

# Are you Grant Ready?

## TIP SHEET



### **BASIC LEVEL – Minimum Requirements to Apply for Grants**

These are the foundational elements you **must** have in place before pursuing grant funding.

#### **Tracking Grant Opportunities**

- Subscribe to funder email lists and share relevant opportunities internally.

#### **Project Development**

- Maintain a list of project needs with realistic cost estimates and timelines.

#### **Financial Systems**

- Maintain accounting and reporting systems that meet state and federal audit standards.
- Understand common state and federal grant reporting requirements and confirm staff capacity to meet them.
- Have a documented process for tracking match funds including in-kind contributions.

#### **Agency Roles and Responsibilities**

- Define clear roles and accountability for grant management, budget tracking, and funder reporting.

# ADVANCED LEVEL – Fully Grant Ready

If you have the Basic Level elements and the following, your agency is well-positioned to compete for and manage multiple grants.

## Tracking Grant Opportunities

- Assign someone to actively monitor state and federal funding opportunities.
- Maintain a shared calendar of upcoming grants and known funding cycles.
- Align grant cycles with Capital Improvement Project (CIP) schedules.

## Project Development

- Maintain current strategic, infrastructure, and capital plans that clearly identify priority projects.
- Ensure project cost estimates and timelines are accurate and updated, with flexibility to respond to new funding opportunities.
- Require early coordination between Project/Program Managers and Finance.

## Centralized Grant Management

- Use a centralized grant management system to coordinate grant applications and award management across departments.
- Track all grant awards, deadlines, reporting requirements, and expenditures in one shared system.
- Store grant agreements and required documentation within the system.
- Assign clear cross-department roles and maintain ongoing coordination.

## Financial Systems

- Use unique project or grant codes to separate costs by funding source.
- For advance-funded grants, have protocols in place to prevent commingling of funds (e.g., special funds separate from the General Fund).

## Partnerships and Collaboration

- Build and maintain relationships with local and regional partners.
- Engage partners early to strengthen applications and demonstrate broad community support.



# MASTER LEVEL – Highly Competitive and Scalable

If you have all Advanced Level elements **and** the following, your agency is positioned to efficiently pursue grants.

## Project Development

- Keep priority projects “shelf ready” with concise summaries outlining goals, partners, estimated costs, timelines, and community benefits.

## Standard Grant Materials

- Maintain ready-to-use templates for letters of support, project maps, staff bios, and required attachments.
- Keep organized records of community engagement, including summaries of surveys and public meetings.

## Application Review and Approval

- Use a streamlined internal review process that ensures timely input from Finance, key staff, and governing bodies before submission deadlines.