



FINALIST REPORTING GUIDELINES

May 2016



REPORTING FOR ABC FINALISTS

Congratulations on being selected as a Finalist for America's Best Communities! As part of your commitment to the prize competition, you will be expected to produce three quarterly progress reports containing the following components:

- Metrics Report
- Budget
- Sample Blog Post
- Videos

You'll find guidance on each component below. At the culmination of the 11-month period, you are required to produce a final report that will be evaluated by judges in order to select the three Grand Prize winners of America's Best Communities. The final report will include the following components:

- Final Metrics Report
- Final Budget
- Final Sample Blog Post
- Videos
- Final Community Revitalization Plan
- Reflection Questions

Please find additional guidance on these components below.

QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORTS

While required by the official rules as part of the prize, the quarterly progress reports are also a tool for your team to measure your progress, set benchmarks and motivate the team forward.

You are expected to submit three quarterly progress reports and one final report online through the ABC Finalist portal. The quarterly progress reporting deadlines are:

- July 6, 2016
- October 5, 2016
- January 11, 2017

METRICS REPORT

1. Open the "ABC Finalist Metrics Report and Budget" Spreadsheet.
2. Go to the blue "Metrics Report" tab at the bottom (it should be the first one on the left).
3. Fill out the information at the top of the sheet related to your overall community. Please indicate how many projects you are currently working on as well as how many partner organizations you are working with and how many community members you are engaging. We know that this information can be difficult to track, so your best estimates are fine.
4. Once you complete the top portion of the sheet, copy and paste a Project Metrics box for each project that you are working on. You can do this by highlighting the full box with your mouse, then right-clicking (PC) or holding Control + clicking (Mac) on the selection and selecting "Copy." then clicking into an empty cell below the existing boxes and right-clicking or Control + clicking and selecting "Paste."
5. Fill out each project box including: Project name, Goal, How far you are towards your goal (% completed). You then need to provide three metrics that you will be using to evaluate your progress on each specific project over the course of the 11-month implementation period. These metrics should reflect what you included in your Community Revitalization Plan.



6. By each reporting deadline, you should fill in your “actual” metrics for each of your key metrics along with your “projected” metrics for the upcoming quarter.
7. If your progress is off-track for any reason, please use the “Project Status Description” box to explain. You can also note any highlights or surprising results in this field. Please note that you are not being evaluated solely on how successful you have been at implementation, but also on how you have navigated the challenges that come up along the way. To that end, we encourage you to be as honest and accurate as possible in your metrics reporting.

BUDGET

The budget worksheet should be familiar as it is the same used at the end of the Quarter-Finalist round.

1. Open the “ABC Finalist Metrics Report and Budget” Spreadsheet.
2. Navigate to the green tabs, each of which is part of your budget.
3. Fill in the fields on each of the tabs in order to complete your full budget.

SAMPLE BLOG POST

You will need to provide a sample blog post that gives a snapshot of your progress to date. The blog post should be no more than 350 words. When constructing your blog post, we encourage your team to use the following questions as a guide:

- **Friction:** What obstacles have you faced while implementing your plan? Include partners or team members lost, reactions from stakeholders, etc.



- **Momentum:** Where have you gained momentum while implementing your plan? Include partners or team members gained, reactions from stakeholders, etc.
- **Opportunity:** What opportunities have you identified to help you in implementing your plan?
- **Pivot:** Have you had to change course or adapt in the implementation of your plan? Please explain.

VIDEOS

You will need to provide three raw, unedited video clips of at least 15 seconds in length as part of your quarterly reporting. Additional guidelines for the multimedia will become available online during the reporting period. There will be a field on the quarterly report to provide links to the videos, which should be hosted on Dropbox, G Drive, Vimeo or YouTube. As a reminder, the multimedia that you provide will not be evaluated as part of the judging process. The videos are used by ABC, Frontier and other sponsors for promotional and storytelling purposes.

FINAL REPORT & COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PLAN

In addition to quarterly progress reports, a final report and finalized Community Revitalization Plan are due on March 29, 2017 through the ABC Finalist portal. Judges will evaluate the final report in order to select the Grand Prize winners of America's Best Communities. The Judges will use the following criteria:

- **Achievement of short-term tactics:** Successful completion of the projects and programs in the Community Revitalization Plan implemented during the previous 11 months
- **Community engagement:** Ongoing engagement of community members and groups in the implementation of Community Revitalization Plan activities
- **Sustainable community revitalization:** Identification of specific and tangible community and regional benefits that have resulted from delivering on the projects and programs identified in the Community Revitalization Plan

Factors the judges will consider when evaluating the beneficial impact on the community and the region include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Ability to attract new businesses or increase investment in the community
- Adjustment to and overcoming of national and regional economic trends
- Short- and long-term job creation
- Improvements to small-scale local infrastructure (e.g., Wi-Fi availability, lighting improvements, event venues, signage)
- Improvements to educational/technical training opportunities for the community and the region
- Impact on availability and affordability of housing
- Improvements to the overall legal and regulatory environment to promote sustainable revitalization for both small and large businesses (e.g., zoning, business licenses, land banking)
- Successful leveraging of federal and regional resources
- Creative responses to challenging economic and geographic hurdles
- Successful leveraging of public/private partnerships



The report will include the following components:

FINAL METRICS REPORT

You are expected to produce a final version of the Metrics Report showing where key metrics for each project have landed by the end of the 11-month implementation period.

FINAL BUDGET

Please provide a final version of the budget that shows how funding was utilized over the course of the 11-month implementation period.

FINAL SAMPLE BLOG POST

You will also need to provide a final sample blog post that gives an overview of your progress over the course of implementing your Community Revitalization Plan. When constructing your blog post, we encourage your team to use the following questions as a guide:

- **Friction:** What obstacles have you faced while implementing your plan? Include partners or team members lost, reactions from stakeholders, etc.
- **Momentum:** Where have you gained momentum while implementing your plan? Include partners or team members gained, reactions from stakeholders, etc.
- **Opportunity:** What opportunities have you identified to help you in implementing your plan in the future?
- **Pivot:** Have you had to change course or adapt in the implementation of your plan? Please explain.

VIDEOS

You should also share three final raw, unedited video clips of at least 15 seconds in length as part of your final reporting. Additional guidelines for the multimedia will become available online. There will be a field on the quarterly report to provide links to the videos, which should be hosted on Dropbox, G Drive, Vimeo or YouTube. As a reminder, the multimedia that you provide will not be



part of the Finalist round judging process. The videos are used by ABC, Frontier and other sponsors for promotional and storytelling purposes.

FINAL REVITALIZATION PLAN

A final version of the Community Revitalization Plan outlining the road ahead for your community. For more information, see the Official Rules.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

The last component that you will submit are responses to Reflection Questions that help to call out highlights of your experience and plans for the future. The Reflection Questions will be available to you on the submission form during the Final Reporting period.

QUESTIONS?

Please email your question to info@americasbestcommunities.org or call 203-614-5070 for support.

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