

**Appalachian Regional Commission
Request for Proposals**

Grants Management System (ARCnet) Upgrade

Questions concerning this RFP must be received by email to William Grant at ARCnetRFP@arc.gov no later than 12:00 pm on November 9, 2018. ARC reserves the right to not answer questions received after that time.

Proposals are due on or before 5:00pm ET

November 16, 2018

ARCnetRFP@arc.gov

**Appalachian Regional Commission Grants Database (ARCnet) Upgrade
Request for Proposals**

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Appalachian Regional Commission Grants Database (ARCnet) Upgrade

Request for Proposals

BACKGROUND

Overview of Request for Proposals

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), located in Washington, D.C., is seeking proposals from qualified developers and/or companies to complete the development of its existing custom hybrid grant management system (ARCnet) into a fully web-based grant management system with an end-to-end electronic process. The electronic process shall begin with the application and includes reporting and transaction processing and the final reporting and grant closure. The existing system has some web based functionality and this solicitation is to complete the development of web based system.

Proposals for the development of a fully web based grant management system shall include the writing of work requirements based on ARC's written business process and staff and user interviews as needed. The proposal shall also include a revision of the user interface design. ARC's schedule for implementation of the fully web-based grant management system is 12 to 18 months.

ARC is soliciting competitive proposals because it has determined that this process best serves the needs and interest of ARC and the public. As such, all Organizations will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals in response to the RFP, and no Organization or person shall be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, citizenship status, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, physical or mental disability, marital status, veteran status, political affiliation, or any other factor protected by law in consideration for an award issued pursuant to this RFP. ARC is committed to the principles of equal opportunity and the elimination of all vestiges of discriminatory practices that might exist.

Overview of the Appalachian Regional Commission

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is a regional economic development agency that is a federal-state partnership. The agency was established by an act of Congress in 1965 to address the needs of Appalachia and to provide economic, infrastructure, health and educational opportunities in this region. The region comprises 420 counties in the region and all or parts of the following states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

ARC invests in projects that innovate, partner and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia. Additional information about Appalachia and the Appalachian Regional Commission can be found at www.arc.gov.

About ARC's Grant Management System (ARCnet)

ARC currently has a custom-built, grants management system (ARCnet) that is a hybrid of manual and web-based functionality. The database contains project information from 1965 to current. The system is used by ARC staff, partner state program managers, grantees, and other stakeholders such as federal and state basic agencies to manage the project information contained in the database. Activities include pre-award and post-award management of the projects from initial receipt of the project application through project closeout. Each year, ARC receives and reviews over 800 project applications

during the fiscal year which runs from October through September; the majority of which occurs after June 30.

In the past sixteen years, the system has undergone upgrades in its architecture going from R-based system to VB6 to a .NET framework with SQL database backend. The business layer uses C#. Some of ARC's business processes have been converted to on-line workflows. One example is the grant agreement workflow from creation of the grant agreement and signing by the ARC's general counsel to final signature from grantee.

The majority of applicants seeking funding from ARC must initially apply at the state level. The state program managers review the applications for completeness and accuracy. Those projects that meet state and federal strategic goals receive approval to move forward from the state's governor (or designee) and then it is submitted to ARC for final approval and funding. Currently, these applications are hard-copy packages which are mailed to ARC, or sent by email in pdf format and printed, and then manually entered into ARCnet. Once entered, the projects are automatically assigned a project number (consecutively) and assigned to an ARC staff member (grant coordinator) to review the project to ensure it meets ARC's strategic goals and objectives, federal guidelines for funding, matching sources of funds, and viability. Those projects that meet the requirements and review by the grant coordinator are forwarded to the division director, then to the Executive Director, and finally to the Federal Co-Chair (and in a very limited number of situations the State Co-Chair; a state governor) for approval. Grantees for approved projects then electronically sign grant agreements to finalize their funding and then post-award activities commence.

The current pre-award process is heavily paper-based with almost all information from the grantee organization submitted in hard copy form and sent to ARC by mail or email. Parts of the application such as the project narratives, support letters, engineering reports and other documents are not captured within the current ARCnet system so the current review process is dependent on the creation of a hard copy folder which moves through ARC's organization to each person that needs to review and render a decision on the project.

Some grant applications by-pass an initial state review and approval. The greatest volume is from ARC's congressionally funded and mandated POWER Initiative. The state approval for grants under this initiative occur subsequent to ARC approval. A web-based application portal within ARCnet was designed in 2016 and updated in 2018. In 2017, there were over 200 applications received for the Power Initiative and so far in 2018, 195 applications have been received in the first of two rounds of funding. Once approved, applications submitted through the POWER portal are electronically transferred to the main ARCnet database. The other direct applicants are for ARC's Co-Chair's Committee funding with a volume of approximately 30 per year. These applications go through ARC's current review and approval process and then receive the approval of a designated state governor.

SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

The Appalachian Regional Commission is seeking proposals to complete the design and development of its existing custom hybrid system to a fully web-based grants management system. The scope of work shall be based on the already mapped grant work process, which is included as an attachment to this request for proposals.

The selected contractor shall appoint a Program Manager (PM) who will serve as the point of contact (POC) and provide supervision and guidance for all contract personnel assigned to this contract. The PM is ultimately responsible for the quality and efficiency of contractor performance to support the requirements. The PM shall manage the overall contract and coordinate tasking to contract personnel, supervise on-going technical efforts, and manage overall contract performance.

The Appalachian Regional Commission shall appoint a Project Coordinator who will provide overall direction and management of the Scope of Work and Deliverables.

1 – GRANT APPLICATION

Application Review and Project Approval

The first task shall be the application process. As a federal-state partnership the majority of applications require the initial approval of one of ARC’s member states and subsequently by ARC. A significant number of the remaining applications (POWER Initiative) are sent directly to and require ARC approval and then concurrence by impacted state(s). Design of the application process shall require the input of all 13 ARC member states because each has their own unique process. Some of these states already have an electronic grant application and approval process, but most are paper based.

ARC approves two basic types of grants- non-construction and construction. Construction grants are managed by a designated basic agency, which can be a federal or a state agency. When a state agency acts as the basic agency (state administered) the grant agreement, amendments, and transactions are processed by ARC staff through ARCnet. A federal basic agency designation means that the federal agency performs all of these tasks and provides monthly financial reporting that is input into ARCnet. Non-construction grants are managed by ARC staff.

Current State

Applications are paper based submissions sent by mail or pdf by email. The applicant information is manually entered into ARCnet and a paper file is created and delivered to a grant coordinator for review. Once this review is completed, and the application receives a positive recommendation, the file is delivered in sequence to the Division Director, Executive Director, and Federal Co-Chair office for review and concurrence and then final decision by the Federal Co-Chair. The approved grant file is then delivered to the General Counsel for grant agreement preparation.

Deliverable

A fully web based application, review and approval process. The task is to establish a central portal for the states that do not have a fully web based grant application whereby grantees can complete and submit their applications electronically. The application would be accessed by the program office in the state where the grantee organization project shall be executed for review and preliminary approval. The state approval would transmit the application within ARCnet to ARC staff for internal review and approval for funding. States with a fully web based application process would need a process for transferring application data from their databases to ARCnet after state approval is executed. Interviews and meetings are needed to successfully design and implement the application process.

Grant Application		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Grant Application	Paper-based application process that involves states	Electronic-based application process with applicants either

	mailing or emailing project applications to ARC	applying at an existing state portal that transfers the application data to ARCnet or apply at an ARCnet portal that is customized for each state.
Standard Forms	The SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-424C, SF-424D and ARC MOU Forms are currently completed manually on paper or PDF	Enable standard forms to be either completed electronically and/or pre-populated from other application info, as applicable
Select Project Service Area	Multiple states and multiple counties in each state can be selected	Enable display of state name, county name, county economic designation, and county coal impact designation
List Budget Line Items	Multiple budget line items can be listed Line items can be categorized into broad budget categories using a dropdown menu Line items can be categorized as cash or in-kind	Enable multiple rows to be deleted at one time
List Sources of Funding	Multiple matching fund sources can be listed	Enable listing of multiple internal ARC funding sources
List Project Partners	Currently not enabled	Enable listing of multiple project partners
List Goals and Objectives	Enables selection of one project goal and one objective Does not enable selection of multiple ordered goals and objectives	Enable selection of multiple ordered goals and objectives.
List Performance Measures	List primary performance measures List secondary performance measures	Enable selection of multiple measures at a time as “Not Applicable”
Basic Agency Letter Form	Basic Agencies submit a letter committing to manage ARC construction project funds	Create electronic form with pre-populated project information that the basic agency can sign electronically
Executive Summary Form	Currently a paper based grantee submitted document.	Create electronic form that is included in the application.

Project Narrative Form	Separate textboxes for the construction and non-construction project checklists	Create electronic multi-screen electronic workflow tool that the applicant signs
Project Checklist Form	Currently a manual process in which grant coordinator identifies missing elements in an application and draft a follow up questionnaire to applicants	Create electronic form that enables grant coordinator to comment on each application checklist item and generate a pre-populated, editable list of follow up questions
Project Approval Memo Form	Currently manually created for each application, except in rare instances with recurring grant applications.	Pre-populate from Executive Summary and Grantee application with the ability to edit. Enable form to be signed electronically. Create new Approval Memo Form template for non-standard projects such as Local Access Roads
Project Announcement Form	Pre-populated from Project Approval Memo.	Maintain current process with the ability to edit.
Pre-Award Tracking	Hybrid tracking that is manual and electronic.	Create a comprehensive project application tracking system for internal and external view. The tracking will begin with initial application generation and end with grant agreement execution.

2 - GRANT AWARD

Approval Notifications, Grant Agreements and Obligations

Current State

Grant notifications are by fax and email delivery with manual scheduling and execution. Grant Agreements are electronically created, delivered and signed by ARC and the grantees. Notices to enter obligations in ARCnet are sent by email to finance staff and are manually entered and then sent to the accounting service provider for processing. Additional information is provided below under Grant Transactions.

Deliverable

Grant notifications require automatic scheduling and delivery with the ability to customize the text as well as the delivery timing.

Grant agreements shall remain electronic with the ability to customize the text and format of the document. The grant agreement should also include the grantee submitted budget.

Obligations shall become automatically entered in ARCnet after review by Finance.

Grant Award		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Approval Notification	Manual process where ARC sends notification of project approval to Congress, member governors, basic agencies, local development districts, and grantees	Create a tool that controls the schedule of automatic email notifications sent to the various ARC stakeholders. Enable ARC staff to adjust the approval notification settings for one project at a time or for multiple projects at the same time
Grant Agreement	General Counsel electronically generates grant agreements with electronic signatures by General Counsel and grantee.	Continue electronic generation and execution of grant agreement and automatically attach electronic project budget Grant Agreement.
Grant Agreement execution	Grant agreements sent by email to grantees for electronic signature	Allow for creation of different legal grant agreements based on type of contract and funding sources. Customization of each agreement and ability to edit document as needed.
Obligations	Electronic delivery of grant agreement, which is notice to enter obligation in ARCnet and accounting. Entry of the accounting coding in ARCnet with drop down options, printed, signed, scanned and sent by email for processing.	Electronic delivery of grant agreements, which initiates an automatic entry of accounting coding based on project classifications, amount, and grant numbering. Obligations are combined with other transactions (see description below in Post Award section) for processing.

3 - POST AWARD

Grant Reporting- Programmatic and Financial

Current State

Non-construction grant reporting consists of a narrative progress report and a financial report, which is normally but not always accompanied with a payment request. Grant reporting is paper based. ARC has a report-based payment system, so payments are only processed when accompanied by a programmatic report describing recent or cumulative project activities and performance impact measures. Construction grant reporting is submitted by the federal or state basic agency and is paper based.

Deliverable

A temporary solution is currently deployed, but not functioning, based on a partial implementation of the original requirements. The deliverable is to fully develop the solution that meets the previously developed requirements.

Grant Reporting		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverables
Programmatic and Financial reporting	Created temporary reporting tool that is currently under repair. The tool contains both financial and programmatic reporting.	Electronic grant reporting tool that includes programmatic as well as financial reporting. Financial reporting includes the Standard Form 270 and excel formatted expense and advance payment calculations.
Basic Agency Monitoring Visit Form	Paper-based form completed by basic agencies when they make site visits to grantees	Make this form electronic and fillable by basic agencies when they make site visits to grantees. This form will also be used to pre-populate the Basic Agency Monitoring Report (BAMR) Form.
Email Notification	Email reminders are sent 15 days before a report is due, 30 or more days past due, which works intermittently	Email reminders should be built into the online payment and reporting tool and the timing of reminders should be configurable by a system administrator; not requiring a developer to change.
Approval Workflow		Approval workflows for ARC staff for interim reports and payments through final reports, payments and closeout.
History of Programmatic reports and financial reports	Does not exist	Generate a report table or another suitable format at the time of grant approval that lists each report and its due date. This shall contain a status field: ie- not submitted,

		submitted, under review, accepted, or rejected. A history column will show each status change, who did it and when. Staff can provide feedback that appears in the grantee portal with workflow based on these status changes. Dashboard notification to grant coordinator when a report is submitted, with a link to that report for review.
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Grant Transactions

Current State

Grant transaction processing currently have manual, paper, and electronic steps. Transactions include obligations, de-obligations, recoveries, reimbursement and advance payments, expensing of advance payments, and refunds. Obligation, amendment and closeout documentation is sent electronically to finance for processing. Payment documentation is sent by paper to the accounting staff, who then review the calculations and documentation for completeness and accuracy. Accounting staff create the payment document needed to execute the disbursal in ARCnet by manually entering the accounting coding from drop down menus and the amount of payment with a breakdown, when required, between a reimbursement and an advance. This document is printed, signed for approval, and then scanned and emailed to the accounting services provider for payment.

State administered construction grants have a separate transaction process. ARC enters these type of grants in the US Treasury’s ASAP database. ASAP is a program that allows grant recipients (in this case the state basic agency) to draw funds directly from ARC’s Treasury account. ARC’s process is to require the state basic agency to fill in, electronically sign, and submit the ASAP Drawdown Request from in ARCnet, which is automatically sent to Finance for processing. After submitting this form the state agency may then draw the funds. Finance staff then prepare the transaction documentation and submit to the accounting service provider. The US Treasury ASAP program and ARCnet have no integration.

Deliverable

Grant transaction documentation should automatically populate the accounting coding and amounts based on the type of transaction, the ARCnet grant classifications and amount of the transaction entered in ARCnet. ARCnet would create one pdf containing all of the documentation for that transaction, including financial reports. All of the grant transaction PDFs would be held in ARCnet for transmittal to the accounting services provider. Each day’s transactions are entered into a transmittal log containing some of the accounting coding, grantee name and amount. When all transactions are processed each day, the log and all of the payment PDFs are combined into one pdf that can be password protected and then emailed to the accounting service provider for processing.

Grant Transactions		
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Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
ARCnet and Accounting transaction notice and entry	Some electronic notice of transaction and manual entry of accounting coding.	Fully electronic notice and accounting coding of transactions based on grant specifics and transaction type.
ASAP Drawdown Request Form	Electronic form that registered state basic agencies (RSBAs) use to notify ARC of a payment drawdown from the ASAP payment system in Treasury	Add a drawdown approval workflow that allows ARC staff to override error messages with an explanation provided
Transaction documentation delivery for processing	Manual printing, scanning and password protection of multiple transactions and a transmittal log listing each transaction into one pdf and email to accounting service provider.	Electronic pdf conversion of each transaction and automatic entry into the transmittal log into one pdf that is password protected and can be emailed to accounting service provider. Continued ability to print payment documentation for manual delivery to accounting service provider as needed.

Grant Amendments

Current State

ARC processes minor and major amendments. Amendments can be used to revise the approved project budget, project scope, performance measures, reporting frequency, grant period start dates, and grant period end dates. Minor amendments are approved by the grant coordinator or division director and major amendments require approval from senior management. Non-construction grantees send an amendment request by email to the grant coordinator and copies the State Program Manager, who must concur with the amendment request. ARCnet has an electronic amendment form filled by a grant coordinator to designate the purpose and change in grant terms, which is normally a change in performance period. The designation of purpose automatically determines approval requirements. The amendment form is signed and executed by the Coordinator and/or the Division Director.

Non-construction grantees that request a major amendment involve the same request process as minor amendments with additional documentation as determined by the purpose. An electronic Amendment Authorization is created from an ARCnet form. This form is signed by the Coordinator and executed by the Division Director. Some major amendments may be approved by a division director while others require senior management approval. Senior management approval of major amendments involves the same review process for new grants. After the Amendment Authorization Form is executed, the Office of General Counsel is electronically notified to create the electronic grant amendment from ARCnet. The Finance Division is electronically notified when the Basic Amendment Form or Standard Grant Revision Form is executed and prepares any transaction documentation needed.

Grantees with state administered construction grants send an amendment request in writing to the state basic agency (BA) on the project. The basic agency creates a new electronic BA Amendment Form. The BA representative signs it, followed by the State Program Manager and the Grant Coordinator. The Division Director is optionally included in the signature chain.

Deliverable

Fully electronic grant amendment request and approval process with notifications as needed. Grants can be amended any time prior to project closeout. Minor amendments can be approved at the DCI staff level while major amendments require the approval of senior management.

- Ability for grantees to initiate an amendment request for the project
 - o Minor amendments
 - o Major amendments
 - o Amendment authorization
- Certain amendment requests would require an amended grant agreement
- Notifications during the workflows

Grant Amendments		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Non-construction grant amendments	Grantee sends amendment request to grant coordinator. Grant coordinator prepares the amendment form or amendment authorization form, with State Program Manager and ARC staff approvals as required.	Electronic grantee request with electronic approval. Editable amendment authorization forms completed and executed by ARC staff as required. Editable Standard Grant Amendment Form executed manually or electronically based on the amendment authorization form signatories.
Federal administered construction grants	Grantee sends amendment request to federal basic agency. Federal basic agency prepares the basic agency amendment form, with State Program Manager and ARC staff approvals as required.	Grantee submits electronic amendment request. Editable amendment authorization forms completed and executed by federal basic agency, State Program Manager, and ARC staff as required. Federal basic agency handles any contracts amendment directly with grantee after receiving amendment authorization from ARC.
State administered construction grants	Grantee sends amendment request in writing for state approval. State basic agency prepares the amendment form, with State Program Manager and ARC approvals as required.	Grantee submits electronic amendment request. Editable amendment authorization forms completed and executed by state basic agency, State Program Manager, and ARC

		staff as required. Editable Standard Grant Revision Form executed manually or electronically based on the amendment authorization form signatories.
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Grant Closeouts

Current State

Paper submission of final reports including the SF-270 and the budget worksheet. DCI program coordinators review and approve the reports and final payment if requested and prepare the electronic grant closeout form within ARCnet. The paper file is then sent for review and approval to the Division Director and then to the General Counsel who opens the closeout form in ARCnet and clicks “I Agree”. Finance receives the file and processes any final payment, recovery of funds, and then closes the grant by also clicking “I Agree” in the closeout form. Any deobligations and recoveries are executed automatically upon final Finance signature. ARC’s temporary grant reporting solution includes a grant closeout, which also requires full development.

Deliverable

Grant closeouts should be electronic and operate within the same process of the Grant Reporting deliverable. The grantee would indicate that this is a final report and ARCnet would initiate the required protocols for review and approval as well as any transactions such as a payment and recovery. ARCnet’s current grantee reporting tool includes a closeout, but it is not currently functioning and requires full development. ARCnet would continue to have the ability to initiate manual closeouts as needed. Manual close outs should include the option to make any corrections to deobligations, refunds, recoveries, etc as part of the manual closeout process.

Grant Closeouts		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Grant closeouts	Paper submission and processing of grant closeouts. Temporary solution developed, but currently suspended.	Electronic closeout within the Grant Reporting function. Flexibility to process manual closeouts as needed.

Grant Evaluation

Current State

Evaluation data is currently collected after a grant is closed and entered into ARCnet through an online validation form.

Deliverable

Eliminate the online validation form and create manually fillable fields for each validation measure. Additional fillable fields will be created for the date and any notes. The naming shall be changed from Validation/Validated to Verification/Verified.

Evaluation/Verification		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Verification data	Performance measure verification data and verification notes must be entered into ARC.net through the "Validation Form" in ARC.net; it is not currently being used.	Remove form from ARC.net; allow for direct input of performance numbers into the "Measures" tab, and notes and date into the "Verification" tab; change all references of "Validation" or "Validation Visits" to "Verification";

4 - USER EXPERIENCE

Report Writing

Current State

The current reporting system is comprised of two types of reports: standard and custom (ad-hoc) reports. Standard reports are built by IT staff based on requests from end-users on the type of data and information they need to pull. The reports have options for filtering the report results.

Custom or ad-hoc reports can be built by the end user using pre-built SQL views. They can select a single view or multiple views. When they build the report, they can select fields from the view(s) then order how they will appear in the report. They can also select the sort order for the report either from fields within the report and/or all available fields from the view(s).

They can filter by building a query of the data to be pulled. It does require a basic knowledge of SQL operators such as 'ands/ors'.

Standard and custom reports can be printed, saved as a PDF or exported to Excel.

Current users of reports are:

- ARC staff
- State Program managers and staff
- Local Development District managers and staff
- State Basic Agencies and staff

Deliverable

ARC would like to use a commercial reporting system such as Crystal Reports or Microsoft SQL Reporting Services to build standard reports for general use. For user built custom reports investigate using Excel, which would allow end users to create, modify, share, and save. End-users should be able to pull fields for the custom reports from any SQL table. Access would be view-only.

The types of reporting that is desired are:

- Monitoring
- Data analytic and metrics
- Financial

- Project tracking
- Project information
- Contact email lists

Reports should be available to same users listed above in Current State, but should be scalable to include other users such as grantees and Federal Basic Agencies.

Report Writing		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Standard Reports	Each report is built, designed, and coded by a developer based on criteria from users	Use a commercial reports/business intelligence application that has easy to use templates, drag/drop for report layout, ease of setup, flexible report design with minimal development by a programmer
Custom Reports	Views are built by developer ; limited query ability; redundant views	Investigate using Excel to build reports that allows users to create, modify, share and save with minimal development by a programmer
Output	Print, export to Excel, PDF	Allow for various output options: print, PDF, export to Excel. Allow reports to be scheduled and sent to stakeholders via email

Email and Fax Notifications

Current State

Emails are built in the business layer using C#. It requires a developer to hard code the text and link the email via SMTP. Any text changes are sent to the developer to code which affects how fast updates are made.

Notifications of projects are sent to Congress, governor of the state where the project is located, grantees, and ARC State Program office. Notifications to Congress and the governor’s office are manual via fax, email, and mail based on preferences set in the contact directory. The majority of notifications are sent immediately after a project has been approved. However, in certain circumstances, notification are delayed upon senior staff request.

Deliverable

Emails administration section that allows administrators to create, modify, delete email text as well as set up schedules and link to workflows.

Explore the feasibility of using electronic faxing but would need to ensure that it meets Federal regulations for security and data protection.

Notifications should be sent automatically within a certain period of time after a project approval with the flexibility of delaying or cancelling the notification for the individual project. The type of notification that should be sent (email, fax, mail) should be pulled from the contact directory. Email should include queuing software that includes error reporting and logging.

Email and Fax Notifications		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Email	Email text is hard-coded into the business layer, which requires a developer to maintain	Allow for email text and setup to be maintained by systems administrator. Easy to use email text module. Email should include queuing software that includes error reporting and logging.
Fax	Faxing is done using fax machines	Electronic faxing that meets Federal standards for security and data protection
Notification Scheduling	Manually done	Automate and scheduling with the flexibility to delay and/or cancel the notification
Type of notification	Type of notifications are set in the contact directory for each external stakeholder	Type of notifications are set in the contact directory for each external stakeholder

Dashboards

Current State:

Users can select up to 4 reports to appear on their dashboard. They can select where the report will appear in the 4 positions on their dashboard (upper left, bottom left, upper right, bottom right).

Users can select from several pre-built and filtered reports. They can choose between detailed or summary display. Some of the financial reports offer an option to display as a chart. The reports show basic information such as project number and project title.

Every user's dashboard shall include reminder notifications for outstanding tasks requiring completion.

Deliverable

Users would have the ability to customize their dashboards according to their user role and type of information to be displayed. For example, directors may want to see reports showing projects by staff so they can balance workloads.

Any report should have a choice of summary, detail or the ability to display as a chart. The number of reports should be scalable from its current limitation of four displayed reports.

Dashboards		
Field	Current State	Deliverable
Dashboard Reports	Dashboard reports are pre-built based on user groups (i.e. grant coordinators)	<p>Customized reports that meet the specific needs of the person, department, organization; displaying key performance metrics; project information; financial information</p> <p>Allow users to customize their reports</p> <p>Reminder notifications for outstanding tasks combined with email.</p>
Dashboard Layout	Limited to 4 reports	Allow for multiple reports to be displayed with the ability to expand/collapse the reports

DATA Act Reporting

Current state

ARC is required to submit projects that have been obligated during the preceding quarter. The report is submitted four times a year. The project information is published on a government website for public access.

The information that is published shows where the project is located, sources of funding (i.e. ARC, other funding), period of performance dates, federal funding obligated by ARC and non-federal funding, grantee information and type of project. This information is pulled using a script in SQL.

Additional information is added to complete the report that is required by the DATA ACT. The additional information required is currently done manually, although some of the information could be incorporated into the project information.

Deliverable

Review the entire process of creating and submitting the report. Automate the process of retrieving the project information and adding the additional information required by the DATA ACT.

DATA Act Reporting		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Pulling project information for report	Run a script to pull projects for the preceding period with placeholders for fields that have to be updated manually.	Create a report that will pull the required information.

Adding Principal Place of Performance Code	Currently done manually	Automate creating the codes for the location of the project (i.e. city, town, county(s), etc).
Lookup tables	Does not exist in ARCnet, but in Excel	Create look up tables to fill in pertinent information

Search Engine

Current State

Currently, there are three types of search: quick, basic and advanced. The quick search function allows users to search by project number (5 digit number), by project id (seldom used), or both. The basic search allows users to search by one of fourteen search categories (ie. Status, admin agency, state, etc). When they select a search category that has a defined set of values, users can select the value to use to search. The results are displayed in grid view and each column is sortable.

The advanced search allows the users to search by multiple criteria . They can choose up to three search criteria to use. For example, if they want to search by fiscal year, state, and funding amount.

There is no ability to print the search results.

Deliverable

Users need the ability to search by one or more search criteria. The results should be displayed in a grid or table view with sortable columns. Users should have the option to print the results, export to Excel or create a PDF report.

There should also be the option to save, modify and delete search builds.

Search		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Multiple ways to search: quick, basic, advanced	Exists	Allow for multiple ways to search
Sortable columns	All columns in the results grid are sortable but one column at time	All columns in the results grid are sortable. Should also allow for multiple sort levels similar to Excel
Print search results	Does not exist in the current state	Output results to print, export to Excel, or PDF
Save searches	Does not exist in current state	Ability to create and save frequently searches

Directories

Current State

ARCnet has several directories containing contact information for our stakeholders and partners. Currently, there are directories for the following groups:

- Congress

- Federal Basic Agencies
- State Basic Agencies
- ARC State Program Offices
- Local Development Districts

The contact records within the directories capture name, title, organization name, mailing and delivery addresses, phone, fax, email, cell phone, and user type.

When a user creates their login to ARCnet, their first name, last name and email address are authenticated against one of the directories. If there is a match, the user can then create their password.

Grantees are authenticated by being listed as a contact on at least one project in ARCnet.

Deliverable

The directories should be used to authenticate users’ login for users to create their login to ARCnet. In order for person to create an account they should be listed in one of the directories.

Any person listed in the directory should be able to manage the directory for their organization which includes adding, modifying or deleting contacts.

The directories allow ARC to categorize its various users, track them, and assign the systematic roles. The main deliverable is to formalize a new directory for grantees and track them with unique identifiers.

Directories		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Contact Directories	Directories exist for member states, Congressional members, local development districts, federal basic agencies, and state basic agencies	Create a new directory for each applicant/grantee organization with EIN or DUNS number as the unique identifier

E-signatures

Current State

ARC has forms that require signatures from grantees, ARC staff, ARC senior management, state and federal basic agencies, and state program managers.

The following workflows have electronic signatures for all parties involved

- Grant agreements
- Basic Agency Monitoring Reports
- ASAP Drawdown Request
- Major Amendments
- Basic Amendments
- Closeout memos

The following workflows have partial electronic signatures:

-Amendment authorizations

The person signs by clicking an 'I Agree' button which then affixes their name and the current date to the form. Once the person signs, an email is sent to the next person in the workflow to sign and their 'I Agree' button is enabled.

Each signer can reject the form which removes the signature of all of the previous signers, sends a notification that the form has been rejected and returns the form back to be corrected then resigned.

Deliverable

Electronic signatures for all forms that require parties to sign. This would include:

- Approvals
- Grant agreements
- Amendments
- Transaction documentation
- Closeouts
- Reports

All of the forms should have workflows that route the form to all parties involved in the review, approval and signing of the form. In addition, the designated signer should be able to delegate signing to another person in case they are unavailable to sign. They should be able to select from a 'delegate' list of authorized signers that they can manage.

E-Signatures		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Approval Memos	Created in ARCnet, but signatures are done outside of ARCnet	Create, sign and route electronic approval memo.
Grant Agreements	Fully electronic with electronic signing for all parties.	Fully electronic with electronic signing for all parties.
Amendments	Some of the amendment forms have electronic signing.	All amendments include electronic signing.
Payment Request	Has electronic signing, but functionality is currently suspended.	Full electronic including signatures
Closeouts	Has electronic signature	Fully electronic including signatures

5 - ADMINISTRATION

User Roles

Current State

ARC uses user roles and types based to manage permissions in ARCnet. The user roles are based on organizational function.

The current permissions include:

- Edit
- View
- Create
- Delete
- Sign
- Comment
- Accept
- Reject
- Execute
- Hide

In the Administration module, administrators can add, modify and delete roles as well as select permissions for the roles.

Deliverable

The new grants management system should be role-driven. The management of user roles should continue to be a systems administrator function with the ability to create, modify, delete roles and permissions. A review of the existing roles should be conducted to see if some of the roles can be combined or eliminated.

The system should allow for adding roles to workflows in an easy to use manner by dragging and dropping the user roles into the workflows.

Administration		
Field	Current State	Deliverable
Roles Setup	Able to create, edit, delete roles. Developer uses roles when coding workflows	Able to create, edit, delete roles. Allow for adding roles to workflows in a user friendly manner by dragging and dropping the user roles into the workflows.

Security

The grants management system should comply with security requirements defined by applicable federal laws, Executive Orders, regulations, policies, directives, or standards (e.g., FISMA, OMB Circular A-130, HSPD-12, FIPS Publication 200).

Security		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable

Identification and Authentication	Able to create, edit, delete user account, and user Roles, password-based authentication.	Able to create, edit, delete user account, and user Roles password-based authentication / pki-based authentication
Audit and Accountability	Able to generate system-wide / time-correlated audit trail	Able to generate system-wide / time-correlated audit trail
Developer Configuration Management	Version control and software integrity verification	version control and software integrity verification
Developer Security Testing and Evaluation	Manual code reviews	static/ dynamic code analysis, threat and vulnerability analyses, penetration testing, and manual code reviews
System Documentation	Partial Design / implementation documentation	Full Design / implementation documentation

6 - MISCELLANEOUS

J-1 Visa

Current State

Currently, all J-1 Visa Waiver applications are received hard copy by mail. They are reviewed for the purpose of recommending a waiver of the foreign residency requirement set forth in the J-1 Visa, pursuant to the ARC policy guidelines. Once guidelines are met the application is forwarded to the Federal Co-Chair for signature. Once signed, the appropriate applications pieces along with the letter are forwarded to Department of State and then on to USCIS for approval.

Deliverable

Maintain the current ability to input the J-1 Waiver request information and continue the current access to this information by the OIG. The database will need to allow for alternate shortage designations, as well as, the ability to create custom reports based on specific data parameters.

J-1 Visa		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Applications	Submitted by mail	Electronic submission with ability to add future application criteria.
Approval	Currently paper signed	Electronic approval

Allocation Tracking

Current State

Funding is allocated to each partner state. Each state's allocation is comprised of categories (fund source), which at ARC is Area Development, Distressed County, Local Access Roads, Local Development

Districts, as well as others as required by Congressional action. Fund allocations are tracked by state and then by category. The columns with each state’s allocation are Fund Source, Allocation Available (balance forward, new allocation, grant recoveries and adjustments), ARC Funds Approved, Balance, ARC Fund Pending, and Projected Balance.

Additions and reductions to the allocation Balance occur by both manual and automatic entry. Automatic entries are grant approvals that reduce the allocation balance and the recovery of unspent funds when closing a grant, which increases the allocation balance. Manual entries include annual allocation increases due to ARC’s appropriation, transfers between funding sources, error corrections or one-time entries, and at each fiscal year end, the ending balances for each state by category is entered as the next fiscal year’s beginning balance.

Deliverable

Automate the entry of the carryover of allocations from the ending fiscal year balance to the next fiscal year’s beginning balance. This automatic entry should occur by manually closing the fiscal year. Any prior fiscal year adjustment should include a warning about the need for a current fiscal year offsetting entry. Edit the format of the Allocation tables and add columns to more finitely track transactions by type.

Allocation Tracking		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable
Allocation tracking	Automatic and manual entries in each state’s allocation by category (funding source).	Automation of additional entries to include the carryover balance of each state’s amount by category (funding source).
		Add warning when an entry occurs in a prior year.
		Add columns to the report table to more finitely track transactions.

Purchase Orders

Current State

ARC enters some programmatic related contracts in ARCnet for tracking purposes under a tab title Purchase Orders. The information entered for each contract is limited and does not include the address, EIN, and DUNS number. The page has a table for manual entry of the obligation and payments. The payment documentation is not created through ARCnet.

Deliverable

The tab name should be changed to Contracts with the creation of transaction documentation occurring in the same manner as grants, which would result in the automatic entry of transactions in the table.

Purchase Orders		
Functionality	Current State	Deliverable

Purchase Orders	Limited contractor information and manual entry of transaction documentation.	Expand contractor information fields and replicate the creation of transaction documentation as exists for grants in ARCnet.
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Training and Support

Deliverable

Contractor shall provide training, including user guides, to ARC staff subsequent to implementation of each deliverable or set of deliverables as determined by ARC. At ARC’s discretion, the training shall be by webinar, in-person, and/or the provision of user guides. The training shall be user role specific and in group sizes decided by ARC. Once all deliverables are implemented the contractor shall provide a comprehensive user guide, which is also available within ARCnet and searchable by subject. The contractor shall also provide to ARC IT staff complete documentation of the code requirements.

Subsequent to the implementation of all deliverables, the contractor shall remain available to repair any issue that arises. The contractor is required to respond to such an issue within 24 hours of receipt of such request for a period of six months. ARC has the option to negotiate a service level agreement with the contractor.

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

Preparation and Submission

Vendors will prepare proposals in compliance with all of the instructions outlined in the RFP. Partial or incomplete proposals will be rejected. The proposal must be signed by an officer of the responding Organization, and the response must include a statement as to the period for which the response remains valid, which must be at least 180 days from the date responses to the RFP are due.

Please submit a PDF copy via e-mail of your proposal, including all supporting documentation to:

ARC contact information:

William Grant, Director, Finance & Administration
wgrant@arc.gov
202-884-7731

Please contact William Grant with any questions about the RFP.

Schedule for Evaluation Process

RFP distributed to vendors and post to ARC website	September 20, 2018
ARCnet Webinar	October 17, 2018
Deadline for vendor questions	November 9, 2018
Deadline for RFP responses	November 16, 2018
Invitations for formal presentations	November 30, 2018
Vendor demonstrations/presentations	mid December 2018
Selection of vendor/contract negotiation	late December 2018

ARC will host an ARCnet functionality and question and answer webinar on October 17 at 10AM via Skype. For more information on the webinar, please check www.arc.gov after October 10 for the link.

Proposal Format

To facilitate the evaluation of the proposals, vendors shall utilize the following proposal format:

- Executive Summary
- Company information
- Written description of the features and functionality the candidate proposes to meet the needs of the electronic application system.
- Projects similar in scope to an electronic application system
- Past clients/References (preferably federal agencies and public-private partnership projects)
- Grant management application experience
- Qualifications, background and experience of staff proposed to work on the project
- Cost proposal
- Estimated project length

Applicant Requirements

All vendors submitting proposals must meet the following minimum requirements at the time of proposal submittal to qualify for consideration

- Vendor must have operated a business providing similar service and support for a minimum of five (5) years.
- Extensive experience with relevant technology (C#, asp.net, sql server) for a minimum of five (5) years.
- Experience with US government software development projects for a minimum of five (5) years.
- Grant management project experience for a minimum of five (5) years.
- Vendor must be in compliance with all city, county and state business licensing, bond and insurance requirements.
- List at least five (5) companies/customers as references. State company name, address, contact name and telephone numbers, Developed and supported software and duration of relationship.

Basis of Award

The following criteria will be used to evaluate each RFP response.

- Experience and demonstrated ability with software development, project management, and implementation,
- Proposed approach for integrating data between partner states and ARCnet,
- Proposed approach for gathering and finalizing work requirements,
- Development plan and post launch support to include software troubleshooting, fixing defects, and testing that would contain regression testing,
- Pricing,
- Timely and complete response to RFP Vendor client references,
- Results of requested demonstrations and presentations.

Contract Type

The Appalachian Regional Commission is requesting two types of proposals:

- Firm Fixed Price including Labor and other direct costs
- Time and Materials

Term of Contract

The initial contract term for this software development project will be negotiated at the time of contract award.

Period of Performance

The period of performance is until all deliverables as described in this request for proposal and any subsequently assigned deliverables are accepted as final and approved by the ARC Project Coordinator. The estimated time period is 12 to 18 months.

ARC's Right to No Award

ARC reserves the right to reject all proposals, reject portions of any proposal, or accept the proposal deemed most advantageous to ARC.

Data Rights and Software Ownership

The Government has unlimited rights to all documents/material (including software) produced under this contract. All documents and materials, to include the source codes of any software, produced under this contract shall be Government owned and are the property of the Government with all rights

and privileges of ownership/copyright belonging exclusively to the Government. These documents and materials may not be used or sold by the contractor without written permission from the Contracting Officer. All materials supplied to the Government shall be the sole property of the Government and may not be used for any other purpose. This right does not abrogate any other Government rights.

Cancellation

Should the vendor fail to meet the requirements of the contract, ARC may cancel the contract with a thirty (30) days' notice and award the remainder of the contract term to the next best vendor.

Place of Performance

The work of this proposal shall be performed at the Appalachian Regional Commission or the contractor's facility or approved remote locations as approved by ARC. Work related to requirements gathering, user acceptance testing, and training should be conducted at ARC headquarters in Washington D.C. however they may be conducted via teleconference, at the contractor's facilities if approved by the ARC Project Coordinator (PC).

ARC will provide access to all required space, supplies, and facilities as needed for meetings, briefings and other required on-site activities with ARC staff. Meetings, briefings, or other activities that are to be at ARC facilities must be scheduled at least one day in advance with the ARC Project Coordinator or designated manager to ensure space is available.

Program Reporting

The contractor's Project Manager must furnish weekly written status reports on the activities and progress of the Program including all active task orders. The content and format of the weekly progress reports will be provided by the ARC Program Manager within ten business days after the task order award, but may be changed from time to time to better manage the support of the task order.

The report shall briefly state the items being worked on, the progress made to date, including the percentage of work completed during the reporting period and any outstanding action items from previous reviews to the ARC Program Manager or the designated Task Manager.

The written status report must also include specific discussion on difficulties encountered and remedial action taken during the reporting period and the contractor's anticipated activity during the subsequent reporting period. The progress report shall contain as a minimum, the following information relative to the period being reported:

- Name(s) of contractor team member(s), their labor category, and labor category rate;
- A brief description of the work accomplished toward completing their tasks, emphasizing the progress made since the last reporting period;
- A list of any unresolved and/or anticipated problems, if any (include schedule impacts);
- An estimate of the percent of all work accomplished to date;
- A statement on the status of a task as it relates to the schedule. The contractor shall state that the task is either on schedule, or explain the nature and extent of any delay(s), to include the anticipated impact on the task;
- A description of work planned for the next reporting period
- A list of risks and mitigation strategies

- A list of action items, assignees, and status of the action item (including information assurance items).

Financial Reporting

The contractor must submit a monthly financial report which tracks the planned to actual expenditures. The financial report must include:

- The budgeted and actual amounts for the month.
- The budgeted and actual cumulative totals to date.
- The variance amount and percentage for the month and cumulative to date.
- Each labor category, labor category rate and total cost of each labor category during the reporting period.

Status Meetings

The contractor shall create an agenda, report, and meeting minutes for each weekly and/or monthly status meeting. The agenda shall be available and distributed one (1) business day prior to a meeting. The comprehensive meeting minutes shall be available and distributed within one (1) business day after the meeting. Contractor shall provide mock-ups, live test systems (betas), and release candidates.

Inspection and Acceptance Criteria

Deliverables are not accepted as final until approved by the ARC Project Manager. The ARC Project Manager will reject deliverables that do not meet the requirements of this RFP and existing ARC policies and documented Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). All ARC policies and SOPs will be made available to the contractor by request following the award of this contract.

Software deliverables cannot be accepted as final until all testing have been completed without any known (unless approved by ARC) or undisclosed Severity 1-3 defects, including high cybersecurity findings.

Training and Support

Training

- Provide details on how user training shall be conducted for the developed software?
- Please provide details of the availability of additional training? (Cost, duration, user level)

Support

- How will project technical support be handled?
- Days and hours support availability?
- Methods of support contact? (email, telephone, real time online, etc)
- Average support call back time?
- Average problem resolution time?

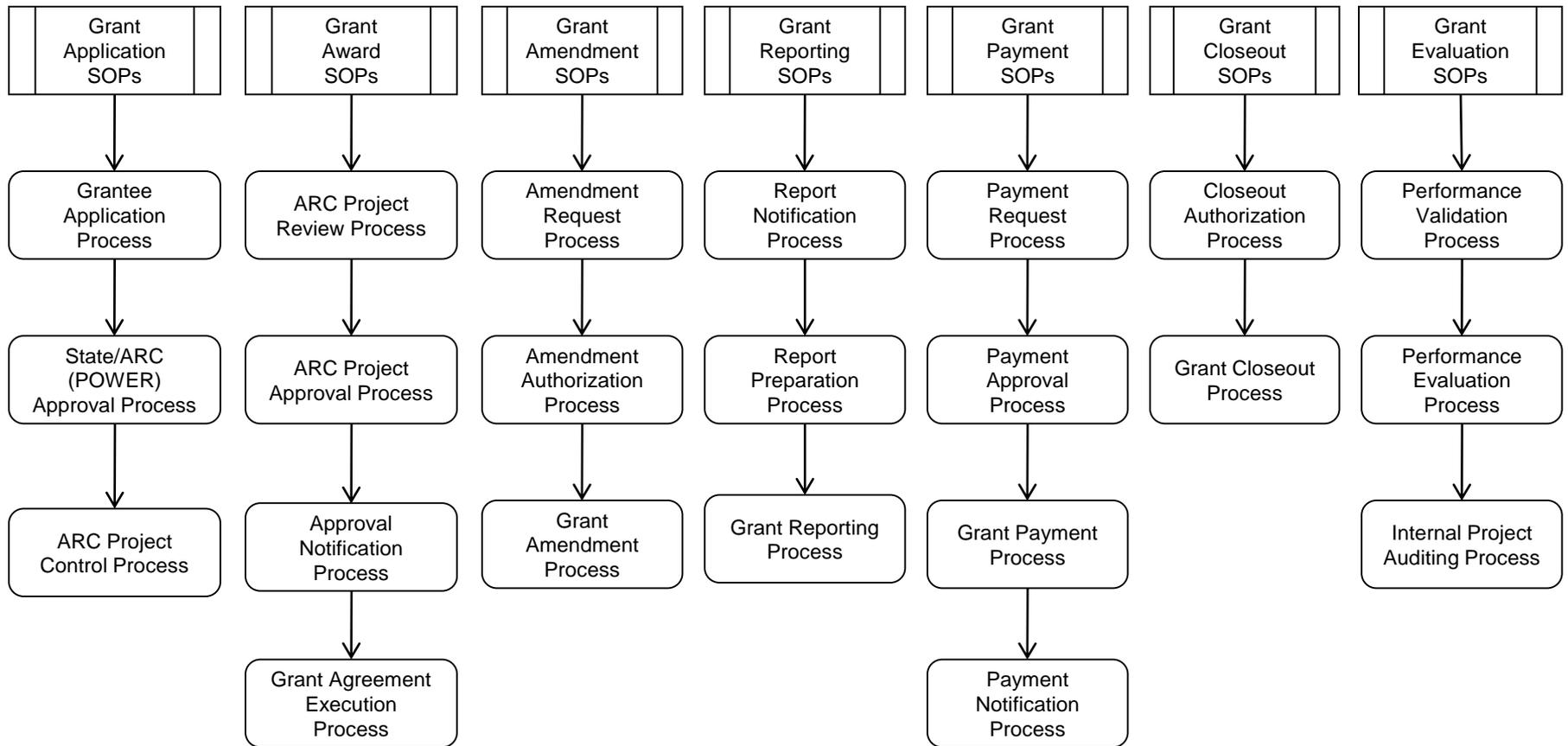
Appendix A

ARC Grants Management System Workflows

ARC Grants Management System: Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

- The ARC grants management system has the following functional SOPs
 - Grant Application
 - Grant Award
 - Grant Amendment
 - Grant Reporting
 - Grant Payment
 - Grant Closeout
 - Grant Evaluation

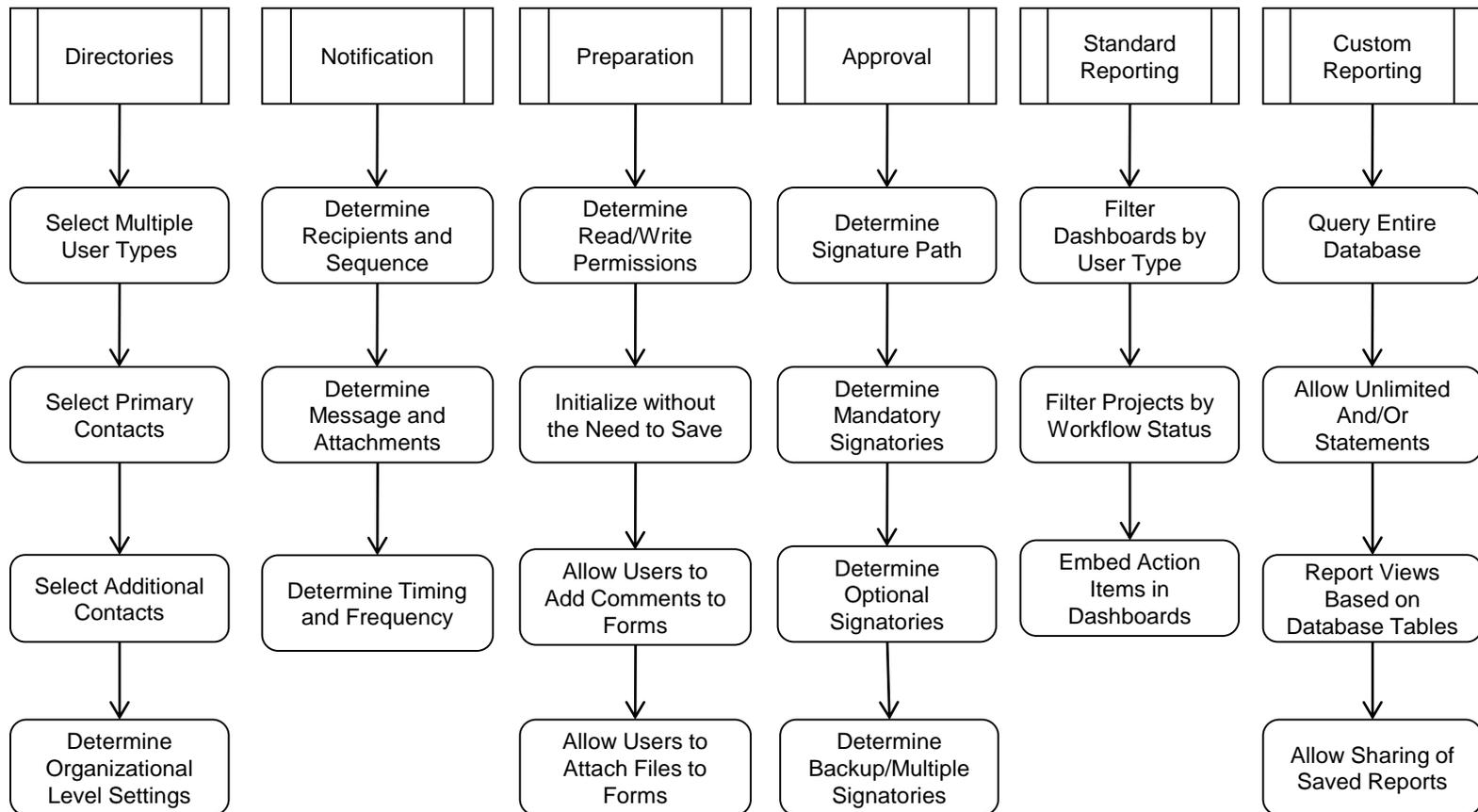
ARC Grants Management System: Functional Workflow Overview



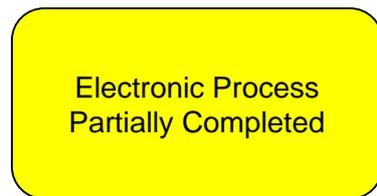
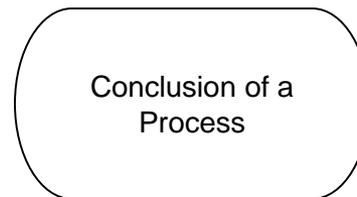
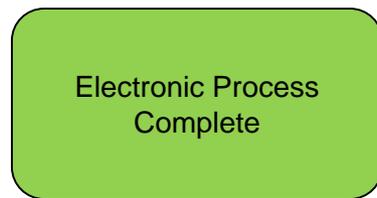
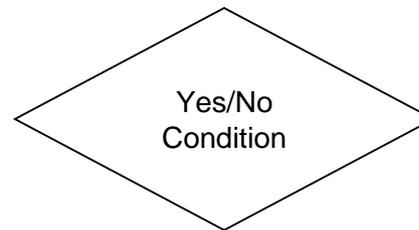
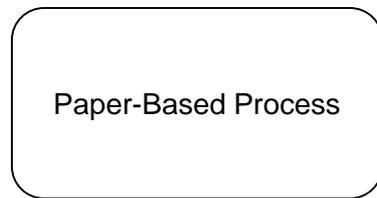
ARC Grants Management SOPs: Basic Grant Processes

- Each grants management SOP consists of one or more of the following processes
 - Directories (primary and additional contacts)
 - Notification (emails and faxes)
 - Preparation (data entry forms)
 - Approval (authorized signature sequence)
 - Standard Reporting (dashboards and standard reports)
 - Custom Reporting (database table views)

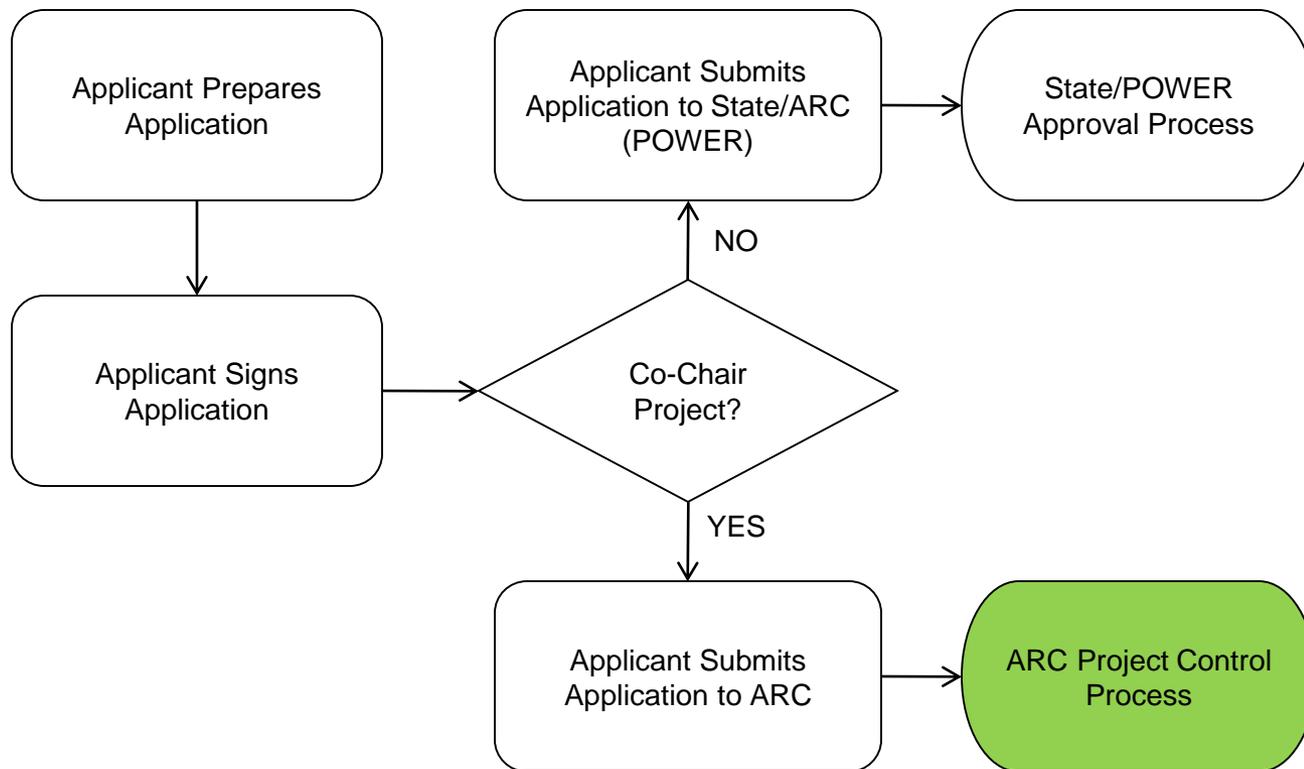
ARC Grants Management System: User Experience (UX) Overview



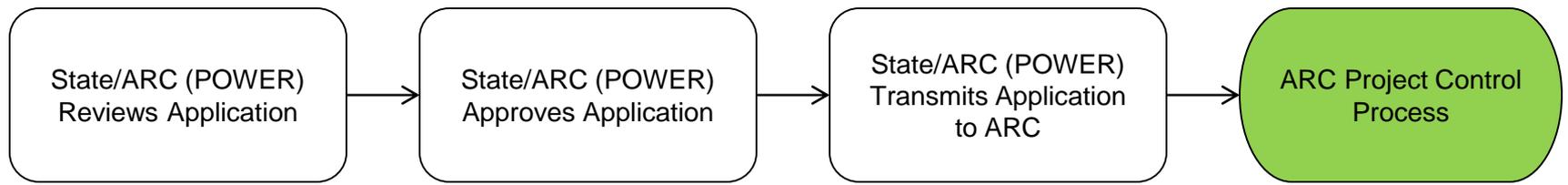
Summary of Flow Diagram Symbols



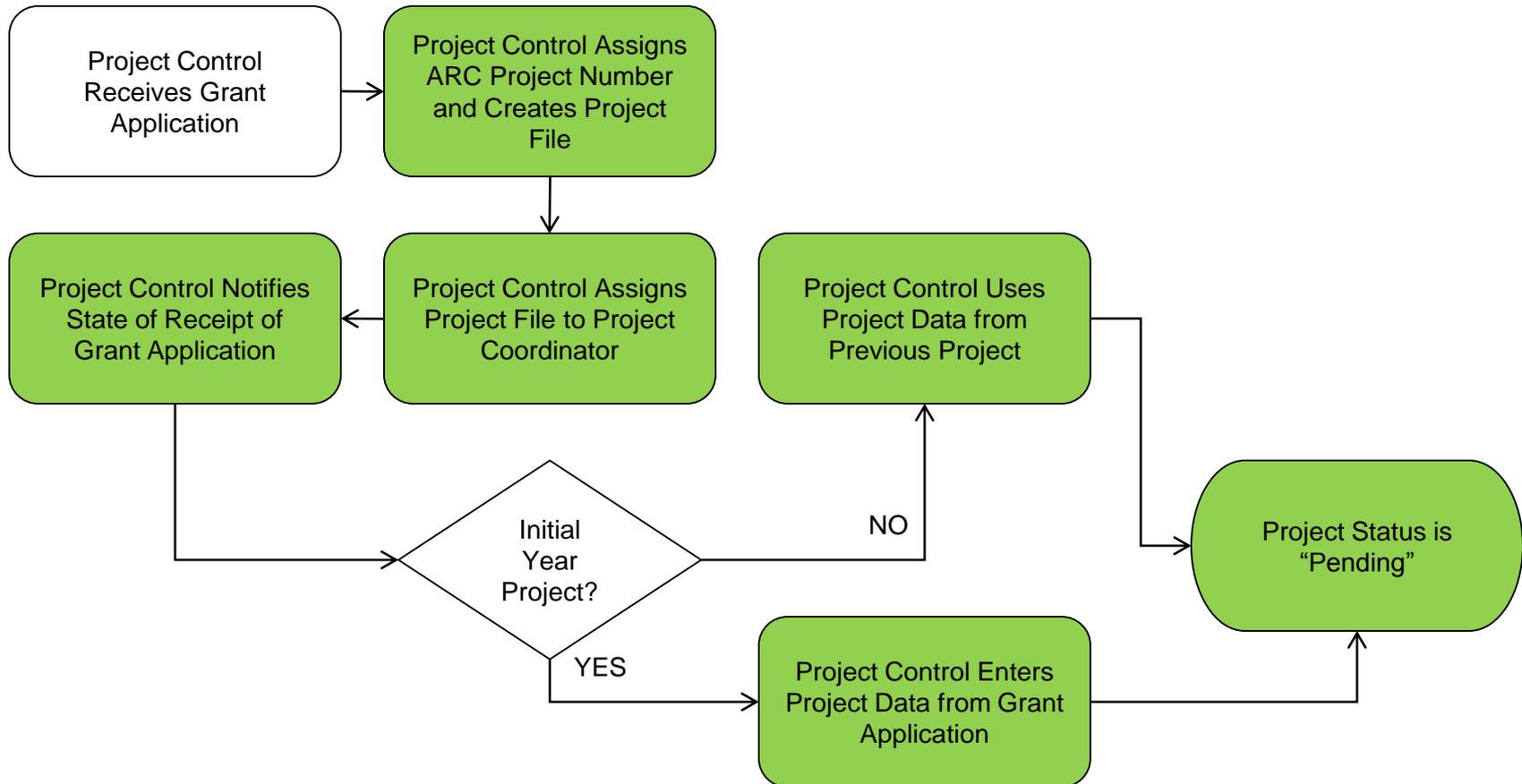
ARC Grant Application SOPs: Grantee Application Process



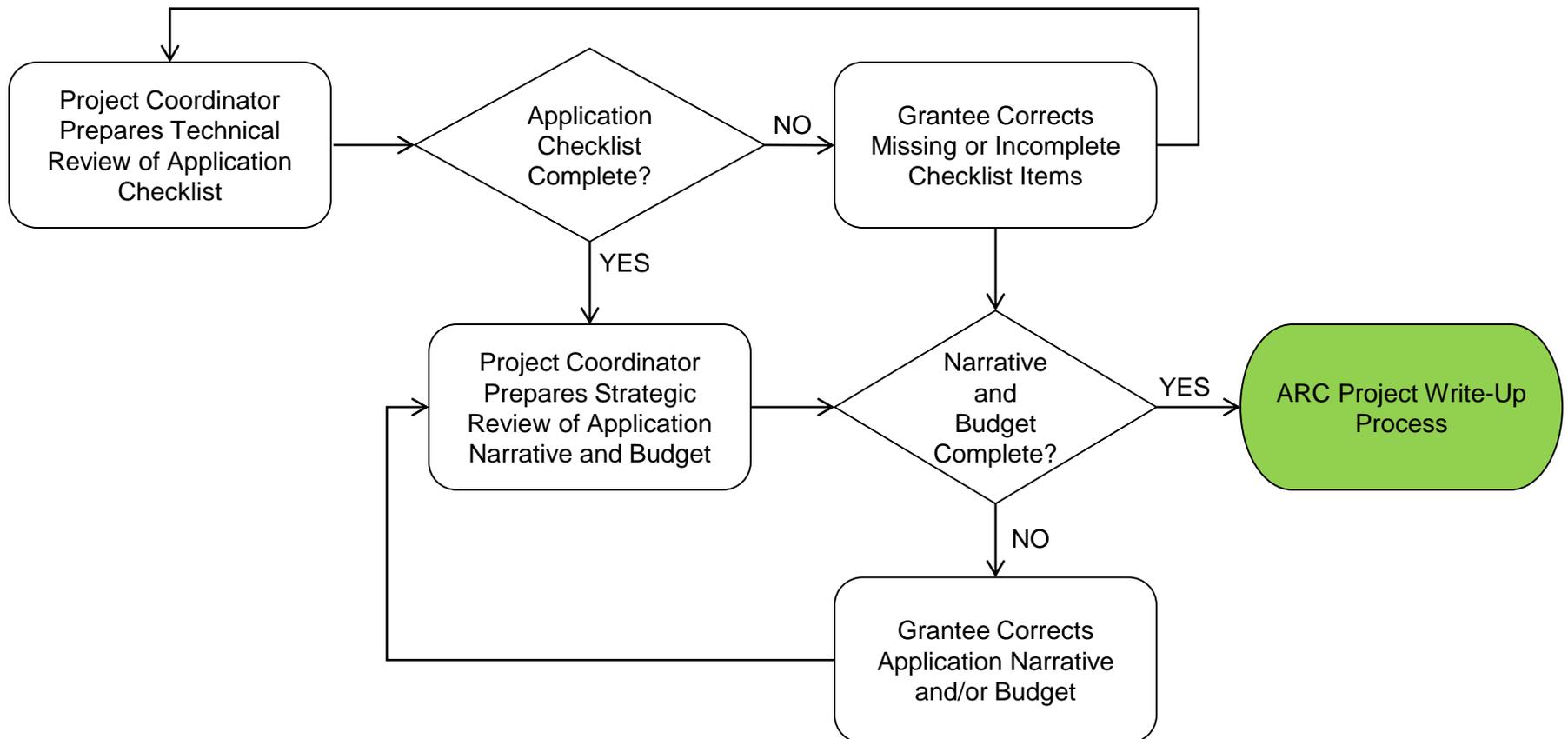
ARC Grant Application SOPs: State/POWER Approval Process



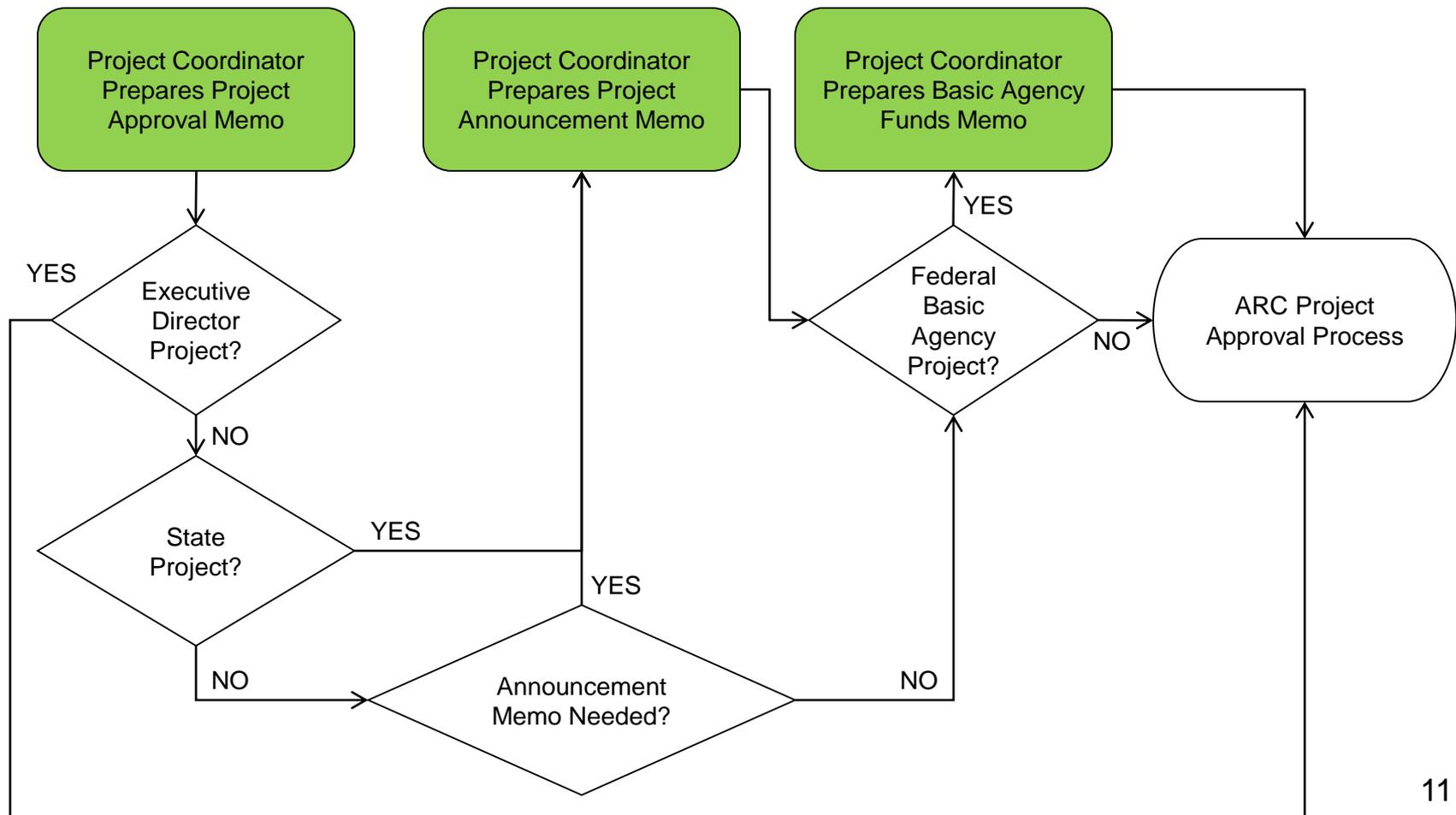
ARC Grant Application SOPs: ARC Project Control Process



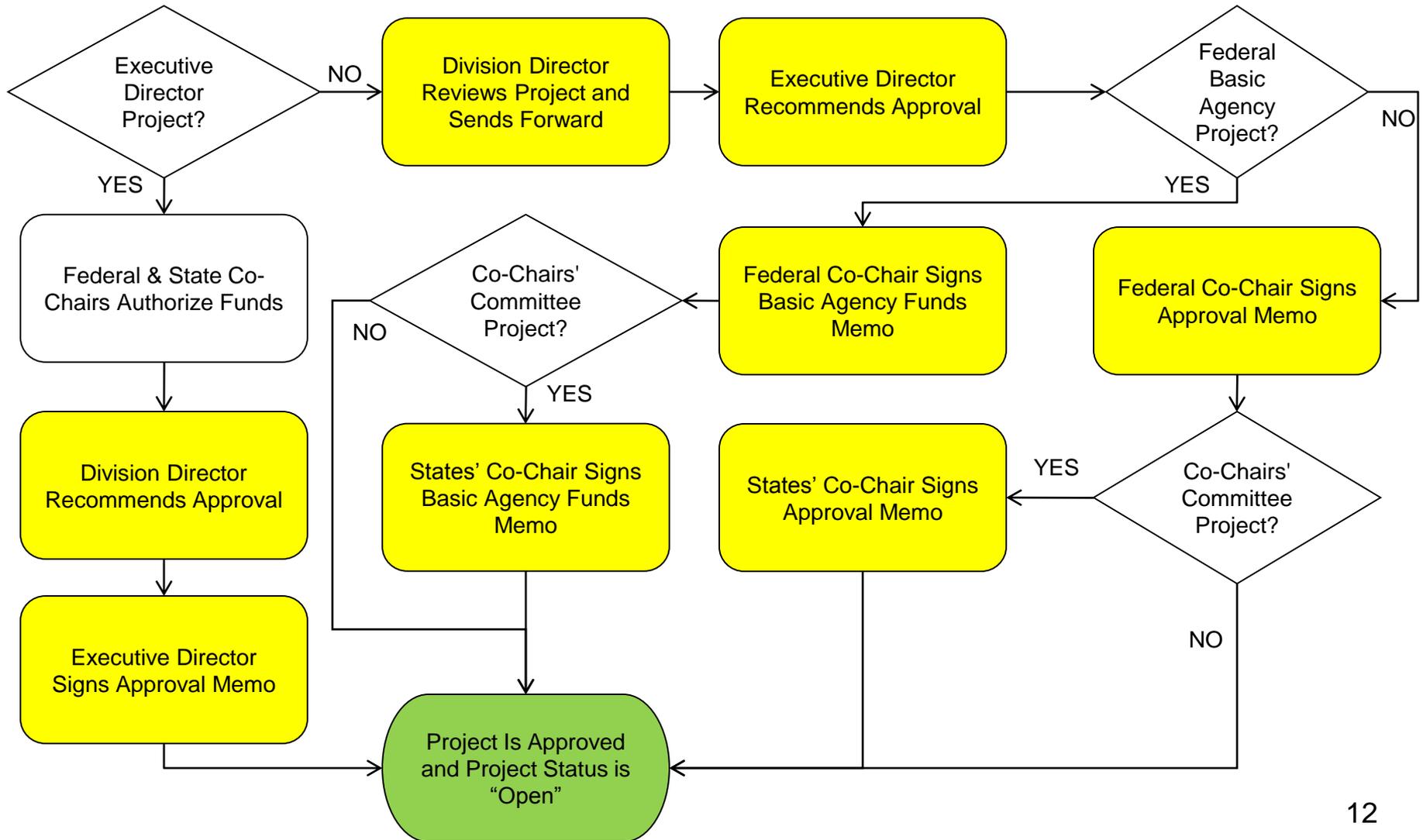
ARC Grant Award SOPs: ARC Project Review Process



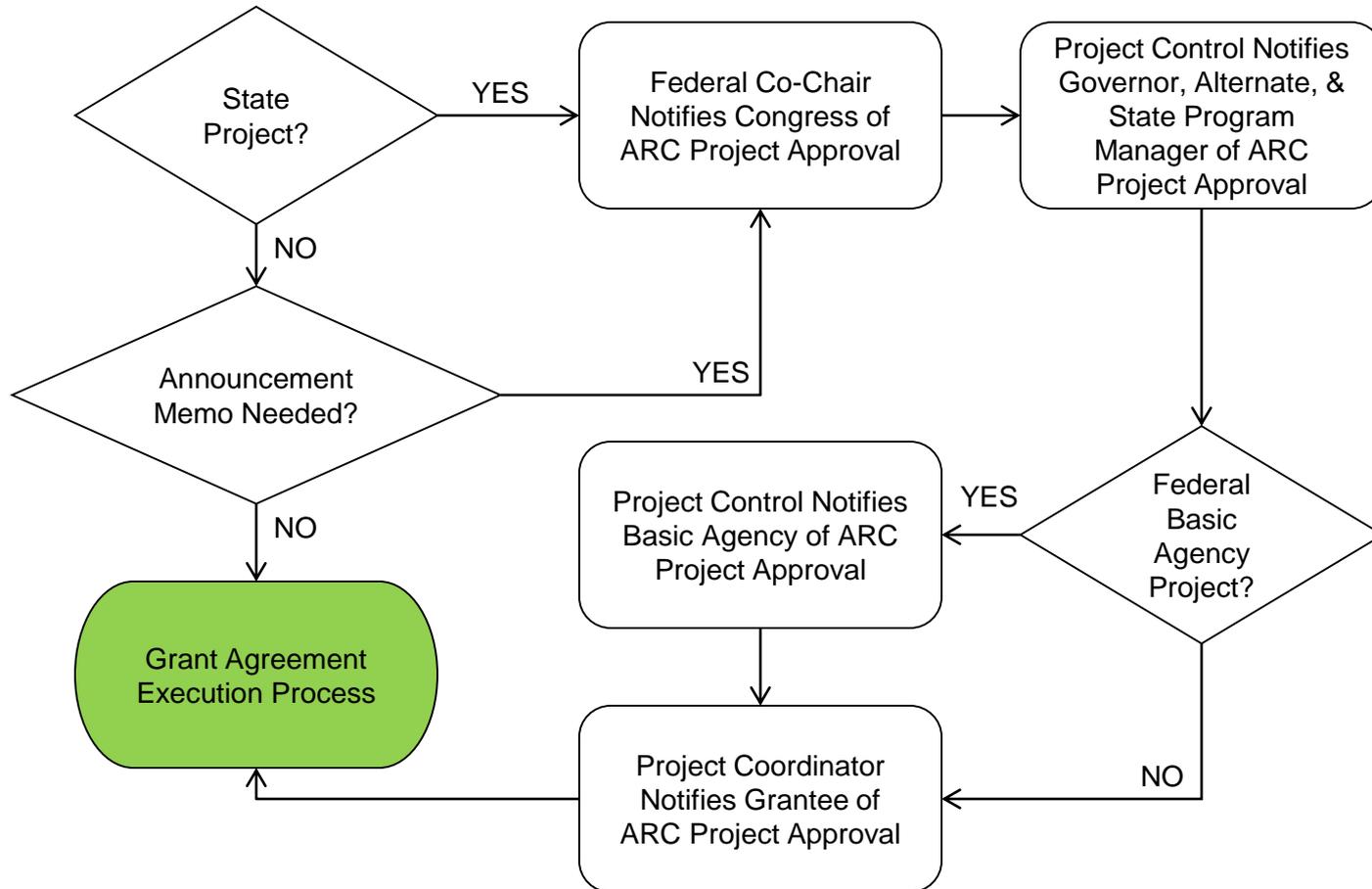
ARC Grant Award SOPs: ARC Project Write-Up Process



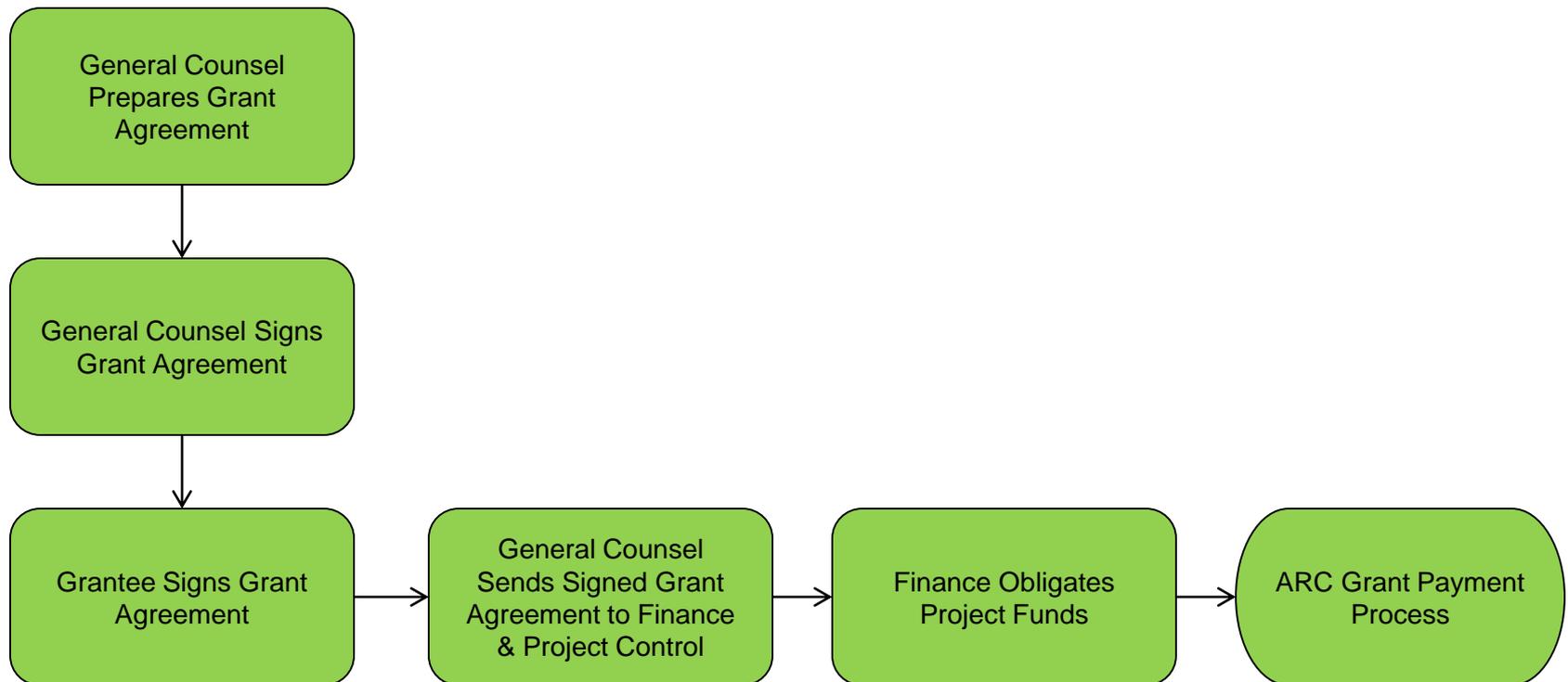
ARC Grant Award SOPs: ARC Project Approval Process



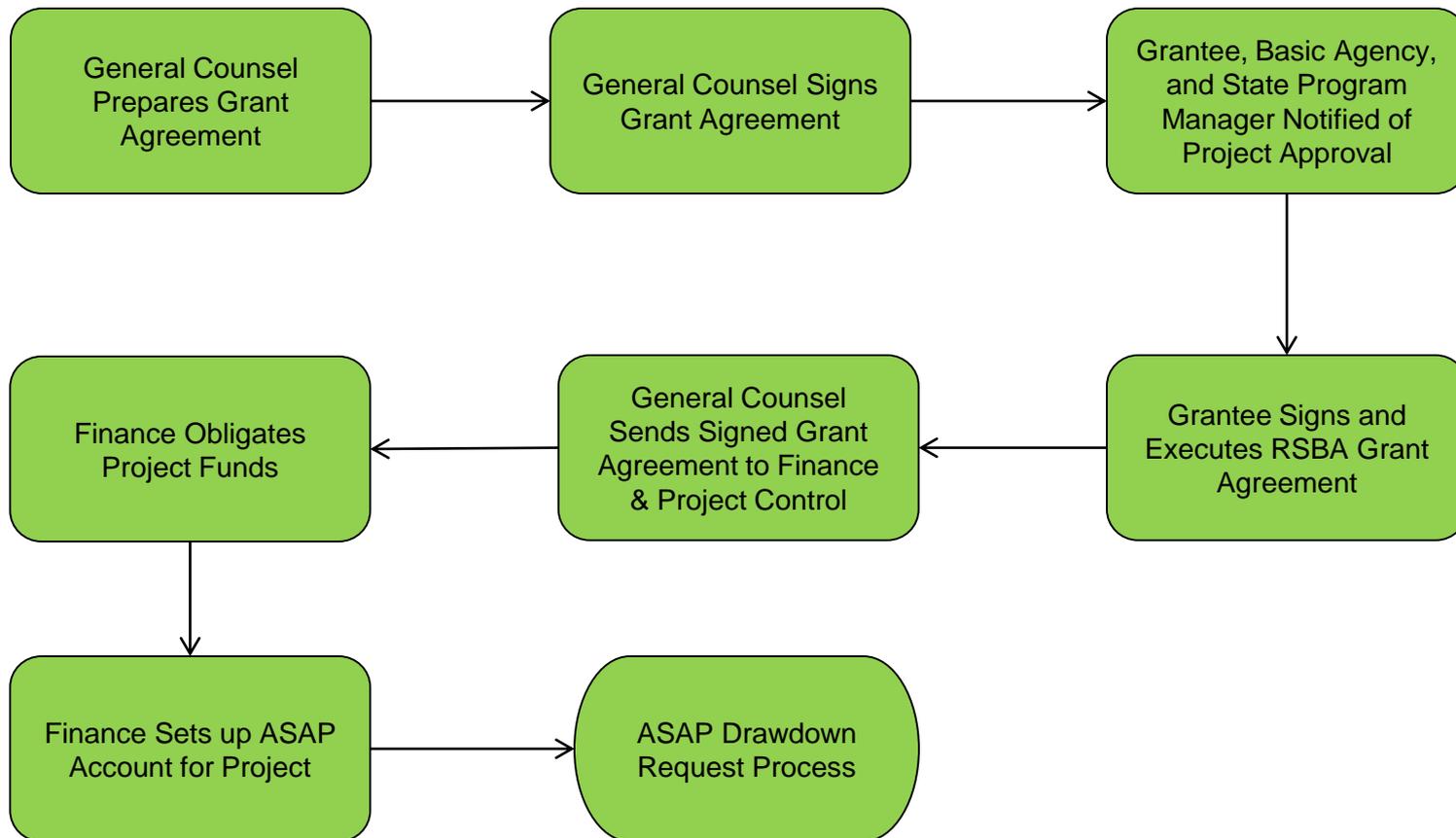
ARC Grant Award SOPs: Approval Notification Process



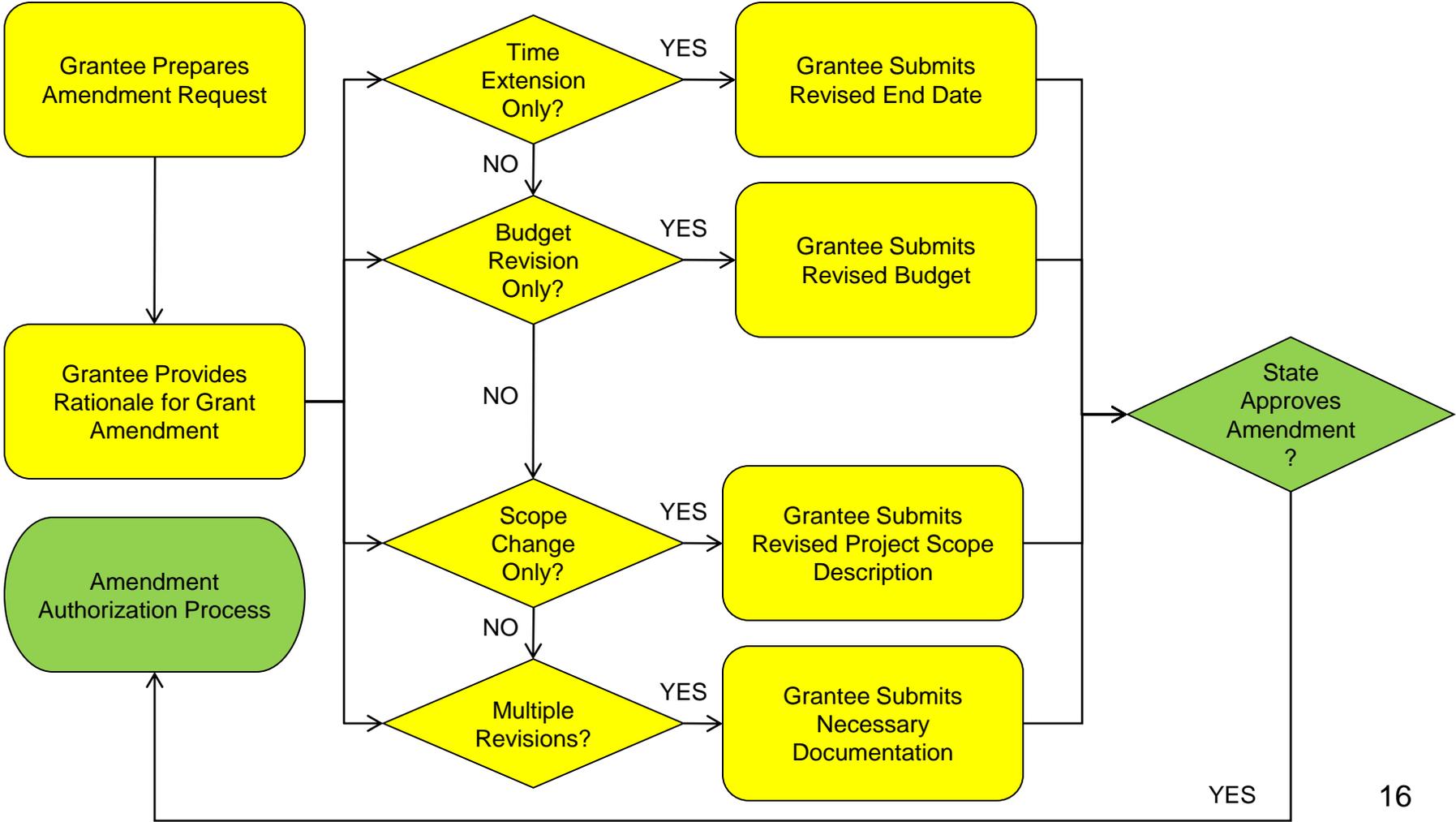
ARC Grant Award SOPs: ARC Grant Agreement Execution Process



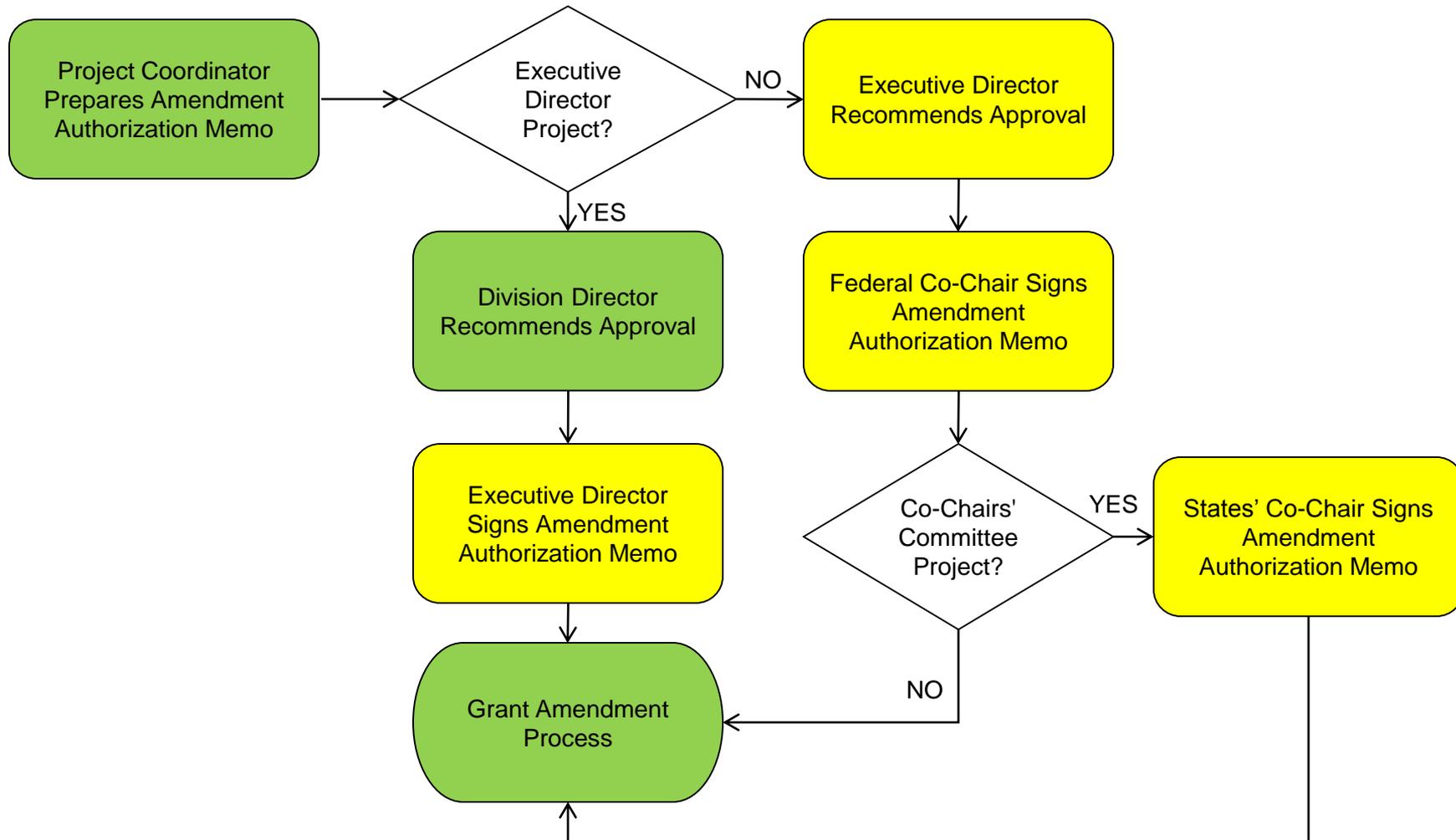
RSBA (Registered State Basic Agency) Grant Agreement Execution Process



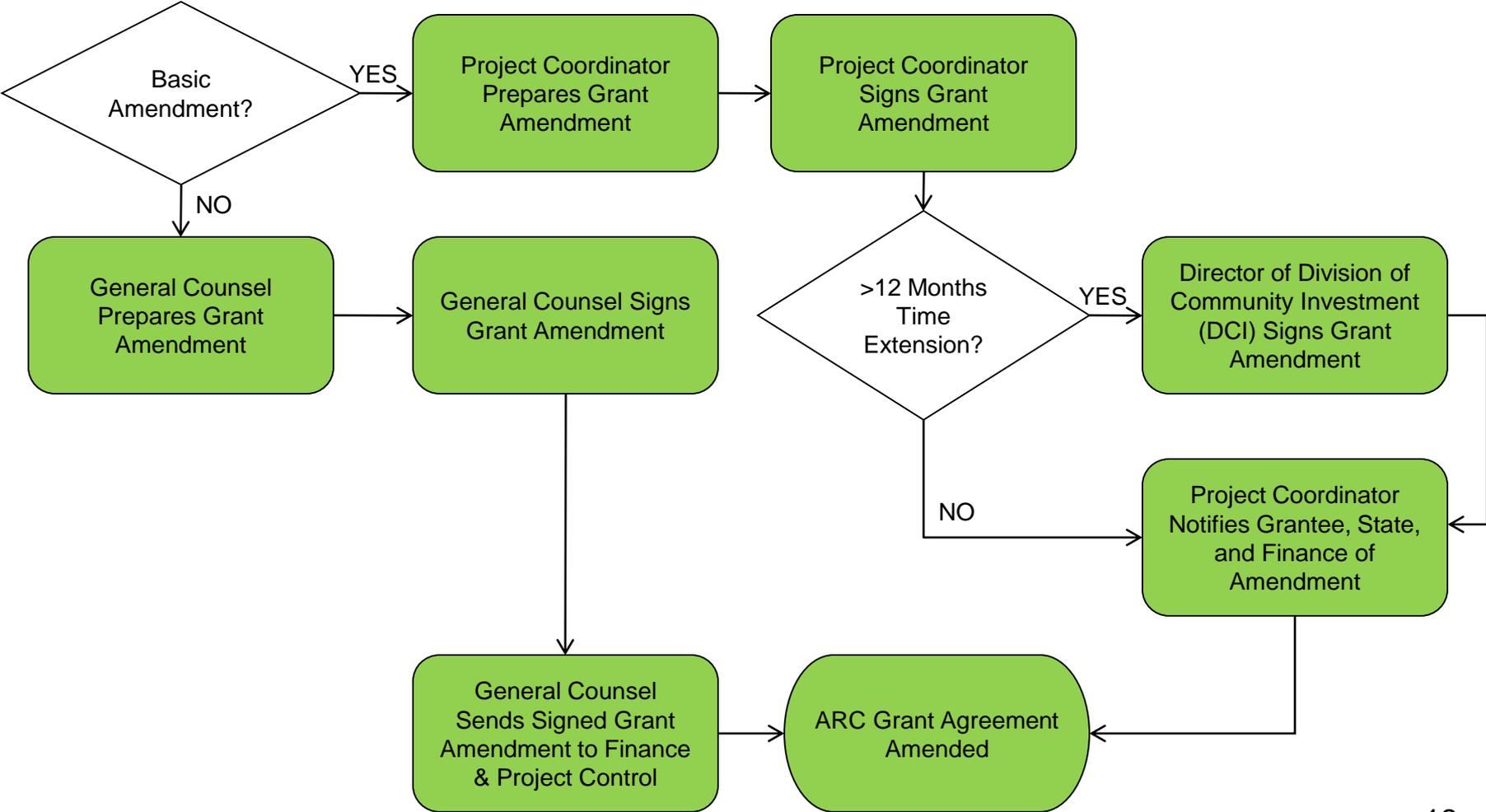
ARC Grant Amendment SOPs: Amendment Request Process



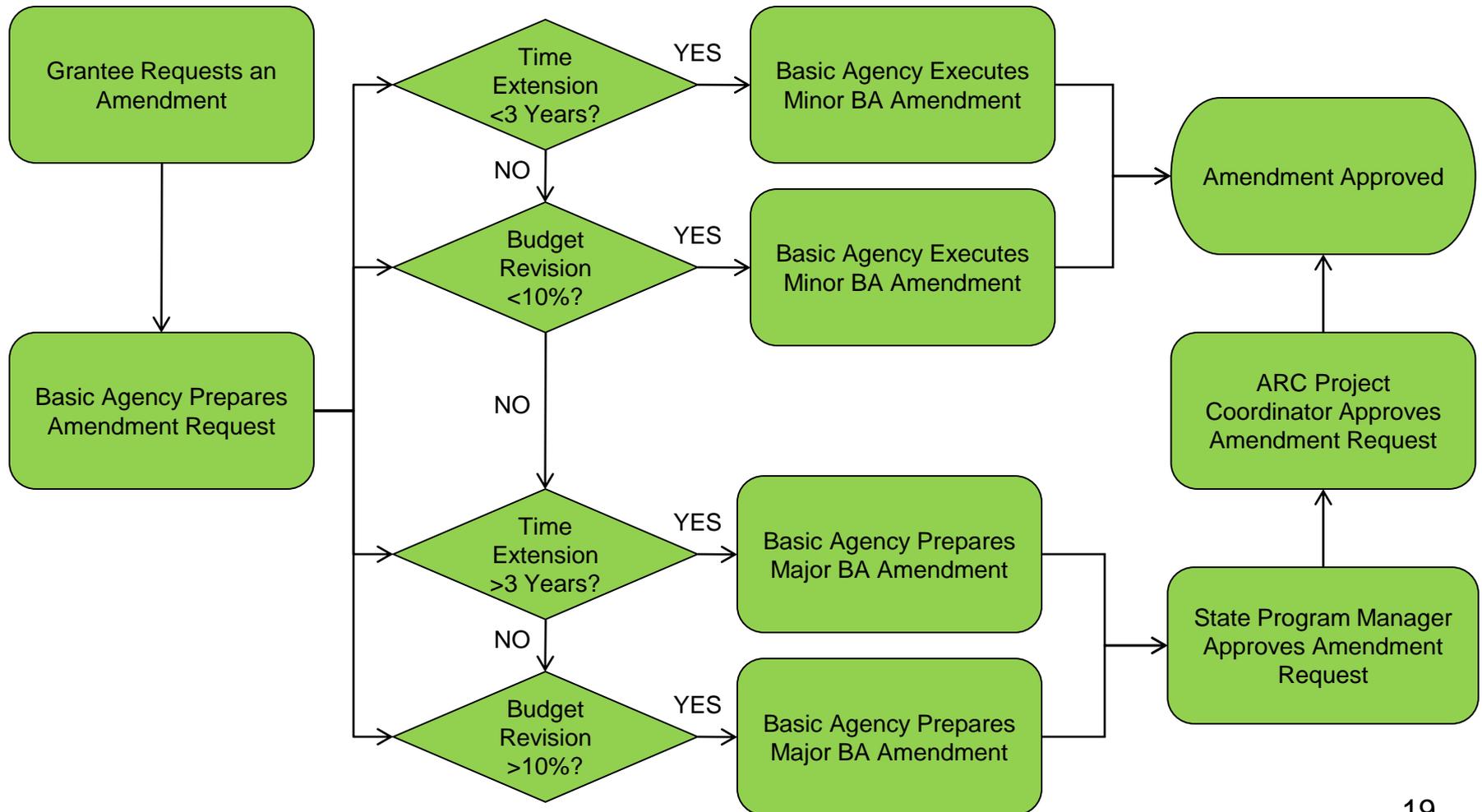
ARC Grant Amendment SOPs: Amendment Authorization Process



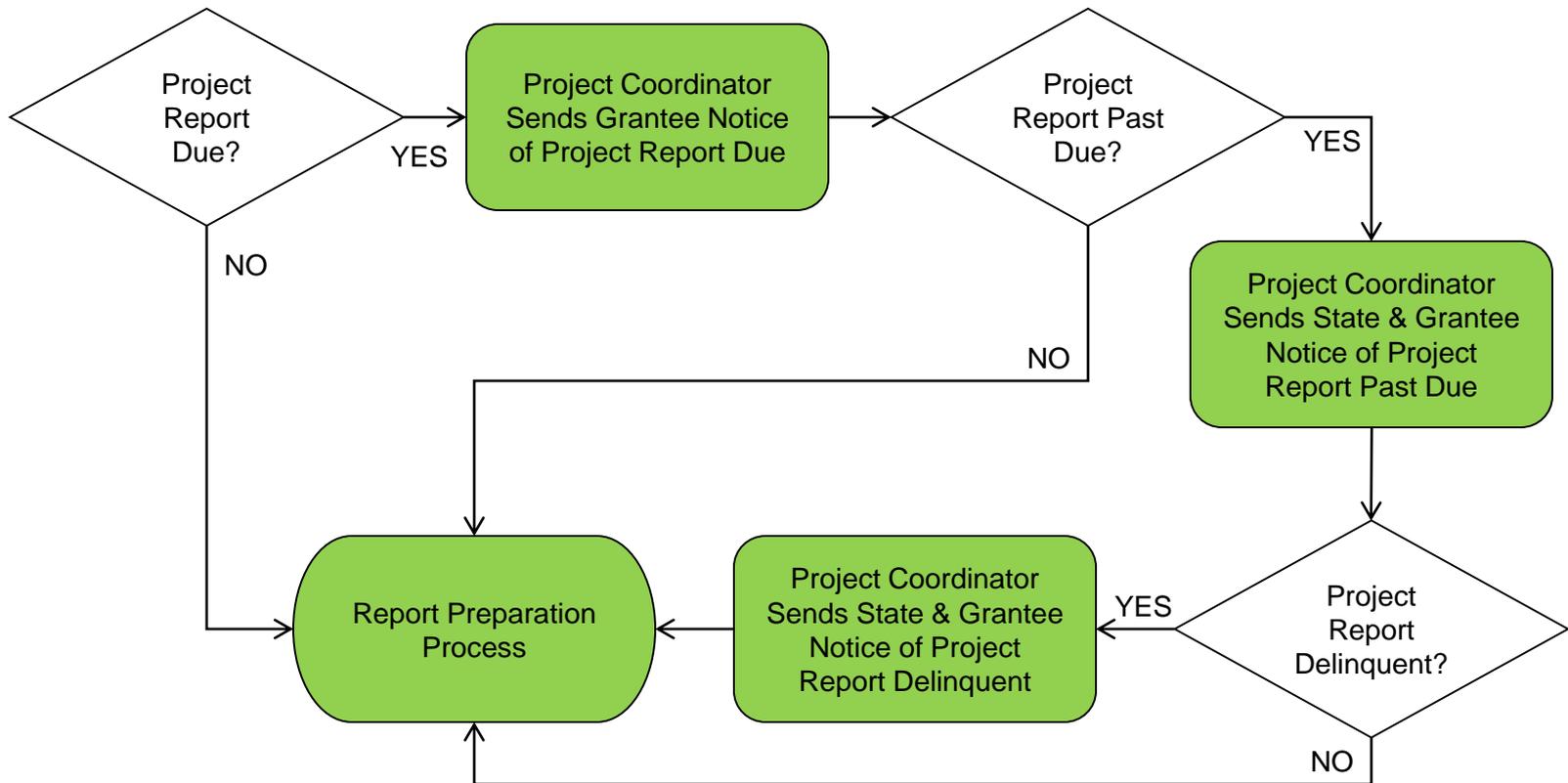
ARC Grant Amendment SOPs: Grant Amendment Process



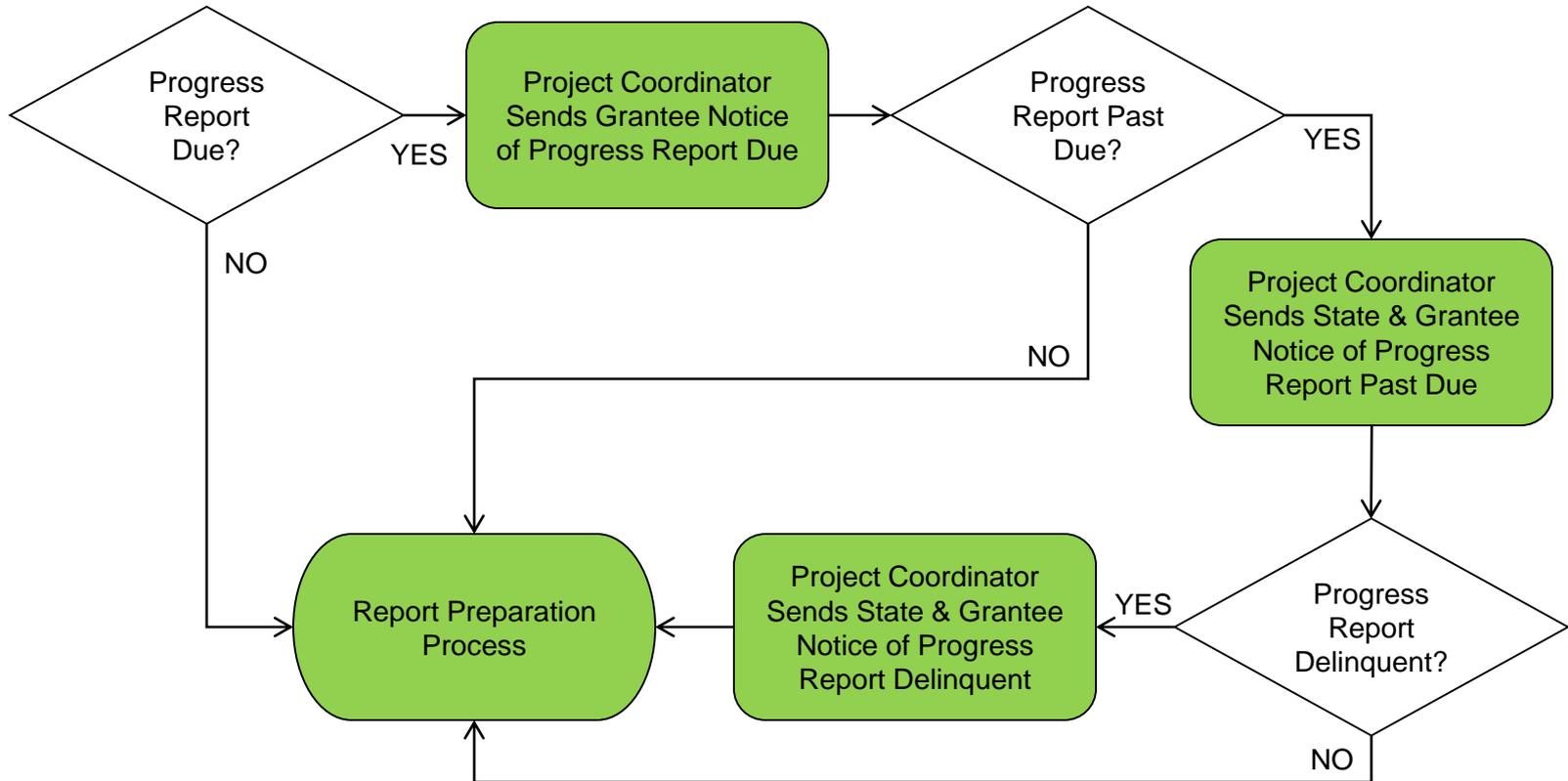
BA (Basic Agency) Amendment Approval Process



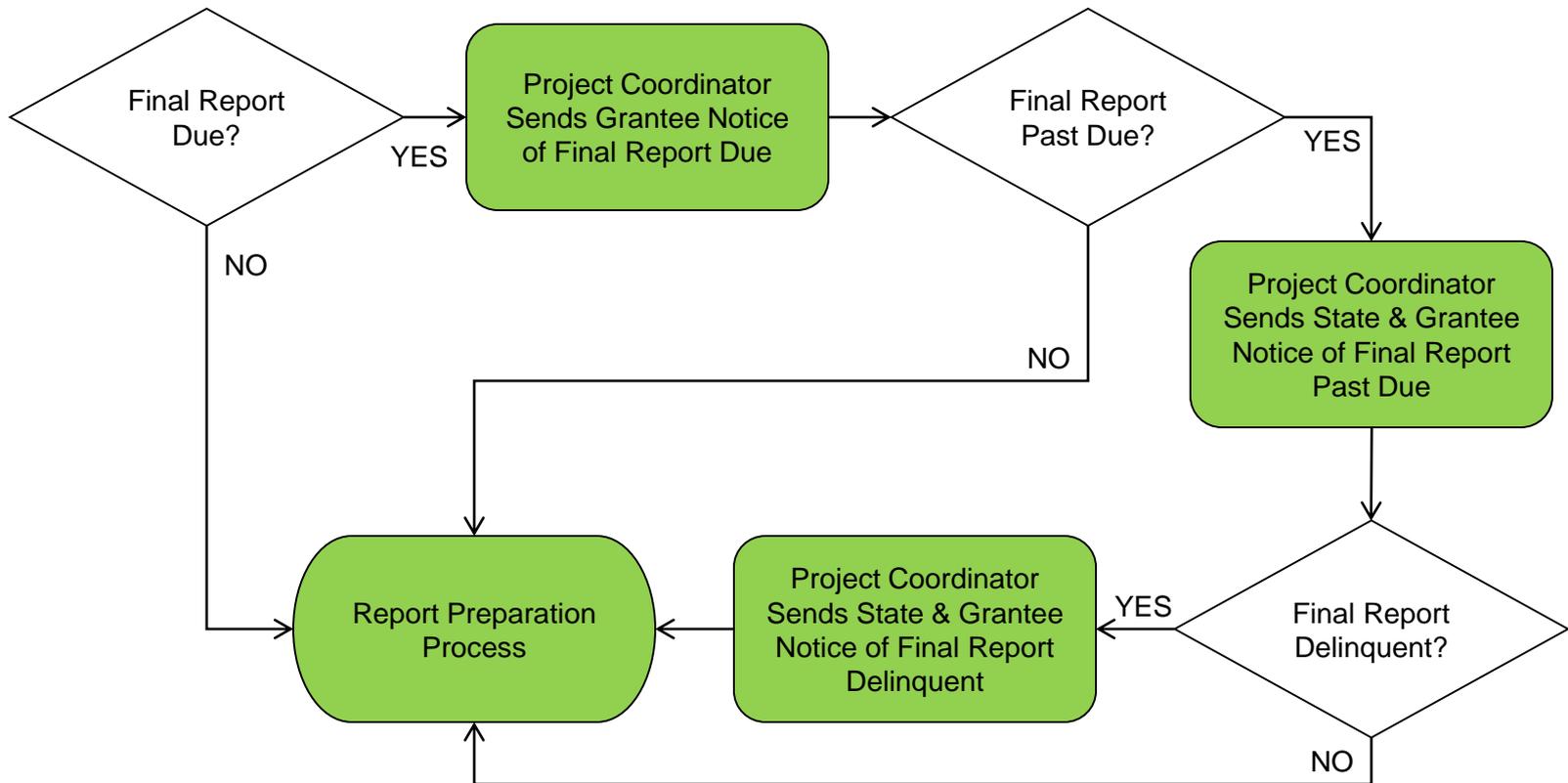
ARC Grant Reporting SOPs: Report Notification Process



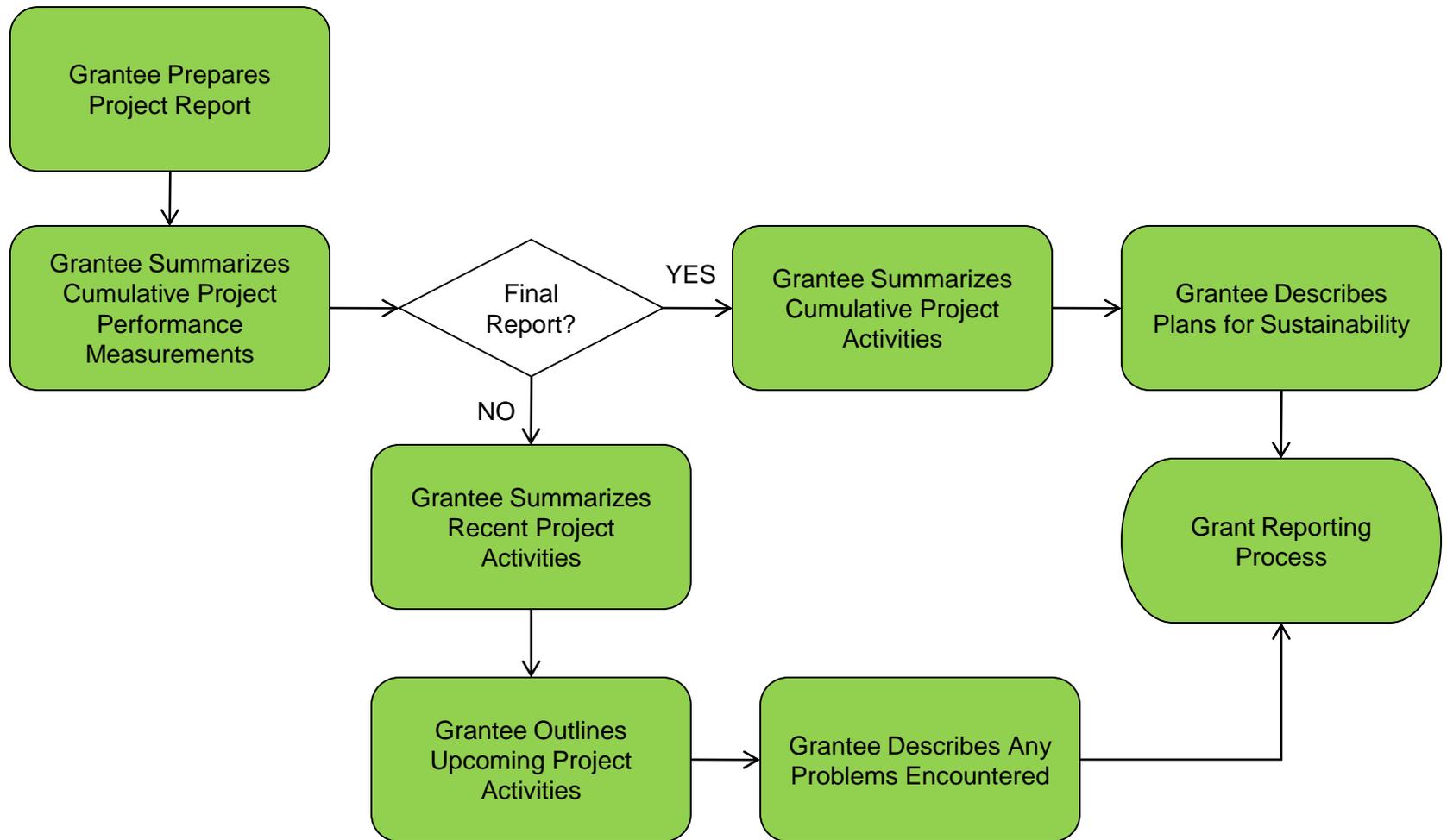
Report Notification Process: Interim Report Notification



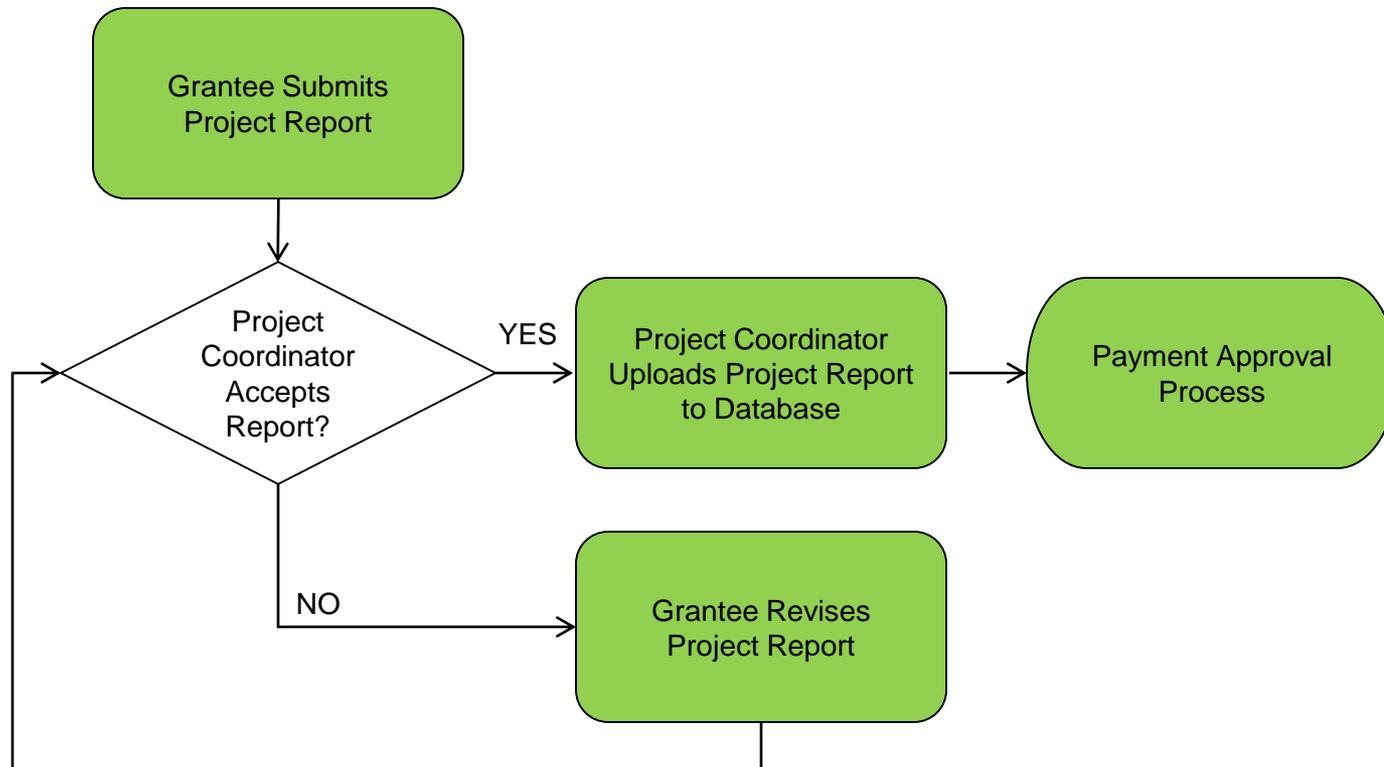
Report Notification Process: Final Report Notification



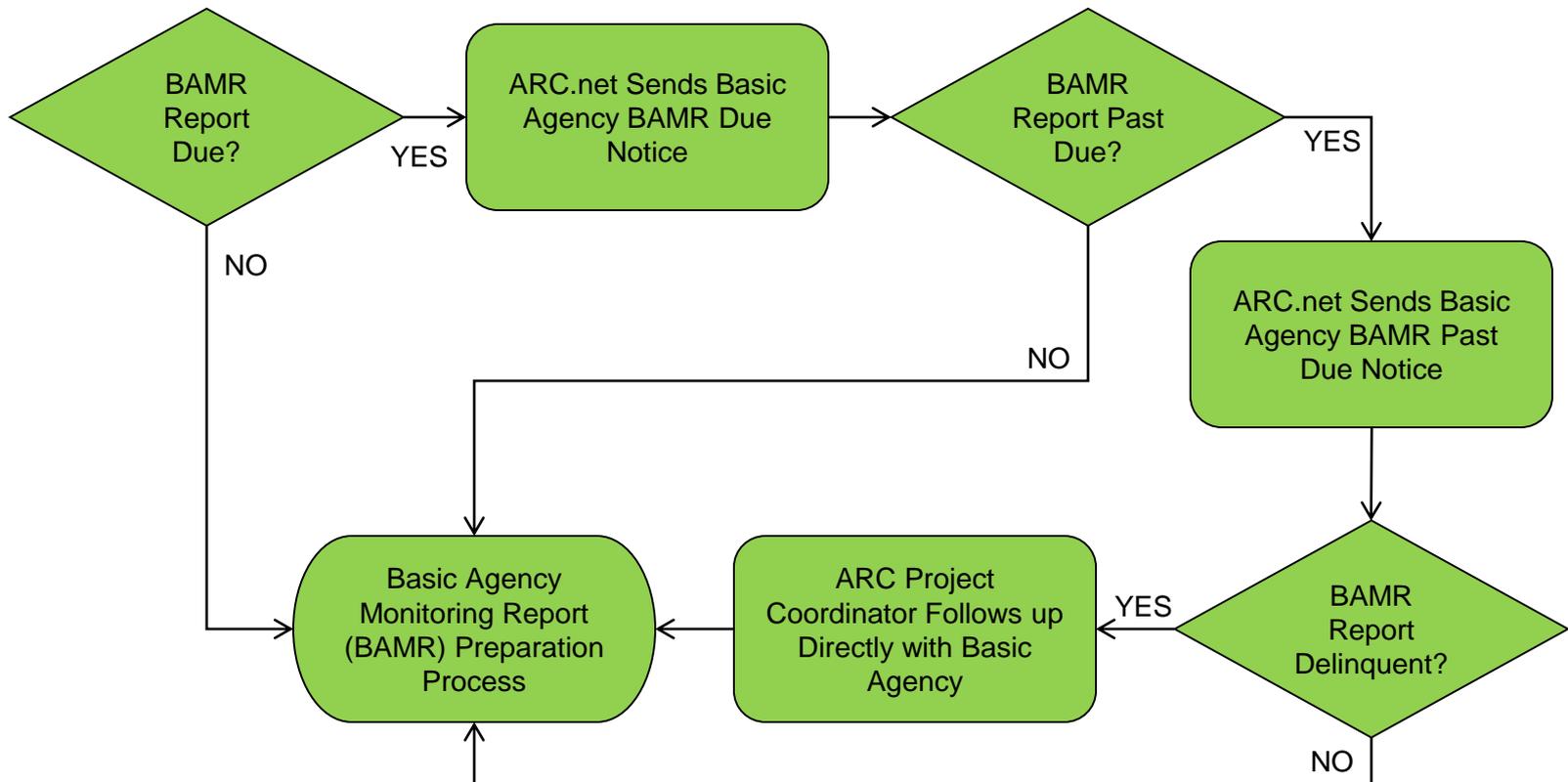
ARC Grant Reporting SOPs: Report Preparation Process



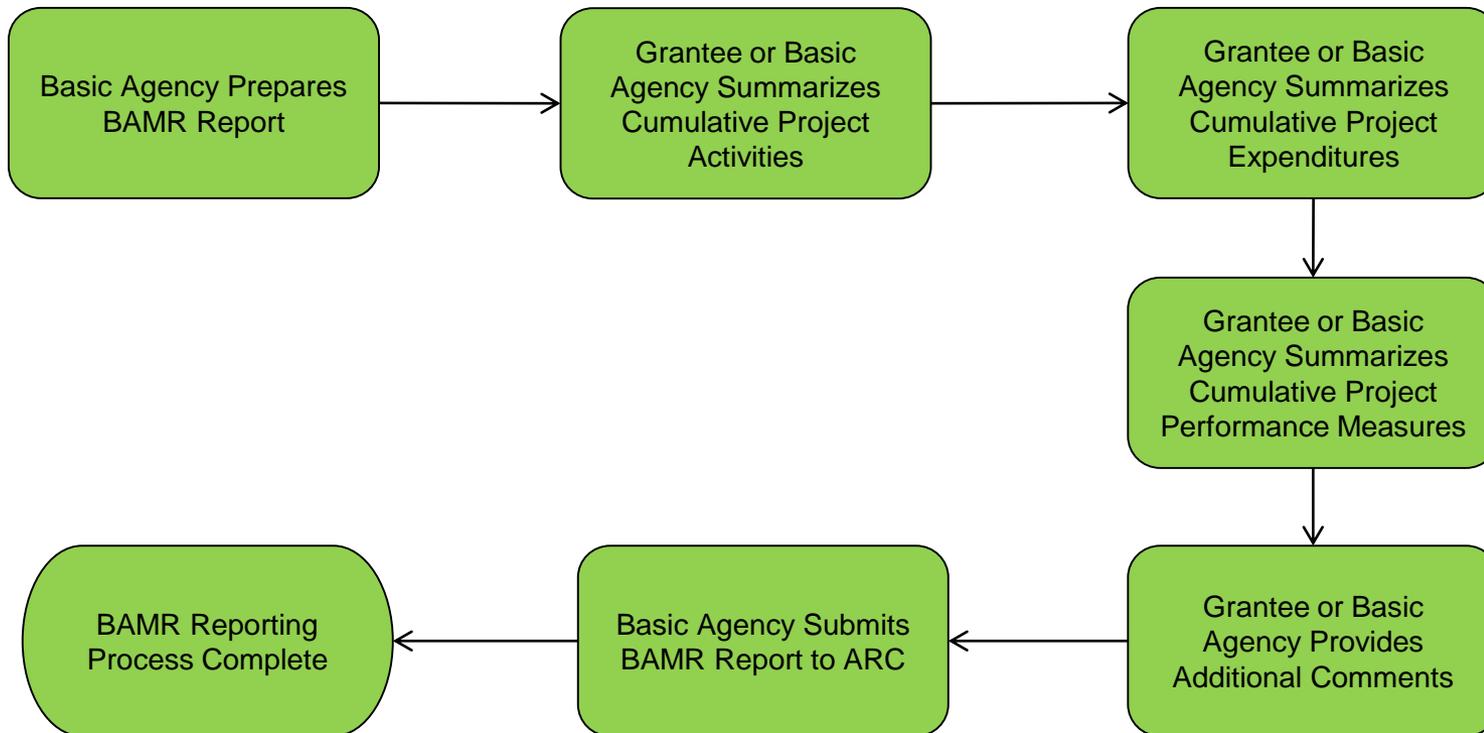
ARC Grant Reporting SOPs: Grant Reporting Process



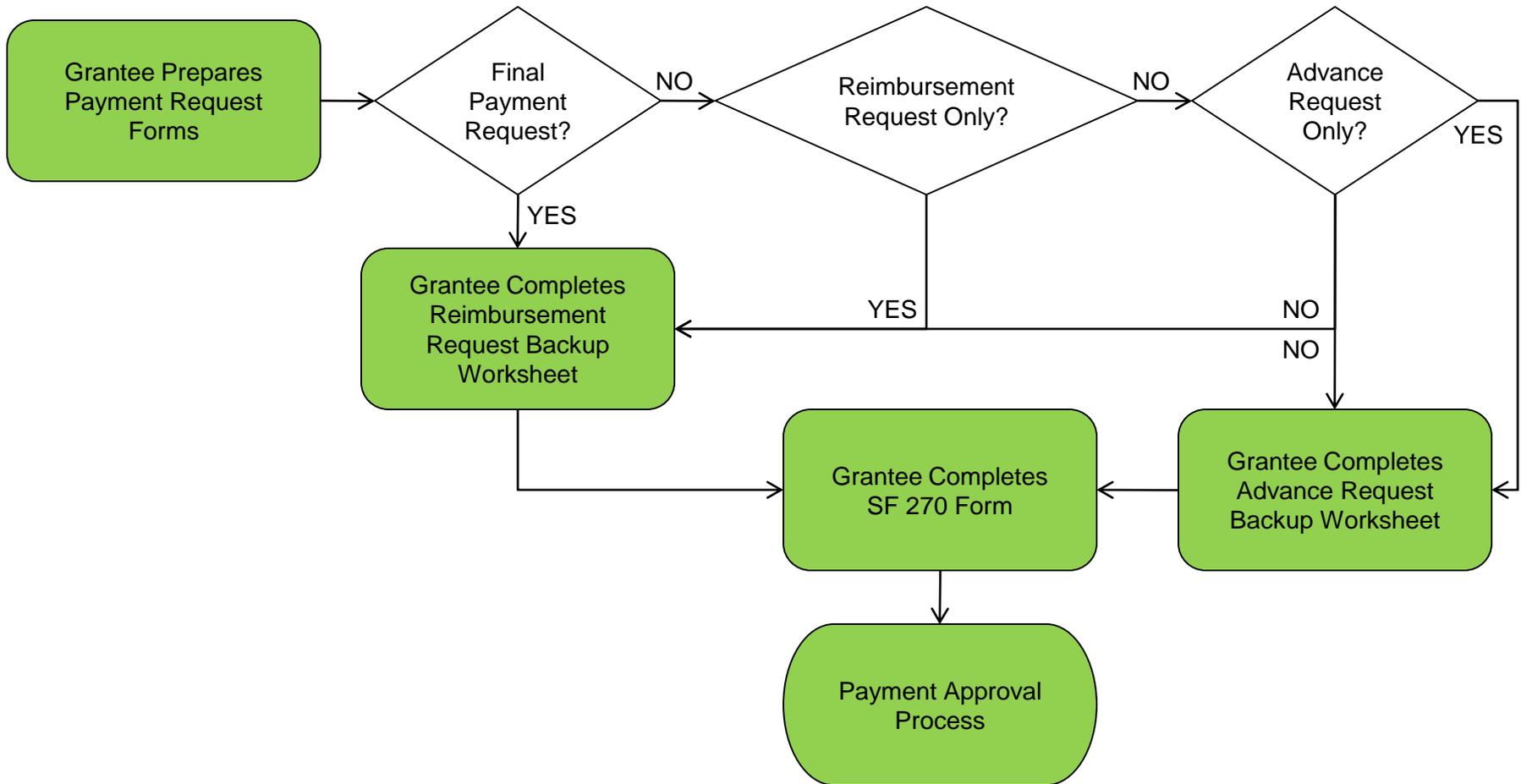
Basic Agency Monitoring Report (BAMR) Notification Process



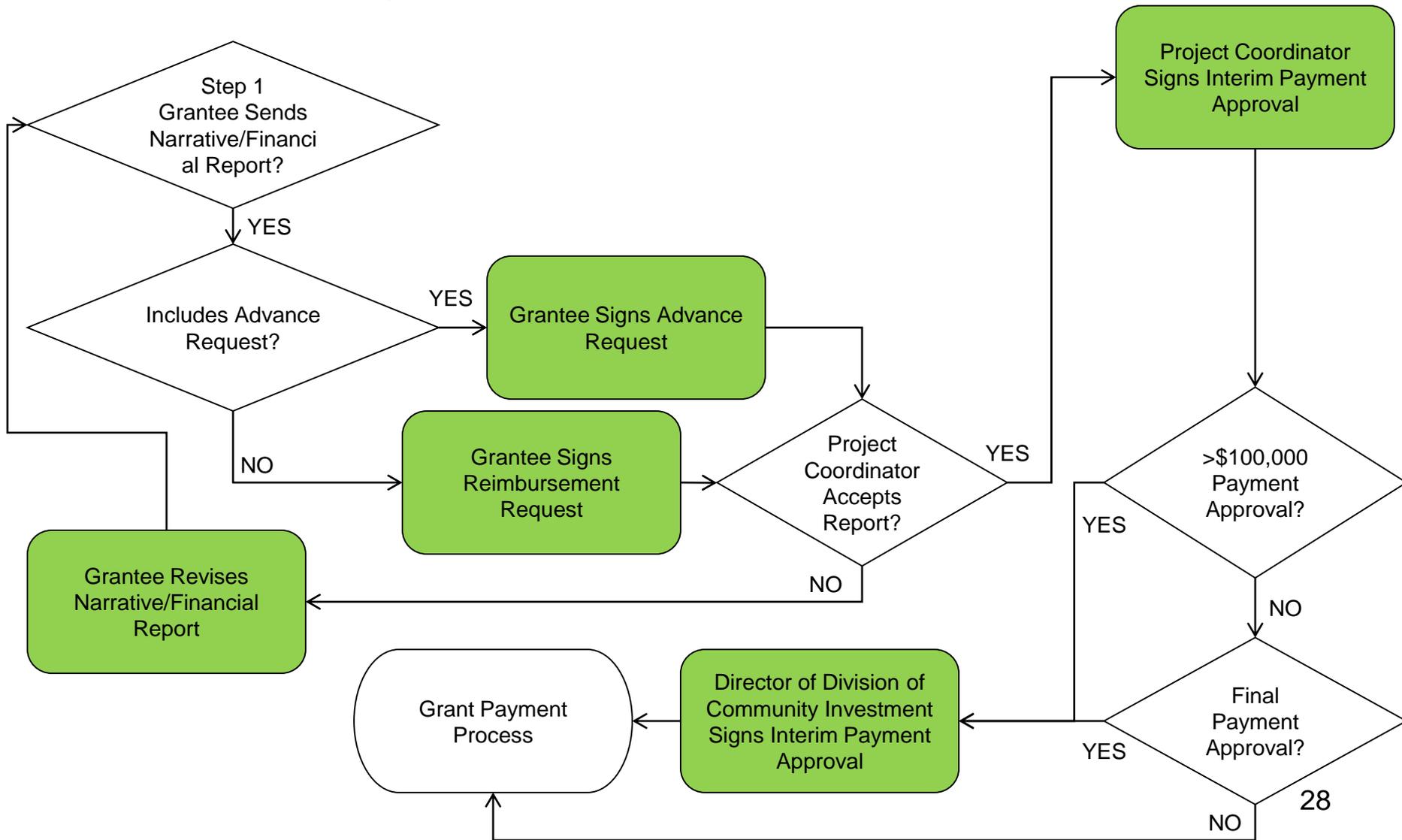
BAMR Report Preparation Process



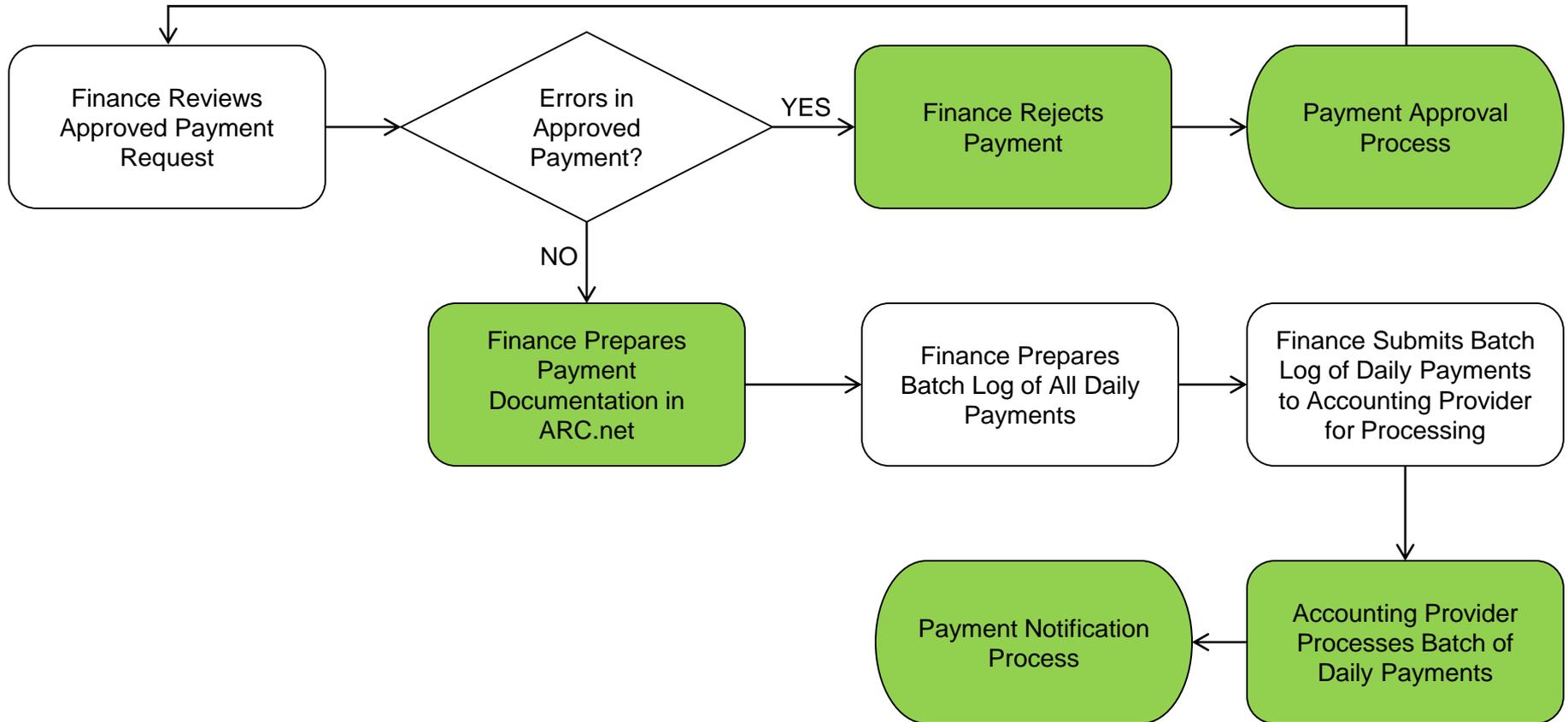
ARC Grant Payment SOPs: Payment Request Process



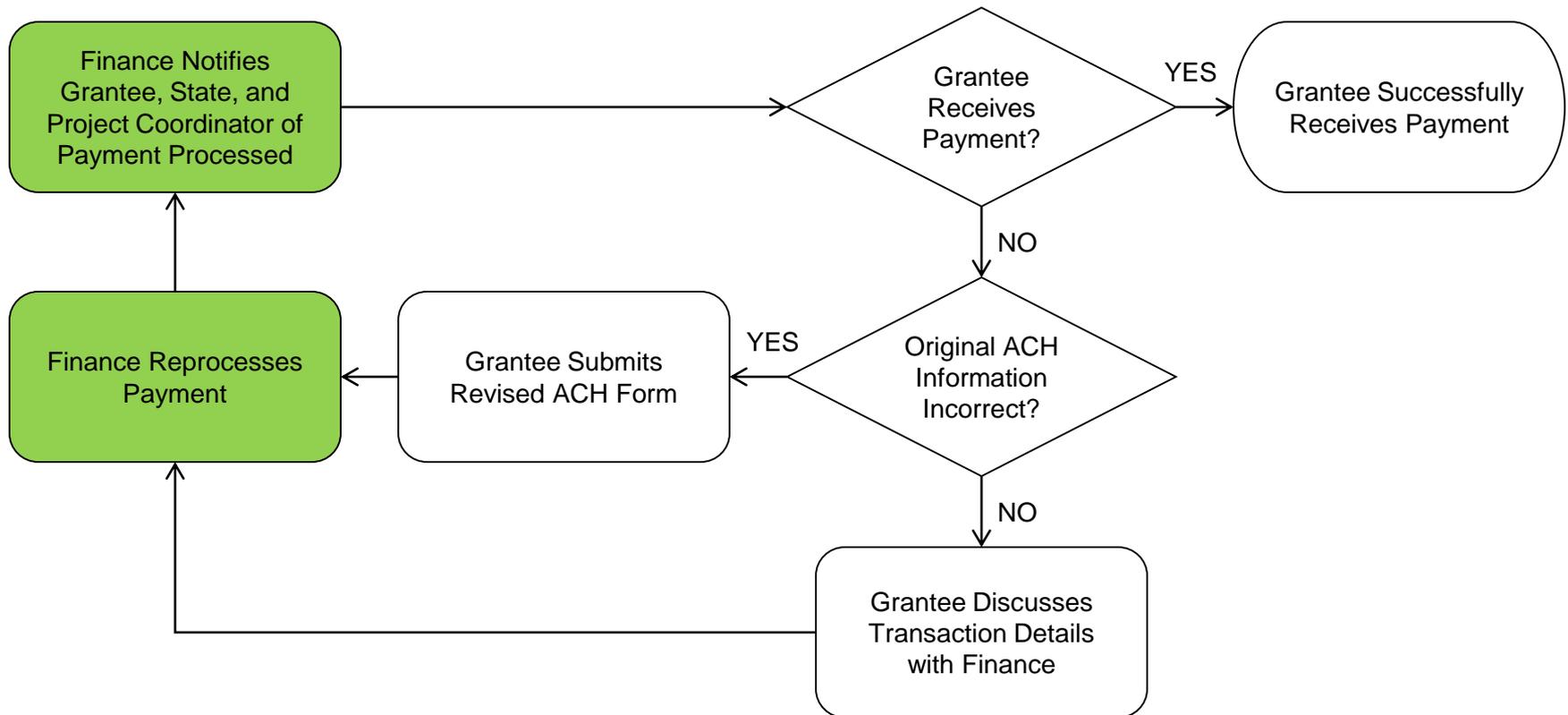
ARC Grant Payment SOPs: Payment Approval Process



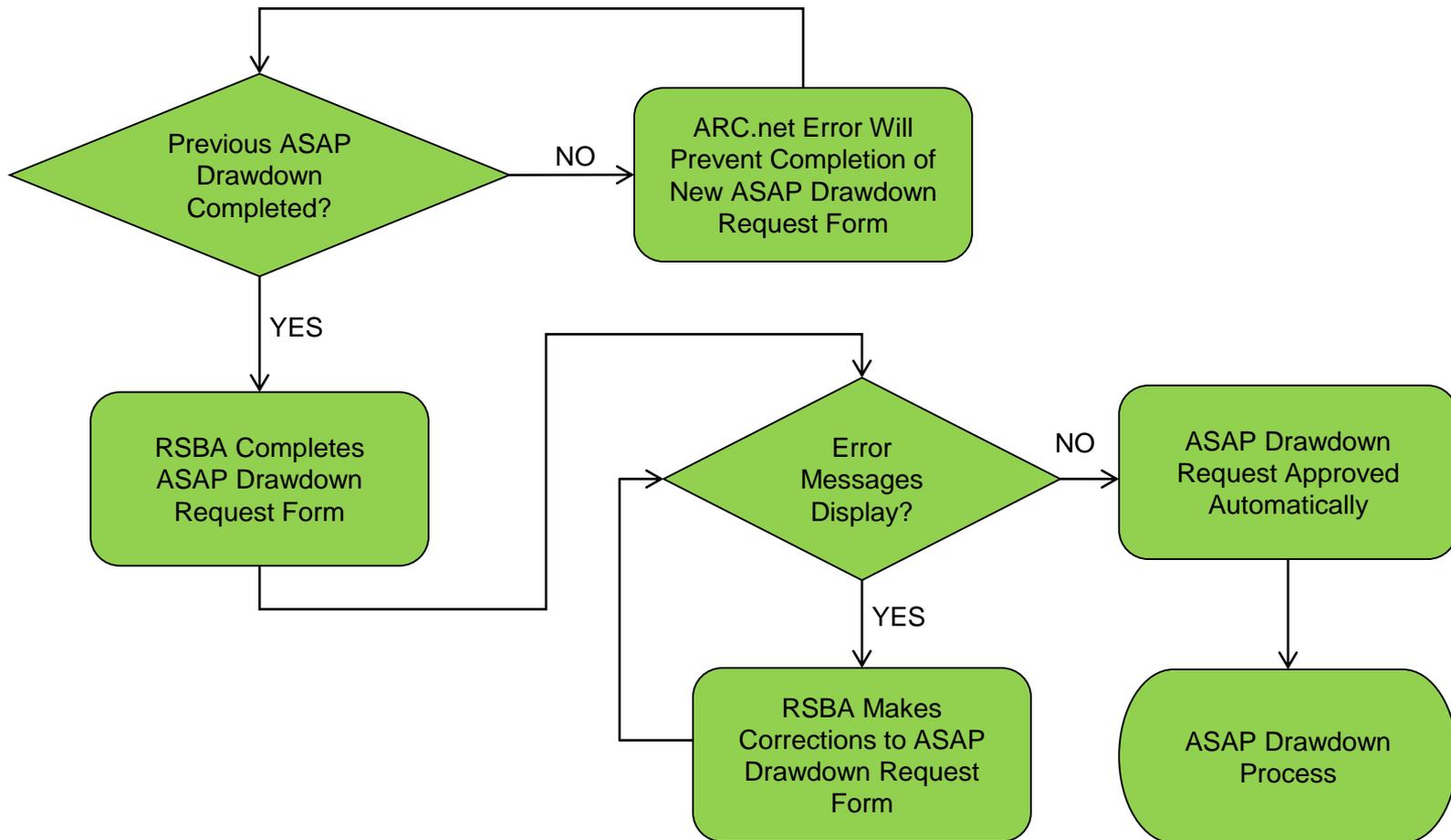
ARC Grant Payment SOPs: Grant Payment Process



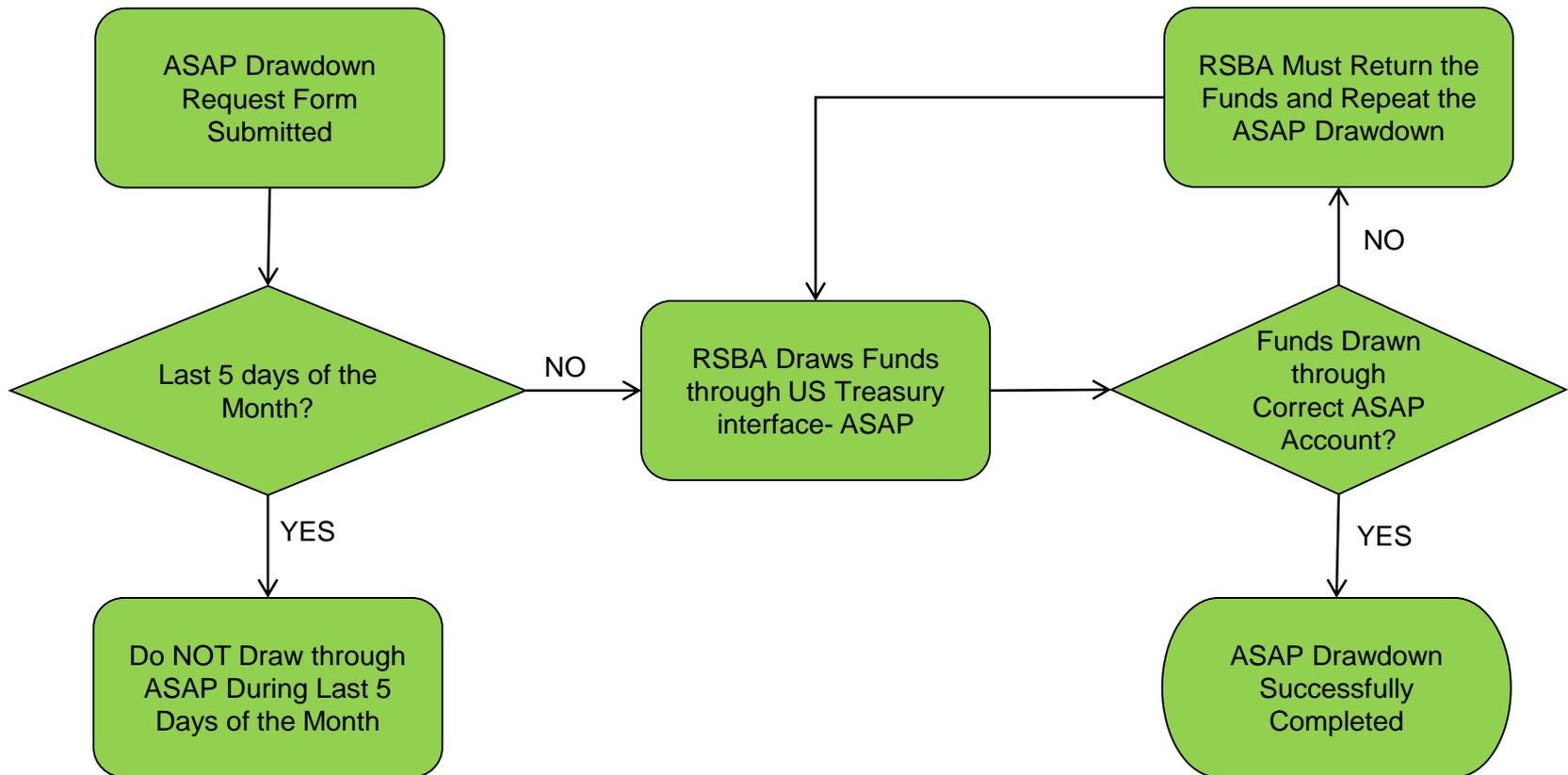
ARC Grant Payment SOPs: Payment Notification Process



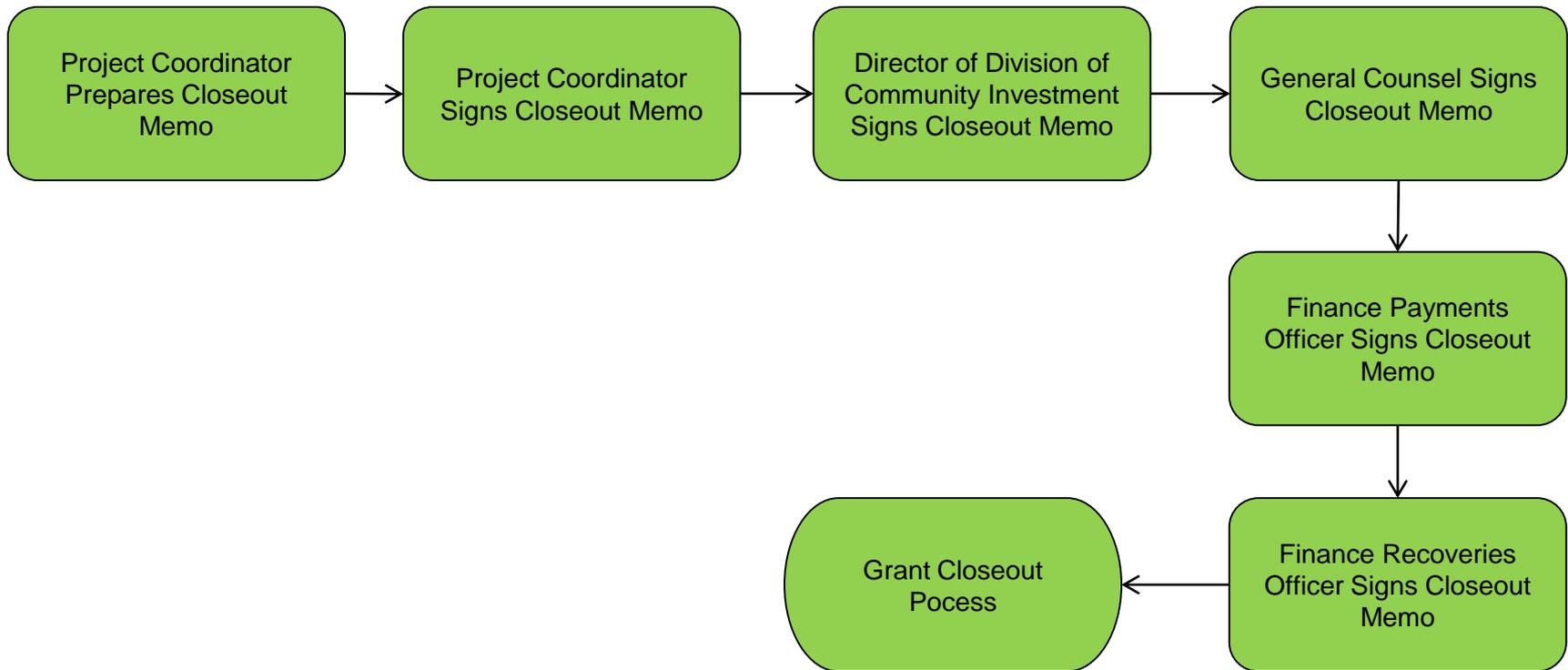
ASAP Drawdown Request Process



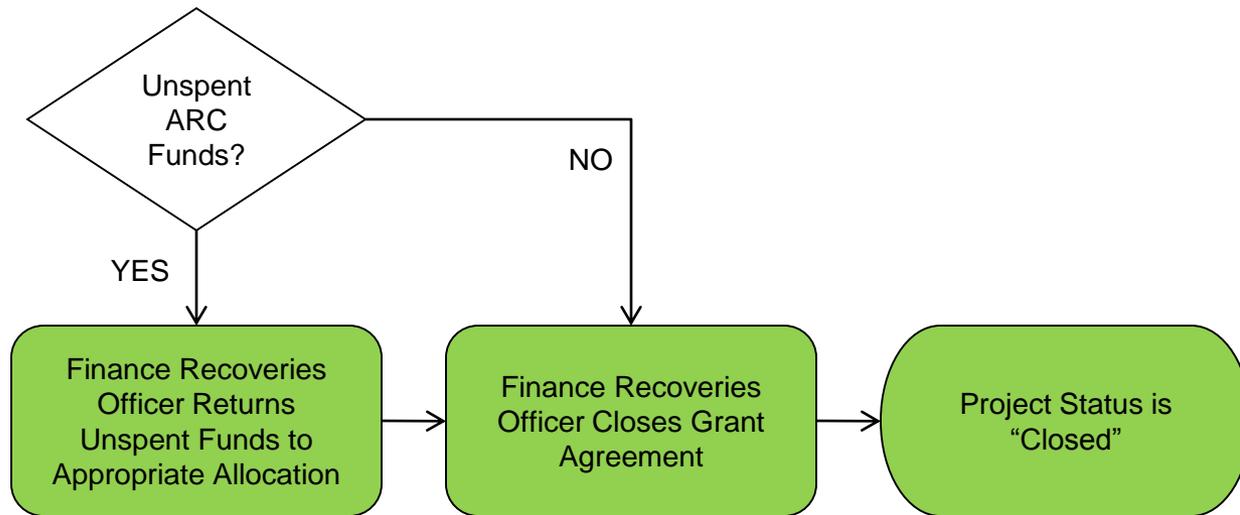
ASAP Drawdown Process



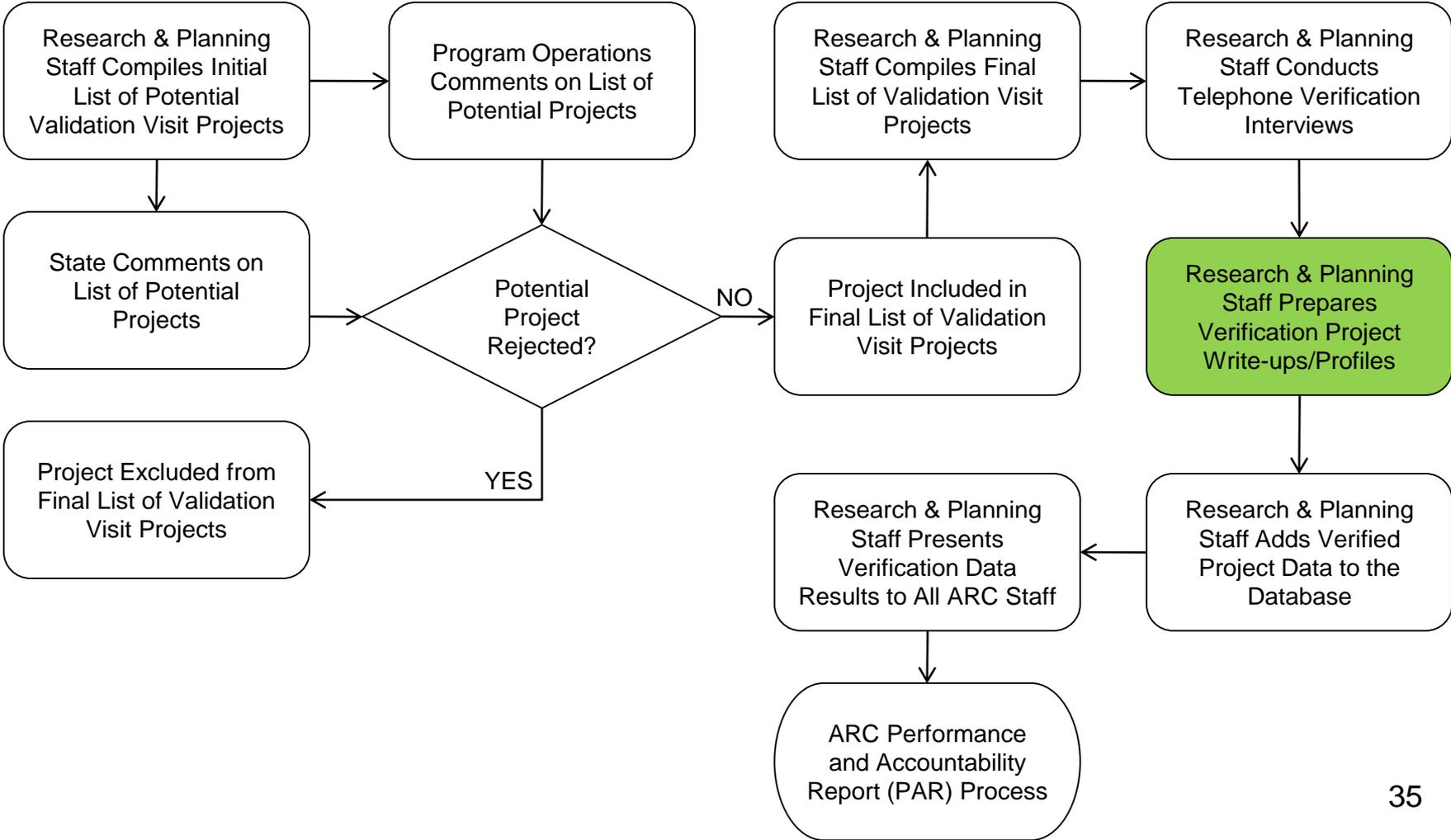
ARC Grant Closeout SOPs: Closeout Authorization Process



ARC Grant Closeout SOPs: Grant Closeout Process



ARC Grant Evaluation SOPs: Performance Validation Process



ARC Grant Evaluation SOPs: Performance Evaluation Process



ARC Grant Evaluation SOPs: Internal Project Auditing Process

