

FY 2024 ASSISTANCE APPLICATION WINDOW

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE



Spring 2024 | Assistance Application



WHAT IS CB ASSISTANCE?

Community Assistance provides communities with the tools and resources to spark meaningful progress, while building local capacity and creating success stories that inspire and inform other communities. Each project is tailored to meet specific local needs and requires a close partnership with the community and CB Team.

APPLICATION WINDOW

March 1st through April 15th, 2024



PROGRAM CONTACT

Erica Heller, AICP

Senior Director
970-384-4364

erica@communitybuilders.org

Glenwood Springs, CO 81601
communitybuilders.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
communitybuilders.org/community-assistance





ABOUT CB

Community Builders (CB) is a Colorado-based nonprofit that works to shape healthy, equitable, and prosperous communities that improve people's lives today and ensure a sustainable tomorrow. We provide tools, training and assistance to empower communities and local leaders that are working to create more livable and sustainable places.

We work shoulder-to-shoulder with community partners to envision the future they want and identify the strategies and actions to get them there. Combining technical expertise, inclusive community engagement, and an ability to navigate turbulent local politics, we bring communities together to craft practical solutions and create real results.

To date, we've completed assistance projects in nearly 40 communities, resulting in reformed local policy and over \$50 million in implementation funding and strategic capital investment.

ASSISTANCE OVERVIEW + APPROACH

Assistance projects are the most direct way we help communities tackle difficult challenges and create meaningful on-the-ground impact. These projects, grounded in a commitment to effective engagement and strengthening civic capacity, help community partners identify and implement strategies that build more livable places.

When a community is selected, we enter into a partnership rooted in shared goals, responsibility, and financial investment. This results in innovative projects, strong buy-in, and leverages the resources of both partners. While there is no set level of funding match, partners must demonstrate meaningful investment of time and resources.

To see recent examples of Community Assistance projects and case studies visit communitybuilders.org/community-assistance

COMMON PROJECT TYPES

The list below provides a sense of the varied types and scales of projects that are possible through CB Assistance.

Vision and Strategy - Projects to bring a community together to identify shared values and strategies to move them forward. Can scale from a block or neighborhood to an entire community or region.

Area Plans - Projects that focus on a specific area, such as a street corridor, downtown, or redevelopment area. While tactical and focused, these often begin with establishing shared community vision then transition into specific strategies.

Topical Strategies - Projects that focus on a particular issue, such as housing, the economy, transportation, redevelopment, or policy reform. Like area plans, these may require community engagement to define direction before strategies.

Implementation - Projects that establish tools, information, systems, resources, or programs needed to advance identified goals, strategies, or projects.

Building Civic Capacity - Projects to strengthen local capacity, such as training, analytical or communication tools, or other actions that improve a community's ability to make progress.



WHAT DO ASSISTANCE PROJECTS ENTAIL?

Projects are typically designed around CB's Process Framework (below), which provides a proven approach, and the flexibility to tailor the project to local needs and opportunities. Projects vary from four months to up to 18, with most in the 8-12 month range. Budgets are commensurate, with the community partner's funds typically matched by CB. Projects often include a multi-day site visit and/or workshop. At the conclusion of each project, a short, visually compelling report with clear recommendations and action steps is provided.

Selected applicants work with the CB team to create a more specific scope and budget that meets the community's needs and fits within the time-frame and budgetary constraints of the assistance program.

WHO CAN APPLY?

This round of assistance is for Colorado communities. It is focused on mountain and rural places, which includes smaller cities, towns, and rural areas or regions. Applications can be submitted by municipal, county, tribal governments, and special districts. Other types of community and economic development organizations, including non-profit organizations, can apply, but must demonstrate support and partnership with the relevant local jurisdiction.



EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications for potential assistance projects will be evaluated on:

- » The strength of the problem statement and clarity of the project concept;
- » Readiness of the project to move forward;
- » Demonstrated commitment to the project from staff, leadership, and the broader community;
- » The potential for impact - how this work fits into a broader strategy for community improvement; and
- » Ability to provide approximately 50% of financial contribution to project costs.

Note: the aesthetic presentation of an application does not factor into selection.





PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

The partnership between the community and CB is the foundation of every project. The nature of this type of partnership is unique. It is not a traditional consulting relationship and CB is not “hired” by partner communities. Rather, both parties agree to work together on a project with shared commitment, responsibility, and resources. It allows CB to adapt to the community’s needs, put in the amount of time needed to get things right, and to commit real resources to community engagement and capacity building. Strong preference is given to communities that have attended a Community Builders training, received prior assistance, or otherwise worked with Community Builders. This is particularly important for applicants seeking support on larger scale projects.

HOW TO APPLY

The community assistance application process is comprised of two key steps:

01 First, applicants must submit a 300-word project concept via email or [this google form](#) and conduct a 20-minute intake conversation with a CB team member (we will reach out to schedule this). This is to ensure that projects are an appropriate fit for CB Assistance before moving on to the full application. We aim to save communities time in the application process if their project is not a fit and to help guide projects that do fit towards a more successful application.

PROJECT CONCEPT PROMPT: *Tell us about the needs, challenges or opportunities you hope to work on through CB Assistance. If you already have ideas for how to approach the work, please describe. If not, just describe the challenge or opportunity and what you hope to get out of CB Assistance.*

02 After your project concept is reviewed and you conduct a consultation call, eligible applicants must complete the full application below. Applications can be submitted via email as a PDF or through the [online application form here](#).

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Submit 300-word project concept
- Schedule and conduct 20-minute consultation call with a CB team member (CB will reach out to you to schedule)
- Collect letters of support (details in application below)
- Submit full application between March 1st and April 15th, 2024
- If selected, complete scoping & budgeting

KEY LINKS

- » Project concept google form (step 1): forms.gle/r9f8JUYQLKAo6A5Z7
- » Full application google form (step 2): forms.gle/RaR6fT35ZYjcuoF29
- » For questions, please contact: Erica Heller, erica@communitybuilders.org

FOR ONLINE MATERIALS & ADDITIONAL DETAILS, VISIT:
[COMMUNITYBUILDERS.ORG/
COMMUNITY-ASSISTANCE](https://communitybuilders.org/community-assistance)



APPLICATION

To apply, submit **one** application per community. A complete application will consist of the following items:

- a.** Project Concept
- b.** Capacity & Resources
- c.** Letters of Support

Please collaborate with project partners to submit your community’s assistance application through this [online application form](#) **OR in PDF format** to: erica@communitybuilders.org any time between **March 1st and April 15th**.

a. PROJECT CONCEPT

1. Initial Consultation Call

Did you conduct an exploratory call with a Community Builders Team Member to discuss and refine your project concept?

Yes (*required*)

2. Problem Statement / Project Concept

In 300 words, please provide a description of the challenge or opportunity your community is facing and the responsive assistance project you would like to undertake to implement change. (*Note: This is a refined version of the original project concept submitted to CB and discussed in the initial consultation.*)

3. Anticipated Project Scale & Time-Frame

Which best describes the timeline and budget of your proposed community assistance project? Note: This is an initial estimate and can change through the scoping and budgeting process.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 Months | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$25,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6-12 Months | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000-75,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12-18 Months | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000-\$150,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please describe:
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please describe:
_____ |

When do you hope to get started with this project?



b. CAPACITY & RESOURCES



4. Statement of Local Capacity

Leadership: Please list and briefly describe which entity, and who specifically, formally owns this potential project.

Staff: What staffing capacity does the lead entity have to partner with CB to carry out this project?

Champions & Partners: What local champions and partners have shown commitment to this project? Please also list *potential* champions or partners.

5. Financial Resources

In most circumstances, Community Builders covers 30-50% of project costs. As an indicator of commitment, local partners are typically expected to contribute at least 30%. CB is willing to collaborate with local partners to explore resources to cover any remaining budget gap. Further budget clarification occurs during final project scoping.

Budget Flexibility: Please describe what can be budgeted towards this project without additional public process.

Other Resources: Are there other potential financial resources (e.g., local partner organizations or foundations) that could contribute?

Budget Gap: What is the total anticipated budget for this project? What is the gap between existing resources and a fully funded process/approach?

6. Community and Political Support

How do you view the current political and community sentiment about this work? Is this work/project controversial or broadly supported? Is community engagement and building broad-based support an important component of the project?

Do you have support from your local government body to do this work with Community Builders? Are any local elected officials championing this work?

7. Letters of Support

Strong partnerships are essential for moving a project forward. For this reason, letters of support from key project partners and stakeholders (as identified in question 4) and local government officials is required.

Please attach one or more letters of support from: project partner(s) (*required*), local government official(s) (*required*), and any others, as appropriate.

Optional: You are welcome to include any reports, plans, project proposals, or other supporting materials you feel are relevant to your application.

c. LETTERS OF SUPPORT

