



Atlanta Regional Commission

LCI & CDAP Assistance Application Guidebook



2019 Guidebook

Your Guide to Applying for ARC's Community Assistance Programs

The purpose of this guidebook is to provide applicants an overview of the revamped Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) and Community Development Assistance Program (CDAP), describe the priority issue areas for both programs, outline the application process, and provide examples of projects to help applicants as they develop their own applications.

Since its creation over 70 years ago, ARC has created a diversity of programs and services to help our local governments make informed land use and transportation decisions. These include grants, technical assistance, convenings, and educational programs. Two of the most impactful and recognized local assistance programs currently offered by ARC are the Community Development Assistance Program (CDAP) and the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI).

Applications for these programs will be accepted beginning on

January 15, 2019

<https://atlantaregional.org/2019callforprojects>



A New Framework

To make sure that every community achieves its best, ARC's Community Development Group is defining a renewed framework for evaluating and focusing our efforts. It responds to the diversity of our region, acknowledging a wide variety of conditions, perspectives, identities, lifestyles, and values. It also affirms our belief that we are all part of the Atlanta region, that this diversity is our strength, and that we all remain committed to a shared vision for our future.

The Community Development Group wants to help you address these challenges to create an equitable and resilient region that works for all. Through a series of stakeholder meetings, workshops, committee meetings, and community surveys, we have identified the following regional challenges as priorities to be addressed within our core land use and transportation planning studies through both CDAP and LCI.

- 1. Access to healthy food** – Land use policies supporting community agriculture, local food systems, and access to healthy food retail opportunities is critical to creating both an equitable and resilient region.
- 2. Creative placemaking** – Allowing the arts to be a part of daily life helps foster a strong sense of community and spur economic growth. Creative placemaking initiatives can include public art, programming of underutilized spaces, or general revitalization efforts.
- 3. Green infrastructure** – Our region will continue to experience weather extremes with increasing frequency, and we need to design resilient urban areas that incorporate innovative storm water management as well as protect natural resources.
- 4. Historic preservation** – Preserving historical buildings and places ensures the relevance of our region's past. It also addresses environmental issues, as preserving an existing structure reduces waste and the need for new materials.
- 5. Housing affordability** – Housing costs continue to outpace income growth, impacting a majority of the region's workforce and affecting the region's livability and economic competitiveness.
- 6. Lifelong communities** – By 2030, 20% of the region's population is expected to be over the age of 60. We must ensure that programs, services, and infrastructure adequately serve the needs of this growing population.
- 7. Smart communities** – The influence of technology on our communities will increase over time. It is critical during this phase of technology development that communities gain a better understanding of potential impacts and prepare themselves to take advantage of future innovations.
- 8. Workforce development** – As the impact of technology and e-commerce on our workforce and communities continues to grow, local governments need to develop strategies to help retain small businesses and ensure that residents get the training and education they need.

LCI 2.0: (Re)Focus on Transit and Town Centers

For the last 20 years, LCI played a big role in getting the region to this shared vision. It was an innovative program for its time and was celebrated as a national model. It mobilized the region to action on issues like better street design and land use policy, increased density, and a growing appetite for transit.

The Need to Change

Over the past two decades, LCI has expanded in geography to include areas outside of transit nodes and traditional town centers. As of 2018, the 10-county Atlanta region has 120 LCI areas in 119 communities. While this reflects the success of the program, **the expanded geography has limited its ability to have a greater impact** in existing communities. Also, ARC now has additional planning tools such as CDAP and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) available to help communities with their small area planning and implementation needs.

In addition to focusing the program's geography, the new LCI framework seeks to **address new and emerging land use and transportation challenges** that the current program is not designed to address. In order to create a livable center, communities need to think about critical equity and resiliency issues such as affordable housing, green infrastructure, and aging in place, to name a few. The top 8 issues that our LCI areas need to address as they envision their future livable centers are highlighted in this guidebook.

Smart Communities: A Partnership with Georgia Institute of Technology

ARC is partnering with Georgia Tech to offer communities the option of applying for a Georgia Smart Communities Challenge Grant through the joint call for project.

Why apply for it instead of a regular LCI grant? The Georgia Smart Communities Challenge will provide applicants with supplemental resources in addition to their grant funds, such as:

- Partnership and Technical assistance from a Georgia Tech researcher who will perform Georgia Tech funded academic research for your project's benefit.
- Multiple themed workshops and engagements with Georgia Tech professors and experts throughout the year to increase your knowledge and awareness of Smart Communities information.
- The placement of a Georgia Tech student in your community to assist with your project during summer paid for by Georgia Tech.
- Access to a network of peer governments to share best practices and learnings.
- Access to local, national, and international network of experts to advise your community.

REQUIREMENT: An established relationship with a Georgia Tech research partner who has agreed to work with your community during this program is required in order to apply to the program. Georgia Smart staff can assist with facilitating a relationship with a research partner.

Website: <http://smartcities.ipat.gatech.edu/georgia-smart>

Georgia Tech Research Partner Listing Webpage: <http://smartcities.ipat.gatech.edu/research-partners-advisors>

Contact: scii@ipat.gatech.edu

IMPORTANT NOTE: Applicants are able to seek assistance outside of the Smart Communities Challenge, if they choose not to seek the supplemental resources offered by Georgia Tech.



Proposed Changes

The new LCI framework has two major components.

LCI 2.0

Changing Geography

The LCI program will prioritize funding studies in the following geographies:

TOD Centers are areas that have a direct connection to the high-capacity regional transit system. These centers will have a fixed-guideway or bus rapid transit stop existing or planned within ¼-mile of the LCI study boundaries.

Local Centers are LCI areas that are the region’s traditional Main Street and downtown communities. These are identified on The Atlanta Region’s Plan Unified Growth Policy Map.

New Study Types

Project selection will include new types of projects with more targeted outcomes.

Catalytic – Long-term master plans or visions for the TOD Center or Town Center and focused on moving the needle.

Tactical – Community-driven long-range plans for creating vibrant TOD areas and town centers that also move the needle on priority equity and resiliency issues.

Experimental – studies that are not place-based, i.e. confined to the LCI area geography. These studies would however need to demonstrate a direct positive impact on or benefit to an adjacent LCI area.

EQUITY

Priority Issues

- Housing Affordability
- Green Infrastructure
- Workforce Development
- Historic Preservation
- Access to Healthy Food
- Lifelong Communities
- Creative Placemaking
- Smart Communities

RESILIENCY

A New Tool: Community Development Assistance Program

In 2018, the ARC launched a technical assistance program with the goal of helping cities, counties, and non-profit organizations find solutions to land use and transportation planning issues. ARC has long provided planning support to local communities, considering individual proposals as they arose. The community development assistance program takes a much more deliberate approach, dedicating resources on an annual basis in a way that enables the agency to serve even more communities. It offers both grants and technical assistance.

In addition to maximizing ARC resources directed towards communities, CDAP is also a partnership with external agencies looking to tackle similar issues. In 2019, ARC will be partnering with Georgia Conservancy, Georgia Power, Georgia State, Georgia Tech, Southface and the Urban Land Institute.

There are four types of technical assistance offered through CDAP:

CDAP

Types of Assistance

Planning: community-driven and long-range planning assistance to guide neighborhood, community-wide, sub-regional, and County level decision-making.

Implementation: strategic assistance to implement high-priority action items identified in adopted plans.

Training: structured education and awareness programs to help a diversity of decision-makers make well-informed decisions.

Facilitation: consensus-building activities to help stakeholders achieve desired outcomes for a given program or project.

Priority Issues

Housing Affordability

Green Infrastructure

Workforce Development

Historic Preservation

Access to Healthy Food

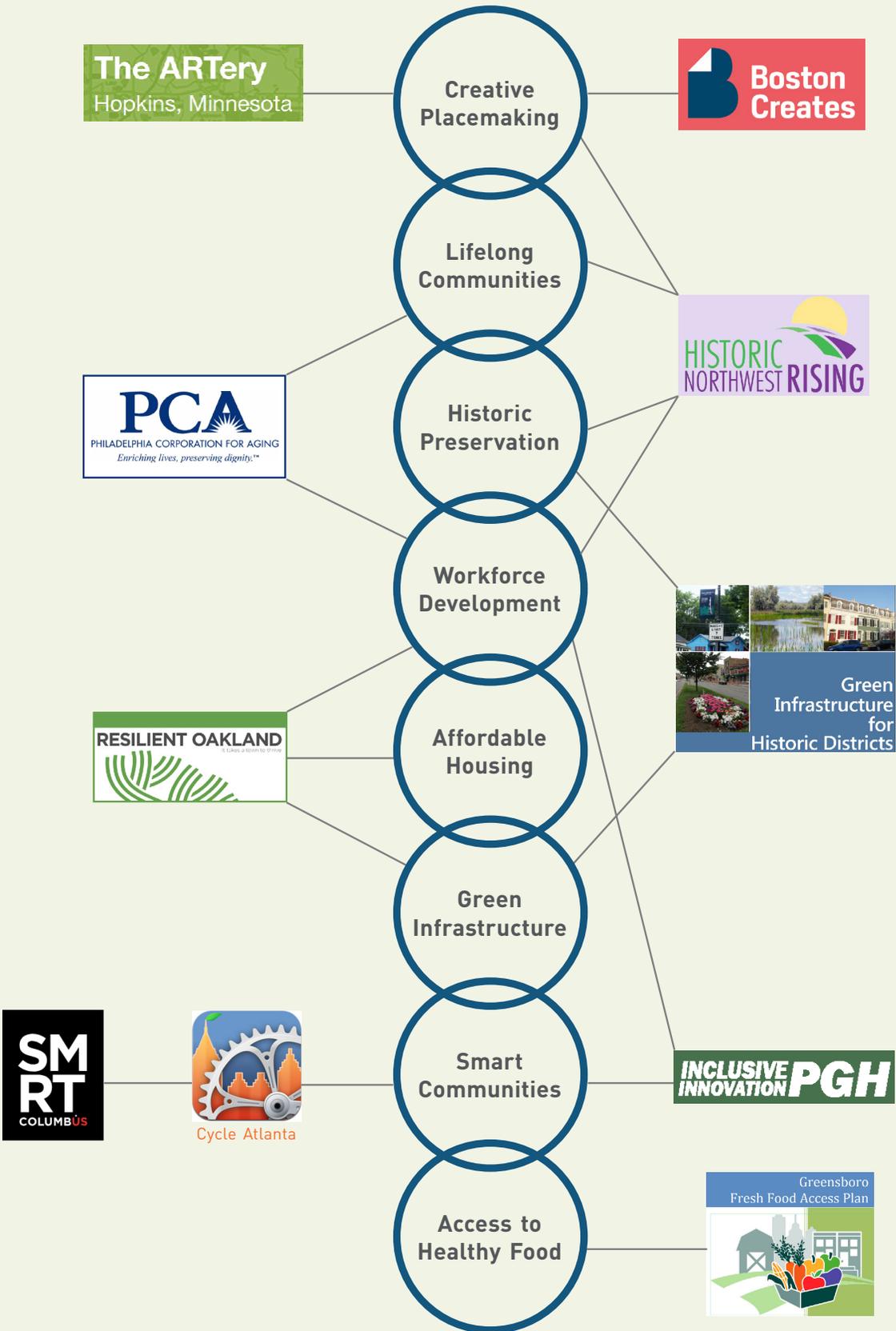
Lifelong Communities

Creative Placemaking

Smart Communities



Project Ideas



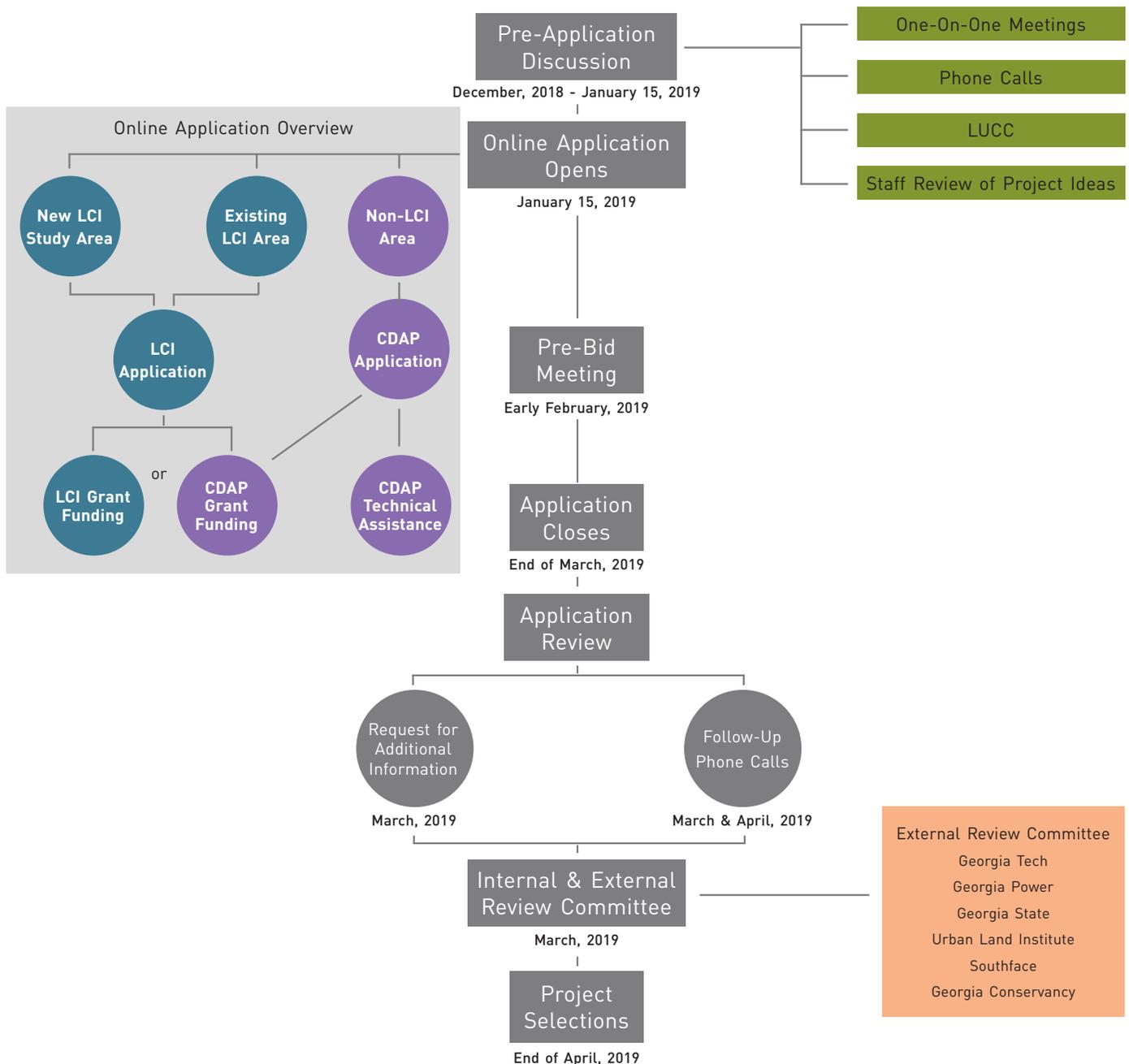
Next Steps

On **January 15th** applications will be available on the ARC website at <https://atlantaregional.org/2019callforprojects>. If you are looking to submit an application for a new LCI study area, please contact an ARC Community Development Staff member **before** applying. Also, please review the FAQ section to learn more about application requirements and answers to other common queries.

For any other questions related to the call for projects, please contact **Sam Shenbaga**, Community Development Group Manager at sshenbaga@atlantaregional.org or via phone at 470.378.1592. Please review the ARC application process below for a look at how ARC staff will evaluate projects. Please keep this in mind as you consider projects for nomination.

Thank you and good luck!

ARC Application Process



FAQ – 2019 Call for Projects

Q Will I still be able to request assistance from ARC's Community Development Group outside of the call for projects?

A Yes. ARC is still a resource for local governments at all times of the year. The annual call for projects will be the primary way to source technical assistance from the Community Development Group. However, communities should reach out to ARC with questions or ideas at anytime. Staff capacity and resources will determine the ability to respond to any specific request.

Q I may not be able to obtain a letter of commitment from my Chief Elected Official. Is a letter still required?

A A letter of commitment from your Chief Elected Official is a requirement. This letter must also acknowledge that a minimum of 20% matching funds are required.

Q Is there a local match for both LCI and CDAP applications?

A Yes, the minimum local match is 20% of project cost. All applicants will be asked to submit a proposed cost as part of their application form. The community should also commit to providing the 20% minimum matching funds required for receiving both grant and technical assistance. The match and funding are based upon a reimbursable basis, e.g. the local government invoices ARC for \$1,000 of completed work and receives \$800.

Q For grant funds, if the applicant already has subcontractors/ consultants under contract, can they use their services and count it toward project requirements?

A No. All grants awarded through the call for projects must be bid out in an open competitive process. If you are thinking about using a consultant under contract for your project work, you must receive approval from ARC in writing before you apply. For technical assistance awarded, ARC staff will welcome the opportunity to work with consultants under contract. This however does not waive the local match.

Q Can fees toward subcontractors count toward local match?

A No.

Q How many projects will be selected?

A There is no set number of projects that will be selected. Once all requests have been received, staff capacity and resources will determine the final list of projects.

Q Will there be a scoring matrix for projects?

A There will be a scored application process by ARC staff and an external committee.

Q Do requests for assistance for local comprehensive plans need to go through this call for projects?

A No. ARC provides assistance to local governments with the update of a basic comprehensive plan through its contract with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. There is a separate process by which that request is submitted.

Q My LCI area does not have planned transit nor is it a town center are we still eligible for LCI funds?

A The LCI studies will prioritize transit nodes and town centers. However, CDAP is able to provide grant assistance at the same levels as LCI studies, with the only exception being that your study area is not designated as an LCI area. While your community would not be eligible for LCI transportation funds, you would have the ability to apply for general TIP funds which fund similar activities.

Q My Qualified Local Government Status has lapsed, and we have not completed our needed update. Are we still eligible for funds?

A No, unless you have already submitted your update to ARC to be approved by DCA.



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229 Peachtree Street NE | Suite 100 | Atlanta, Georgia 30303

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