

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program (NRTC)

OVERVIEW AND GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING GRANTS RFP (FY 2020)

These guidelines outline the available funding, eligibility requirements, application requirements, and evaluation criteria for NRTC Planning Grants (FY 2020). This document also serves as a guide for completing a project application in SAGE. Each item listed under the “Application Content” section of this document corresponds directly to a required form in the SAGE application.

AVAILABLE FUNDING:

The available funding is \$2,000,000.

MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF AWARD:

Up to \$50,000 per successful application; one (1) application may be submitted per prospective NRTC neighborhood.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:

Community-based non-profit organizations that have a formal determination by the Internal Revenue Service of exemption from income taxation (26 U.S.C. s.501(c)(3)).

ELIGIBLE NEIGHBORHOODS:

An eligible neighborhood:

1. Is located in a eligible municipality; the current list can be viewed on the NRTC webpage, at **NRTC Eligible Municipalities:**

<https://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dhcr/offices/nrtc.html>

2. Meets the definition of “eligible neighborhood” as per the revised NRTC Statute (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-490 et seq.); this definition can be viewed in the NRTC Neighborhood Plan Guidelines (on p. 3), via the NRTC webpage (use address above) at **Neighborhood Plans**
3. Meets the following neighborhood income targets:
 - At least 50% of the households must be of low and moderate income (below 80% of area median income, as determined by US Department of Housing & Urban Development).
 - At least 25% of the households must be of low income (50% of area median income or below, as determined by US Department of Housing & Urban Development).

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:

NRTC funds may be used solely for costs related to preparation of a neighborhood plan. These are further defined as follows:

1. Salaries/wages of agency staff involved with plan preparation, for the portion of work time that is applicable.
2. Consultant, approved by DCA, who may be retained to assist with plan preparation.
3. Other costs, whether borne by agency or consultant, that are directly related to plan preparation.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND FUNDING PROCESSES:

1. Threshold Review: a submitted application must fulfill all of the criteria listed previously under “Eligible Applicants” and “Eligible Neighborhoods”, scored as “pass” or “fail”. One “fail” will disqualify the application from further review.
2. Evaluative Review: A project application that passes threshold review will be further evaluated, using the criteria discussed later in this document under Application Rating Criteria.

APPLICATION CONTENT:

The project application will contain the following application forms. An applicant must complete and submit this application electronically via SAGE (the Department’s on-line applications and grants system).

1. Statement of Board President/Agency Description: Form to be completed by the President of the Board of Directors/Trustees of your organization. Briefly describe your agency and its ability to implement the proposed project and include your agency’s mission statement. The form must be printed out (click on the “View PDF” button), signed by the Board President and uploaded to the application.
2. Assessment of Need(s):
 - a. Describe the neighborhood for which an NRTC plan would be created (or updated), including: delineation of boundaries; listing of census tracts and census blocks; statistical information.
 - b. Describe why this is an appropriate neighborhood for an NRTC Plan, in terms of its potential for revitalization.
 - c. If this was previously an approved NRTC neighborhood, describe why a new NRTC plan is needed.
3. Neighborhood Population Information: Enter the requested data about the number of households in the neighborhood: low-income; moderate-income; above moderate-income (*previously defined at “Eligible Applicants”*).

4. **Organizational Capacity and Relevant Experience**: Provide information about your organization's capacity to carry out the activities of the prospective NRTC plan, and also its community development experience. This should include: staffing, finances, accomplishments and examples of current activities (with and without NRTC funding), and community involvement.
5. **Partner Information**: Information about EACH organization that will participate in developing the NRTC plan.
6. **Attachments** to be uploaded to the "Attachments" section of the SAGE application:
 - a. *Neighborhood Map* – clearly identifying boundaries, street names and key features. (**Subsection A**).
 - b. *Letters of support from community* – a minimum of four (4) letters from residents and established civic/community organizations within the target neighborhood. (**Subsection B**).
 - c. *Letter of support from mayor* - a letter from the mayor of the municipality where the target neighborhood is located, which expresses support for this application (**Subsection C**).
 - d. *Digital Photos* - these should illustrate the existing conditions in the neighborhood (**Subsection D**).
 - e. *Resumes* - of key staff, professionals and consultants who will be involved in creating the neighborhood plan (**Subsection E**).
 - f. *Consultant Qualifications* – (if applicable) Information should include: years of experience; professional licenses held; types of clients; success in fulfilling clients' needs (**Subsection F**).
 - g. *Organizational Annual Audit Report* – prepared by a Certified Public Accountant, for the applicant's most recently completed fiscal year (**Subsection G**).
7. **Other Sources of Funding**: All sources and amounts of funding committed to, or anticipated for, plan preparation (not including NRTC funds).
8. **Budget**: All proposed activities will be entered under a single program component ("NRTC Planning Grant"), resulting in one application budget.
9. **Documents** to be uploaded to the "Certification Sheets" form in SAGE:
 - a. *Resolution*
 - b. *IRS Determination Letter*
 - c. *Organizational Chart*
 - d. *Insurance certificate regarding "fidelity bond" coverage*

APPLICATION RATING CRITERIA:

For threshold review, NRTC staff will determine which of the submitted applications cannot be further reviewed (using criteria previously listed). For **evaluative review**, NRTC staff will review and evaluate the applications as described below:

1. Neighborhood (15 (or 10) points):

- a. *Description* (5 points) – completeness of submitted information (narrative, statistics, map and photos)
- b. *Appropriateness* (5 points) – sufficiency of presentation regarding its potential for revitalization
- c. *If there was a previously approved NRTC Plan for this neighborhood* (5 points, if applicable) – sufficiency of presentation for why a new NRTC Plan is needed

2. Organization (12 points):

- a. *Staffing* (4 points) – assess narrative information, resumes, partner info (if applicable) and consultant qualifications (if applicable)
- b. *Finances* (4 points) – assess narrative information and audit report
- c. *Relevant Community Development Experience* (4 points) – demonstration of sufficient experience, in terms of: accomplishments and current activities (with and without NRTC funds); and community involvement

3. Letters of Support (3 points):

- a. *Mayor's Letter* (1 point).
- b. *Letters from Residents and Established Community Organizations* (1 point) – minimum of 4 must be submitted.
- c. *Statement of Board President/Agency Description* (1 point).

The overall scores from the reviewers will be combined to obtain an average score for each application. Applications will be recommended for approval as follows:

- Neighborhood with a previously-approved NRTC Plan: average score of 18.0 points or better (out of 30 points)
- Neighborhood new to NRTC: average score of 15.0 points or better (out of 25 points)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Information to be provided in a live session and by webinar.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION:

The application cycle will be open until all available funding has been awarded.