construction and Non-Construction Projects
- When Directed by the Program Officer



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## Question 4

*Funds will be sent by the granting agency prior to the start of work...*

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## Question 5

*A "Single Audit" is required for any grant recipient receiving federal funds in the prior calendar year greater than*

- \$250,000
- \$500,000
- \$750,000
- \$1,000,000
- What the heck is a "single audit"



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Understanding Grant Opportunities

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*Vocabulary*

*Key Terms & Conditions*

*Preparing to Respond*



# Project/Program Vocabulary

- **Capital asset** means land, buildings (facilities), equipment, and intellectual property (including software), whether acquired by purchase, construction, or manufacture.
- **Capital expenditures** means additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations, or alterations to capital assets that materially increase their value or u
- **Operating cost** means the ongoing, day-to-day expenses incurred by an organization such as rent, utilities, salaries, supplies, etc.
- **Discretionary grant** is awarded based on the discretion of the granting agency or organization. Unlike mandatory grants, which are allocated based on predetermined criteria, discretionary grants allow the awarding body to choose which applications to fund based on their alignment with specific goals and objectives.
- **Bond bills** are requested by members of the Maryland General Assembly for organizations or local governments to fund capital projects.
- **Community Project Funding** (aka “earmark”) is a type of grant award whereby members of Congress request federal funding for specific projects in their districts during the annual appropriations process. Funding is allocated to named projects if approved by the Appropriations Committees and included in legislation

# Application Vocabulary

- **Notice of Funding Opportunity** provides information on the award, such as who is eligible to apply, the evaluation criteria for selecting a recipient or subrecipient, the required components of an application, and how to submit the application
- **Standard Forms** means government-wide standard data sets and forms for grant application packages,
- **Unique Entity Identifier** means the authoritative identifier for those doing business with the federal government (Ex: 693JJ32540021)
- **Responsiveness Review** means the criteria that make an application or project eligible or ineligible for selection.
- **Review or Merit Criteria** means the substantive basis on which applications will be evaluated.



Source: Grants.gov

# Award Vocabulary

- **Federal award** means the instrument setting forth the terms and conditions of a grant, loan, or contract. May also refer to **the federal grant agreement**.
- **Federal award date** means the date when the authorized official of the Federal agency signed (physically or digitally) the Federal award or when an alternative, consistent with the requirements of [31 U.S.C. 1501](#), is reached with the recipient.
- **Period of performance** means the time interval between the start and end date of a Federal award, which may include one or more budget periods.
- **Subrecipient** means an entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a Federal award.



Source: US Department of Transportation

*An announcement by press release, letter notification, agency event, etc. does not constitute a federal award.*

# Finance Vocabulary

- **Budget period** means the time interval from the start date of a funded portion of an award to the end date of that funded portion, during which recipients and subrecipients are authorized to incur financial obligations of the funds awarded.
- **Cost sharing or matching funds** means the amount that must be provided by a recipient as part of a grant award.
- **Indirect cost** means those costs incurred for a common benefitting more than one cost objective and not readily assignable to a specific grant activity. Also known as “overhead.”
- **Single Audit** is a comprehensive audit of a non-Federal entity's financial statements and compliance with federal program requirements, typically required for entities that expend \$1 million or more in federal funds annually.
- **Simplified acquisition threshold** means the dollar amount below which a recipient may use small purchase procedures to expedite the purchase of items at or below the simplified acquisition threshold. (Currently SAT is \$350,000)



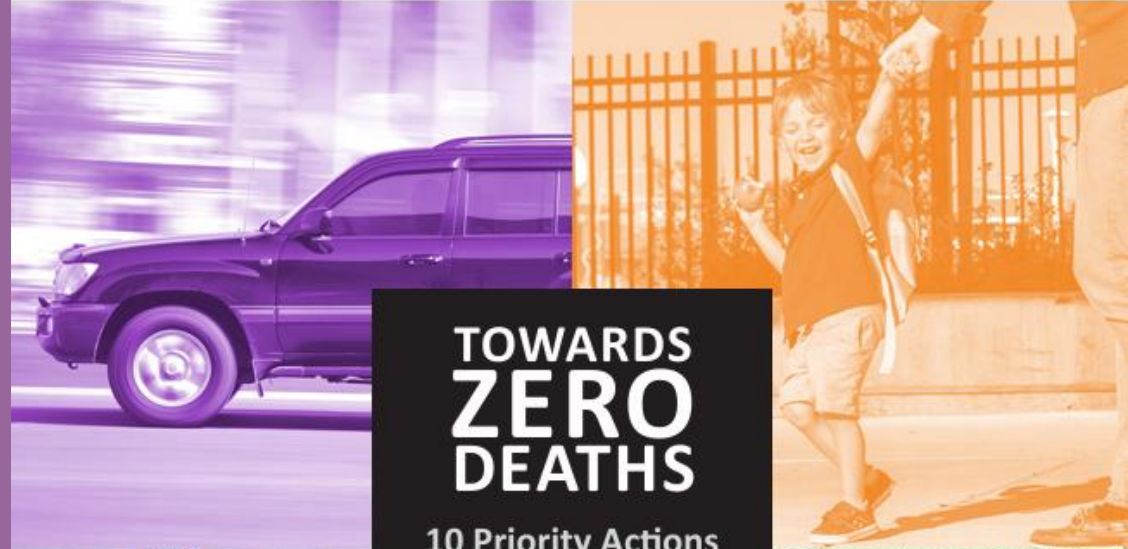
Source: US Department of Transportation

*An announcement by press release, letter notification, agency event, etc. does not authorize money to be spent on a project.*

# This Week's Case Study

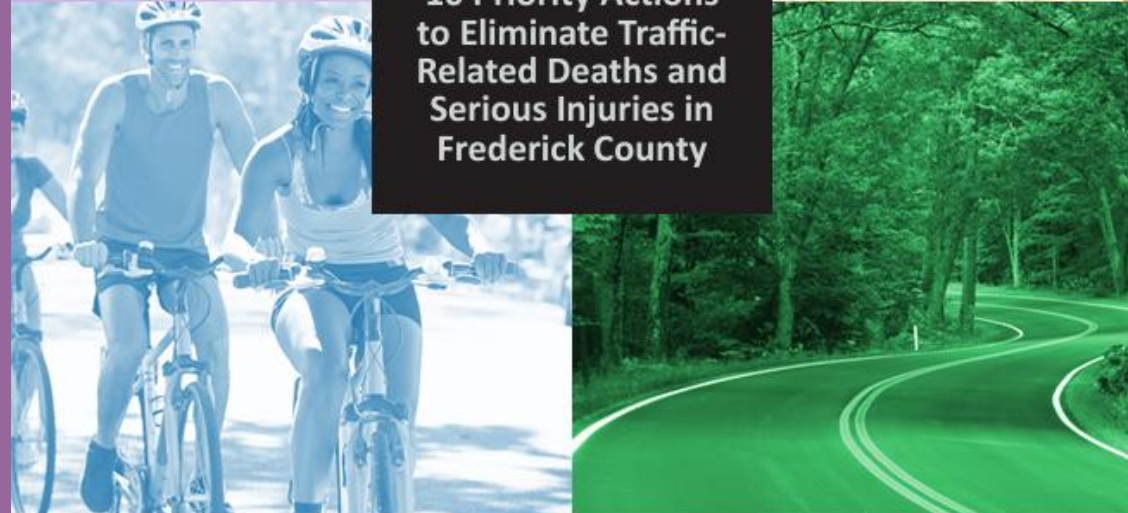
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*Frederick County  
Safe Streets for All Implementation Grant*



**TOWARDS  
ZERO  
DEATHS**

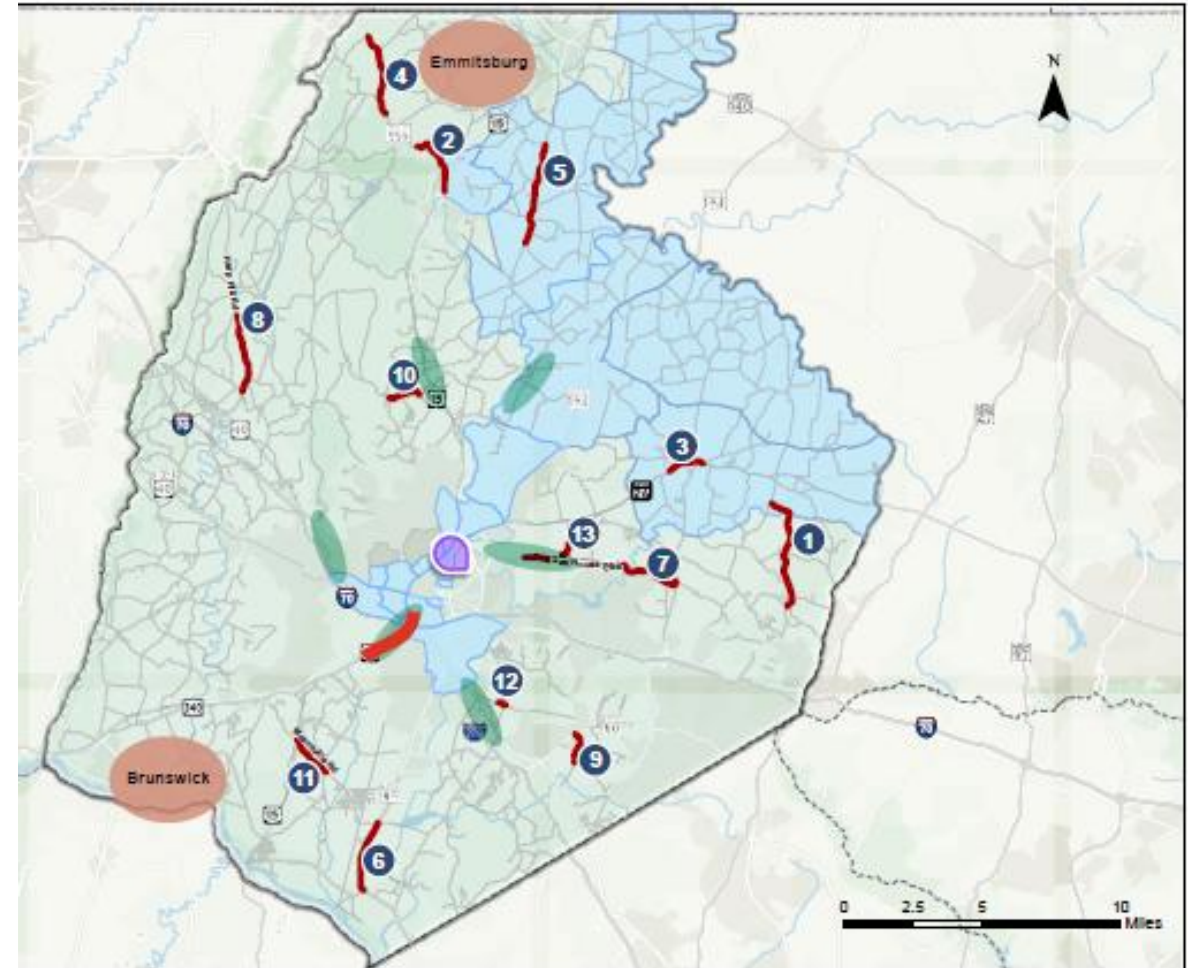
**10 Priority Actions  
to Eliminate Traffic-  
Related Deaths and  
Serious Injuries in  
Frederick County**



MARCH 2022

# Quick Background

- **98 fatal crashes and 1515 crashes resulting in serious injuries between 2015 – 2019.**
- **County Executive identified road safety as a priority issue and directed creation of a local road safety plan; completed in 2022.**
- **Received 2 grants/\$1.2 million from USDOT Safe Streets for All**
  - FY 23 – Supplemental Planning & Demonstration
  - FY 24 – Supplemental Planning & Demonstration
- **Unsuccessful implementation grant in FY 25 and FY 26.**



Source: Federick County SS4A Grant Application

# USDOT Safe Streets for All Grants

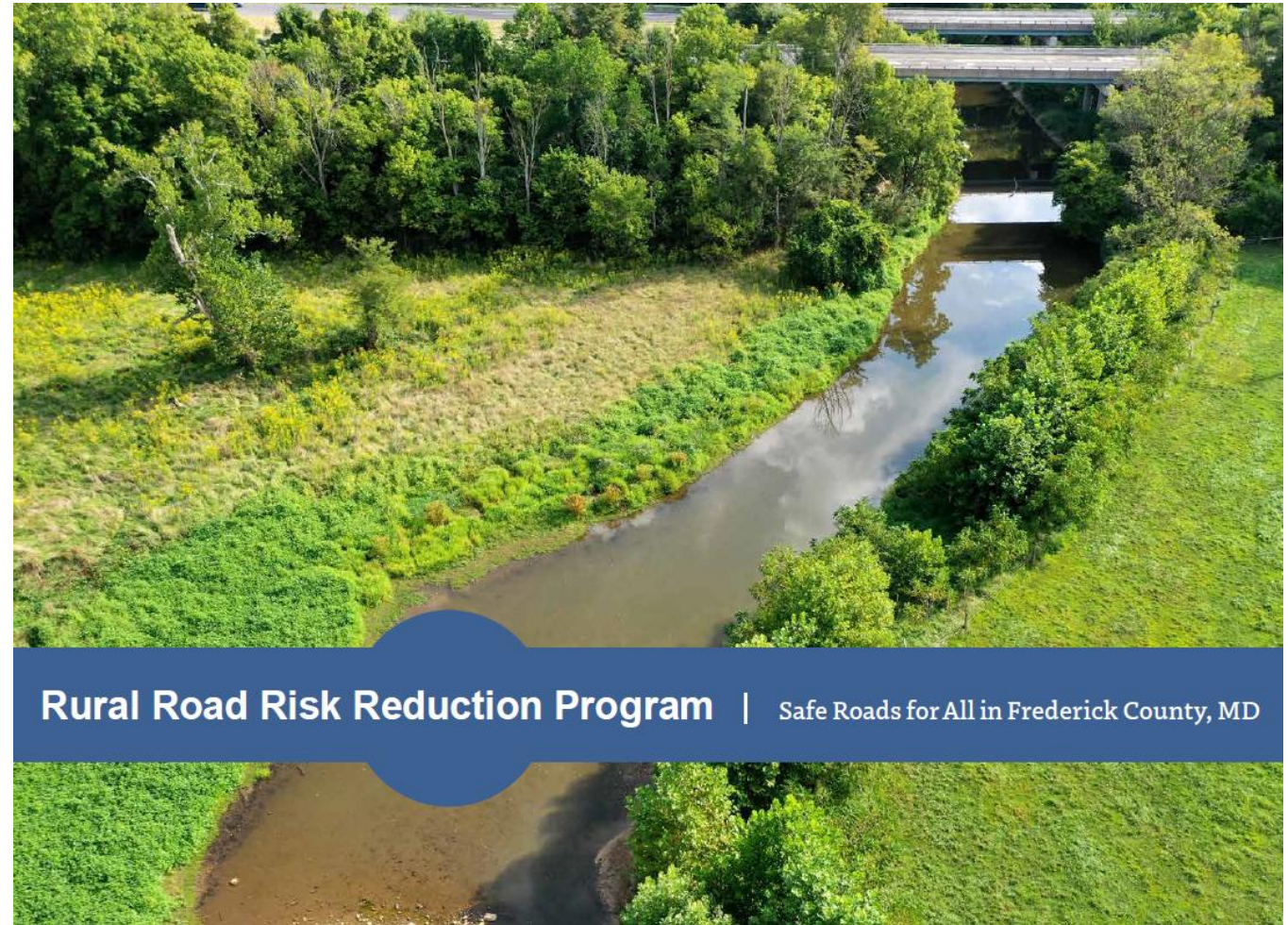
- Focused on preventing serious injuries and fatalities
- Competitive, discretionary grants
- \$1 billion annually available only to local and regional agencies.
- Funds available for:
  - Comprehensive Safety Action Plan
  - Supplemental Planning
    - Road safety audits
    - Corridor studies
    - Pedestrian and bicycle studies
    - Feasibility studies
  - Demonstration Projects
  - Implementation Activities



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

# Implementation Grant Application

- Requested \$8.7 million with \$2.8m match (exceeds 20% requirement).
- Included 4 projects:
  - Municipal sidewalks and safety
  - Rural systemic improvements
  - School zone improvements
  - Gas House Pike
- 30% of funds were directed to underserved communities; 94% of funds in rural areas.
- Construction application not funded in FY 25/FY 26.



Rural Road Risk Reduction Program | Safe Roads for All in Frederick County, MD

# Evaluation Criteria

## Selection Criteria

- Safety Need
- Safety Impact (inc. implementation costs)
- Engagement & Collaboration

## Additional Award Considerations

- Project readiness
- Prior grants received
- Underserved communities and rural areas
- Reduce lane capacity (less favorable)
- Killed/serious injuries per \$1 million
- Applications \$10 m or less

**Selection Criteria #2 – Safety Impact of Selected Projects (Construction Only)**

**A** City of Brunswick  
H Street and Sounder Road  
Pedestrian Safety

SS4A Request: \$500,000  
which leverages \$1.7 million in local and state investment

There are two primary pedestrian corridors connecting schools, libraries, and residential areas in Brunswick. The first requires traversing downtown streets which are high volume but low speed, the second requires walking along Souder Road which has intermittent sidewalks down to 30 mph but average speeds above 40 mph. A third and signed for 30 mph but average speeds above 40 mph. A third corridor is under development along H Street from 2nd Ave. to Scudder Rd. which is a low speed, low volume residential road that is most suitable for children walking to and from Brunswick Elementary, Middle, and High Schools. Final design for the project is underway through a Transportation Alternatives Program grant. SS4A funds will be used for construction. When completed, approximately 700 school children will have a safe and accessible route to school.



**B** Town of Emmitsburg  
N. Seton Avenue Traffic Calming  
& Pedestrian Safety

SS4A Request: \$600,000  
which leverages \$3.5 million in local investment

US 15 from was built as a bypass 50 years ago, but to this day most avenues as their high-speed gateway. Frequent crashes and 4 minor injury segment of N. Seton Avenue proposed SS4A project aims to countermeasures (rumble strip, N. Seton Avenue as it approaches between DePaul Street and F and pedestrian crossings will approximately \$3.5 million.

**C** City of Frederick  
Jefferson Street Roundabout

SS4A Request: \$500,000  
which leverages \$2 million in local investment

Jefferson Street is the eastern extension of US 340/US 15 which runs from the West Virginia border through rural western Frederick to downtown Frederick. A 2023 study performed for the City of Frederick and the State of Maryland found that the roundabout would reduce crashes and improve traffic flow.

**Our Work: Ten Years of Steady Progress Towards Zero Deaths**



**2019**  
Secretary Pete Rahn of the Maryland Department of Transportation, issues a call to action for local governments to engage road safety planning even though they do not own most of the primary roads across the state. Frederick County was only the second of sixteen rural jurisdictions in Maryland to adopt a strategy roadway safety plan.

**2020**  
Frederick County Executive Issues "Towards Zero Deaths" Policy

**2021-22**  
Towards Zero Deaths Plan Developed and Approved

**2023-24**  
SS4A Supplemental Planning

**2024-25**  
SS4A Supplemental Planning & Demonstration Grant

**2026**  
Implementation

**Selection Criteria #2 – Safety Impact of Selected Project #1 – Installation of Systemic Improvements**

Rural crashes tend to be dispersed, but they are not "random" as indicated by one publication of the National Center for Rural Road Safety. High speeds, substandard vertical and horizontal curves, narrow clear zones, and poor pavement conditions are systemic risks that can be managed with a systemic approach. This SS4A implementation grant requests \$1.4 million in federal funds to deploy systemic countermeasures such as those as shown in below.

- High-Friction Surfacing – Up to 46% reduction of single vehicle run-off-road crashes.<sup>1</sup>
- Increased Delineation of Horizontal Curves – Approximate 28% reduction in non-intersection crashes.<sup>2</sup>
- Guardrails – Crash severity reduction in the range of 11-58% depending on the hazard blocked by the guardrail.<sup>3</sup>
- Longitudinal Rumble Strips – Reduction of all crash types by as much as 27% and run-off road incidents up to 45%.<sup>4</sup>
- Reflective Pavement Markers – Overall crash reduction by as much as 10% and low-visibility or wet-weather crashes by as much as 14%.<sup>5</sup>

**3**  
Lives Saved

**24**  
Serious Injuries Avoided

**68**  
Minor Injuries or Property Damage Crashes Avoided

**\$67 million**  
in economic savings

**\$700k**  
per life saved in SSFA Funds

Project	2020	2021-22	2023-24	2024-25	2026-Implementation
MD 85 (Browns)					
Gas House Pike		x	x	x	
Harp Hill Rd					x
Big Woods Rd					x
Mountaindale Rd		x		x	
Mountville Rd					x
Ball Rd		x			x
Dance Hall Rd			x	x	

Add US 15/340/Jefferson Street Spot Improvements - See Project 4C

Add "Rumble Strips" in advance of curves and hills, or to slow traffic approaching town limits.

Assess, add, and upgrade advance warning signs approaching intersections, curves, and hills.

<sup>1</sup>Gayah, V., K.T. Donnell, and P. Zhang. "Crash Modification Factors for High Friction Surface Treatments in Pennsylvania." Report No. FHWA/OTD/2018-04/MS-R0404-W01a. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. (June 2019).

<sup>2</sup>Shirk, R. and Vaa, T. "Handbook of Road Safety Measures." Oxford, United Kingdom, Elsevier. (2004)

<sup>3</sup>Claros, B., Schroeder, K., Armstrong, K., Chittur, M., Bill, A., & Noyce, D. A. "Safety and Economic Evaluation of the Highway Safety Improvement Program: Is There a Return on Investment?" Transportation Research Record, June, No. 8, Transportation Research Board of the National Academies of Sciences, Washington, D.C. (2022).

<sup>4</sup>Wu, L., S. R. Geethapally and A. M. Pike. "Safety Evaluation of Alternative Audible Lane Departure Warning Treatments in Reducing Traffic Crashes: an Empirical Bayesian Observational Before-After Study." Presented at the 97th Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, Paper No. 18-02098, Washington, D.C. (2018).

<sup>5</sup>Lyon, C., B. Penland, and K. Eccles. "Safety Evaluation of Wet Reflective Pavement Markers." Report No. FHWA/HIF-95-066. Federal Highway Administration, Washington, D.C. (October 2005).

# Activity

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*Review and Evaluate  
Frederick County SS4A Application*



Source: PowerPoint Stock

Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Selection Criteria Example

#	Criteria	Responding Details
<b>Safety Need</b>	The safety problem to be addressed is described, including historical trends, fatal and serious injury crash locations, contributing factors, and crash types by category of road user.	
	Crashes and/or crash risk are displayed in a high-injury network or similar geospatial risk visualization.	
	Safety risk is summarized from risk models, hazard analysis, the identification of high risk roadway features, road safety audits/assessments, near miss data, and/or other proactive safety analyses.	

## Overall Score:

- High
- Medium
- Low
- Non-Responsive

# Selection Criteria Example

#	Criteria	Responding Details
<b>Safety Impact</b>	Is the proposal likely to reduce or eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries?	
	Does the proposal employ low-cost, high-impact strategies over a wide geographic area?	
	Do projects and strategies align with and comprehensively address identified safety problems?	
	Are the projects primarily on a high-injury network or address high-risk roadway features correlated with severe crash types	
	Does the proposal use evidence-based strategies and measure safety impact through models, studies, or Crash Modification Factors?	
	Will the project have safety benefits that persist over time?	

## Overall Score:

- High
- Medium
- Low
- Non-Responsive

# Selection Criteria Example

#	Criteria	Responding Details
<b>Engagement &amp; Collaboration</b>	Ensure investment in preventing roadway fatalities and serious injuries in underserved communities including rural communities.	
	Include demographic analysis, both quantitative and qualitative, and stakeholder engagement as part of the development and implementation process.	
	Included or will include meaningful engagement with the public during all phases of the project such as planning, design, construction, and implementation.	
	Leverage partnerships within their jurisdiction, with other government entities, non governmental organizations, the private sector, academic institutions, and/or other relevant stakeholders to achieve safety benefits while avoiding negative consequences for the community.	

## Overall Score:

- High
- Medium
- Low
- Non-Responsive

# Group Activity

## GROUP #1

- Review Selection Criteria #1 (Demonstrated Safety Need) on page 5.
- AND review Selection Criteria #3 (Engagement & Collaboration) on Page 10. Independently

## GROUP #2

- Review Selection Criteria #2 (Safety Impact) for Projects #1 (Systemic Improvements) on Page 6 (Schools on the Rural High Injury Network) and Page 7.

## GROUP #3

- Review Selection Criteria #2 (Safety Impact) for Projects #3 (Gas House Pike) on Page 8 and #4 (Municipal Partnership Projects) on Page 9.

## • Individually

- Review the selection criteria for your group
- Review the Frederick County “Rural Road Risk Reduction Program” grant application for your sections

## • Then as a group

- Identify how Frederick County has responded to the criteria
- Give the county a score: High, Medium, Low, Non-Responsive

# USDOT Feedback

- **Clear path from planning through implementation**
- **Strong projects and strategies, well documented/evidence-based.**
- **Budget reasonable and appropriate but miscalculation of benefits per KSI prevented.**
- **Strong collaboration with municipalities, but no details on community engagement during implementation**



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Grant Preparation

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*Budget, Schedule, and Readiness/Risk*



# Developing a Project Budget

ITEM NO.	CATEGORY CODE	DESCRIPTION	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT COST	TOWN QTY.	TOWN COST	COUNTY QTY.	COUNTY COST	TOTAL COST
<b>CATEGORY 1 - PRELIMINARY</b>										
1001	130875	MOBILIZATION AND DEMOBILIZATION	1	LS	\$ 222,897.20		\$187,233.65		\$35,663.55	\$ 222,897.20
1002	120500	MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC	1	LS	\$ 167,172.90		\$140,425.24		\$26,747.66	\$ 167,172.90
1003	130840	CONSTRUCTION STAKEOUT	1	LS	\$ 55,724.30		\$46,808.41		\$8,915.89	\$ 55,724.30
1004	110100	CLEARING AND GRUBBING	1	LS	\$ 25,000.00		\$21,000.00		\$4,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
1005	120690	TUBULAR MARKERS	165	EA	\$ 25.00		\$21.00		\$4.00	\$ 25,000.00
<b>CATEGORY 1=</b>							<b>\$ 395,488.30</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 75,331.10</b>	
<b>CATEGORY 2 - GRADING</b>										
2001	201030	CLASS 1 EXCAVATION	1,745	CY	\$ 40.00	1,020	\$40,800.00	725	\$29,000.00	\$ 69,800.00
2002	202065	COMMON BORROW	1,200	CY	\$ 40.00	800	\$32,000.00	400	\$16,000.00	\$ 48,000.00
2003	210011	REMOVAL OF EXISTING COMBINATION CURB & GUTTER	3,450	LF	\$ 30.00	3,450	\$103,500.00		\$0.00	\$ 103,500.00
2004	210025	REMOVAL OF EXISTING PAVEMENT	495	CY	\$ 135.00		\$66,825.00	90	\$52,650.00	\$ 119,475.00
<b>CATEGORY 2=</b>							<b>\$ 213,125.00</b>	<b>\$ 52,650.00</b>	<b>\$ 160,475.00</b>	

Item	Description	SS4A Request		SS4A Non-Federal Match		Total SS4A Project Cost	Other Fed Funds
		Itemized Estimated Costs of (A) Supplemental Activities	Itemized Estimated Costs of (B) Planning, Design, and Development Activities	Itemized Estimated Costs of (C) Carrying Out Projects and Strategies	Itemized Estimated Costs of (D) Supplemental Activities		
<b>CATEGORY 3 - DRAINAGE</b>							
3001	301311	MIX 2 CONCRETE FOR MISCELLANEOUS					
3002	301010	CLASS 3 EXCAVATION					
3003	301008	STABILIZED					
3004	302412	12 INCH REIN					
3005	302415	15 INCH REIN					
3006	302418	18 INCH REIN					
3007	302424	24 INCH REIN					
3008	304215	15 INCH CORR					
<b>Project 1 - Rural Systemic Improvements</b>							
Systemic Improvements		\$ 1,400,000	\$ 25,800	\$ 1,720,000	\$ -	\$ 1,720,000	\$ -
School Zone Improvements		\$ 1,700,000	\$ 175,000	\$ 1,950,000	\$ -	\$ 1,950,000	\$ -
<b>Project 2 - Rural School Zone Improvements</b>							
Gas House Pike		\$ 750,000	\$ -	\$ 750,000	\$ -	\$ 750,000	\$ -
<b>Project 3 - Gas House Pike</b>							
Brunswick - H Street/Sounder Road		\$ 475,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ 500,000	\$ -
<b>Project 4a - Brunswick - H Street/Sounder Road</b>							
Emmitsburg - N. Seton Avenue		\$ 570,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ 600,000	\$ -
<b>Project 4b - Emmitsburg - N. Seton Avenue</b>							
Frederick - Jefferson Street Roundabout		\$ 470,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ 500,000	\$ -
<b>Project 4c - Jefferson Street Roundabout</b>							
Subtotal Budget for (C)		\$ 8,700,000	\$ 2,845,000	\$ 11,545,000	\$ -	\$ 11,545,000	\$ -
TOTAL BUDGET		\$ 8,700,000	\$ 2,845,000	\$ 11,545,000	\$ -	\$ 11,545,000	\$ -
For all Activities (A), (B), and (C)		\$ 8,700,000	\$ 2,845,000	\$ 11,545,000	\$ -	\$ 11,545,000	\$ -

OMB Number: 4040-0008  
Expiration Date: 06/30/2028

### BUDGET INFORMATION - Construction Programs

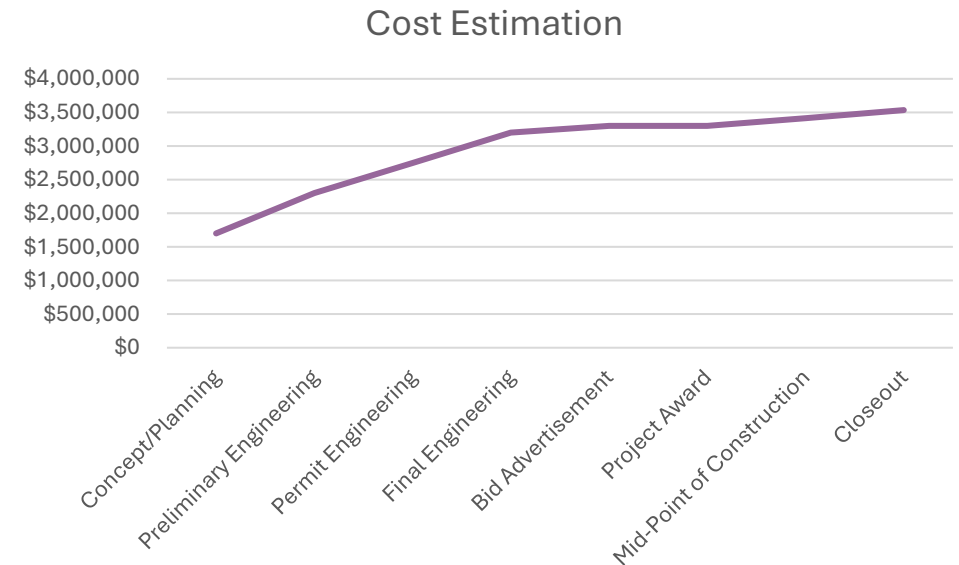
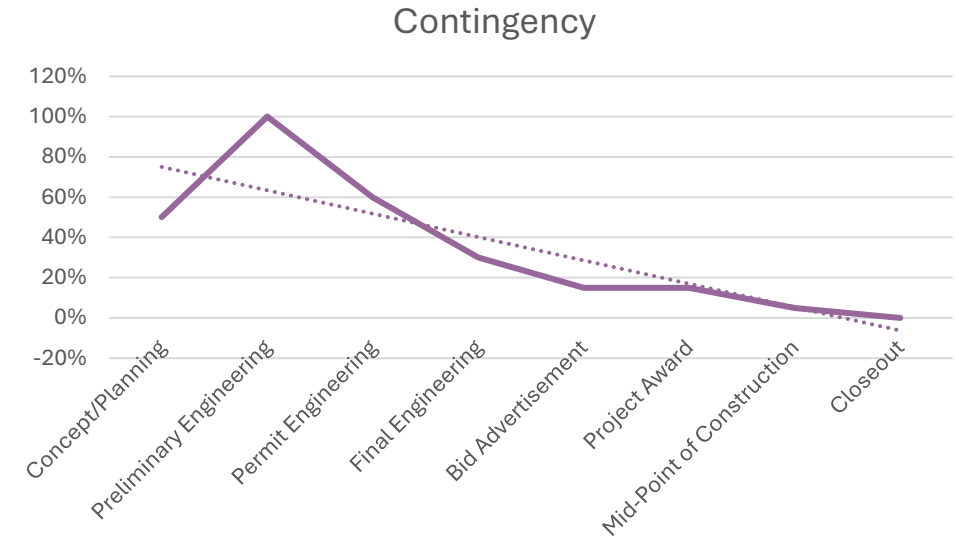
NOTE: Certain Federal assistance programs require additional computations to arrive at the Federal share of project costs eligible for participation. If such is the case, you will be notified.

COST CLASSIFICATION	BUDGET INFORMATION - Construction Programs		
	a. Total Cost	b. Costs Not Allowable for Participation	c. Total Allowable Costs (Columns a-b)
1. Administrative and legal expenses	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
2. Land, structures, rights-of-way, appraisals, etc.	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
3. Relocation expenses and payments	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
4. Architectural and engineering fees	\$ 720,000	\$ 0	\$ 720,000
5. Other architectural and engineering fees	\$ 100,000	\$ 0	\$ 100,000
6. Project inspection fees	\$ 150,000	\$ 0	\$ 150,000
7. Site work	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
8. Demolition and removal	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
9. Construction	\$ 10,575,000	\$ 0	\$ 10,575,000
10. Equipment	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
11. Miscellaneous	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
12. SUBTOTAL (sum of lines 1-11)	\$ 11,545,000	\$ 0	\$ 11,545,000
13. Contingencies	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
14. SUBTOTAL	\$ 11,545,000	\$ 0	\$ 11,545,000
15. Project (program) income	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
16. TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (subtract #15 from #14)	\$ 11,545,000	\$ 0	\$ 11,545,000
FEDERAL FUNDING			
17. Federal assistance requested, calculate as follows: (Consult Federal agency for Federal percentage share.) Enter the resulting Federal share.	Enter eligible costs from line 16c Multiply X <input type="text" value="80"/> %	\$ 8,700,000	

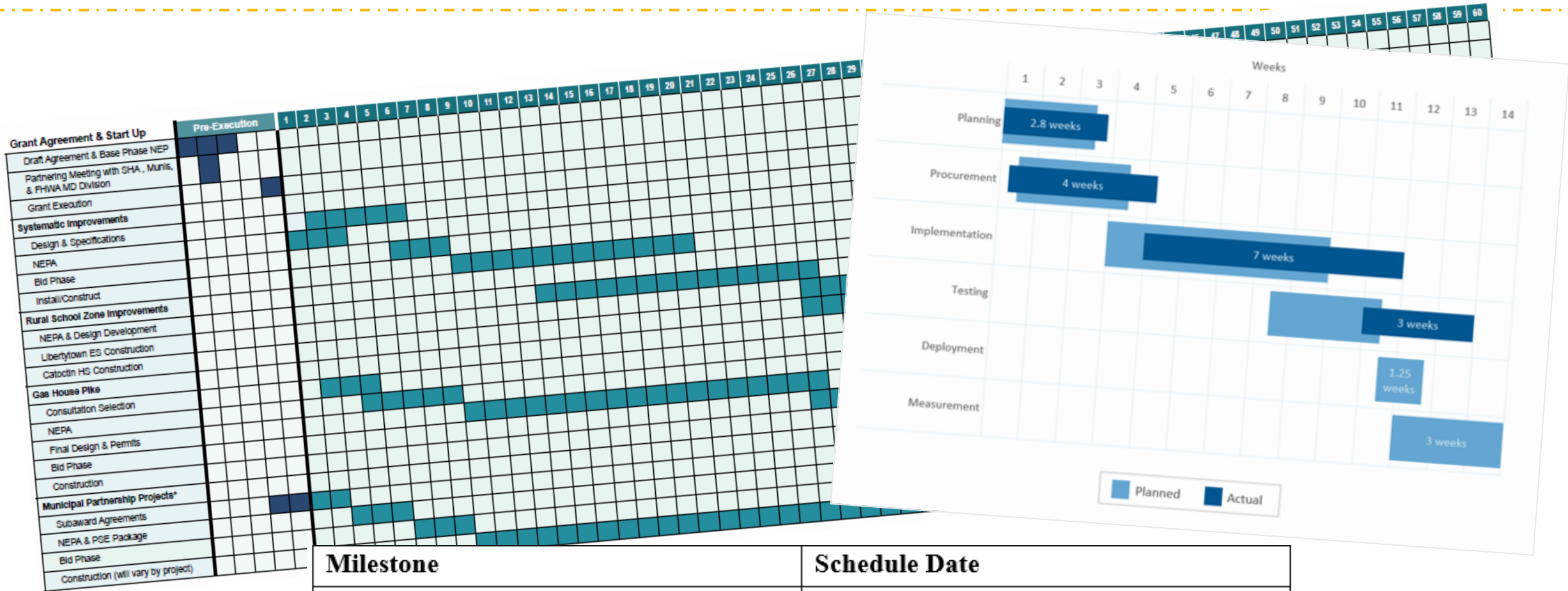


# Developing a Project Budget

- Document your assumptions
- Take note of ineligible/non-reimbursable costs.
- Prepare the full cost of the project
  - Administrative/Indirect
  - Planning
  - Engineering
  - Construction
  - Right of Way, Permitting, Environmental Mitigation
  - Construction Management and Inspection
  - Contingency
- Consider inflation (year of expenditure)



# Sharing Your Project Schedule



Milestone	Schedule Date
Planned NEPA Completion Date:	Same Date Agreement is Signed
Planned Construction Substantial Completion and Open to Public Use Date:	June 1, 2029
Planned SS4A Final Report Date:	May 30, 2031

# Developing a Project Schedule

- If possible, use Grant Award + 1 month, 1 quarter, etc. rather than specific dates.
- If dates are required, remember that it will take time from grant award announcement to grant award.
- Stay within the maximum time allowed.
- Show a reasonable amount of detail.
- Document assumptions.
- Consider the time required for external reviews and approvals, procurement, etc.
- Be realistic.



Source: Prince George County Council

# Explaining Project Risks/Solutions

- Unless otherwise stated, grantors want to fund projects that are ready and likely to succeed.
- Risk is neither good nor bad; it just needs to be addressed and mitigated.
- Risk has budget, scope, and schedule implications.
- Do not be afraid to share the potential problems. Doing so shows maturity of the grant applicant and supports your readiness arguments.
- Risk relates to internal and external factors and shifts as the project progresses.

Readiness	Status
State and Local Planning Approvals	The National Capital Transportation Planning Board (MPO) has indicated that the SS4A projects do not need to be added to the TIP.
Roadway Design Standards	SS4A projects will follow the MDOT design standards and local roads.
Right of Way	All spot and systemic improvements will occur within the operational right of way. Any sidewalk improvements implemented by the municipalities will be prioritized so that right of way is not needed, but if right of way is needed it will be acquired in conformance with the URA.
NEPA	Not yet started, but will qualify as a Categorical Exclusion's under § 771.117(c) 3, 8, 22, and/or 27.
Section 106, Section 4(f)	No protected properties are likely to be affected; coordination will occur with the SHPO.

Readiness	Status
Utility Relocation	None on high injury network systemic improvements. If sidewalk construction occurs in the municipalities, then storm drains may be affected; but project selection would encourage that no other utilities could be impacted due to cost and delay impacts.
Partnership and Implementation Agreements	MDOT has indicated its support for the projects (see letter from Secretary Wiedefeld.) SHA has indicated that it will take responsibility for construction management of spot and systemic improvements along state-owned roadways.  Municipalities will be permitted to use eligible county contracts that comply with federal requirements and allow municipalities to draw down from that contract. We will also designate a project manager to work with the municipalities to advance their selected project(s).
Public Engagement	Community meetings will be held and property owners potentially affected by construction will be coordinated with.

# Wrap Up

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# Next Session – March 18<sup>th</sup>

## Writing & Responding

- Creating a compelling narrative
- Responding to prompts
- Common grant writing mistakes

## Post-Workshop Session

MD Department of Natural Resources



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Thank you

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# Agency Presentation

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*Allison Gost*



Prince George's County  
Planning Department

# Municipal Grant Writing Workshop Series

*Workshop #3 Writing  
and Responding*

March 18, 2026



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Municipal Grant Writing Workshop

*This workshop is brought to you by the Prince George's County Planning Department's Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities (PAMC) Program, which provides free technical assistance funding for municipalities and communities who are interested in revitalizing and enhancing the appearance and function of their communities.*

# PAMC



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# Review of Session Two

- Reviewed grant- and finance-related vocabulary
- A grant award is not an award until there is a signed agreement!
- Reviewed sample grant criteria



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Welcome & Framing

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*What makes a proposal stand out in a competitive funding cycle?*



# Key Framing Message

- **Grant writing is not creative writing – it is strategic alignment storytelling**
- **High-scoring proposals:**
  - Answer exactly what is asked
  - Provide evidence, not emotion
  - Demonstrate readiness and impact
  - Connect narrative to implementation



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Grant Writing



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## Creating a clear and compelling narrative

- Draft persuasive responses for key proposal sections
- Writing responses that are concise, relevant and strong in evidence
- Understanding how language, structure and flow will convey impact
- Community voice & storytelling



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## Responding effectively to grant questions and prompts

- Purpose & need
- Expected outcomes
- Project delivery
- Grant requirements and evaluation



Source: Creative Commons

## Avoiding common grant mistakes

- Pitfalls that lead to lower scoring proposals
- Relationship between grant application and grant agreement

# POLL

---

*Multiple Choice*



# What is the grant activity that you have the most trouble with?

1. Translating technical plans into compelling grant language
2. Writing outcomes that balance community impact + funder metrics
3. Aligning projects with funder priorities (equity, access, climate, etc.)
4. Responding clearly to narrative questions with limited word counts
5. Budget narratives for capital or infrastructure projects
6. Addressing reviewer comments or resubmitting after rejection



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Creating Clear and Compelling Narrative

---



# Draft Persuasive Responses for Key Proposal Sections

## Common Sections in Local & State Grants:

- Statement of Need
- Project Description
- Community Engagement
- Equity & Access
- Outcomes & Evaluation
- Budget Justification



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Common Sections: Statement of Need

## *What the statement of need must prove:*

- The problem exists
- The problem is significant
- The problem is documented
- The problem affects specific people
- The project directly addresses the problem



Source: PowerPoint Stock

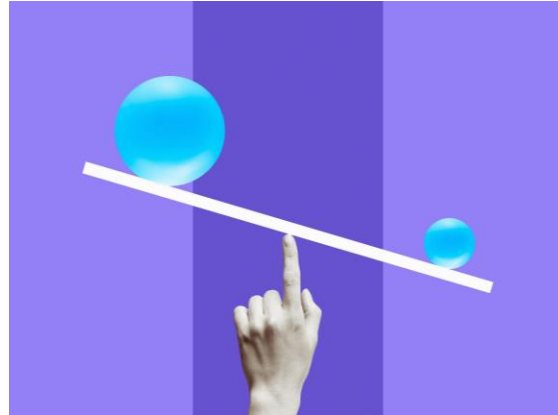
# Framework



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## Data

- Crash data
- Health disparities
- Park access metrics
- Environmental risk indicators
- Demographic trends



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## Disparity

Show inequity or gap:

“Residents in District 4 have 40% less green space per capita than the county average.”



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## Consequence

Explain impact of doing nothing:

- Public health risks
- Safety risks
- Economic stagnation
- Environmental vulnerability



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## Opportunity

Transition to solution:

“The proposed multi-use trail directly addresses pedestrian crash corridors identified in the 2023 safety audit.”

# Common Sections: Project Description

## *This section should answer:*

- What exactly are you building, improving, or implementing?
- Where is it located?
- Who benefits?
- What is the scope?
- What are the phases?
- What is the timeline?



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Common Mistake: Being Vague

*Specificity builds the confidence of the reviewer.*

**Weak:** “We will improve the park and enhance safety.”

**Strong:** “The project will install 1.4 miles of ADA-compliant trail, upgrade lighting along the western corridor, add two pedestrian crossings at identified crash locations, and construct a shaded community gathering space.”



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Draft Persuasive Responses for Key Proposal Sections

## *The “CLEAR” Formula*

- C – Context (What is happening?)**
- L – Local data (Why here? Why now?)**
- E – Evidence-based solution**
- A – Alignment with funder priorities**
- R – Results (measurable impact)**



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Writing Concise, Relevant, Evidence-Based Responses

## *Rule of thumb: If it doesn't add value, it doesn't belong*

- Remove adjectives without evidence
- Replace generalizations with data
- Avoid repetition
- Keep paragraphs focused

### **Replace:**

- “Very important”
- “Extremely needed”
- “Will greatly improve”

### **With or add:**

- Numbers
- Comparisons
- Benchmarks
- Outcomes

### **Practical Editing Tip**

After drafting, ask:  
“Does this sentence directly support the scoring criteria?”

If not — remove or revise it.



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Common Mistake: Fluff Without Substance

**Weak:** Our community park is very important to local residents, and provides a wonderful space for families, children, and visitors to gather and enjoy outdoor recreation. Unfortunately, the park has become outdated and does not meet the growing needs of the community.

By improving the park, we will enhance quality of life and create a safer and more enjoyable environment for everyone.”

## Why This Is Weak

- No specific data
- No clear problem
- Uses generic language reviewers see repeatedly
- No evidence of community need



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Common Mistake: Fluff Without Substance

**Strong:** “Riverside Park serves more than 8,500 residents within a one-mile radius, yet the park’s playground equipment is over 22 years old and no longer meets current safety and accessibility standards.

According to the County Parks Condition Assessment (2024), the playground structure is rated ‘Poor’, with deteriorating surfacing and no ADA-accessible play features. Additionally, the surrounding census tract has 28% of households with children under age 12 and no other playground within a 15-minute walking distance.

Community engagement conducted during the 2025 Parks Master Plan update identified playground replacement and accessible recreational space as the #1 priority among residents.

Investing in Riverside Park will address a documented recreation gap and ensure safe, inclusive play opportunities for families in this underserved neighborhood.”

## Why This Works

- Uses specific numbers
- References existing plans and assessments
- Shows clear community impact
- Demonstrates alignment with planning data

***Funders don’t fund good intentions; they fund well-documented solutions***

# Language, Structure & Flow Convey Impact

## *Strong grant narratives follow a logical flow:*

- Define the problem clearly
- Prove it with data
- Show who is affected
- Present the solution
- Demonstrate readiness
- Outline measurable results

### **Use Headings Strategically**

Instead of dense paragraphs, organize clearly:

- Existing Conditions
- Identified Safety Risks
- Project Scope
- Equity Considerations
- Anticipated Outcomes

**Remember: Structured writing improves readability and scoring efficiency. Follow the outline.**



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Community Voice & Engagement

## *What Reviewers Want to See:*

- Who was engaged
- How they were engaged
- When they were engaged
- What they said
- How feedback influenced project design

## *Move Beyond “We held a meeting” Instead show:*

- Attendance demographics
- Survey results
- Language accessibility
- Partnerships with trusted organizations
- Changes made based on input



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Common Mistake: Generic

**Weak:** “Our department values community input and worked closely with residents to ensure the park improvements reflect community needs. The community is excited about the project, and many residents expressed interest in seeing upgrades to the park. We will continue engaging with the community as the project moves forward.”

## Why This Is Weak

- No explanation of how engagement occurred
- No number of participants
- No documentation or evidence
- No indication that community feedback influenced the project design
- Sounds like a placeholder paragraph used in many applications



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Common Mistake: Generic

**Strong:** The proposed improvements at Riverside Park were shaped through a multi-step community engagement process conducted between March and July 2025. Engagement activities included:

- Two in-person community meetings attended by 64 residents
- A bilingual online survey completed by 312 community members
- Three youth listening sessions conducted with students from Riverside Elementary School

Survey results indicated that the top three community priorities were:

- Safe playground equipment for younger children (78%)
- Shaded seating areas for caregivers and seniors (65%)
- Accessible walking paths for individuals with mobility challenges (59%)

Community feedback directly informed the project design. As a result, the proposed project includes an ADA accessible playground, shaded seating areas, and a new accessible pathway connecting the playground to the parking area and restrooms.

To ensure continued community involvement, the Parks Department will provide project updates through neighborhood association meetings and the county website during the construction phase.

## Why This Version Is Strong

- Clear engagement methods
- Number of participants
- Multiple outreach approaches
- Specific feedback received
- How feedback shaped the project

This shows reviewers that the project is community-driven, not agency-driven.

**Remember:** Funders and reviewers are not looking for statements that the community supports the project — they are looking for evidence that the community helped shape the project.

# When Writing, Remember This:

## *When using words such as*

- “important to the community”
- “enhance quality of life”
- “vibrant community space”
- “benefit residents”

## *Be sure to include:*

- Data
- Community demographics
- Infrastructure condition
- Specific project scope
- Measurable outcomes



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Respond Effectively to Grant Questions and Prompts

---



# The Number #1 Scoring Mistake

**Answering  
the question  
you *wish*  
were asked**



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Respond effectively to grant questions and prompts

## *How to Interpret Prompts Correctly*

### Break the Prompt into 3 Parts:

- Topic (What section is this?)
- Required evidence (What must be included?)
- Evaluation lens (How will this be scored?)

**Statement of Need: “Describe the safety challenges in the project area and provide current data to demonstrate need.”**

### What It Really Requires:

- Geographic specificity
- Current (not outdated) data
- Quantified safety issues
- Clear relationship to proposed project



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Respond effectively to grant questions and prompts

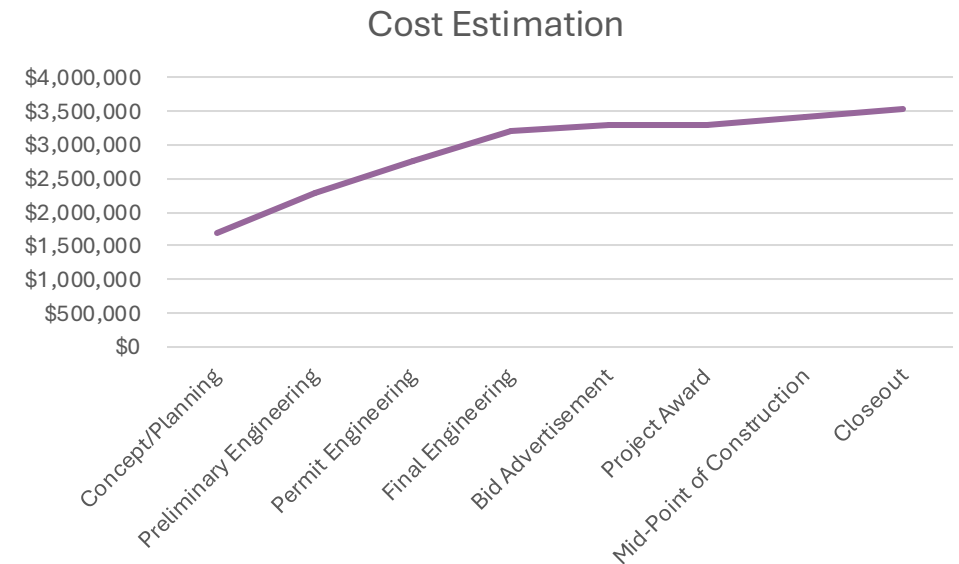
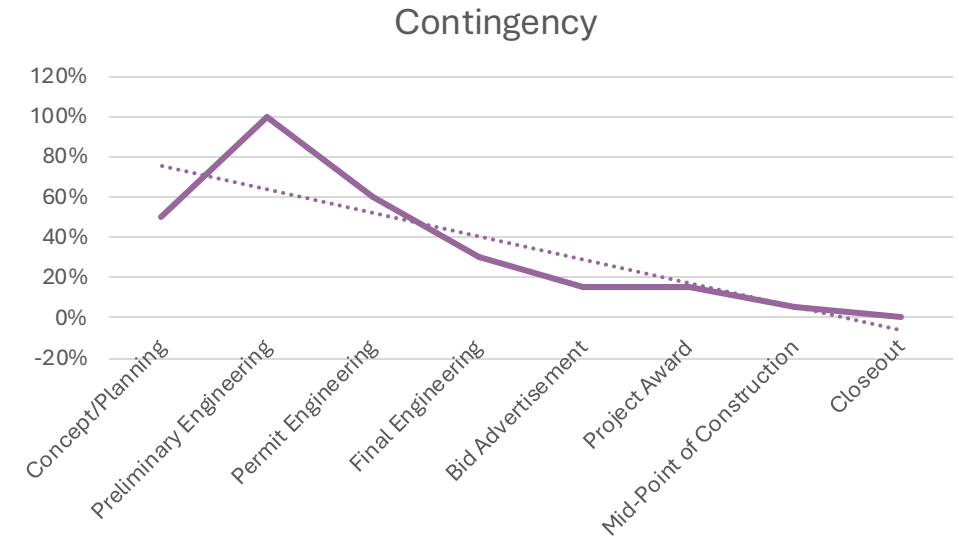
## Practical Tool: Prompt Alignment Grid

Prompt Requirement	Did you address it?	Evidence Included
Current data	✓	2023 crash report
Geographic focus	✓	Census tract map
Safety challenge defined	✓	17% pedestrian crash increase

Every paragraph should answer: “How does this directly respond to what the funder asked?”

# Developing a Project Budget

- Document your assumptions
- Take note of ineligible/non-reimbursable costs.
- Prepare the full cost of the project
  - Administrative/Indirect
  - Planning
  - Engineering
  - Construction
  - Right of Way, Permitting, Environmental Mitigation
  - Construction Management and Inspection
  - Contingency
- Consider inflation (year of expenditure)



# Avoiding Common Grant Mistakes

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# Pitfalls that lead to lower scoring proposals

- Copy-paste narratives from prior grants
- Generic language
- No clear measurable outcomes
- Overpromising without capacity
- Budget that does not match scope
- Lack of community engagement documentation
- Missing attachments or formatting errors



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Copy-Paste Narratives from Prior Grants

## *Why This Happens:*

- Time pressure
- Staff bandwidth limitations
- “It worked before”

## *Why It Hurts Your Score:*

- Funder priorities shift
- Data becomes outdated
- Language may not align with this NOFO



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Overpromising Without Capacity

*Ambitious language can unintentionally create risk*

## Red Flags:

- Aggressive construction timelines
- Staffing assumptions without funding
- Complex infrastructure without engineering readiness
- Multi-phase expansion without secured matching funds

## Reviewers assess:

- Organizational capacity
- Past performance
- Internal controls
- Procurement readiness

*If awarded tomorrow, could we truly deliver what we wrote?*



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Budget That Does Not Match Scope

## Common Issues

- Line items not mentioned in narrative
- Narrative elements not reflected in budget
- Administrative costs unexplained
- Contingency gaps
- Inconsistent totals
- Numbers that don't add up
- Including ineligible or non-reimbursable costs



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Relationship between grant application & grant agreement

*What you promise in the application becomes legally binding in the grant agreement*

## Your narrative becomes part of:

- Scope of work
- Reporting requirements
- Performance metrics
- Audit review

## Misalignment Risks

*If application and implementation do not align, risks include:*

1. Scope Reductions: You may be forced to scale back or renegotiate
2. Funding Return: Funds may be withheld or recaptured
3. Compliance Findings: Audits may cite discrepancies between proposal and execution



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# POLL

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*Multiple Choice*



# What typically drives how you structure your narrative?

- A. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
- B. A past proposal we copy and edit
- C. Internal brainstorming
- D. We write as we go



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# What makes a narrative most compelling to reviewers?

1. Strong statistics
2. Emotional storytelling
3. Clear measurable outcomes
4. Alignment with funding priorities



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# When a prompt asks for “Statement of Need,” you:

- A. Describe the problem
- B. Include current localized data
- C. Connect the need to your proposed solution
- D. All of the above



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# If your narrative overpromises outcomes, what can happen?

1. Nothing, we adjust later
2. Scope reductions
3. Compliance findings
4. Funding recovery



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Wrap Up

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# Key Takeaways

## 1. Clarity Wins Over Creativity

- Grant reviewers score alignment, structure, and evidence – not passion alone
- If it is unclear, it will not score

## 2. Answer the Question That Is Asked

- Do not respond to what you *wish* the funder asked
- Dissect prompts
- Align responses precisely
- Use the funder's language



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Key Takeaways

## 3. Data Is Not Optional — It Is Foundational

*Data builds credibility.*

- Localized statistics
- Disparity analysis
- Measurable outcomes
- Current evidence

## 4 . Alignment Between Narrative, Budget, and Timeline Is Critical

- If your narrative promises more than your budget funds – reviewers notice
- Consistency equals credibility



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Key Takeaways

## 5. What You Write Becomes Legally Binding

- Your application becomes part of your grant agreement
- Before submitting, ask: Can we confidently execute everything we are promising?

## 6. Capacity Matters as Much as Vision

*Big ideas must be matched by operational reality.*

High-scoring proposals demonstrate:

- Organizational readiness
- Implementation experience
- Clear internal roles
- Risk awareness



Source: PowerPoint Stock

**Thank you**

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# Next Session – April 1st

## Implementation & Compliance

- Budget
- Risk
- Schedule
- Post-award responsibilities
- Compliance and legal requirements

## Post-Workshop Session

Maryland State Arts Council



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Chat with Maryland Department of Natural Resources

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***Dana Reiss***

*Director, Center for Restoration Finance*



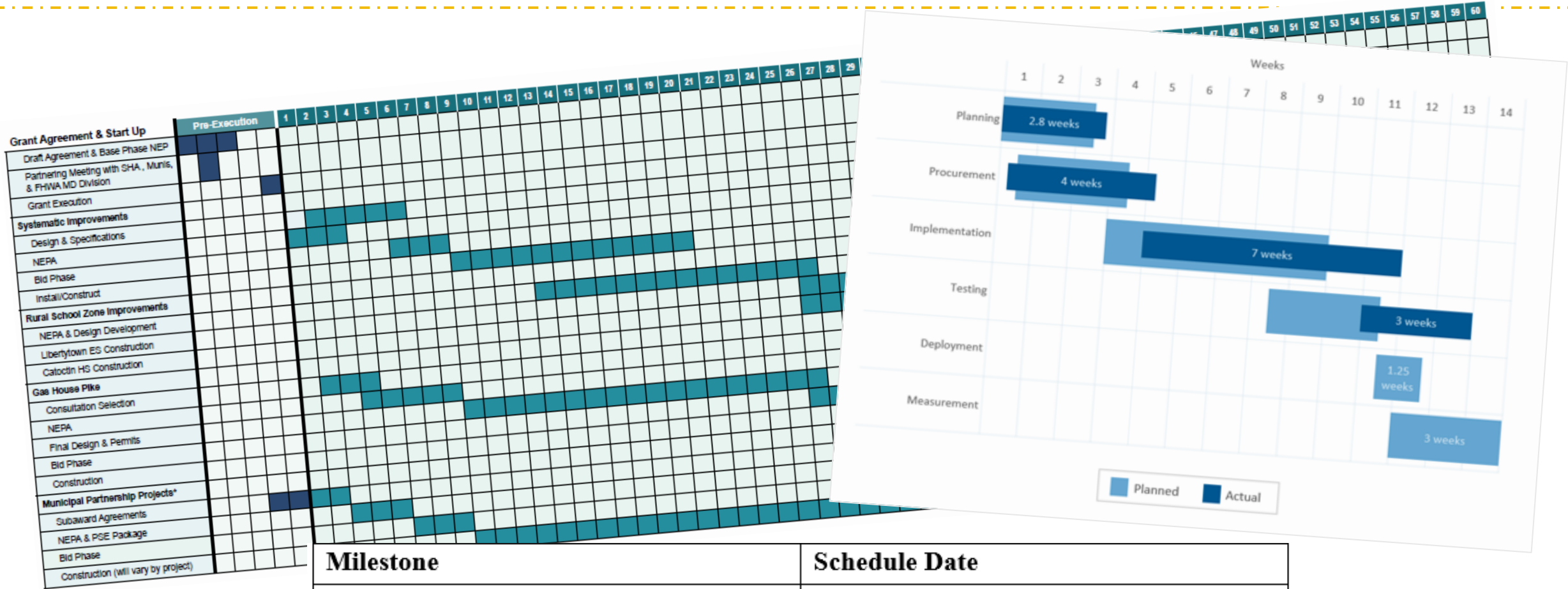
# Grant Preparation

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*Budget, Schedule, and Readiness/Risk*



# Sharing Your Project Schedule



Milestone	Schedule Date
Planned NEPA Completion Date:	Same Date Agreement is Signed
Planned Construction Substantial Completion and Open to Public Use Date:	June 1, 2029
Planned SS4A Final Report Date:	May 30, 2031

# Developing a Project Schedule

- If possible, use Grant Award + 1 month, 1 quarter, etc. rather than specific dates.
- If dates are required, remember that it will take time from grant award announcement to grant award.
- Stay within the maximum time allowed.
- Show a reasonable amount of detail.
- Document assumptions.
- Consider the time required for external reviews and approvals, procurement, etc.
- Be realistic.



Source: Prince George County Council

# Explaining Project Risks/Solutions

- Unless otherwise stated, grantors want to fund projects that are ready and likely to succeed.
- Risk is neither good nor bad; it just needs to be addressed and mitigated.
- Risk has budget, scope, and schedule implications.
- Do not be afraid to share the potential problems. Doing so shows maturity of the grant applicant and supports your readiness arguments.
- Risk relates to internal and external factors and shifts as the project progresses.

Readiness	Status
State and Local Planning Approvals	The National Capital Transportation Planning Board (MPO) has indicated that the SS4A projects do not need to be added to the TIP.
Roadway Design Standards	SS4A projects will follow the MDOT design standards and local roads.
Right of Way	All spot and systemic improvements will occur within the operational right of way. Any sidewalk improvements implemented by the municipalities will be prioritized so that right of way is not needed, but if right of way is needed it will be acquired in conformance with the URA.
NEPA	Not yet started, but will qualify as a Categorical Exclusion's under § 771.117(c) 3, 8, 22, and/or 27.
Section 106, Section 4(f)	No protected properties are likely to be affected; coordination will occur with the SHPO.

Readiness	Status
Utility Relocation	None on high injury network systemic improvements. If sidewalk construction occurs in the municipalities, then storm drains may be affected; but project selection would encourage that no other utilities could be impacted due to cost and delay impacts.
Partnership and Implementation Agreements	MDOT has indicated its support for the projects (see letter from Secretary Wiedefeld.) SHA has indicated that it will take responsibility for construction management of spot and systemic improvements along state-owned roadways.  Municipalities will be permitted to use eligible county contracts that comply with federal requirements and allow municipalities to draw down from that contract. We will also designate a project manager to work with the municipalities to advance their selected project(s).
Public Engagement	Community meetings will be held and property owners potentially affected by construction will be coordinated with.

Prince George's County  
Planning Department

# Municipal Grant Writing Workshop Series

*Workshop #4  
Grant Implementation*

April 1, 2026



# Municipal Grant Writing Workshop

*This workshop is brought to you by the Prince George's County Planning Department's Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities (PAMC) Program, which provides free technical assistance funding for municipalities and communities who are interested in revitalizing and enhancing the appearance and function of their communities.*

# PAMC



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**Josephine Selvakumar**

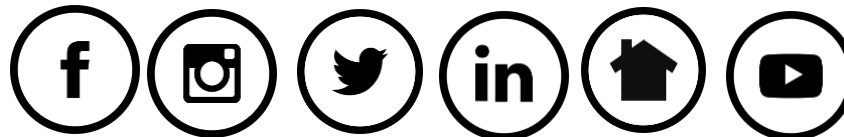
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# Review of Session Three

- Creating a clear and compelling narrative
- Responding effectively to grant questions and prompts
- Relationship between grant application and grant agreement



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Grant Implementation



Source: PowerPoint Stock



Source: PowerPoint Stock



Source: PowerPoint Stock

## Creating a Project Budget

- Budget research
- Key terms in budget development
- Budget components

## Creating a Project Schedule

- Level of detail
- Period of performance
- Building in flexibility

## Grant Compliance

- Reviews and approvals
- Cost compliance
- Procurement compliance

**RISK IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT**

# Relationship between Grant Application & Grant Agreement

***What you promise in the application becomes legally binding in the grant agreement***

## **Your narrative becomes part of:**

- Scope of work
- Reporting requirements
- Performance metrics
- Audit review

## **If application, agreement, and implementation do not align, risks include:**

- Scope Reductions: You may be forced to scale back or renegotiate
- Funding Return: Funds may be withheld or recaptured
- Compliance Findings: Audits may cite discrepancies between proposal and execution



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Creating a Project Budget

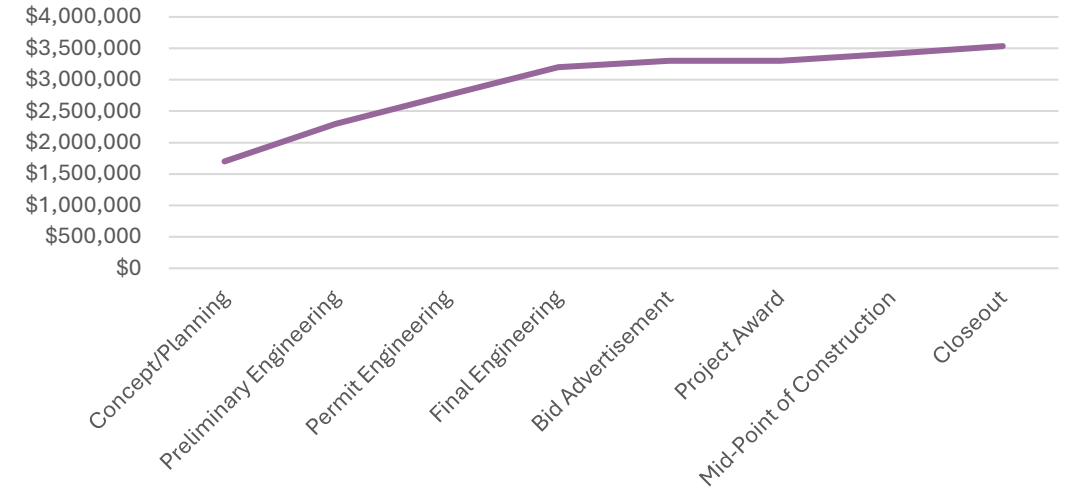
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# Developing a Project Budget

- Research typical award amounts
- Scalability
- Capital vs. operating costs
- Take note of ineligible/non-reimbursable costs
- Prepare the full cost of the project
  - Planning
  - Engineering
  - Construction
  - Right of Way, Permitting, Environmental Mitigation
  - Construction Management and Inspection
  - Contingency
  - Indirect (Administration & Overhead)
- Tie back to narrative
- Document your assumptions
- Remember inflation

Cost Estimation



# Matching Funds

- Range from 20% to 50%, read the NOFO
- Cannot match federal with federal
- Show over-match where you can
- In-kind and volunteer services are often eligible with proper documentation
- Understand when matching funds are needed
- Document source of funds and services and identify where funds are secured or committed vs. already in-hand

Source	Amount
Federal (80%)	\$200,000
Non-Federal (20%)	\$50,000
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>

## Non-Federal Share

Source	Amount
Indirect Allocation	\$20,000
Volunteer Services	\$8,000
Cash	\$22,000
<b>Total Non-Federal Sources</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>

# Indirect Costs (Overhead & Administration)

- Costs that are not easily assigned to a particular project, but which are necessary to the operation of the grantee and the performance of the project
- Larger agencies may have an approved indirect cost rate from a “cognizant federal agency”
- “De minimis” rate is 10% of total project costs

Typical indirect costs include:

- Salaries or wages of administrative staff
- Building maintenance and utilities
- Basic office supplies that can't be counted toward a program



Source: PowerPoint Stock

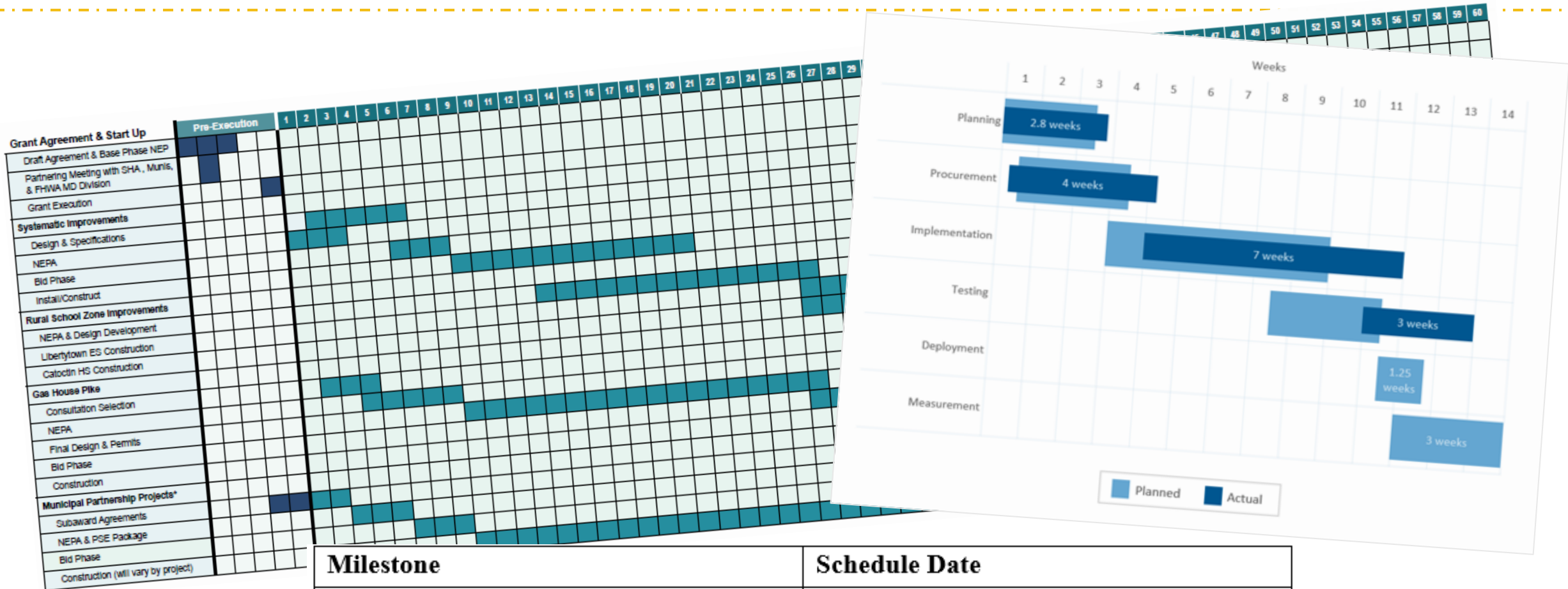
# Creating a Project Schedule

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Source: PowerPoint Stock



# Sharing Your Project Schedule



Milestone	Schedule Date
Planned NEPA Completion Date:	Same Date Agreement is Signed
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Planned SS4A Final Report Date:	May 30, 2031

# Developing a Project Schedule

- If possible, use Grant Award + 1 month, 1 quarter, etc. rather than specific dates
- If dates are required, remember that it will take time from grant award announcement to grant award
- Where possible, show what you have done to prepare
- Show a reasonable amount of detail
- Show logical sequence, concurrent or dependent activities; approvals by others
- Document assumptions
- Be realistic



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# **Project/Grant Risks**

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# Port Deposit Marina Park Rehabilitation and Resilience Project

## The Vision

- Extend promenade to Marina Park
- Include a two-bay boat ramp, trailer parking, fishing pier, living shoreline, scenic overlook and picnic area
- Northernmost boat launch along the Susquehanna and NPS Capital John A. Smith National Water Trail
- Endangered Northern Map Turtle and Great Blue Heron nesting



- Estimated budget of \$9.5M inclusive of all construction and related costs
- Opportunities for breakout projects exist but core infrastructure is \$6 - \$7M

# Explaining Project Risks/Solutions

- Unless otherwise stated, grantors want to fund projects that are ready and likely to succeed
- Risk is neither good nor bad; it just needs to be addressed and mitigated
- Risk has budget, scope, and schedule implications
- Do not be afraid to share the potential challenges, doing so shows maturity of the grant applicant and supports your readiness arguments
- Risk relates to internal and external factors and shift as the project progresses



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Examples of Project Risks/Solutions

Risk	Mitigation
<b>Environmental permits may take longer than expected</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Permit matrix developed</li><li>• Initial discussions have occurred with permitting agency</li><li>• Project designed to avoid permitting requirements</li></ul>
<b>Community support for project may erode</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Town Council adopted resolution in support of project</li><li>• Frequent community and stakeholder meetings held prior to application</li><li>• Post-award public engagement plan</li></ul>
<b>Costs may increase beyond available funds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contingency included in project budget</li><li>• Trade-offs have been identified</li><li>• Procurement method allows for flexibility</li></ul>



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Grant Administration

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# Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200)

## Reporting

- Every grant award must include requirements related to performance measurement and financial management
- Typically, all agencies require a quarterly report on a standard form
- Reporting is financial and programmatic
- Closeout
  - 90 days after agreement ends, the recipient submits all eligible incurred costs; performance and financial reports; other project records
  - Agency fully closes project after 1 year



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200)

## Costs must be:

- Necessary, reasonable, and allocable;
- Consistent with cost principles of federal award;
- Consistent with policies and procedures;
- Consistently treated as direct or indirect costs;
- In accordance with GAAP;
- Not included as cost sharing requirements of any other federally financed program;
- Adequately documented; and,
- Incurred during the approved budget period

*What would a reasonable person do?  
What is the context that affects the cost?*



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Procurement

- Grantee must have written procurement procedures – or make specific reference to higher level of government’s procedures
- May need agency approval before procuring large items above the Simplified Acquisition Threshold
- Must maintain sufficient detail on the history of each procurement
- Consider small, woman, veteran, and minority owned-businesses
- Consider procurement strategies with flexible approaches:
  - Piggyback or cooperative purchasing
  - On-call or indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contracts



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Procurement Types

Type	Use/Comments
Micropurchase (up to \$15,000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May be awarded without soliciting competitive price or rate quotations</li><li>• The recipient or subrecipient must consider the price reasonable based on research, experience, purchase history, or other information</li></ul>
Simplified Acquisition Threshold (\$350,000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May use a request for quotation</li><li>• Recommended to consider at least three sources</li><li>• May also use blanket purchase agreements</li></ul>
All Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sealed bids (price only)</li><li>• Requests for Proposals (technical plus price)</li></ul>
Noncompetitive procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can only be filled by a single source</li><li>• Public emergency</li><li>• After solicitation, competition is determined inadequate</li></ul>



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Wrap Up

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# Session 4 Wrap Up

- **Budget**
  - Pay attention to the details
  - Account for all different kinds of costs
  - Document your assumptions
- **Schedule**
  - Use the grant award +1 format if possible
  - Document assumptions and be realistic
- **Compliance**
  - Document risk and mitigation – it shows project maturity to understand and plan for the risks
  - Cost and procurement compliance require accurate documentation



Source: PowerPoint Stock

# Workshop Wrap-Up

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# Session 4 Wrap Up

- **Please complete the evaluation when sent later this week**
- **Post-workshop training package**
  - Matrix for evaluating grant opportunities
  - Templates for budgets and schedules
  - Links to compliance resources
  - *What else would you like?*
- **Coaching/consultation**



Source: PowerPoint Stock