Community Rides Grants Webinar 2:
Project Development, Performance Measures, and Application Portal Overview

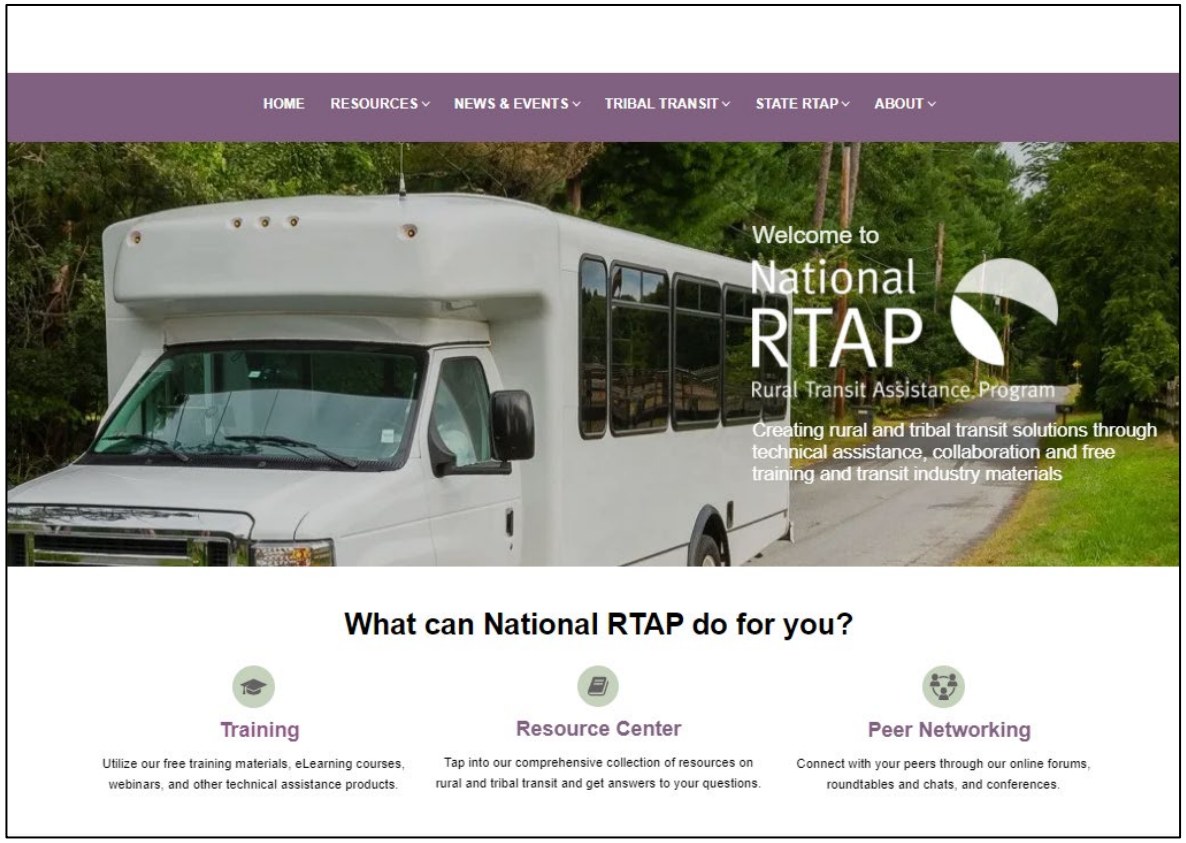
July 31, 2025, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

National RTAP
Rural Transit Assistance Program

FTA
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

National Rural Transit Assistance Program

- Technical assistance center funded by FTA through the Section 5311 Program
- Provides free training materials and technical assistance to rural and tribal transit providers and state RTAP programs
- Review Board – state DOT and rural and tribal transit agency staff
- Learn more at nationalrtap.org



National RTAP Resources and Services

Training

manuals, videos, slides, and eLearning for front-line staff and management

Information

and best practices via tech briefs, toolkits, topic guides, articles, and news

Technology Tools

for procurement, cost allocation, website building, and GTFS

Peer Networking

and training via webinars, conferences, roundtables, and online forums

Assistance

through reference services and tech support – bring us your questions!

Webinar Agenda

Community Rides Grants Overview

- Overview of the Community Rides Grant Program
- Using the Grant Portal
- Cost Allocation Calculator

Time for questions at the end of the presentation

Webinar and Q&A Document will be posted to the Community Rides Grant webpage

How to Access Grant Program Information

National RTAP
Community Rides Grants

For complete up-to-date information:

https://www.nationalrtap.org/News/Community-Rides-Grants

- Download the Request for Proposals
- Sign-up to be notified about grant program updates
- View helpful resources and past grantee project summaries
- Email grants@nationalrtap.org with any questions

- Questions/Responses from Webinar 1 are posted

Grant Program Summary – Funding and Eligibility

- ~$250,000 distributed year one / distributed annually
- ***Support Local Partnerships: Must have a minimum of one local partner***
- Additional resources available for Tribal projects
- Grant awards of up to $100,000; $25,000 minimum grant amount
- Funding distributed monthly on a reimbursement basis
- Project duration is up to 12 months
- Eligible applicants are rural or tribal transit systems that receive FTA Section 5311
- **Not eligible: vehicle purchases and expenses for existing transit services**

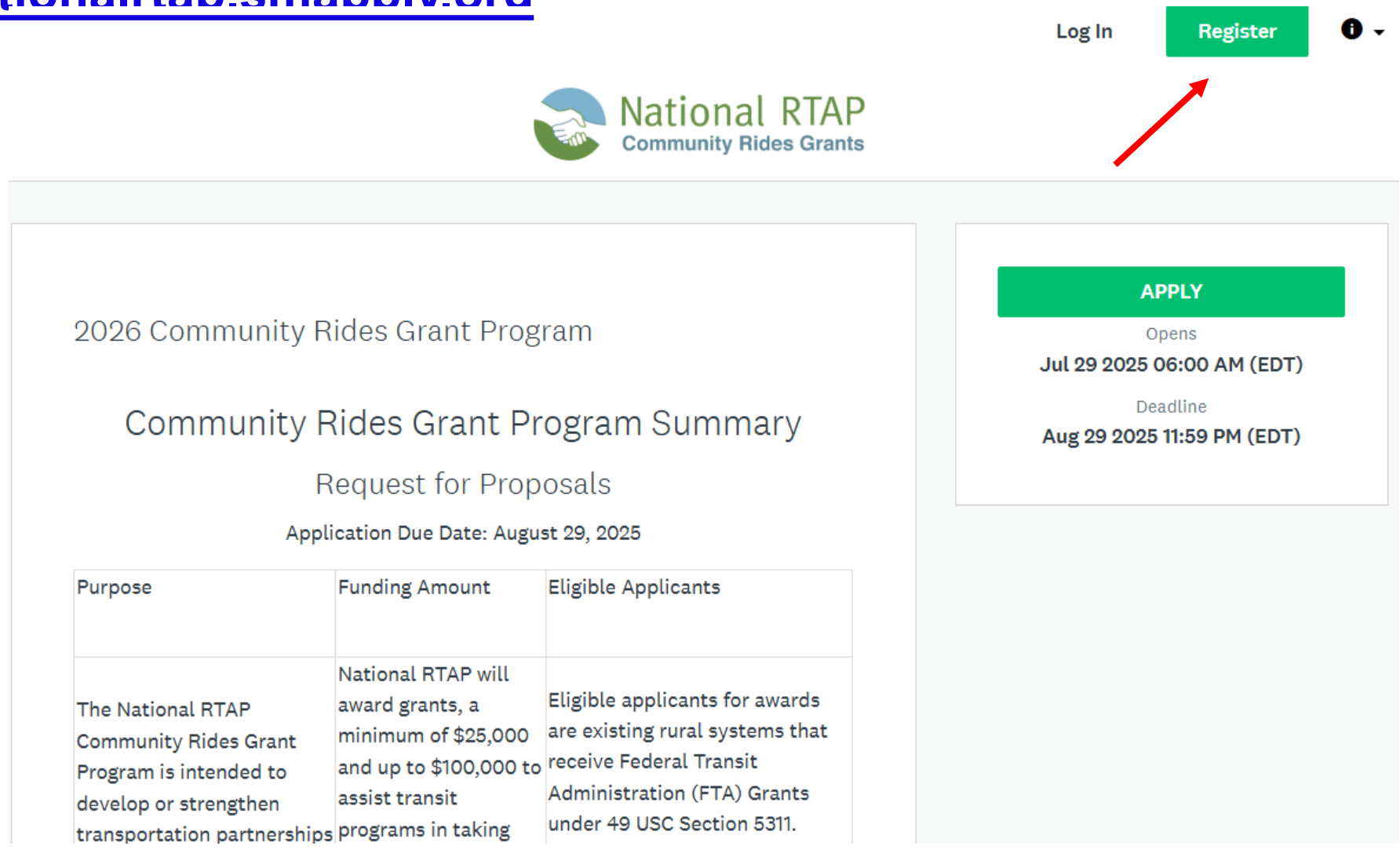
Improve access to critical needs like employment, healthcare, education, healthy food, social services, etc., as well as build the capacity of transit programs

Grant Program Key Dates

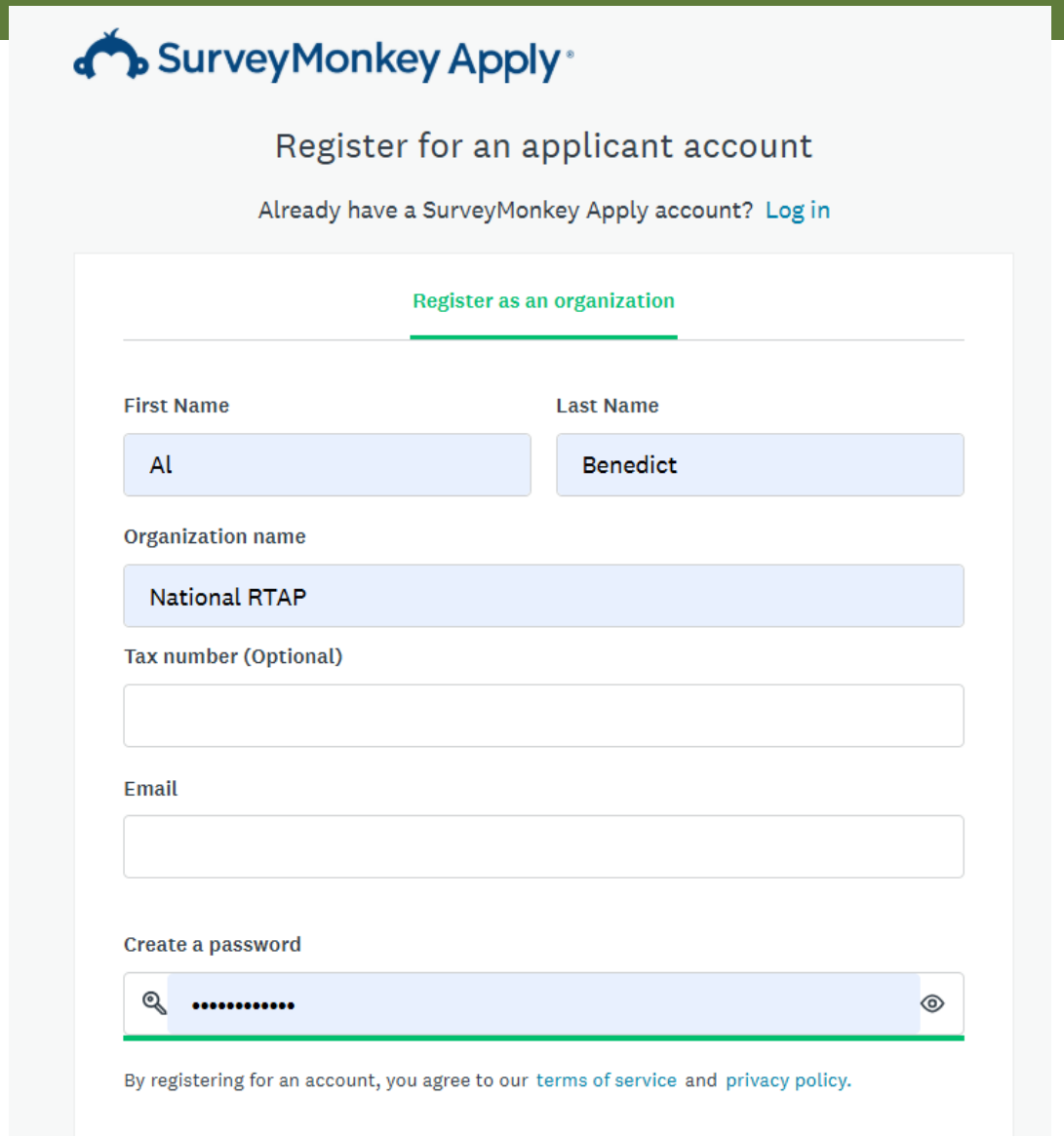
7/2/25	Request for proposals (RFP) published
7/22/25	Informational webinar for interested applicants #1
7/31/25	**Grant application portal opens**
7/31/25	**Informational webinar for interested applicants #2**
8/29/25	Grant application due date at 11:59 PM EDT
10/24/25	Approximate date of grant award announcements
1/1/26	Selected projects begin work
12/31/26	All Community Rides Grant projects must be completed
3/31/27	Final report/supporting materials due

National RTAP SurveyMonkey Apply Grant Application Portal

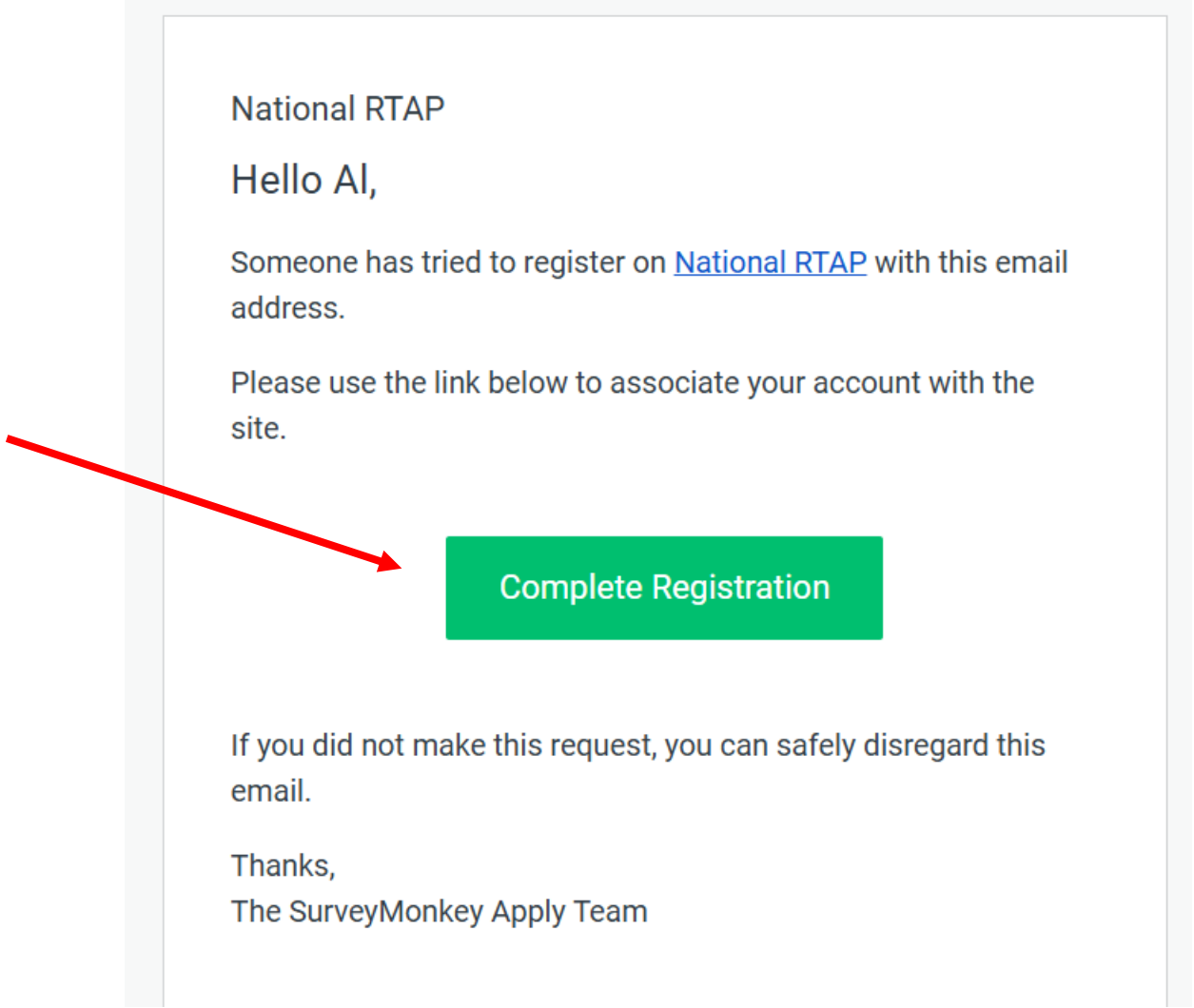
https://nationalrtap.smapply.org



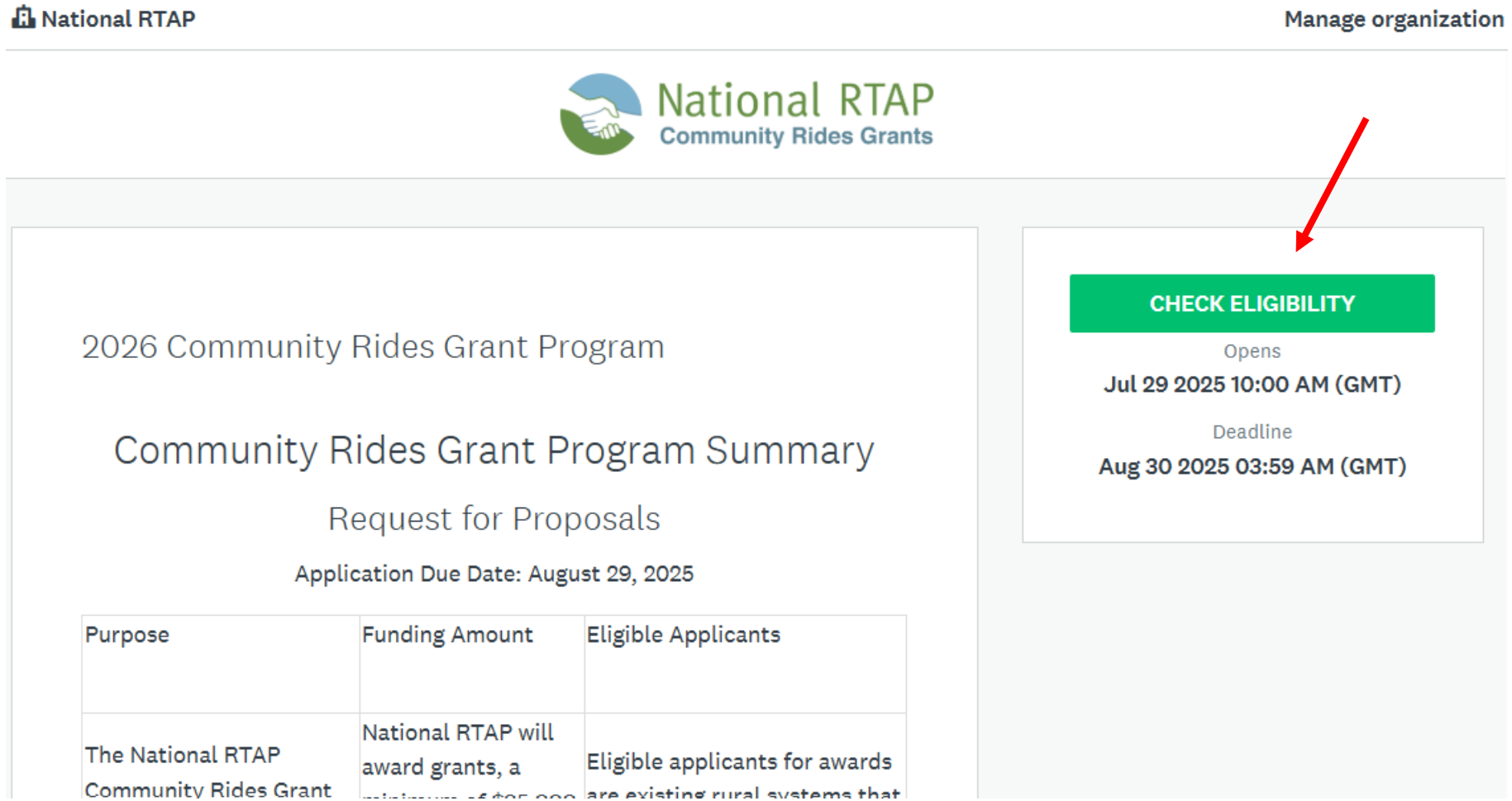
Register with SurveyMonkey Apply



Check Your Email to Confirm Registration



Check your Eligibility



Eligibility Quiz

Are you, as the lead applicant, currently receiving FTA Section 5311 funding?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Do you have authorization from your transit agency's executive management and/or governing board to apply for this grant program and to implement the proposed project?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Do you have a letter or written agreement from a partner organization that commits to being involved in planning and implementing the proposed project?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Does your organization have any outstanding legal or financial issues?

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No

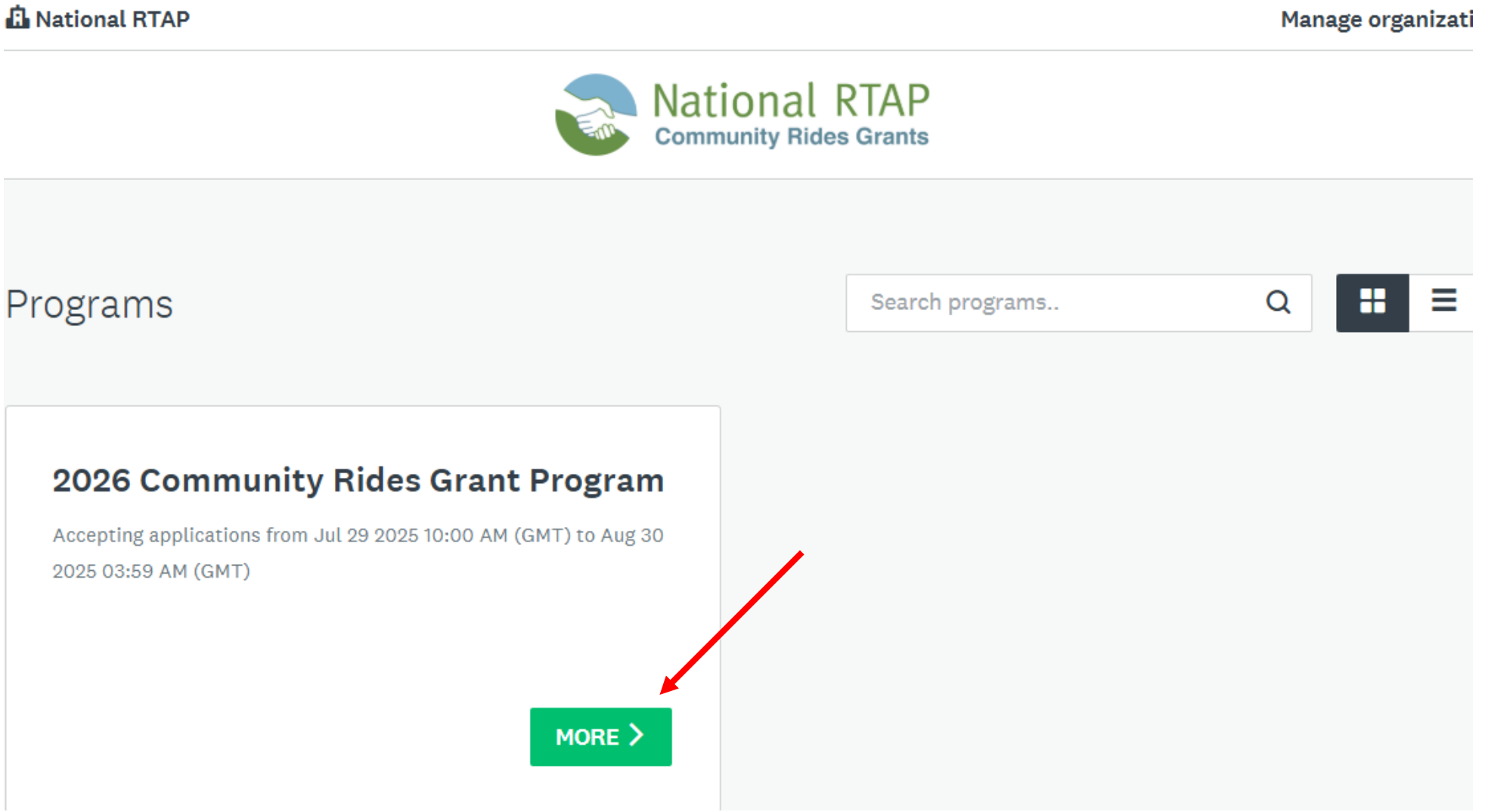
Does your proposal involve using these grant funds to purchase a vehicle?

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No

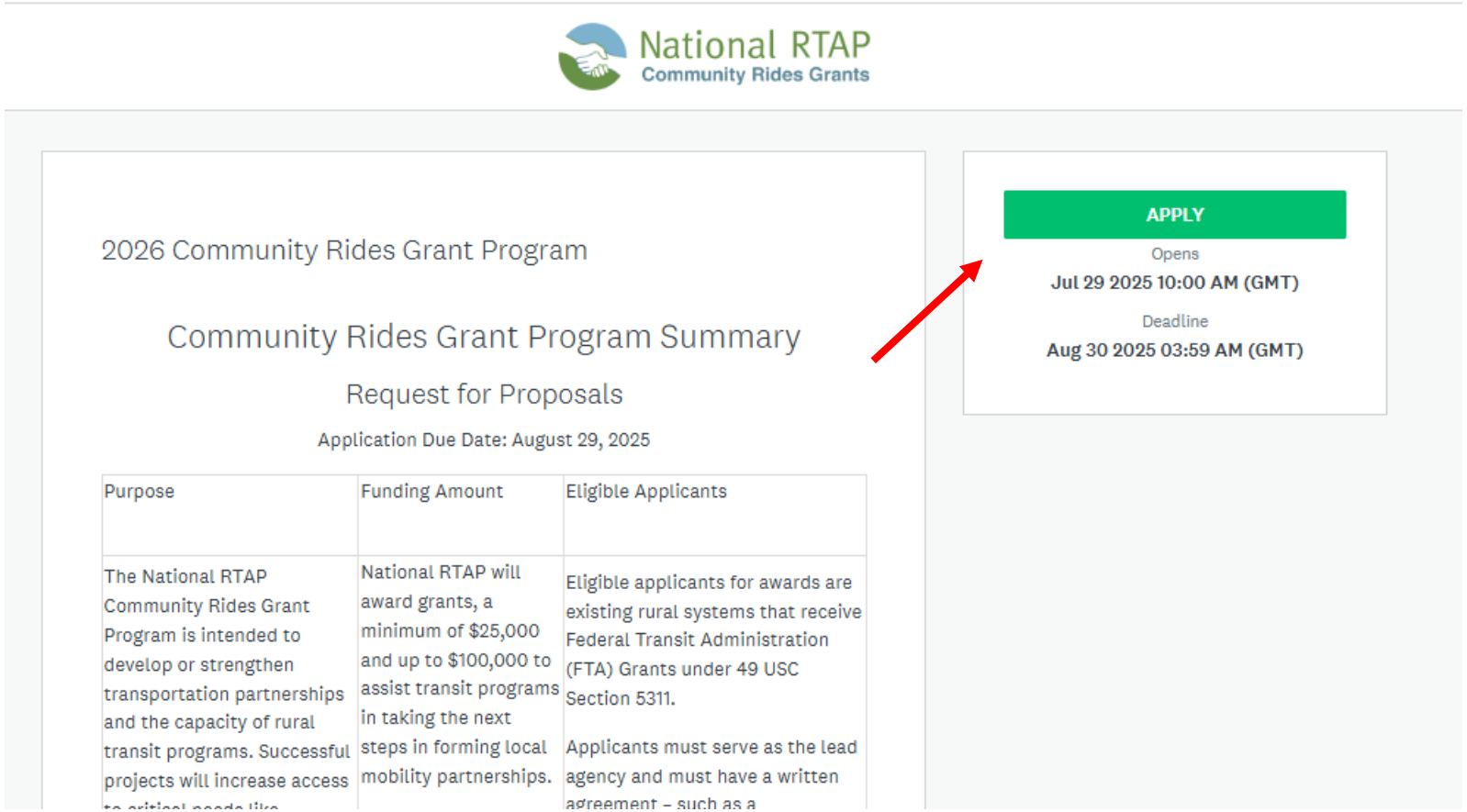
I'll do this later **Save my profile**

These Questions are in the RFP

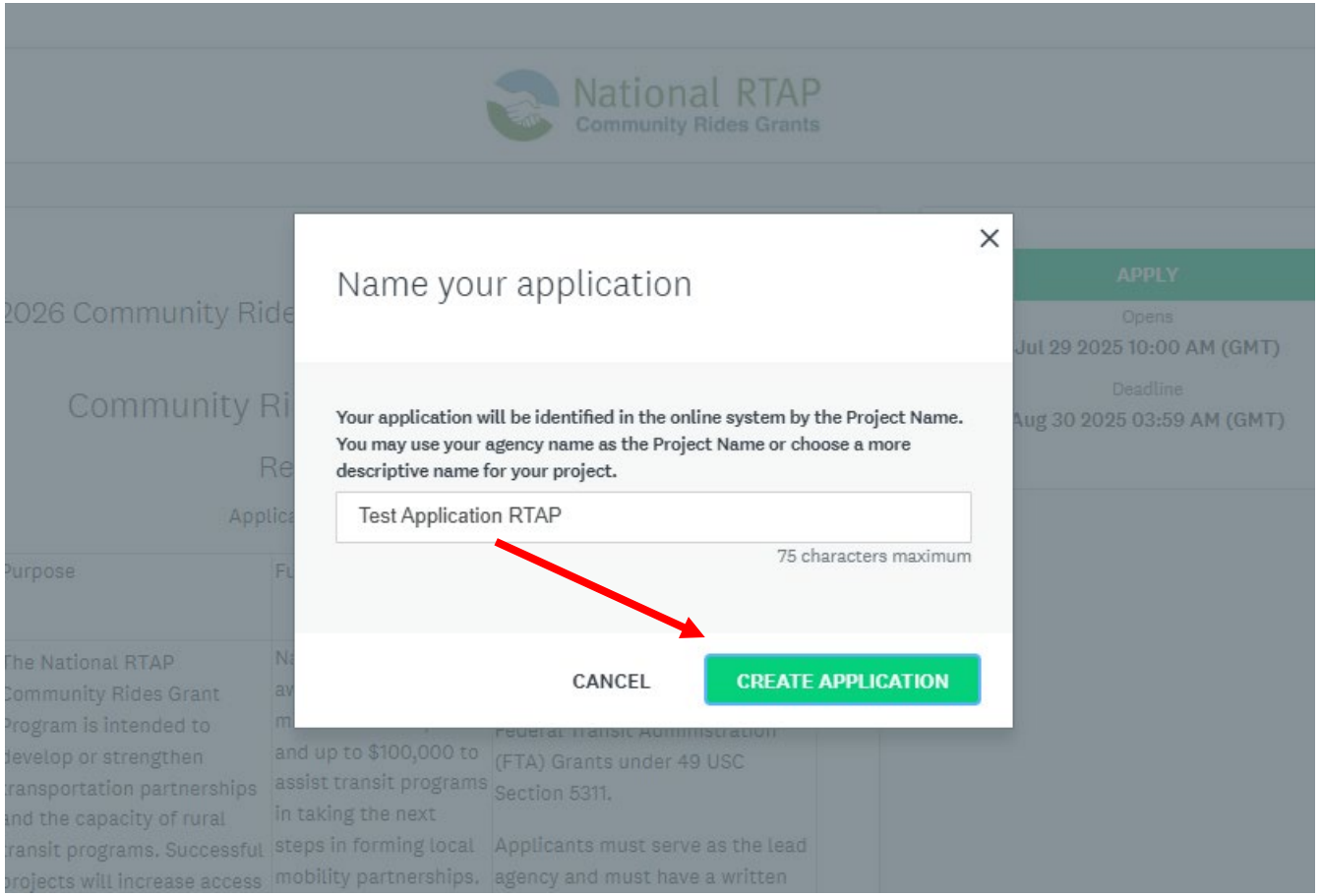
Accessing the Application



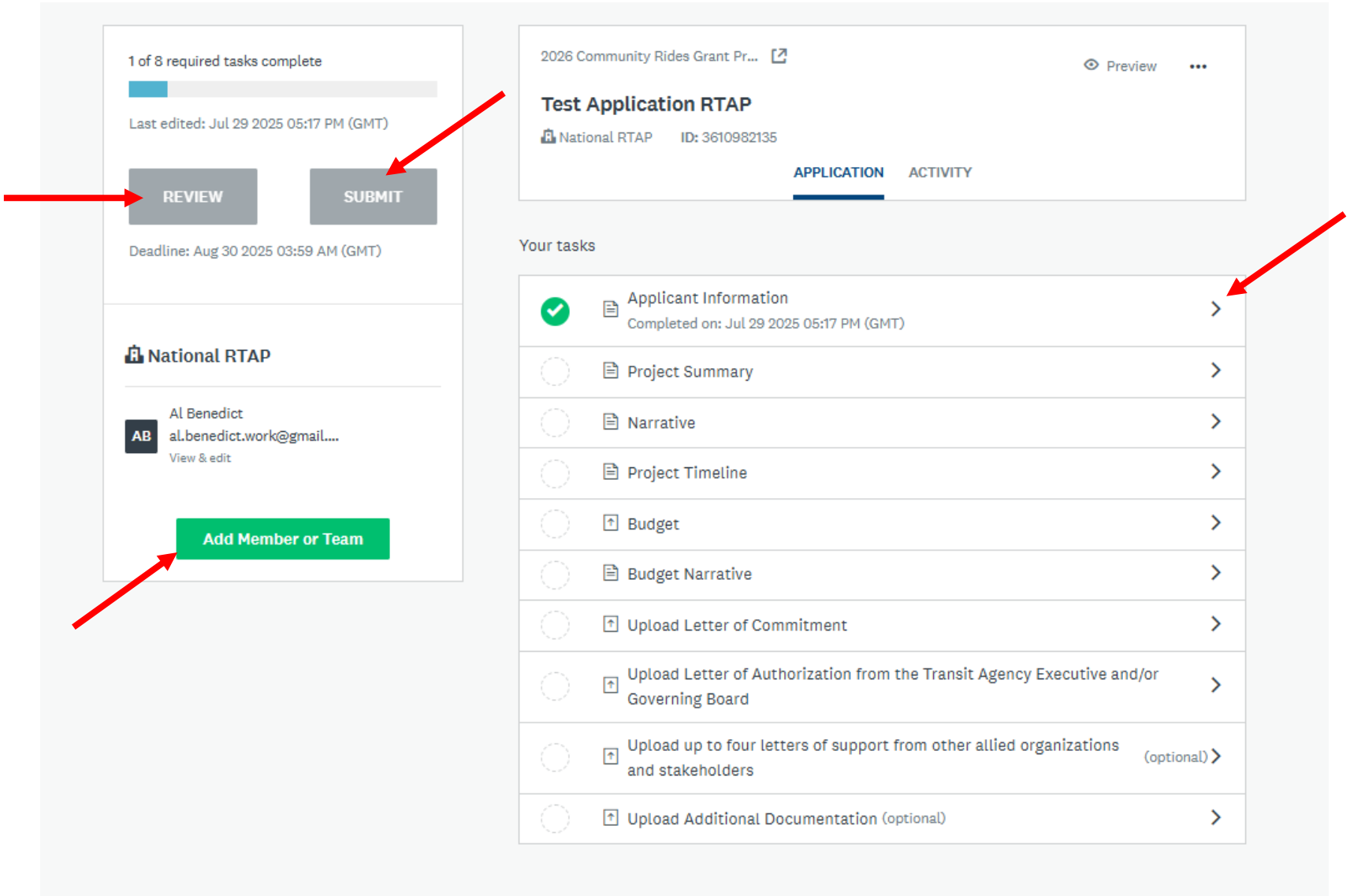
Applying for the Grant



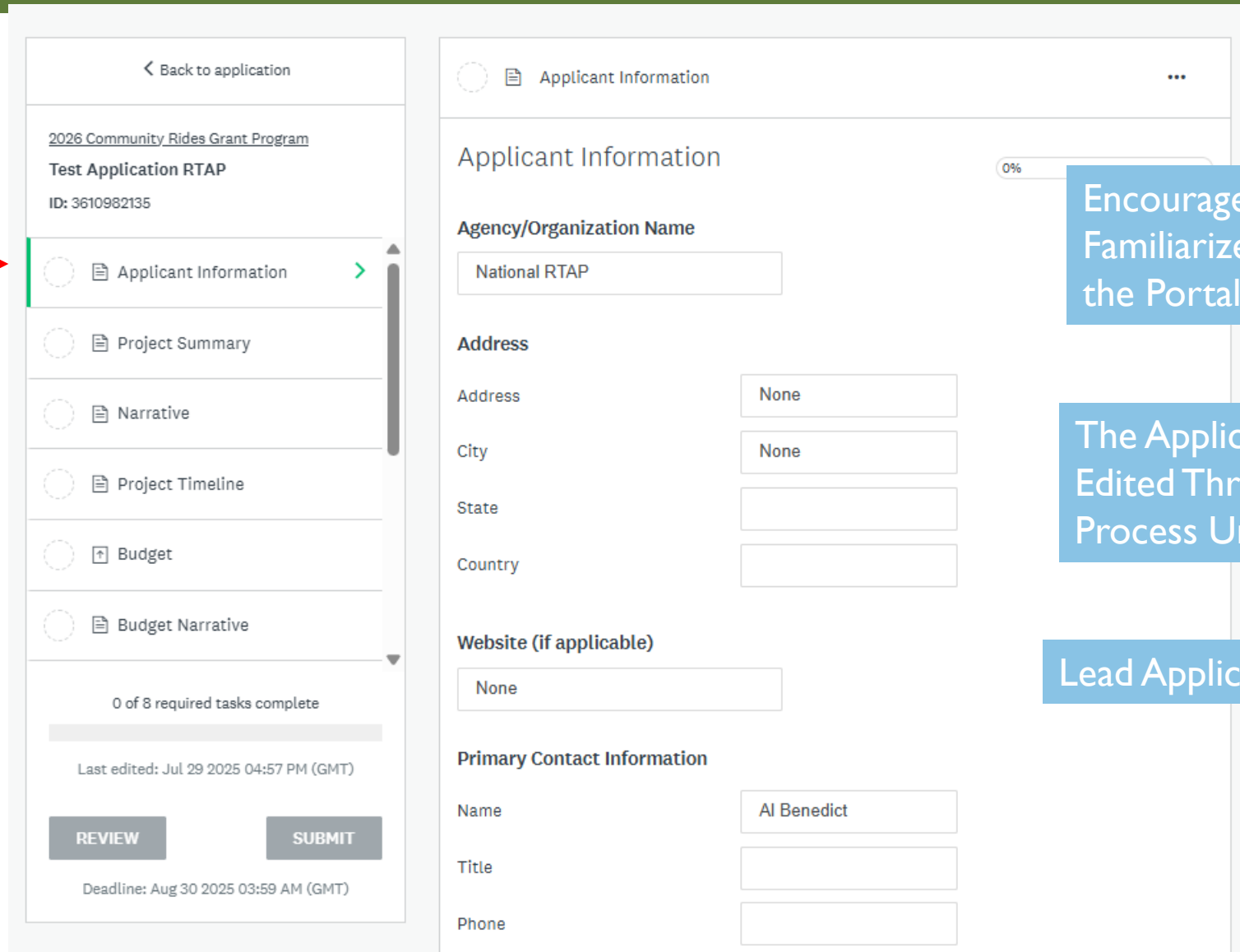
Name your Application



The Application Dashboard



Applicant Information

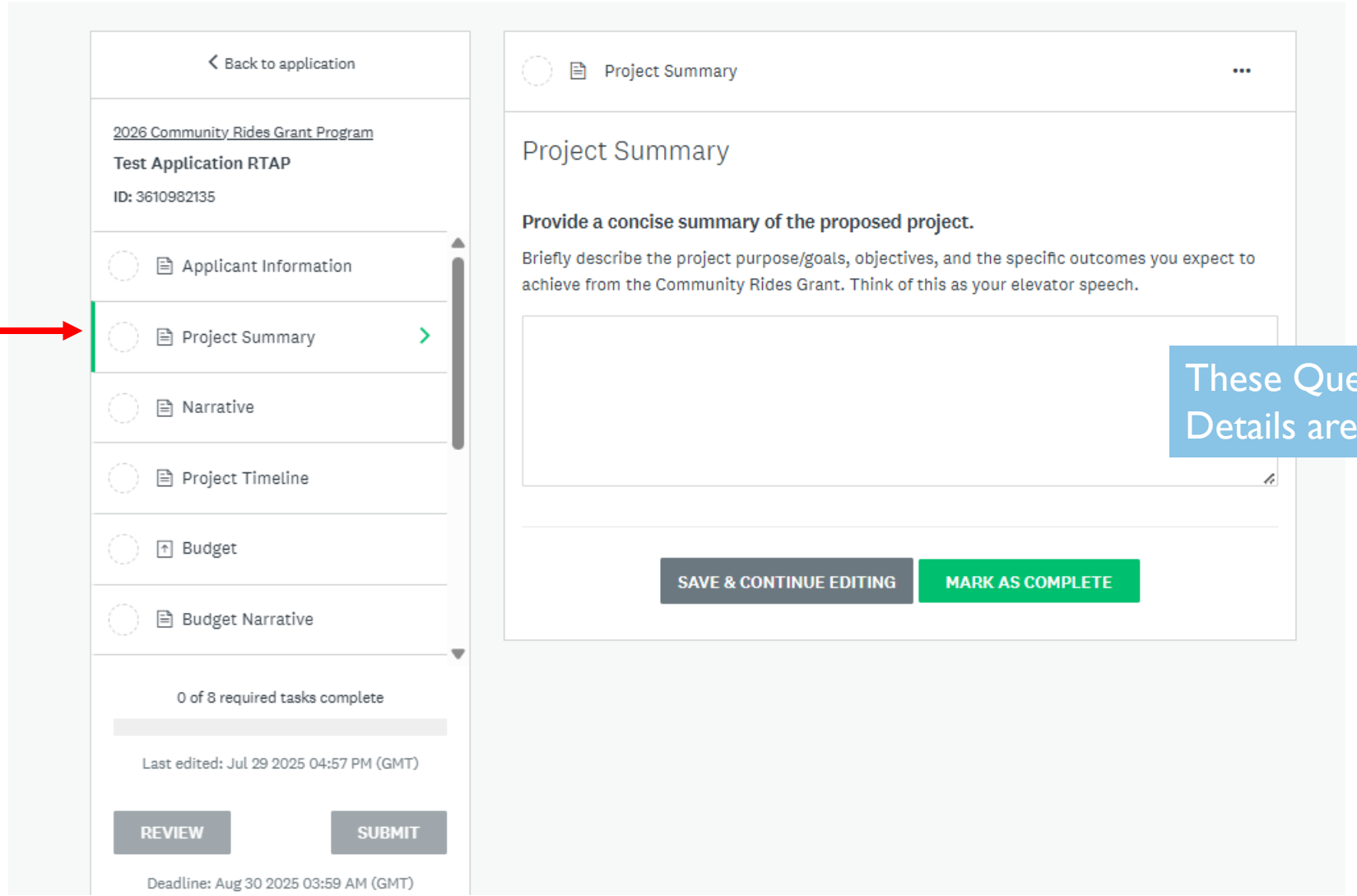


Encourage Applicants to Familiarize Themselves with the Portal Ahead of Time

The Application Can be Edited Throughout the Process Until you Hit Submit

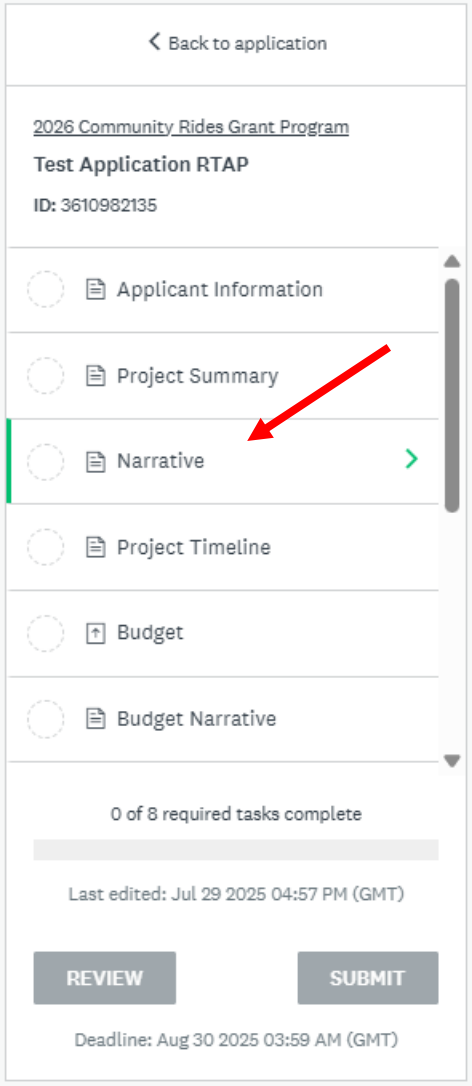
Lead Applicant 5311 recipient

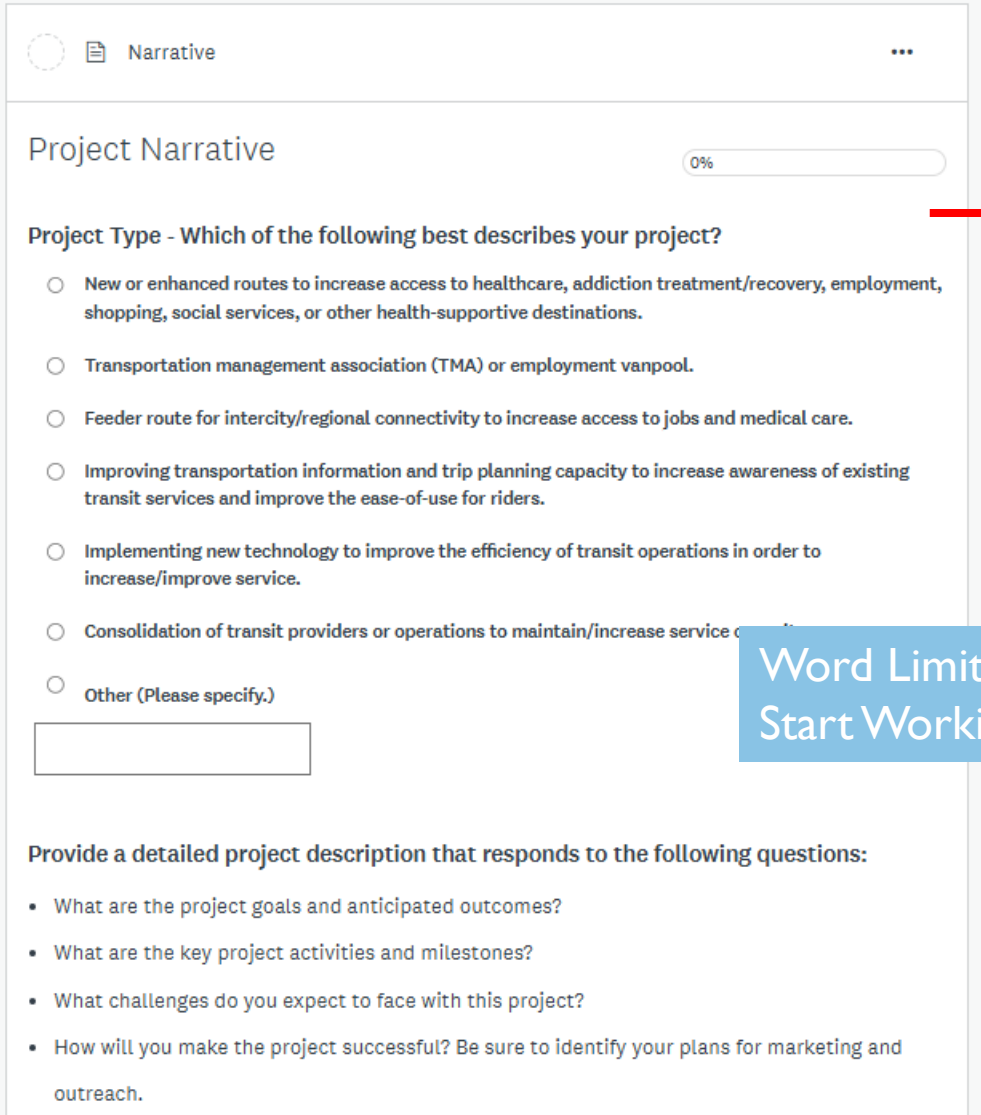
Project Summary

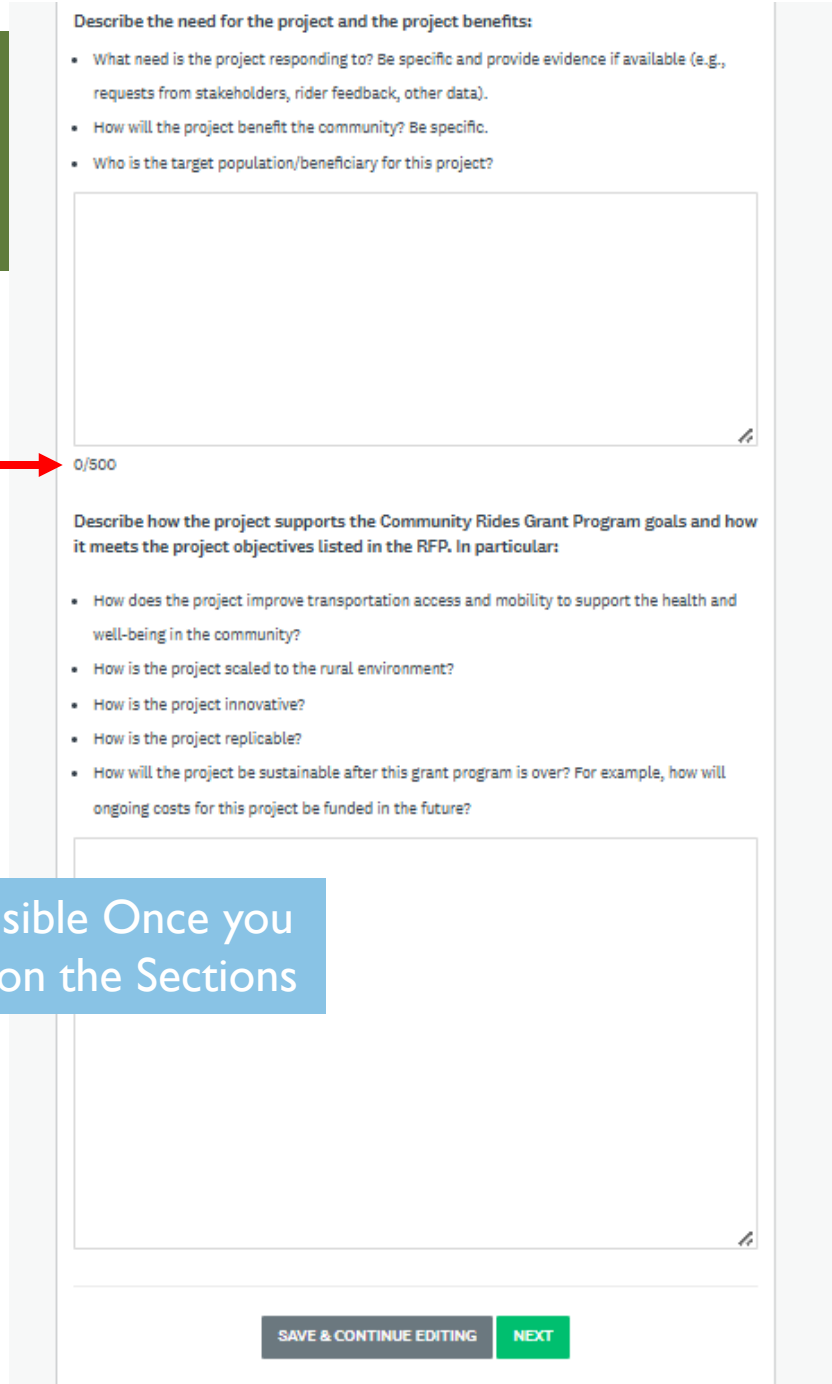


These Questions and Other Details are in the RFP

Project Narrative





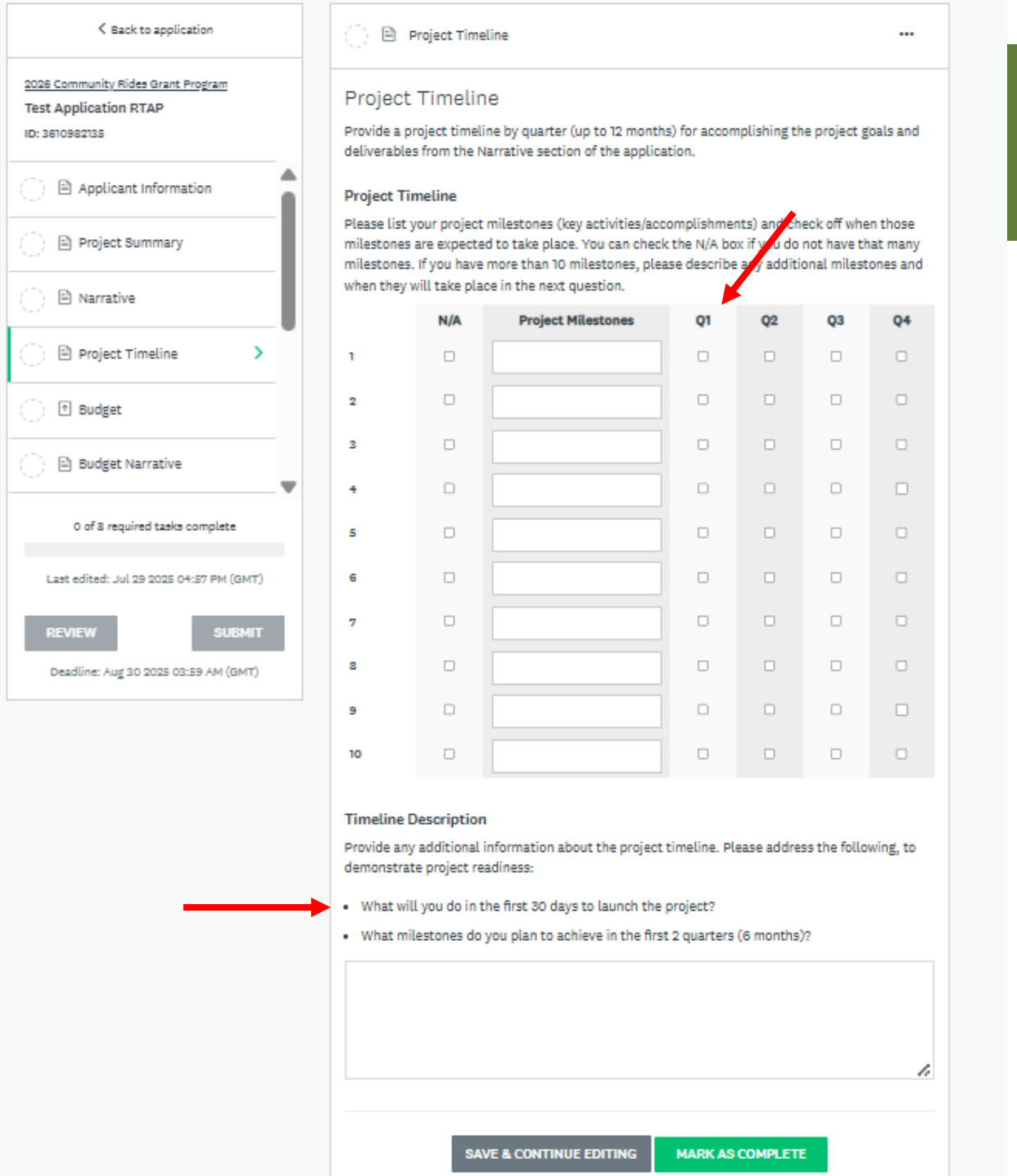


Word Limits Visible Once you Start Working on the Sections

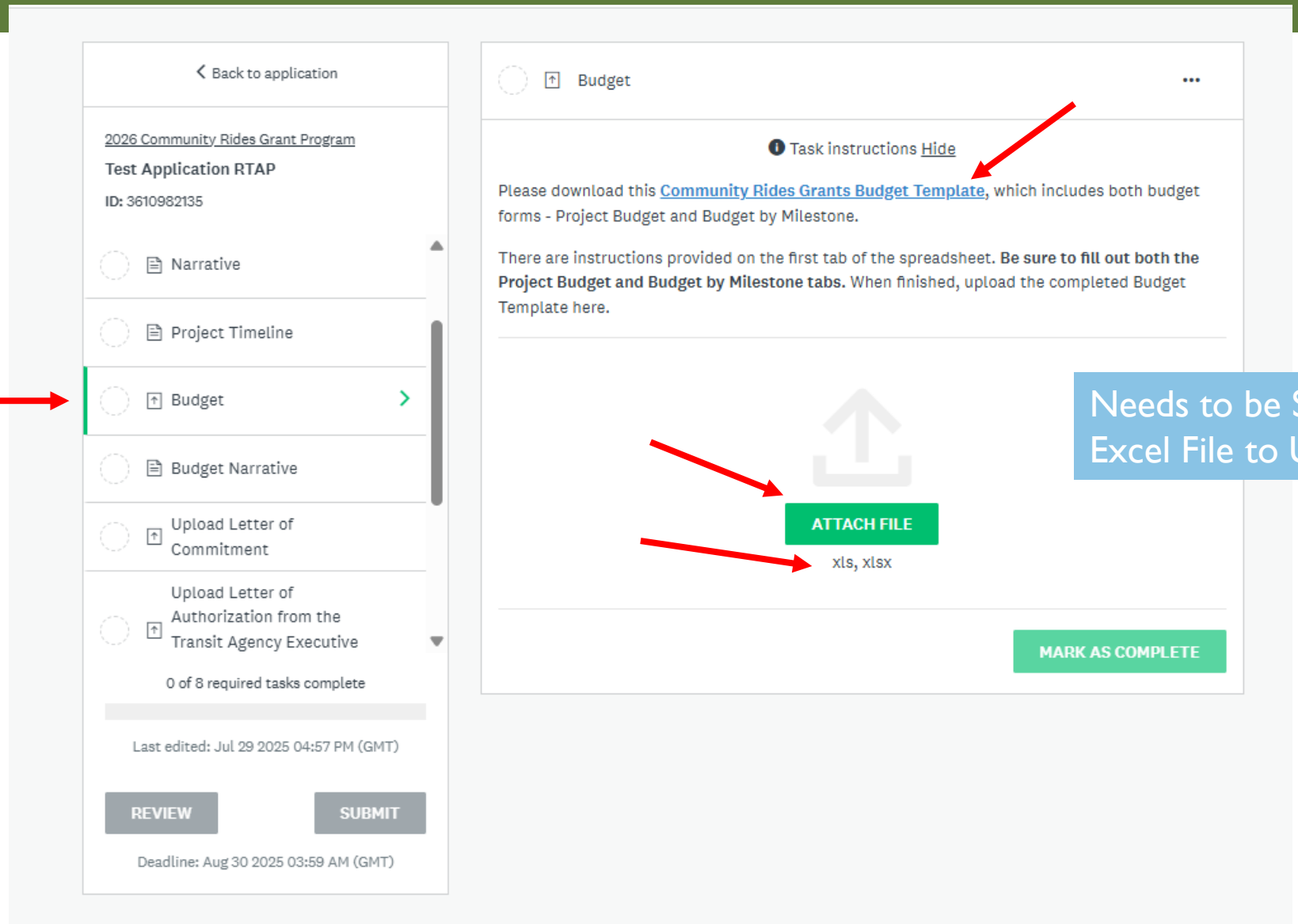
Project Timeline

Project Milestones by Quarter & the First 30 Days

Should Align with the Project Budget Milestones



Budget



Needs to be Saved in as an Excel File to Upload

NRTAP_Community_Rides_Grant_Budget_Template .XLSX

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Share

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	A
1	**BUDGET FORM INSTRUCTIONS**
2	Fill out the Project Budget and Budget by Milestone tabs. There is a Budget by Milestone Sample for illustration purposes only. This is a 12-month funding opportunity. The goal is that these projects will be sustainable beyond the 12-month timeframe. Project proposals need to include a detailed summary of tasks, budget, and outline a clear set of objectives, goals, and milestones. (Awarded projects will start January 1, 2026 and end by December 31, 2026). The amount of the NRTAP Community Rides Grant Award requested in each budget category must be specified on the form. The total budget for the NRTAP Grant Award must be a minimum of $25,000 and not exceed $100,000. Matching funds are not required. However, if the applicant/partner organization will contribute staff hours or funds to the project, or will utilize additional outside funding, the amount to be provided must be specified in the budget categories listed on this form in the Outside Funds column. The Total Project Costs column should match the sum of the Community Rides Grant Funding and any Outside Funds. All expenses must be directly related to this project and cannot be used for existing services. The Description field must include detail for each budget category, following the guidance provided below. Additional information about the budget can be provided in the Budget Narrative section of the application.
3	**BUDGET CATEGORIES**
	PERSONNEL COSTS should specify salary costs (hourly rate, number of staff, number of hours) and associated fringe benefits (and how fringe is calculated – e.g., a percentage of salary costs) to carry out project activities. TRAVEL COSTS are for staff travel and may include per diem for meals, mileage, parking, and other necessary costs. CONSULTANT OR CONTRACTOR FEES, including travel, anticipated by the applicant should be included as a separate category in the budget. Be sure to specify how consultant fees are calculated. OTHER DIRECT COSTS:

Instructions | Project Budget | Budget by Milestone | Budget by Milestone Sample

Project Budget

Selected projects will be awarded for up to 12 months of funding (January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026).

Grant funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis after expenses are incurred.

Monthly invoices must be submitted with proper documentation to be reimbursed (See RFP Award Information, page 17).

NRTAP_Community_Rides_Grant_Budget_Template .XLSX

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A1:G1 NATIONAL RTAP BUDGET FORM

National RTAP Community Rides Grants

NATIONAL RTAP BUDGET FORM
Community Rides Grant Program

Organization Name: _____			Total Project Costs	Community Rides Grant Funding	Outside Funding (if any)	Detailed Description
Personnel Costs:	**Hourly Rate**	**Hours Per Week**				
Project Manager			$ -			
Program Manager			$ -			
Driver(s)			$ -			
Dispatch			$ -			
Administrative			$ -			
Other Staff (specify)			$ -			
Subtotal			$ -	$ -	$ -	
Fringe (enter percentage)						
Travel (enter total)						
Total Personnel Cost			$ -	$ -	$ -	
Contracted Services:	**Hourly Rate**	**Hours Per Week**				
Sub-contracted Services			$ -			
Consultants			$ -			
Travel for consultants						
Total Contracted Services Costs			$ -	$ -	$ -	
Other Direct Costs:						
Fuel			$ -			
Vehicle lease			$ -			
Maintenance			$ -			
Meeting/Training Expenses			$ -			
Office Space Rental/Utilities			$ -			
Telephone/Fax/Internet			$ -			
Printing			$ -			
Mailing/Postage			$ -			
Supplies			$ -			
Computer/Technology Expenses			$ -			
Marketing/Media/Outreach			$ -			
Other (specify)			$ -			
Other (specify)			$ -			
Other (specify)			$ -			
Total Other Direct Costs			$ -	$ -	$ -	
Subtotal			$ -	$ -	$ -	
Indirect Costs (enter percentage)			$ -	$ -	$ -	
		Totals	$ -	$ -	$ -	
				Cannot exceed $100,000.00		

Budget Milestones

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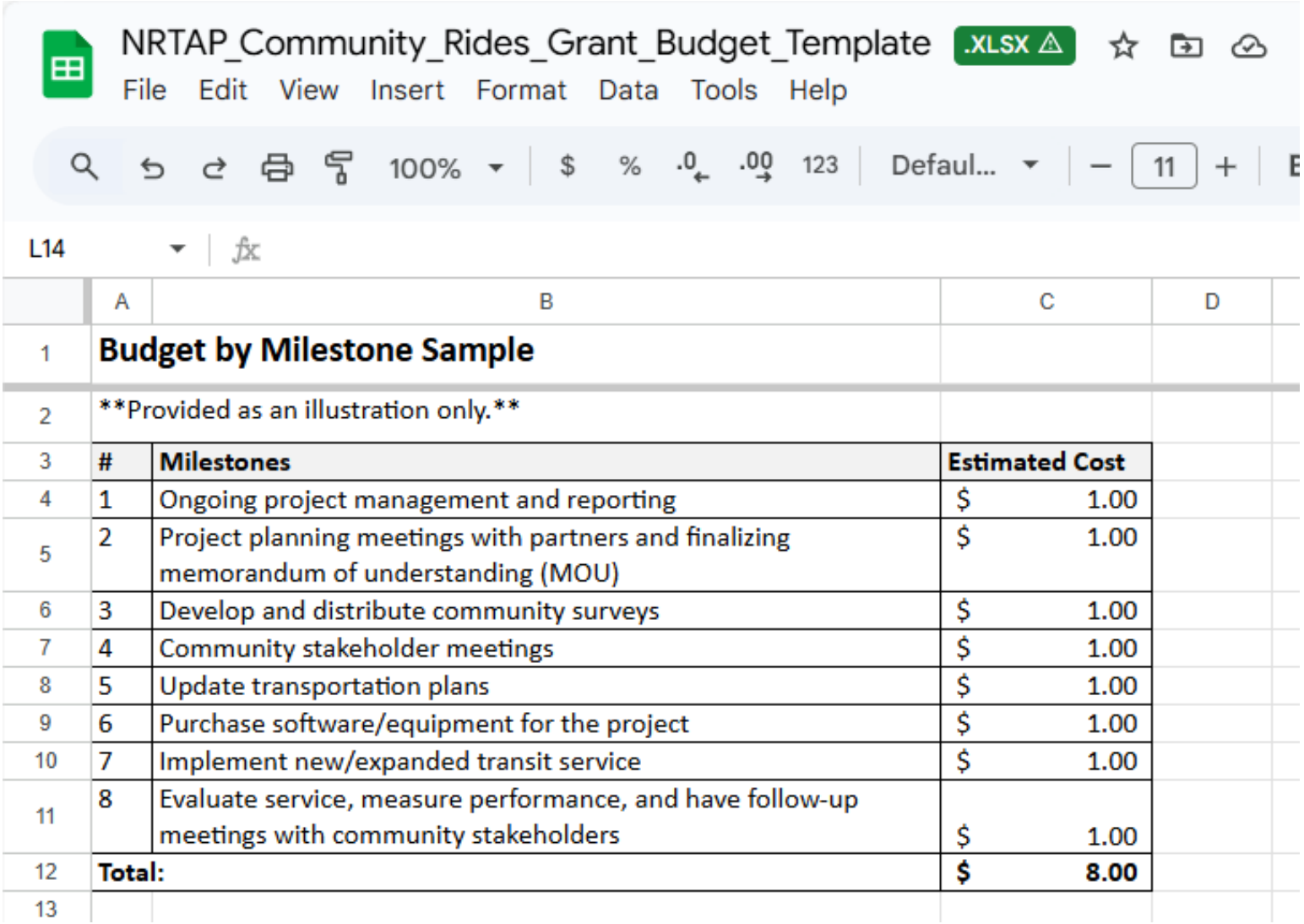
Project Budget by Milestone

Applicants need to identify the milestones (key activities/achievements) appropriate to their project in the application form. Please also list them below and estimate the amount you anticipate spending on achieving each of these milestones.

#	Milestones	Estimated Cost
1		$ -
2		$ -
3		$ -
4		$ -
5		$ -
6		$ -
7		$ -
8		$ -
9		$ -
10		$ -
11		$ -
12		$ -
Total:		**$ -**

Budget Milestone Sample



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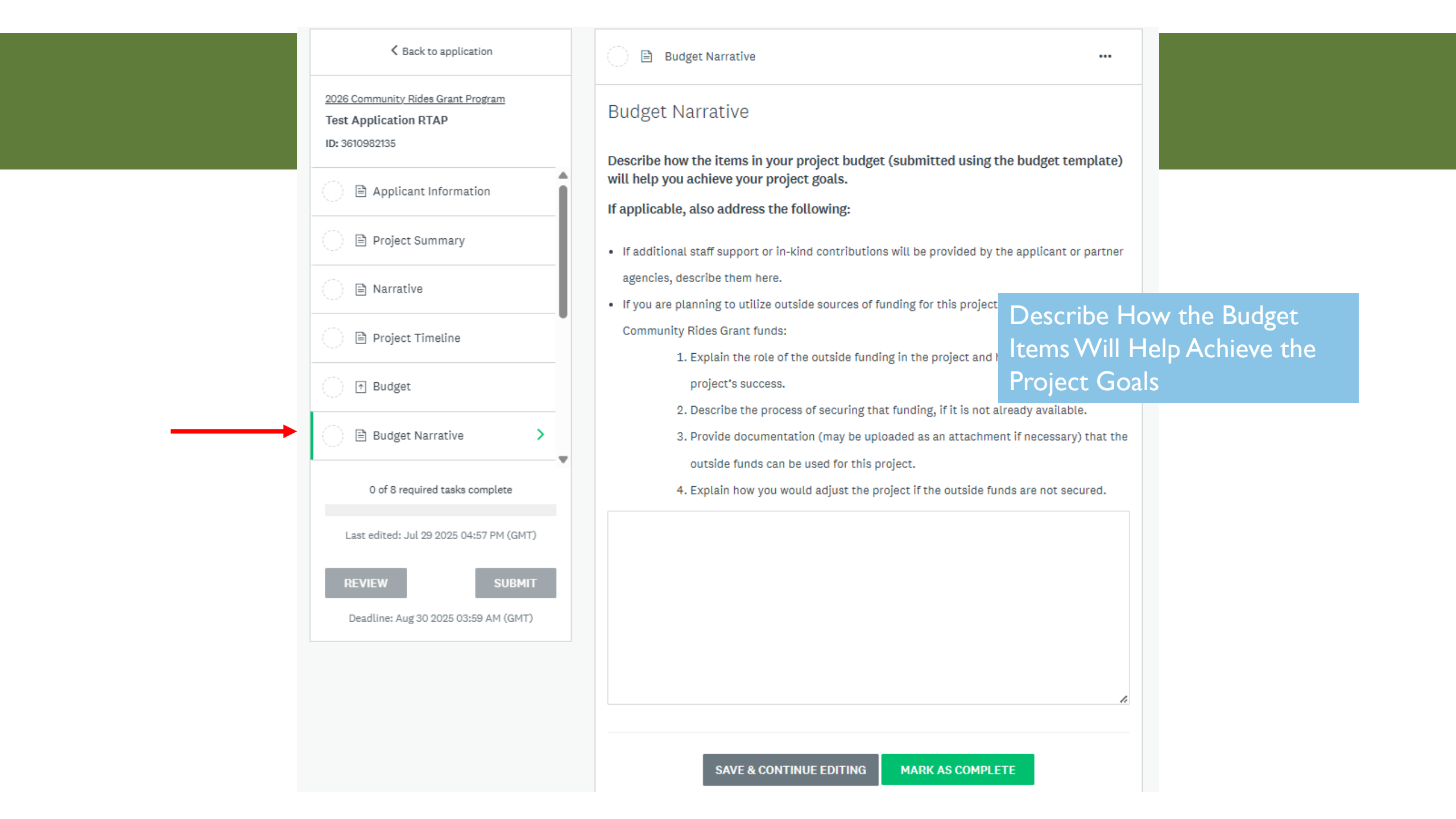
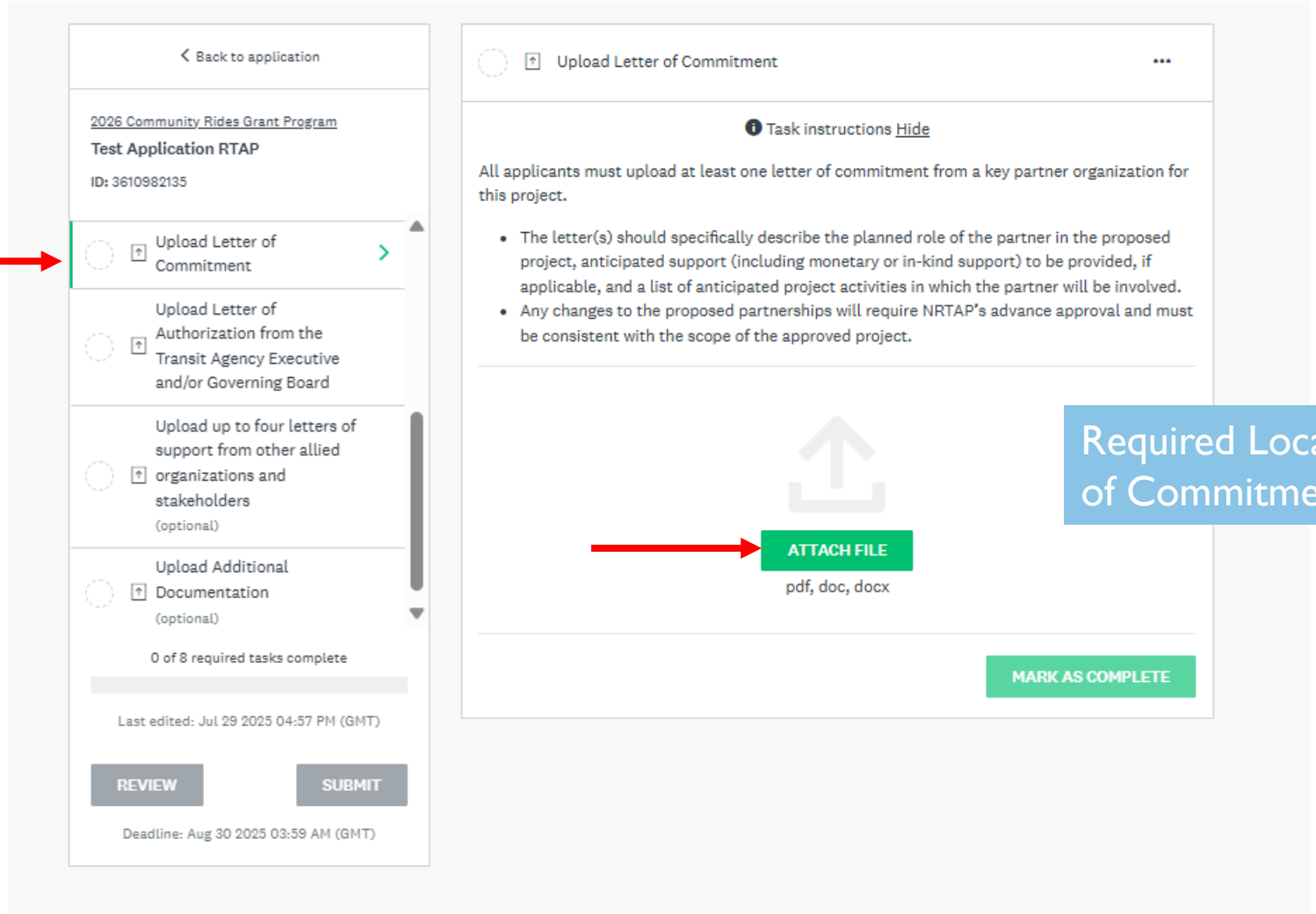
	A	B	C	D
1	**Budget by Milestone Sample**			
2	**Provided as an illustration only.**			
3	#	Milestones	Estimated Cost	
4	1	Ongoing project management and reporting	$ 1.00	
5	2	Project planning meetings with partners and finalizing memorandum of understanding (MOU)	$ 1.00	
6	3	Develop and distribute community surveys	$ 1.00	
7	4	Community stakeholder meetings	$ 1.00	
8	5	Update transportation plans	$ 1.00	
9	6	Purchase software/equipment for the project	$ 1.00	
10	7	Implement new/expanded transit service	$ 1.00	
11	8	Evaluate service, measure performance, and have follow-up meetings with community stakeholders	$ 1.00	
12	**Total:**		**$ 8.00**	
13				



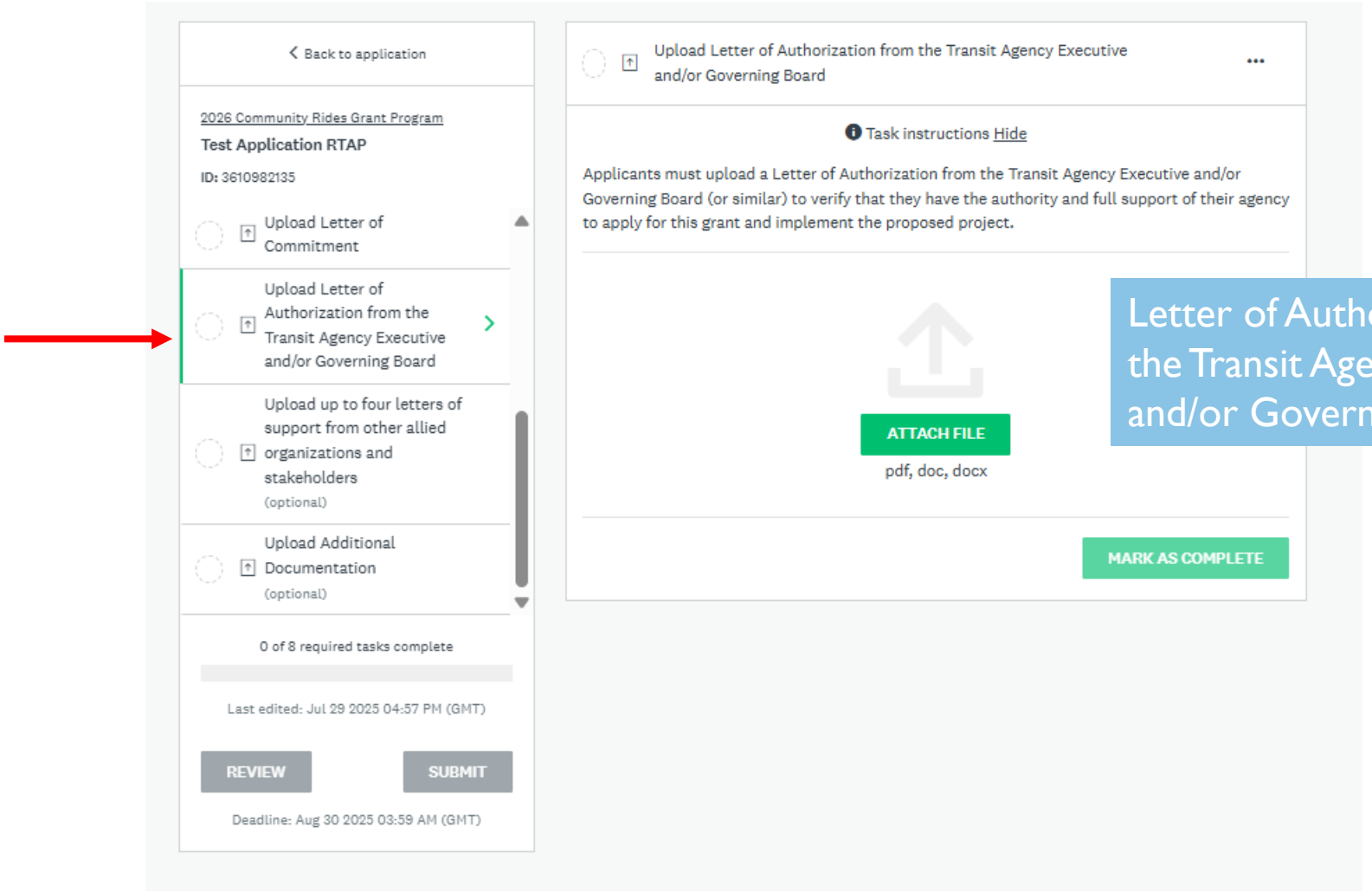
Describe How the Budget Items Will Help Achieve the Project Goals

Local Partner Letter of Commitment

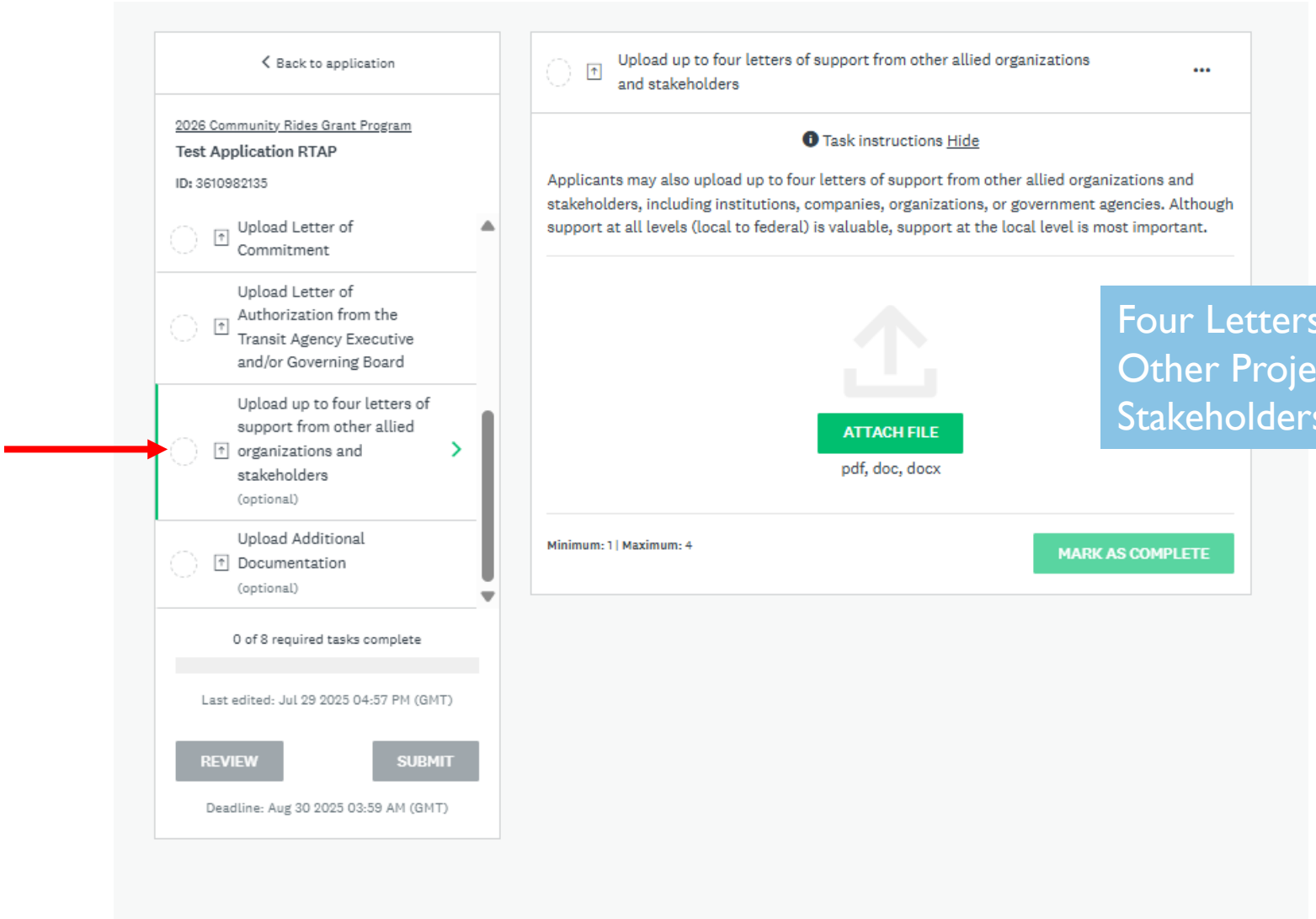


Required Local Partner Letter of Commitment

Authorization Letter

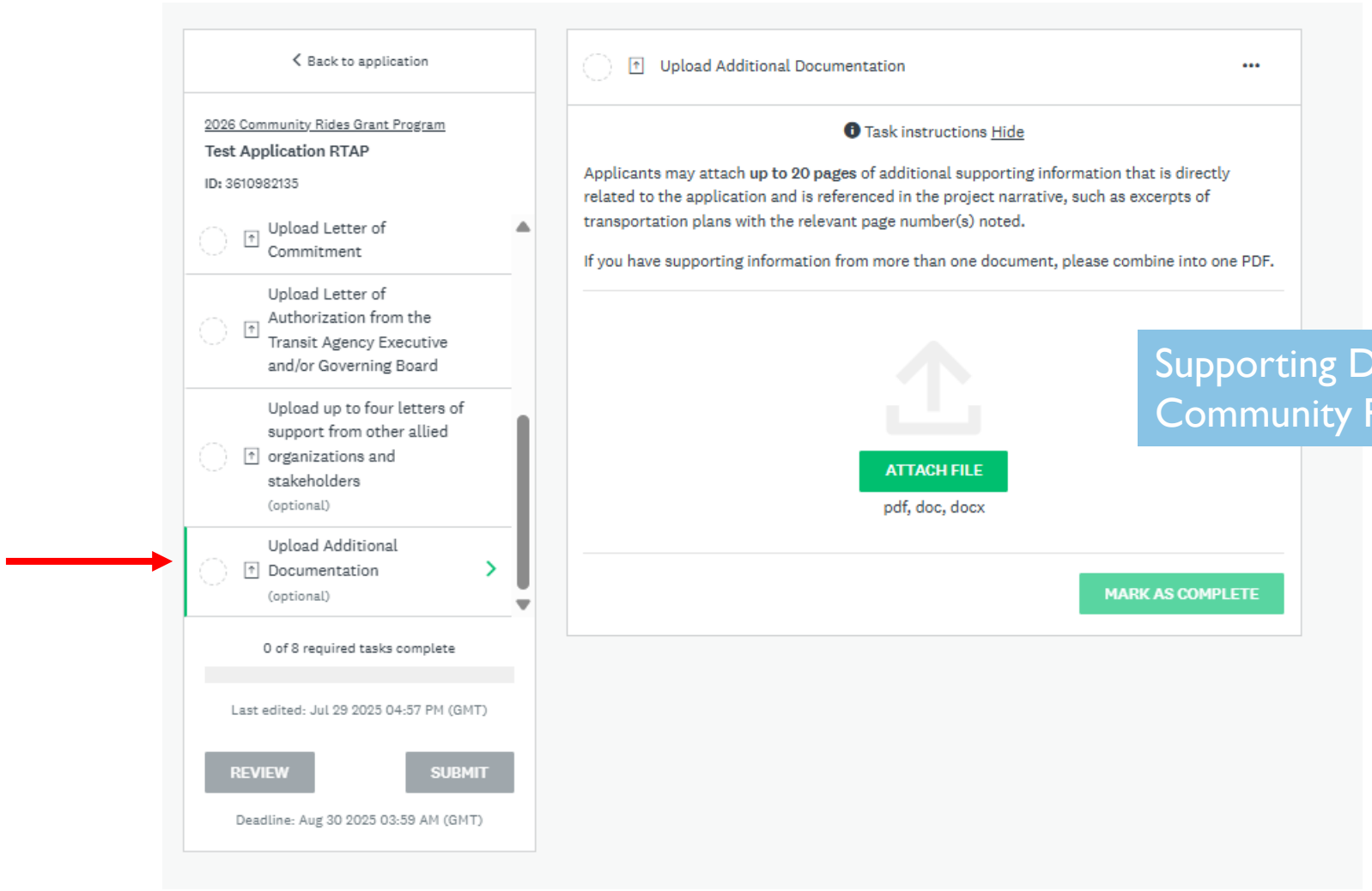


Additional Letters of Support (optional)



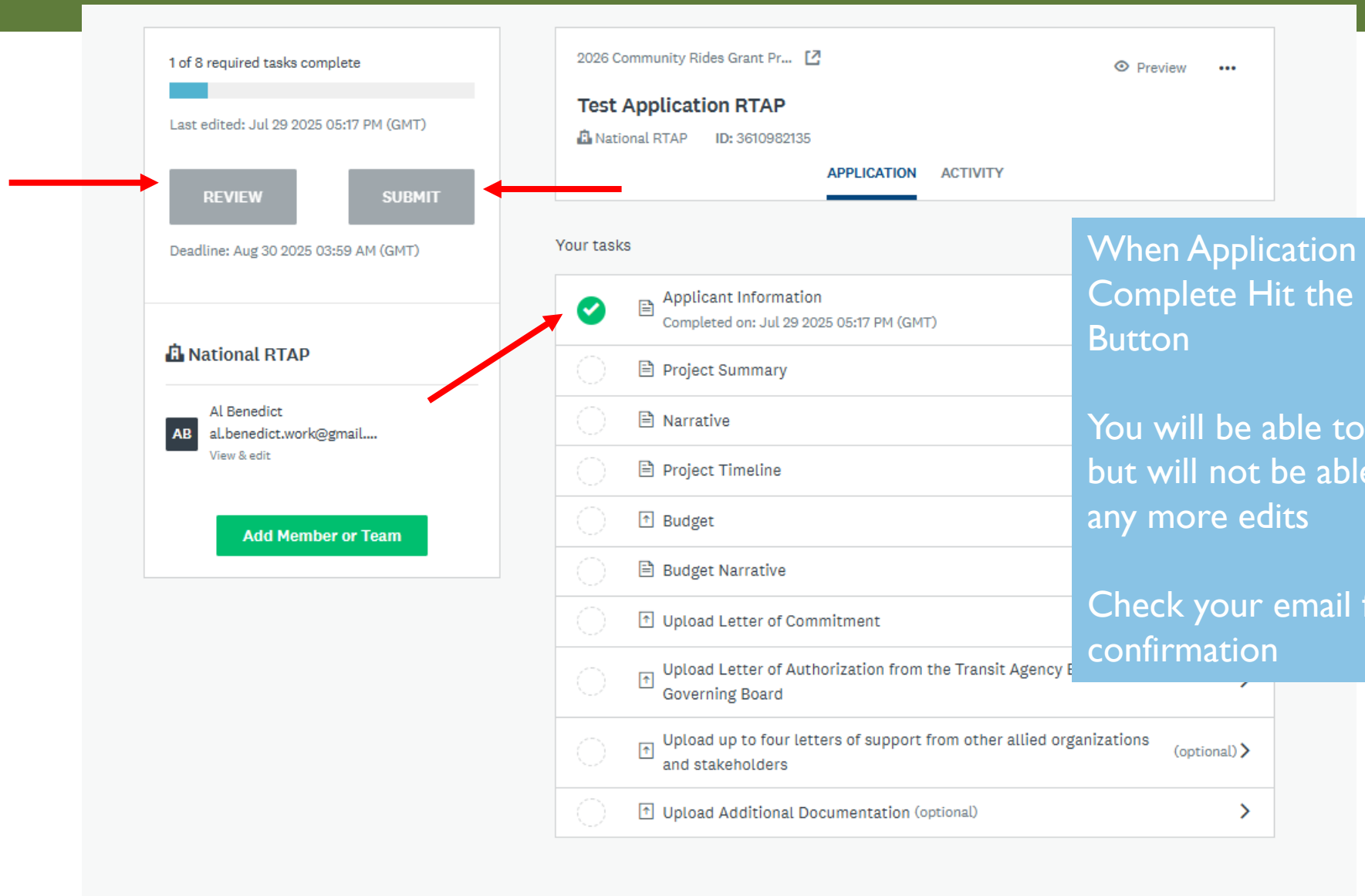
Four Letters of Support from Other Project Partners or Stakeholders

Supporting Documents



Supporting Document like Community Plans

When Ready to Submit

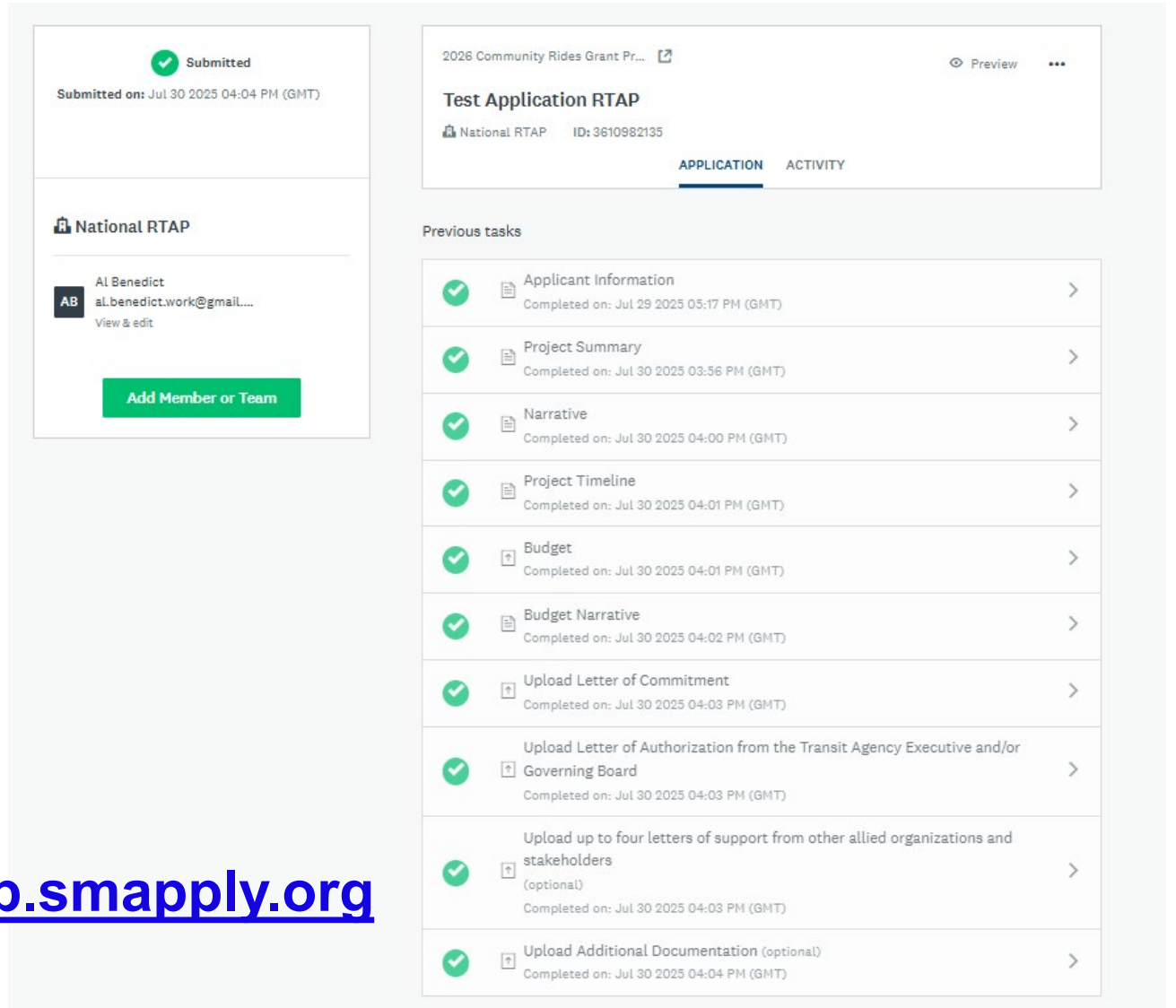


When Application is Complete Hit the Submit Button

You will be able to review it but will not be able to make any more edits

Check your email for confirmation

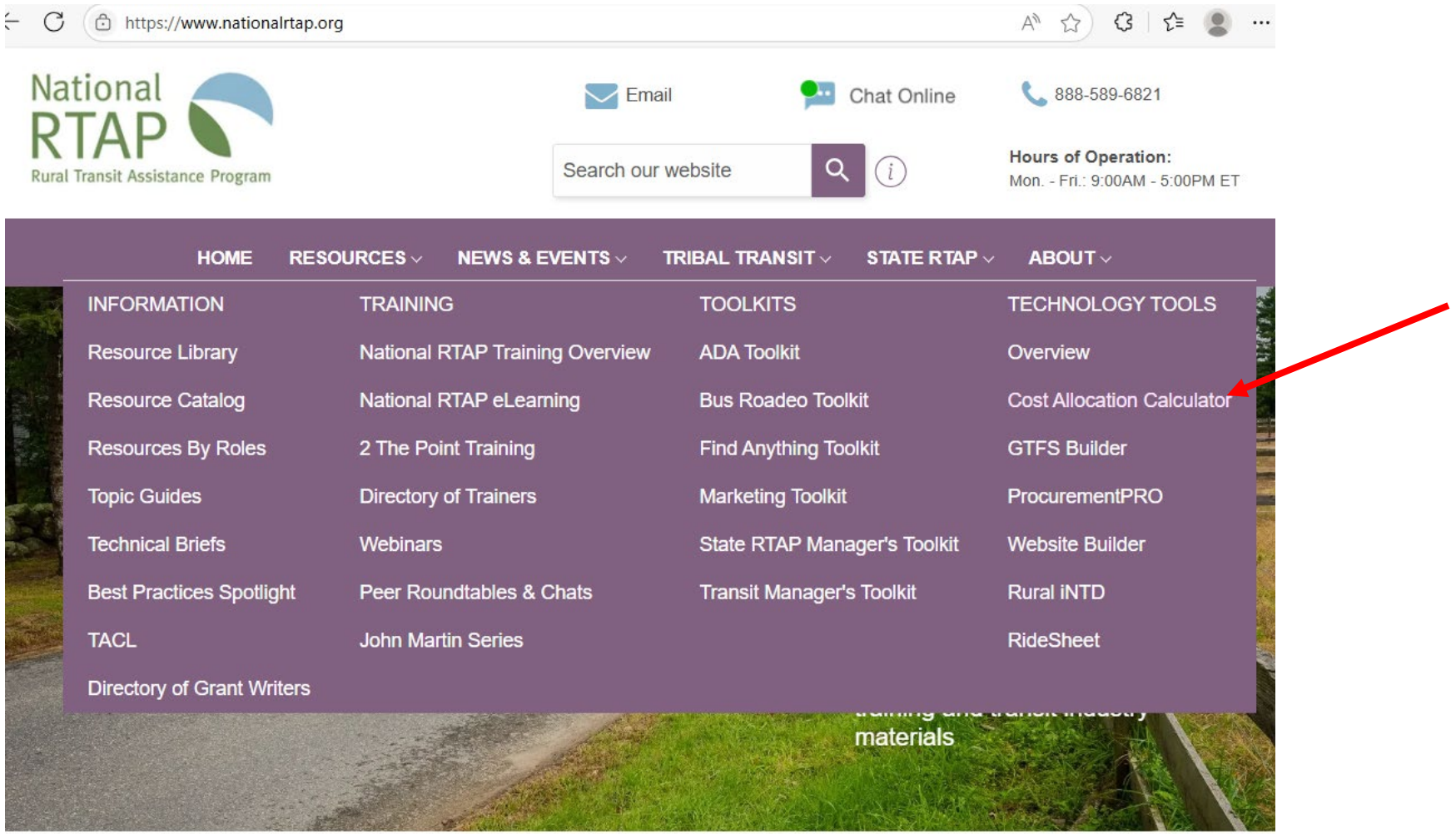
Submitted Application



https://nationalrtap.smapply.org

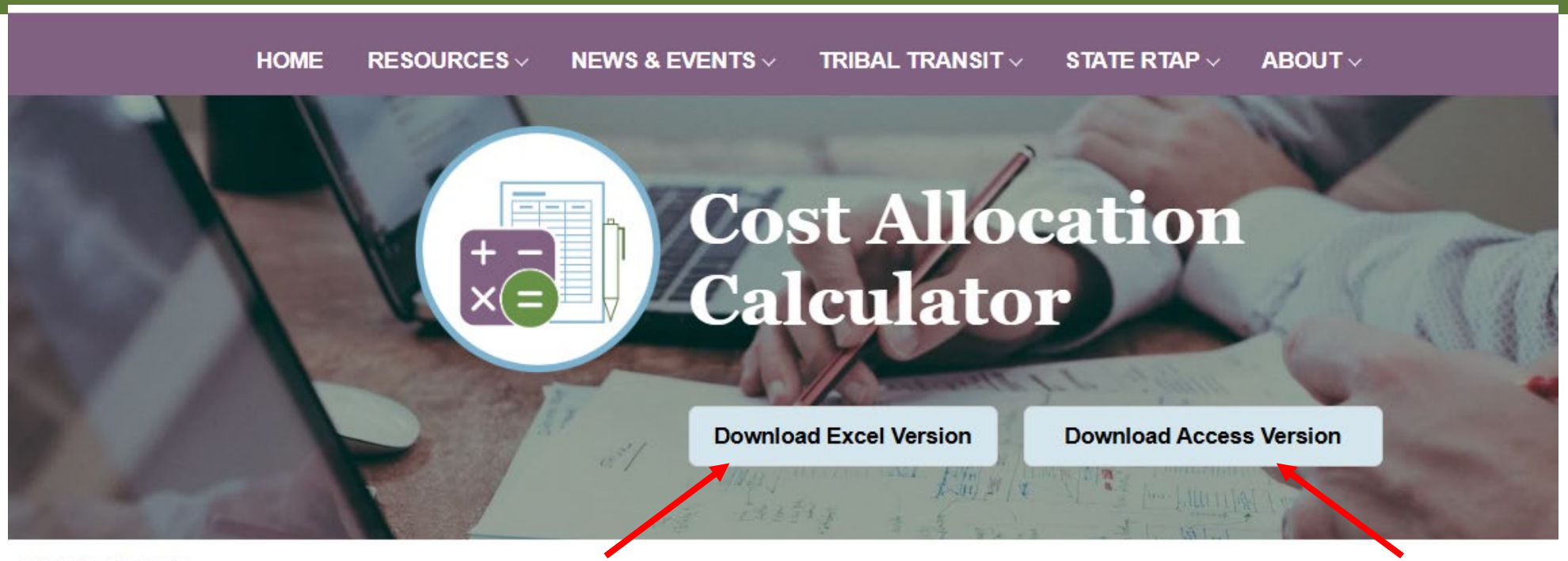
Cost Allocation Calculator

Cost Allocation Calculator

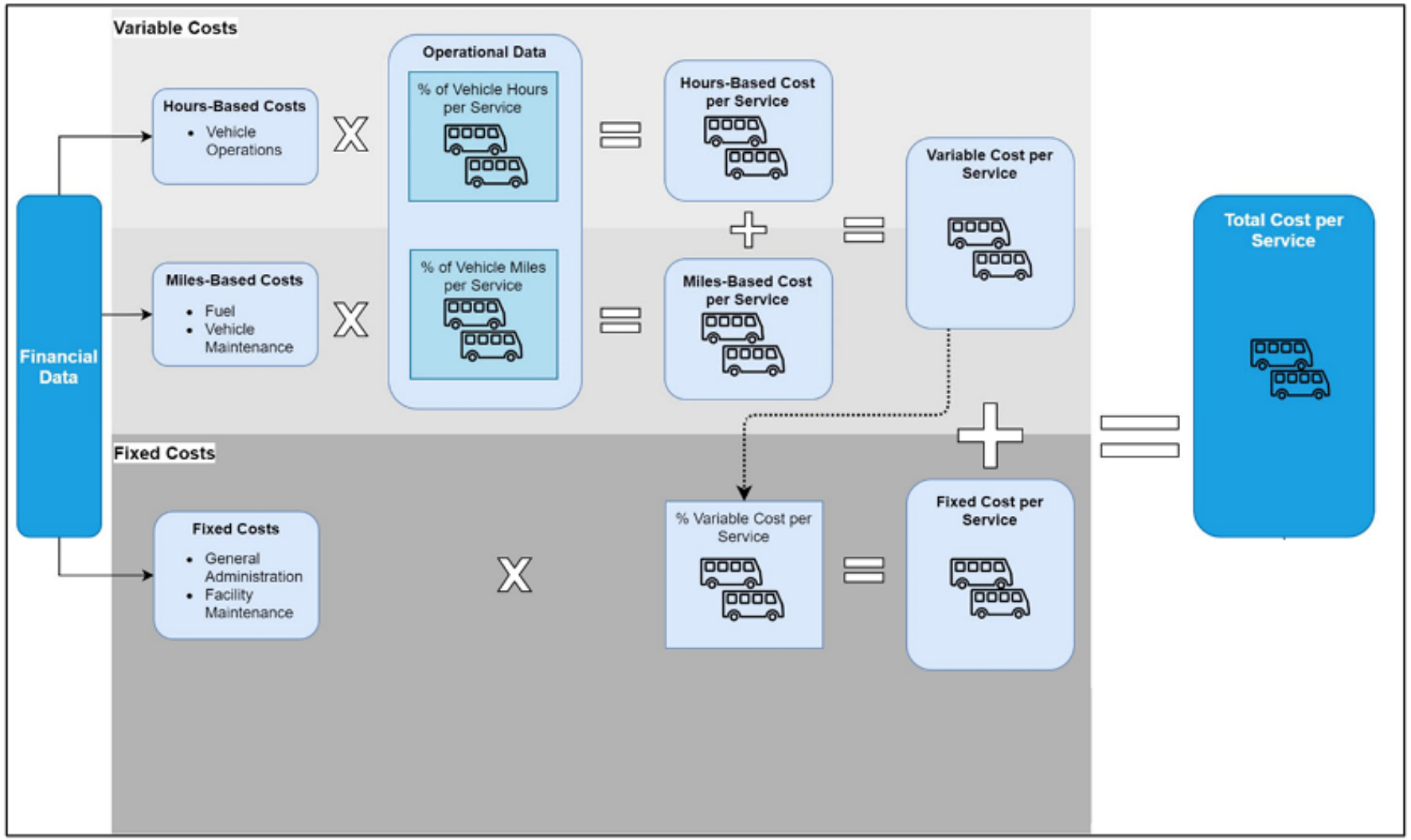


National RTAP is managed under a cooperative agreement with the Federal Transit Administration. This website and resources are being reviewed to ensure they reflect recent Executive Orders. Some

Cost Allocation Calculator



Two Variable Cost Calculator



Questions

Questions

- I missed the first webinar. Am I still able to attend the second webinar? Will I still be eligible to apply for the grant?

Have other questions? Put them in the Q&A box

See the Q&A Document for answers to questions asked thus far. We will update the document after today's webinar.

Upcoming National RTAP Events

Books in Transit Discussion Group: Bus People, August 19, 2025, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

National RTAP Training - Tribal and Rural Transit Mini-Conference, Tuesday, October 14, Rapid City, SD

Transit Manager Peer Roundtable: Mobility Management Focused August 13, 2025, 2:00 PM ET

Wrangling Access and Mobility in Rural and Tribal Transit

December 7-10, 2025 in Austin Texas

https://www.nationalrtap.org/News/Conference/2025-Austin

To register or to access recordings, slides, or summaries, go to:

nationalrtap.org/Training/Peer-Roundtables-and-Chats and nationalrtap.org/Webinars.

Thank You!

National Rural Transit Assistance Program

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