

Post Sandy Planning Assistance Grant

Program Description and Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of the Post Sandy Planning Assistance Grant Program (the “Program”) is to support long range planning for community redevelopment in the municipalities and counties sustaining damage from Superstorm Sandy. Due to the damage caused by the storm, many New Jersey municipalities and counties face a myriad of recovery challenges. Among them is the need for planning support to develop community recovery plans that strategically address the issues that now confront them. In furtherance of its mission to provide local government officials with the tools needed to efficiently manage municipal operations, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has created a local planning assistance program that will supplement the ongoing efforts of storm-impacted local and county governments to rebuild and revitalize.

Program Overview

The Program will offer grants to municipalities and counties to hire American Institute of Certified Planners /New Jersey Board of Professional Planners (AICP/PP) licensed planners to address conditions created or exacerbated by the storm, identify approaches to rebuilding that will be more resistant to damage from future storm events, and encourage sustainable economic growth.

Initially, the Department is allocating \$5 million in Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds to effectuate the purposes of the program. Funding will be available to the counties of Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Union and all municipalities within those counties that have sustained a ratable loss attributable to Superstorm Sandy of at least 1% or \$1 million and demonstrate how assistance will lead to greater community resilience. Broader eligibility criteria may be established to allow additional local governments to participate if a clear need exists.

Program Management

The Program will be administered by the DCA’s Office of Local Planning Services (LPS), which maintains a staff of planners licensed by both the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and the New Jersey Board of Professional Planners (PP). LPS staff will review grant applications and assess the substance and cost - of the requests. Applicants may be asked to present additional information or revise the scope of their application. Grants will be awarded on a rolling basis following the acceptance of an application for one or more eligible grant activities that adequately describes the need and purpose for the request. All funded projects must be overseen by an AICP/PP licensed planner. Applicants may also ask that LPS staff provide (free of charge) assistance once a grant application has been initiated.

Eligible Grant Activities

Eligible grant activities and maximum awards are listed below. An applicant must have completed a practical Strategic Recovery Planning Report (described below) before being eligible to receive other Post Sandy Planning Assistance. Applicants who do not have a Strategic Recovery Planning Report (or a report of comparable content) should apply for a grant to create a Strategic Recovery Planning Report (and/or for funding to prepare a Request for Proposal) before applying for other eligible grant activities. Combined requests for multiple eligible grant activities are also acceptable, and local government entities may file joint applications when planning grant activities are regional in nature.

Strategic Recovery Planning Report

Purpose: To engage professional planners to evaluate the impacts of the disaster on relevant community features. The evaluation can be broad or narrow but should focus on planning goals, strategies, and priorities leading to actions that are most urgently needed for public safety and economic recovery. The Strategic Recovery Planning Report should serve as a guide for actions taken henceforth not only to recover from the effects of Superstorm Sandy but also to reduce vulnerabilities to future disasters. All reports must contain detailed descriptions of the projects proposed, planned implementation dates, and proposed funding sources for such projects.

Maximum Grant Award: \$30,000

Preparation of Requests for Proposals

Purpose: To prepare Request for Proposals (RFP) for soliciting professional firms to undertake planning activities funded by the Post Sandy Planning Grant. This activity should be combined with another activity request.

Maximum Grant Award: \$5,000 or free service provided by LPS professional planners

Municipal Land Use Law Comprehensive Plans; Reexamination Reports; Plan Elements; Community Resiliency Plans; and Master Plan Re-examination Reports

Purpose: To modify or replace existing Master Plans or Master Plan Elements to address Post Sandy issues or establish Post Sandy strategies and policies.

Maximum Grant Award: \$50,000

Community Development and Neighborhood Plans

Purpose: To prepare, modify or replace plans for local neighborhoods or specific areas within the municipality (i.e. Redevelopment or Rehabilitation Plans, Economic Development Plans and Strategies, Historic District Plans and Open Space/Recreation Plans).

Maximum Grant Award: \$50,000

Permit and Application Process Quality Improvement

Purpose: To analyze local land use approval procedures and recommend new administrative procedures and ordinances; to streamline application processes in order to manage increased demand for Planning Board and Zoning Board actions.

Maximum Grant Award: \$25,000

Design Standards

Purpose: To prepare community design standards specific to flood hazard areas that will foster communities of place and set standards for flood resiliency at the street level for public, residential, commercial and mixed use buildings.

Maximum Grant Award: \$50,000

Capital Improvement Plans

Purpose: To prepare 5 year Capital Improvement Plans that will focus municipal capital investment on public facilities, fleets and equipment to build community resiliency in plants and equipment (i.e. scheduling and funding items such as elevation of generators above flood hazard elevations, contingency plans for storing and moving rolling stock and emergency equipment acquisition plans).

Maximum Grant Award: \$30,000

Urban and Suburban Environmental Design

Purpose: To prepare municipal hazard mitigation plans (to complement county hazard mitigation plans). Municipal Hazard Mitigation Plans have a closer tie to municipal emergency and public services and will address the unique and specific needs of the applicant community. To prepare other specialized environmental plans regarding storm impact and building community resiliency.

Maximum Grant Award: \$50,000

Development of codes, ordinances, standards and regulations

Purpose: To develop codes, ordinances, standards and regulations that will implement community plans for resiliency and flood/storm surge mitigation or assist in redeveloping storm damaged areas or attracting new development to support the tourism industry or local economy.

Maximum Grant Award: \$20,000

The activities listed above do not constitute all the activities that may be funded with Post Sandy Assistance Grants. Eligible applicants may apply for projects that are not listed above if the project activities satisfy the purposes of the program and the applicant has an approved Strategic Recovery Planning Report.

Grant Administration

Application requirements and process

Necessary Documents

1. A Post Sandy Planning Assistance Grant application. The grant application is available at https://www.formsite.com/dcanet/PostSandyPlanning/form_login.html.
2. A certified resolution adopted by the Governing Body or Board of Chosen Freeholders approving the grant application, agreeing to comply with all CDBG-DR regulations, Post Sandy Planning Assistance guidelines, and accepting that the proposed use of CDBG-DR funds are not reimbursable by FEMA, SBA or other federal agencies.
3. A statement of need that demonstrates how the proposed project relates to the impacts of Superstorm Sandy and why the proposed project is important to the economic and environmental health of the community or region.
4. A proposed scope of work, funding request and a timeline for the planning project.

Application process

Applicants will first apply for funding to complete a Strategic Recovery Planning Report (SRPR) or submit an equivalent document for LPS review. Applicants who submit an existing report may, at the same time, request assistance for their next planning priority or priorities. Applicants will be notified by email if their SRPR (or equivalent) substantiates the need for additional planning and assistance. Once approved to pursue funds for purposes other than creating the SRPR, the applicant will be required to provide LPS with a project proposal drafted by the preferred consultant. The consultant's proposal will specify the deliverable product, the scope of work, a timetable for completion of project deliverables and a cost for professional services. Certain expenditures associated and necessary to ensure the quality and completion of the project will be permitted in addition to the consultant's fee (see funding availability below) if they are itemized and justified in the application's Statement of Need and enumerated in a supporting budget.

Any municipality or county intending to apply for a Post Sandy Planning Assistance Grant must notify the Office of Local Planning Services by emailing a "Notice of Intent to Apply" (found as an addendum to this document) to lpsmail@dca.state.nj.us with the subject line: "PSPAG Notice of Intent" and attending a pre-application information session.

Funding Availability and Timelines

Funding availability

These funds are intended to be used primarily to pay for professional planning services. Reasonable costs associated with specific planning activities, including the costs to collect or buy data, software, maps and studies may also be funded. These grant funds will not pay for staff salaries, travel, equipment, or meals. Grant applicants should secure other sources of funding or commit municipal or county funds to implement the plans created through this Program. These grants are not competitive.

All funding requests for eligible activities accompanied by adequate supporting documentation (as solely determined by LPS) may be granted until funds are exhausted.

Timelines

There is no submission deadline. Grant applications will be accepted on a first come first serve basis. However, because federal regulations require that all CDBG-DR funds must be expended in two years, grant agreements will be for a term of 12 months or less. Applications will be accepted beyond the first twelve months for a second round of activities or for first time applicants if funds allocated to the Program have not been exhausted.

Grant Agreements & Reporting

Grant agreements

Grant scope, approval, issuance, monitoring and product quality -will be managed by LPS. Once approved for grant award, the municipality/county will need to complete a grant agreement with the Department of Community Affairs, Office of Local Planning Services. All grant activities must be completed within 12 months of grant execution. Grant agreements will require that all planning reports produced with these funds include suggestions for finding additional sources of funding and target dates for the implementation of the planning recommendations.

Reporting

Following execution of the grant agreement, LPS will provide the grantee with a format for the submission of monthly reports and a payment schedule based on consultant invoices that are tied to project deliverables. No grant agreement will permit more than four payments. LPS will monitor progress toward the completion of the scope of work within the timeline agreed to by the consultant and the grantee. Failure to submit monthly reports and/or other documents as required by the agreement in a timely manner may result in a suspension of the grant and the reimbursement of all grant moneys provided through this program.

Addendum

Notice of Intent to Apply to the Post Sandy Planning Assistance Grant Program

As indicated in the “Program Description and Guidelines”, funding will be available to the counties of Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Union and all municipalities in those counties that have sustained a ratable loss attributable to Superstorm Sandy of at least 1% or \$1 million. A government meeting these criteria and intending to apply is required to attend a mandatory orientation to learn about the application process and conditions of award. This meeting will take place at 2 p.m. on June 26, 2013 in the Department of Community Affairs building located at 101 South Broad Street, Trenton, New Jersey in Room 640.

Complete this form no later than June 24 and the municipality/county will be invited to attend the orientation session. Submission of the Notice of Intent is for informational and planning purposes only and does not oblige a municipality to submit a formal application.

Submit this **Notice** by email (lpsmail@dca.state.nj.us) with the subject line: “PSPAG Notice of Intent.”

Applicant Entity:			
Contact Person:			
Title:			
Phone:		Fax:	
E-mail:			



Click this button to send this Notice to Local Planning Services.