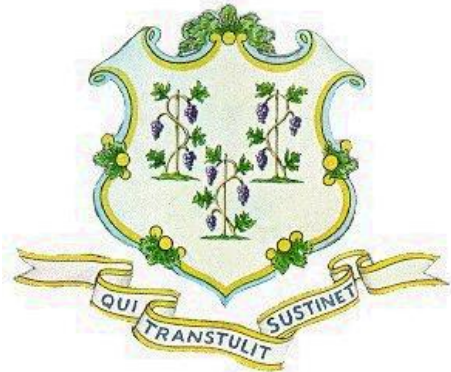




**Community Development Block Grant  
Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)**

**Program Guide  
Planning for Mitigation and Resiliency Projects**



**State of Connecticut  
Department of Housing**

**Revised September 30, 2015**



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## Introduction

The State recognizes that future storms may severely damage homes, businesses, infrastructure and public facilities in municipalities throughout Connecticut. It is essential that our infrastructure and public facilities be hardened in anticipation of these events. A portion of these Planning funds will be used to assist the State, regional planning agencies, and/or local governments to plan resiliency and mitigation investments. Based on input from other state agencies and local governments, DOH intends to support a coordinated effort to promote consistency in resiliency and mitigation planning across State agencies and local governments, training and capacity building initiatives to promote preparedness, hazard mitigation, and future disaster resilience at the local, regional and state level, and specific studies to coordinated, cost effective long-term resiliency and mitigation investments, including the development of “green” initiatives.

HUD Guidelines allow the State, like other states to which it has allocated CDBG-DR Program funds, to opt to expend up to 15% of its CDBG-DR funds for planning activities. It is important for Connecticut to be proactive in anticipation of future natural disasters. Accordingly, DOH intends to expend up to \$7,000,000 in planning activities in Tranche 2 to assist in the planning processes associated with improving the resiliency of infrastructure and public facilities, and providing mitigation activities in the areas of the State that are eligible for the expenditure of the funding.

These Planning Activities may include, but are not limited to the following examples:

- Research to develop strategies to address the health and safety of homeless individual and families and other vulnerable populations;
- Plans to address foreseeable mitigation and resiliency projects, particularly as they relate to critical infrastructure;
- Plans to avoid fuel shortages during disasters;
- Plans to address coastline resilience;
- Research to develop strategies for creating off-the-grid public facilities, homes and commercial businesses.
- Plans to address resiliency/mitigation of potable water or waste water systems.
- Plans to address resiliency/mitigation of roads and drainage systems.

Planning Grants will be selected on a basis modeled after the Small Cities CDBG Program. Funding will be available to specific projects submitted by municipalities and their partners through a competitive application round. DOH will provide advance notice of fund availability but will reserve the right to cease accepting applications at any time that all available funds have been committed.

### **Program Requirements**

Consistent with CDBG-DR Program Requirements, the State's use of a portion of the funding for this program will be consistent with the following:

1. **Unmet Needs** –funding is available to address community needs, but each project must contain resiliency features.
2. **Eligible/Fundable** – each project must be determined to be an eligible and fundable activity under the Housing and Community Development Act as modified by the Federal Register Notice and all other applicable regulations and related guidance.
3. **Impacted and Distressed Area** – each project must be located in one of the four counties in which the expenditure of the Funding is allowable (i.e. Fairfield County, New Haven County, Middlesex County, New London County) or the Mashantucket Pequot Indian Reservation, all of which sustained significant damage from Hurricane Sandy.
4. **Readiness to Proceed** – each project must be capable of being undertaken immediately to provide outcomes to intended beneficiaries affected by the disaster. All projects must include a project timeline that allows DOH to meet the Federal expenditure deadline of September 30, 2017.
5. **Feasibility** – each project must be found to be financially feasible, sustainable and likely to contribute to the long-term recovery of disaster impacted communities.

6. **Consistency with Consolidated Plan/Action Plan** – each project must be reflective of the goals, priorities and requirements of the State of Connecticut’s Disaster Recovery Action Plan.

## **Definitions**

**CDBG-DR** –Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery program

**CHAMP** –Competitive Housing Assistance for Multifamily Properties

**CHFA** - Connecticut Housing Finance Authority

**Contractors** - Procured contractors providing supplies, equipment, construction, or services, and may be further restricted by Program Rules or other guidance including applications.

**Demolition** – Clearance and proper disposal of dilapidated buildings and improvements.

**DOH** - Department of Housing or its duly authorized agent

**DECD** - Department of Economic and Community Development

### **NATIONAL OBJECTIVES:**

**Low to Moderate Income (LMI) National Objective** – Activities which benefit households whose total annual gross income does not exceed 80% of Area Median Income (AMI), adjusted for family size.

1. **Very low:** Household’s annual income is up to 30% of the area median family income, as determined by HUD, adjusted for family size;
2. **Low:** Household’s annual income is between 31% and 50% of the area median family income, as determined by HUD, adjusted for family size;
3. **Moderate:** Household’s annual income is between 51% and 80% of the area median family income, as determined by HUD, adjusted for family size.

**Slum and Blight National Objective** – Activities which help to eliminate slums and blighted conditions. Use of this National Objective is limited due to its inability to contribute towards the overall requirement for. Slum and Blight activities must meet the criteria of one of the three following categories:

1. Prevent or eliminate slums and blight on an area basis;
2. Prevent or eliminate slum and blight on a spot basis; or
3. Be in an urban renewal area.

**Urgent Need National Objective** – An urgent need that exists because existing conditions pose serious and immediate threat to health/welfare of community, the existing

conditions are recent or recently became urgent (typically within 18 months), and because other funding sources are not available.

**DOL** - Federal Department of Labor

**Duplication of Benefits** - The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief Act (Stafford Act) prohibits any person, business concern, or other entity from receiving financial assistance from CDBG Disaster Recovery funding with respect to any part of a loss resulting from a major disaster as to which financial assistance has already been received under any other program or from insurance or any other source.

**HUD** – Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development

**Subrecipient** - Cities, Counties, Indian Tribes, local governmental agencies (including Councils of Government {COGs}), private non-profits (including faith-based organizations), or a for-profit entity authorized under 24 CFR 570.201(o).

**Family** – A household composed of two or more related persons. The term family also includes one or more eligible persons living with another person or persons who are determined to be important to their care or wellbeing, and the surviving member or members of any family described in this definition who were living in a unit assisted under the HOPWA program with the person with AIDS at the time of his or her death.

**Household** – A household is defined as all persons occupying the same housing unit, regardless of their relationship to each other. The occupants could consist of:

1. a single family;
2. two (2) or more families living together; or
3. any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements.

For housing activities, the test of meeting the low to moderate income objective is based on the LMI of households.

**INFRASTRUCTURE** –For this program, an infrastructure planning project is an activity or a group of activities related to critical sectors like energy, communications, water and wastewater systems, transportation and other support measures such as flood control (NEPA 40 CFR Part 1508 and 24 CFR Part 58.); the technical structures that support a society, for example: roads, bridges, water supply, sewers, electrical grids, telecommunications; the physical components of interrelated systems.

**Related Infrastructure Project:** Related if a project automatically triggers other projects or actions; cannot or will not proceed unless other projects or actions are taken previously or simultaneously; or are interdependent parts of a larger action and depend on that larger action for justification. (Consistent with 40CFR part 1508)

**Green Infrastructure:** as defined in the Federal Notices is the “integration of natural systems and processes, or engineered systems that mimic natural systems and processes, into investments in resilient infrastructure.”

**Low impact development (LID)** is often used interchangeably with green infrastructure.

**MITIGATION** – Cost effective resiliency and other activities designed to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters; taking action now – before the next disaster – to reduce the human and financial consequences later (analyzing risk, reducing risk, insuring against risk); lessening the force or intensity; making a condition or consequence less severe.

**PRWORA** - Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act

**FEMA** - Federal Emergency Management Agency

**FEMA- Areas Of High Risk** - Areas designated by FEMA as vulnerable to significant wind and/or storm surge damage and areas located in 100-year flood zones. These areas will be identified during the environmental review process for each participating jurisdiction.

**NFIP** - National Flood Insurance Program

**Area of High Minority Concentration** – A census block group that consists of 65% or more of minorities. Minorities include all racial and ethnic population groups other than “White, non- Hispanic (Anglo).

**Area of High Poverty Concentration** – A census block group that consists of 35% or more of the residents living in poverty. A household that meets the US Census Bureau’s poverty threshold is considered to be at or below poverty level for the Disaster Recovery Program.

**NTP** - Notice to Proceed

**IECC** - International Energy Conservation Code 2009

**Demonstrable Hardship** – an applicant for assistance has identified and documented one or more instance or condition which would prevent them from fully meeting any non-regulatory guideline.

***Not Suitable for Rehabilitation*** – properties where the cost of rehabilitation exceeds the after rehab appraisal and there is not a compelling historical or community justification to save the property.

## **Funding Priorities**

Funding Priorities for planning projects for Mitigation and Resiliency under the Second Tranche:

- The ability of the project to address conditions that threaten health and safety of either occupants or public safety.
- Projects that contribute significantly to the long-term recovery and economic revitalization of the affected area.
- Mitigation – cost effective resiliency and other activities designed to make people and property less vulnerable and minimizing reoccurrence of storm damage whenever possible.
- Restoration or replacement planning of infrastructure damaged as a result of Superstorm Sandy, especially for projects that are vital for the redevelopment of residential properties damaged as a result of Superstorm Sandy.
- Resiliency/mitigation activities related to potable water or waste water systems.
- Resiliency/mitigation activities related to roads and drainage systems.
- Resiliency /mitigation of transportation systems and controls
- Resiliency/mitigation of energy systems.
- Projects that enable the State to satisfy the federal requirement that at least 80% of the funding must be spent in Fairfield and New Haven Counties.
- Projects that contribute significantly to the long-term recovery and economic revitalization of the affected area.

## **Minimum/Maximum Assistance**

Financial assistance to eligible communities shall be determined based on unmet need. The minimum allocation will be \$100,000. There will be not set maximum.



## **DOH Roles and Responsibilities**

The DOH staff dedicated to the administration of the Funding will be responsible for complying with the significant federal requirements related to financial management and control of programmatic compliance and monitoring, affirmative fair housing, the prevention of fraud, waste and abuse. These staff members will be responsible for administering all aspects of the State's CDBG-DR Program, including processing the necessary payments, tracking projects and program activities, reporting in the federal Disaster Recovery Grants Administration (DRGR) system, as well as coordinating the activities of other state agencies in relation to the Sandy recovery. In addition to these dedicated staff, the Internal Auditor for DOH, who reports directly to the Office of the Commissioner, is responsible for ensuring that procedures to detect fraud, waste and abuse are both adopted and implemented in accordance with federal requirements and consistent with the Statement on Auditing Standards No. 99 (SAS99) and the standards established for the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing as promulgated by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA).

## **Eligible Applicants**

Applicants must be an "Eligible Applicant" as defined by HUD Program Regulations and Modified by the Federal Register notice to include Entitlement Communities. Applicants include but are not limited to owners of infrastructure. Joint Applications will be considered in instances where solving a shared problem requires mutual action.

## **Eligible Activities**

1. Planning for Construction / Reconstruction / Resiliency of Streets and Drainage Systems
2. Planning for Construction / Reconstruction / Resiliency of Water Lines, Sewer Lines or Related Systems
3. Planning for Construction / Reconstruction / Resiliency of Other Non-Residential Structures- including but not limited to micro grids, generators, seawalls and revetments.

## **Scope of Planning Project**

A proposed description of the planning project must be submitted with each application from a local government or other party. The scope of the planning project must be developed by a planning professional, and must include, at a minimum, the following information:

- A description of the project area including the larger planning area if part of a larger plan.
- Describe all resiliency and mitigation measures built into the project to minimize future storm damage.
- Map(s) of the project area showing a schematic layout. Include scale and legend.
- Describe any damage caused by Hurricane Sandy that will be mitigated.
- Describe the critical need for the project as it relates to health and environmental consequences.
- Describe the project design.
- Provide the estimated term of completion.

All planning consultant agreements must be competitively bid in accordance with 24 CFR 85.

## **Duplication of Benefits**

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief Act (Stafford Act) prohibits any person, business concern, or other entity from receiving financial assistance from CDBG Disaster Recovery funding with respect to any part of a loss resulting from a major disaster as to which he has already received financial assistance under any other program or from insurance or any other source. Duplication of Benefits also exists if funds were received from other sources and not used for a recognized “Allowable Activity.” Applicants will be required to contribute unspent Sandy funds in order to receive assistance from the Program

The DR Program Manager will coordinate and work closely with the eligible local government and other sources as appropriate to determine the total amount of money received by the local government for the planning grant.

Examples of other sources which, if received, applicants will be required to disclose in order to receive assistance from this program include:

- FEMA benefits (Public Assistance, Individual Assistance, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, etc.)

- Army Corps of Engineers Assistance
- HUD Community Development Programs
- Other State or charitable assistance
- Private Insurance
- Any other funding source that may duplicate assistance.

## **Environmental Review**

Participation in the CDBG-DR Program requires compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Environmental Review Process and the compilation of the Environmental Review Record will be started and administered by DOH with the assistance of the applicant as soon as the Scope of the CDBG-DR Project is determined.

## **Green Planning Projects and Activities**

It is the State's expectation that any project receiving CDBG-DR dollars will incorporate green infrastructure practices where appropriate and feasible. Any infrastructure planning project that does not, will either not receive funding or will have to demonstrate using acceptable cost-benefit methodologies why it is not feasible and/or cost effective.

## **The Enterprise Green Communities Criteria**

The Enterprise Green Communities Criteria will guide planning grant recipients in selecting green infrastructure components particularly related to sensitive site protection; connections to existing development and infrastructure; erosion control; low-impact design; landscaping, surface storm water management; energy efficiency. It is the State's expectation that any project planning on receiving CDBG-DR dollars will incorporate green infrastructure practices where appropriate and feasible.

## **Requisitions & Payments**

Upon satisfactory completion of work and sign-off by DOH Staff program funds are issued to the applicant. DOH may request disbursements on a monthly or quarterly basis. DOH shall use reasonable efforts to process disbursement requests within thirty (30) days from the receipt of the reimbursement request. All cost overruns will be the responsibility of the applicant.

## **Project Closeout**

Once the planning project is completed, DOH will ask the grantee for sign-off. DOH staff will do a final review of the planning project to ensure that proposed project is complete and meets requirements for set by the HUD Environmental Review Record (NEPA) and the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) for future construction and project implementation.

## **Compliance/Monitoring**

HUD regulations governing the CDBG-DR Program, along with the State CDBG-DR Substantial Amendment and HUD Monitoring Handbook, will be guides for conducting program monitoring with a particular emphasis on the accuracy of information provided by applicants, identification of the duplication of benefits, compliance with all applicable state and federal requirements associated with the CDBG-DR funding.