

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**Please be advised that FAQs will be revised when additional content is needed and as additional information becomes available.**

Q: What is “Rebuild by Design?”

A: President Obama’s Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force created the Rebuild by Design competition (RBD) in the summer of 2013 to develop ideas to improve physical, ecological and economic resilience in regions affected by Superstorm Sandy. The competition has two goals: to promote innovation by developing flexible solutions that would increase regional resilience, and to implement proposals with both public and private funding dedicated to the RBD effort. To realize the RBD initiative, HUD Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds allocated through the federal Sandy Supplemental legislation were set aside by HUD to develop and incentivize implementation of RBD projects.

Multi-disciplinary teams made up of architects, designers, planners and engineers were engaged by HUD and charged with proposing regional and community-based projects that would promote resilience in various Sandy-affected areas. The teams included experts and thought-leaders from around the world. The teams’ proposals, developed with and by the communities where projects were focused, were submitted to HUD, and HUD ultimately selected six “winning” projects.

Two New Jersey projects were awarded funding: one focused in the Hudson River region (allocated \$230 million by HUD) and the other in the Meadowlands region (allocated \$150 million by HUD). Comprehensive information about the RBD process and the winning projects also is available through the HUD portal at <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/sandyrebuilding/rebuildbydesign>.

The State is committed to implementing the Rebuild by Design projects as set forth in the RBD teams’ proposals. Should financial, technical or other issues arise in connection with a project, adjustments may need to be made.

Q: Who conceived the “winning” concept plans for the New Meadowlands project?

A: The New Meadowlands project concept was conceived by a collaboration of the following entities:

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Center for Advanced Urbanism

Zones Urbaines Sensibles

De Urbanisten

75B

Deltares

VolkerInfra

Along with the following advisory members:

Meadowlands Environmental Research Institute  
Rutgers  
AKRF

Q: Who conceived the “winning” concept plans for the Hudson River project?

A: The Hudson River project concept was conceived by a collaboration of the following entities:

OMA  
Royal Haskoning DHV  
Balmori Associates  
HR&A Advisors

Q: What is the New Meadowlands project concept?

A: The “New Meadowlands” project concept proposes an integrated vision of protecting, connecting and growing the Meadowlands. Integrating transportation, ecology and development, the project aims to transform the Meadowlands to address a wide spectrum of risks while providing civic amenities and creating opportunities for new redevelopment.

The project as proposed consists of two principle pieces of new infrastructure: the “Meadowpark” and the “Meadowband.”

The Meadowpark is a large natural reserve made accessible to the public that will also offer flood risk reduction. It would connect and expand marshland restoration efforts. Around and across the Meadowpark, the team proposes an intricate system of berms and marshes. These will protect against ocean surges and collect rainfall, reducing sewer overflows in adjacent towns.

The Meadowband, a raised berm that could potentially include transportation across the top, lies at the edge of the Meadowpark. It offers flood protection, connections between towns and wetlands, and will provide opportunities for towns to grow.

The RBD team’s final submission to HUD for the New Meadowlands project is available through the HUD portal at:

<http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/sandyrebuilding/rebuildbydesign>

It includes an extensive narrative description of the project, conceptual project renderings, a flood risk assessment and a benefit-cost analysis, among other things. Due to funding limitations, CDBG-DR funds are to be used to implement the first phase of the proposal in Pilot Area #1, which includes Little Ferry, Moonachie, Carlstadt, South Hackensack and Teterboro.

The results from the planning, feasibility and design phases, among other things, will yield a work product that addresses what, if any, additional funding sources are available for the project, the components of the project that available funding is sufficient to

address, the efficacy and sustainability of the final project design. The feasibility study will also incorporate such analyses as the NOAA Sea Level Rise tool, and will also determine how that final project will meet the resilience performance standards requirements in Section VI(2)(e) of the November 2013 Federal Register Notice (FR-5696-N-06).

Q: What is the Hudson River project concept?

A: The Hudson River project, known as the “Resist, Delay, Store, Discharge” project, is a comprehensive urban water strategy that would deploy programmed hard infrastructure and soft landscape for coastal defense (resist); generate policy recommendations, guidelines and urban infrastructure to slow rainwater runoff (delay); develop a circuit of interconnected green infrastructure to store and direct excess rainwater (store); and deploy water pumps and alternative routes to support drainage (discharge). As proposed, a variety of flood risk reduction infrastructure will be built along the Hudson River in order to reduce flood waters, including at Weehawken Cove (to protect Hoboken, Weehawken and critical regional utilities) and by the Hoboken Ferry Terminal. Along Hoboken’s downtown thoroughfare, green infrastructure measures, such as permeable paving and rain gardens, would help manage the city’s surface water and reduce the risk of flash flooding from rain while enhancing the cityscape. Along NJ Transit’s Hudson-Bergen Light Rail, otherwise discrete rainwater storage initiatives would be connected to make a “green circuit.” This system would serve as the foundations of a parallel green drainage infrastructure that would reduce the risk of flash flooding from rain, filtering and cleaning storm water and serving as a park for the community. Additionally, the City of Hoboken is taking steps to address some of the above components with its own funds.

The RBD team’s final submission to HUD for the Hudson River project is available through the HUD portal at:

<http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/sandyrebuilding/rebuildbydesign>

It includes a narrative description of the project, conceptual project renderings, a flood risk assessment and a benefit-cost analysis, among other things.

The results from the planning, feasibility and design phases of this project, among other things, will yield a work product that addresses what, if any, additional funding sources are available for the project, the components of the project available funding is sufficient to address, the efficacy and sustainability of the final project design, incorporating such analyses as the NOAA Sea Level Rise tool, and also how that final project will meet the resilience performance standards requirements in Section VI(2)(e) of the November 2013 Federal Register Notice (FR-5696-N-06).

Additional work is also being performed in the area. The New Jersey Transit Long Slip Canal project is being performed by New Jersey Transit and is separately funded through Federal Transit Authority monies. This project is being performed independent of the Rebuild by Design work in the area.

Q: What is the timeline for the RBD projects?

- A: The project timelines include the following phases:
- The Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) phase will take approximately 1.5 years
  - The Design phase will take approximately 2 years
  - The Construction phase will take approximately 3.5 years

Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 1552(a), when allowing for potential waivers of the two-year expenditure deadline in the Disaster Relief Act of 2013 (the “Act”) through the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB), all CDBG-DR funds must be expended on or before September 30th of the fifth year following the statutory period of obligation. The statutory period for obligation under the Act ends on September 30, 2017, so even allowing for OMB waivers that permit expenditure beyond September 30, 2019, all CDBG-DR funds must be spent by September 30, 2022, and that date cannot be extended by OMB. While the State will endeavor to expend RBD funds in conformance with the current expenditure deadline under the Disaster Relief Act of 2013, the State will request permitted extensions for RBD projects as needed.

Q: Have Consultants/Contractors been hired by NJDEP for the RBD projects?

A: The NJDEP and the Department of Treasury, together, prepare Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to engage Consultants/Contractors to perform different phases of the projects. Two RFPs have already been released for public bid.

On October 7, 2015, the Feasibility/EIS, Design and Construction Administration RFP for the Meadowlands Project was awarded to AECOM and its team of sub-consultants. This team includes HDR, Inc., Dewberry Engineers, Matrix New World Engineering, HR&A Advisors, Robinson Aerial Surveys, Remora Consulting, Reichman Frankle, and Stevens Institute of Technology. Once a project alternative is selected through the EIS/NEPA process and designed, a Project Construction RFP will be released to seek qualified construction firms to build the project.

By using an existing NJ Transit contract, the NJDEP was able to start the Feasibility/EIS phase of the work on the Hudson River project ahead of schedule. The NJ Transit contract allowed the NJDEP to engage a qualified Consultant, Dewberry Engineers, who is able to do work in the authority jurisdiction of NJ Transit which includes the Hudson River region. Once the Feasibility Study/EIS is completed by Dewberry Engineers, an RFP will be released seeking a qualified Consultant to perform the Design and Construction Administration phases of the project. Once the project is designed, a Project Construction RFP will be released to seek qualified construction firms to build the project.

Additionally, a separate RFP has been advertised to engage Project Management firms that will assist the NJDEP in overseeing all aspects of each RBD project. NJDEP expects to award this contract in late December 2015.

Q: Who is the qualified Consultant that is contracted to complete the Feasibility/EIS phase of the Hudson River project?

A: The Consulting team that is contracted to complete the Feasibility/EIS phase of the Hudson River project consists of Dewberry, OMA and Scape Landscape/Architecture PLLC.

Q: Who is eligible to bid on the RBD projects?

A: All remaining RFPs will go out for public bid and will be open to all qualified parties. Specific qualifications will be listed as a part of each RFP. Bidders and other interested parties are encouraged to visit this website frequently for updates regarding the release of the RFPs.

Q: Will the original RBD design teams be involved in the New Meadowlands or Hudson River projects?

A: If the RBD design teams are qualified then they are eligible to bid on the RFPs. It is possible that the RBD design teams or portions of the RBD design teams will partner with other qualified firms to bid on the RFPs. The NJDEP is not required to hire any firm that is not qualified, nor is the NJDEP required to hire the RBD design teams that bid on the RFPs.

Though not required, OMA, a member of the design team associated with the Hudson River project, has been included as part of the team working on the Feasibility/EIS portion of the Hudson River project.

Q: What is the focus of the RBD projects?

A: The overall focus of the two projects is on surge protection and regional resiliency. The feasibility studies to be completed for each RBD project will primarily focus on addressing rain events, surge events and sea level rise within project areas. Other project components will be considered if funding is sufficient.

Q: Has the NJDEP coordinated with other agencies or groups?

A: The NJDEP has met with and will continue to meet with all the affected municipalities, the public, HUD, Army Corps of Engineers, US Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, US Fish and Wildlife, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, New Jersey Meadowlands Commission and with other stakeholders on a regular basis. The NJDEP has established an Executive Steering Committee for each RBD project that includes the mayors of the municipalities, and any other necessary parties. The Executive Steering Committees will share information, discuss policy and ultimately guide the projects to completion.

Q: Will the public have an opportunity to provide input on the direction of the RBD projects?

A: Citizen Advisory Groups (CAGs) will be organized for each RBD project. The CAGs will include key citizens and citizens groups that are representative of their communities. The CAGs will be responsible for communicating the concerns and needs of the communities. These concerns and needs will be relayed to the NJDEP Project Team. The CAGs will also be tasked with developing a Community Outreach Plan (COP) that outlines community participation in the RBD process. The COP will be available for review on this website when it is finalized.

Q: Is the NJDEP exploring public/private partnerships?

A: The NJDEP will consider any partnership opportunities that can guide the projects to completion or provide additional funding for the projects.

Q: Will the NJDEP be implementing any green infrastructure or nature-based solutions in the project design?

A: The NJDEP will be exploring the use of green infrastructure and nature based solutions. These options will be utilized where ever feasible.

Q: Will the NJDEP be considering buyouts of private property?

A: Buyouts are not specifically identified by the RBD projects however, until the feasibility study and alternatives analyses are completed, no solution is off the table. The feasibility study and alternatives analysis may identify buyouts as a feasible solution that needs to be considered.

Q: How will the NJDEP be dealing with private and public property issues?

A: The NJDEP will obtain access agreements to complete any sampling, investigation, delineation, surveying or other investigation-type work on public and private properties. NJDEP will obtain easements to complete any construction or ecological restoration on public and private properties. The NJDEP will ask the municipalities to assist in obtaining access agreements and easements.

Q: If the NJDEP does not receive additional funding for the RBD projects, will the \$150 million allocated by HUD for the Meadowlands project and the \$230 million allocated by HUD for the Hudson River project be enough to complete adequate flood protection?

A: The NJDEP will design flood protection projects for whatever amounts the RBD projects ultimately receive. Project components that are not considered necessary for providing flood protection may be eliminated from the scope if funding does not allow for construction of these components. The NJDEP will be exploring other sources of funding and public/private partnerships to meet any budgetary shortfalls.

Q: Will an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the RBD projects?

A: Yes. The NJDEP will be complying with HUD and NEPA regulations to complete the EIS.

Q: Each RBD project includes flood control barriers for surge protection. Where will these barriers be placed?

A: The Feasibility Study that will be completed for each project will determine the exact locations and forms of the flood control barriers (berm, sheet pile wall, terraced edge or any other form) and placement of all other necessary flood control measures.

Q: Who will own and maintain the flood control barriers after construction?

A: There will be a long term maintenance plan; however it is still too early to identify the parties that will own and maintain the flood control barriers.

Q: How do I get additional information about the RBD projects?

A: The OFHRRM webpage has links to a "listserv" that will send you email updates as they become available. After exiting this FAQ document, please click on the link for RBD project in which you are interested, then click on "Get email updates." Enter your email address, then click "OK." Within several minutes you will receive email confirmation that you have successfully signed up for RBD project updates. To receive updates for both RBD projects you must sign up for each listserv.