

Maryland's *Community Resilience* Grant Program 2018 PROJECT SOLICITATION



Maryland's Community Resilience Grant Program provides financial and technical assistance to local governments to help address the impacts of hazards, including localized flooding, storm events and sea level rise.



Overview

The Chesapeake and Coastal Service (CCS) is soliciting project proposals that will help address the impacts of climate-related hazards through the Community Resilience Grants Program (Resilience Grants). Projects can be proposed to address coastal impacts (storm surge, shoreline erosion, sea level rise, nuisance flooding, etc.), stormwater hazards, and floodplain flood risks. Proposals should address one of three project phases: Understand, Plan, or Implement.

The Resilience Grants encourage projects that take a holistic, watershed-scale planning approach to address both water quantity and quality. Ideal projects will foster innovative adaptation strategies that ensure that Maryland communities are increasingly resilient to flood risks, work to ascertain that Bay and ocean waters meet living resource and human needs, and serve to enhance the protection and management of the state's resources. Projects should help communities more clearly communicate the risks associated with hazards in order to better protect citizens, infrastructure, and natural resources.

Grants this year are made possible by funding provided by the State of Maryland, the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Maryland's Community Resilience Grants Program combines the funding previously available through the CoastSmart Communities and Green Infrastructure Resiliency grant programs. The state is better able to promote and support comprehensive, holistic planning and implementation projects through this revised solicitation by leveraging federal dollars with newly available state funds to address resiliency in Maryland.

Background and Intent of Funding

The damages and impacts resulting from flood events present a substantial threat to communities, infrastructure and natural resources throughout the state. Since 2007, Maryland has experienced four hurricane and flood events warranting Presidential Disaster Declarations, resulting in more than \$95 million in federal public assistance. This solicitation requests actions that can be taken before a flood event to reduce the risk to life, property, and natural resources. The funds will be used for projects that seek to achieve this reduced risk in whatever manner is most feasible for the local community. **This solicitation encourages projects that address both coastal impacts and stormwater and floodplain impacts.**

Coastal Impacts

Extending over 3,000 miles along the diverse landscape of the Chesapeake Bay, the Coastal Bays, and the Atlantic Ocean, Maryland's shoreline is highly susceptible to coastal hazards. In Maryland, these hazards are both episodic (hurricanes, nor'easters, floods, nuisance flooding, and storm surge) and chronic (sea-level rise, land subsidence, and erosion) in nature. Almost 70% of Maryland's shoreline experiences chronic erosion and up to 60% of some counties lie within FEMA's Special Flood Hazard Area.

This grant program aims to support local governments located in Maryland's coastal zone integrate planning scenarios into day-to-day decision making (e.g. variances, permits, etc.) and long-term strategic planning (e.g. major infrastructure updates, community visioning, designating growth and intense development areas, etc.) to be better prepared for the next flood event. This includes increasing the awareness of residents, business owners, elected officials, and planners around what hazards exist now and into the future and what actions can be taken to maintain a community's identity and cultural heritage, while acknowledging changes that could impact that vision. Potential projects include flood vulnerability and risk assessments, updates to planning documents (e.g. hazard mitigation plans, zoning ordinances, building codes, floodplain ordinances, comprehensive plans), education and outreach campaigns and materials and support of a community's participation in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS). All projects should integrate risk reduction into day-to-day planning processes to reduce overall flood risk from tide-influenced and/or rain and storm events.



New this year, funds can be utilized to design and permit natural and nature-based shoreline stabilization and flood reduction projects. Projects may consist of shoreline and buffer restoration, beneficial use of dredge materials, tidal marsh restoration, dune restoration, or other nature-based solutions that provide community and ecosystem benefits by restoring, enhancing, or creating coastal habitat. These coastal resilience practices help to attenuate wave energy, stabilize sediment and absorb water, acting as natural buffers from the impacts of coastal storms and other climate impacts. In addition to protecting critical coastal infrastructure, these practices can also address public access, vital habitats, and environmental justice. Once a project is designed and permitted, CCS will work with the partners to fund the construction of the project, but construction funding is not guaranteed. Applicants cannot propose construction projects without first receiving funding for design and permitting through this grant program.

In order to receive funding to address coastal impacts, the project must be located within Maryland's designated coastal zone, which consists of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester counties and Baltimore City.

To review examples of coastal resilience restoration projects, [click here](#).

Stormwater and Floodplain Impacts

Maryland's precipitation regime is changing. Annual precipitation totals in Maryland have become more variable since 1970, and our winters are anticipated to become wetter. Since 1958 the amount of precipitation that has occurred in extreme events in the eastern United States has increased by twenty five percent, and extreme weather events are expected to become even more frequent and intense. Larger and more frequent precipitation events will increase stormwater runoff, which may overwhelm stormwater management systems designed for smaller storms. Riparian flooding is also likely to increase as a result of the changing precipitation regime. An increase in the incidence and severity of flooding will cause increased damages and further degrade water quality.

This grant program aims to help Maryland communities assess localized flood risks resulting from more frequent and intense precipitation events and address those risks by implementing targeted green infrastructure projects. Green infrastructure practices - such as rain gardens, bioretention facilities, and permeable pavement - reduce flooding by helping stormwater infiltrate in place rather than contributing to runoff. As a result, these practices have the dual benefits of managing water quantity while also improving water quality. Potential projects include watershed assessments that focus on determining local flood risks and how green infrastructure can be used to address those risks and site- or watershed-level green infrastructure implementation plans and project designs. Once a project is designed and permitted, CCS will work with the partners to fund the construction of the project, but construction funding is not guaranteed. Applicants cannot propose construction projects without first receiving funding for design and permitting through this grant program.

To receive funding to address stormwater or floodplain hazards, the community must be located within the Maryland portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Please note that projects proposed in Cecil, Garrett and Worcester counties must be located within the portions of those counties that are within the watershed in order to be eligible.

Phases

Project proposals must be submitted under one of the three following phases: Understand, Plan, or Implement. Each phase reflects where a local community may be in preparedness. Projects submitted under all phases will receive equal consideration for funding. Each phase is meant to build upon complementary tasks such as community engagement.

Phase 1 - Understand

Local governments that have yet to complete a formal assessment of the risk natural hazards pose to their community are encouraged to submit a project proposal under Phase 1. Projects in this category should propose bringing together existing resources and data (such as hazard mitigation plans and Flood Insurance Rate Maps) to develop a holistic understanding of what is at-risk (built and natural infrastructure) to tidal, stormwater or riparian flooding. Phase 1 proposals may request up to \$75,000 of funding for projects that will be a maximum of one year in duration.

Examples of projects may include:

- Model dynamic processes, such as erosion, coastal flooding, or stormwater flow
- Model marsh migration under the MD Climate Change Commission scenarios
- Assess vulnerability of natural resources, recreational and public access, and built infrastructure to flooding and/or MD Climate Change Commission sea level rise scenarios
- Conduct assessments to determine how green infrastructure practices could reduce flooding risks

Phase 2 – Plan

Local governments that have quantified and understand their vulnerability and risk are encouraged to apply for a grant in this category. Under Phase 2, projects will use data from vulnerability assessments and other existing resources to either research and evaluate current planning processes for how and where to integrate hazard planning strategies or move forward with updating and adopting updated planning processes. These projects should result in higher regulatory standards and risk-reduction strategies. Applicants must identify a program change (change in local policies) for which the funding is being sought. Proposals may request up to \$75,000 of funding for projects that will be a maximum of one year in duration.

Examples of projects may include:

- Update and adopt planning processes such as hazard mitigation plans, small area flood mitigation plans, critical areas plans, floodplain ordinances, building codes, zoning ordinances, and/or long-term plans
- Develop or integrate a green infrastructure plan to address coastal, stormwater, or floodplain hazards
- Maintain membership in, or apply to, FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS)
- Assess or evaluate impacted infrastructure (built or natural) with the intent to address current and anticipated flood impacts

Phase 3 – Implement

Local governments and non-profit organizations can submit proposals under this phase to design and permit a resilience project that addresses coastal hazards, stormwater hazards, and/or floodplain management needs. Proposals must be for natural and nature-based resilience projects (i.e. green infrastructure); gray infrastructure (such as bulkheads, conventional stormwater system upgrades and sea walls) will not be funded. CCS can assist applicants to define and identify potential green infrastructure projects that will increase their resilience to specific climate hazards. Proposals may request up to \$100,000 of funding for projects that will be a maximum of two years in duration. Once a project is designed and permitted, CCS will work with the partners to fund the construction of the project, but construction funding is not guaranteed. Applicants cannot propose construction projects without first receiving funding for design and permitting through this grant program.

Examples of projects may include:

- Design a green infrastructure practice that will address previously-determined stormwater risks anticipated due to climate change
- Design an innovative coastal resilience project that will restore or enhance natural features (such as high and low marsh, dunes, coastal forest buffer, and near-shore habitats) while protecting critical infrastructure

Eligible Applicants

Local Governments: Local governments are eligible to propose projects under all phases. Applications must be submitted by a representative of a local government (county or municipality) and the government entity must be the funding recipient if selected.

Non Profits: Charitable or religious non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for funding for Phase 3 projects only. Non-profit organizations must submit a letter of support from a local government representative as well as be registered, in compliance and in good standing with the Maryland Secretary of State.

Other organizations are encouraged to partner with an eligible entity.

Letter of Intent

Interested applicants are encouraged to submit a letter of intent through the CCS Grants Online website at: <http://mesgis.com/GrantsOnLine/Login.aspx>. Please note that although they are encouraged to be submitted by January 26, 2018, letters of intent are not required but will assist CCS staff in working with interested communities to identify and scope a proposal prior to the solicitation deadline. To submit a letter of intent, you will first need to visit the website and create a profile, which consists of a username and password. Please store your username and password in a secure location for later reference. Once you have created a profile and/or logged into the system, select “Submit a Proposal” from the left menu bar. Next you will be asked to select the funding source for which you want to apply – choose “Community Resilience Grant Letter of Intent.” Fill out the appropriate information in fields 1-14 and upload a letter briefly describing your project and the anticipated funding request for Step 1b. You do not need to complete Steps 2 or 3. When done, press “Save and Submit” at the bottom of the page.

Submitting a Proposal

All proposals must be submitted through the CCS Grants Online website at: <http://mesgis.com/GrantsOnLine/Login.aspx>. Applications CANNOT be mailed, faxed or submitted in person. To submit a proposal, you will first need to visit the website and create a profile, which will consist of a username and password. Please store your username and password in a secure location for later reference. Your username and password will be used to submit online reports if your project is selected and to submit future proposals.

Once a profile has been created, you will be guided through the proposal process which is broken into four steps:

- Step 1: Create a Proposal
- Step 2: Create a Budget
- Step 3: Upload Supporting Documents
- Step 4: Review and Submit

Once you have logged in to CCS Grants Online, select “Submit a Proposal” from the left menu bar. Next you will be asked to select the funding source for which you want to apply – choose “Community Resilience Grant Letter of Intent.” Fill out the appropriate information and follow the instructions for each subsequent step in the process. Note: you will be asked to download a “Detailed Proposal Template” and “Budget Template” that you will fill out and upload when complete. Letters of support can be submitted as attachments under Step 3 and are highly encouraged from partners, elected officials, local government agencies and/or other collaborators. Direct any questions about your applications to the Issuing Officers, contact information provided below.

Proposal Review

Each project proposal will receive an initial screening by the CCS to ensure the application meets basic eligibility criteria. CCS staff may follow up with applicants to discuss the projects further. Eligible proposals will then be evaluated by an inter-agency review team on general project content, incorporation of natural resource issues, how well the project proposes to address climate hazards, upcoming development issues, level of community engagement, transferability and readiness to proceed.

After review, CCS staff will work with selected candidates to complete the final scope of work for the project and discuss timing needs to ensure project outcomes are met on time.

Issuing Officers on Behalf of the State of Maryland

The points of contact for the purpose of this solicitation are the Issuing Officers:

For projects addressing coastal impacts within Phases 1 or 2

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Chesapeake and Coastal Service

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For projects addressing coastal impacts within Phase 3

Nicole Carlozo

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For projects addressing stormwater or floodplain impacts within all phases

Megan Granato

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An electronic version of this solicitation can be found at <http://dnr.maryland.gov/ccs/Pages/funding/fundingopp.aspx>.

Deadline

The proposals will be due to the Department of Natural Resources by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, March 2, 2018 through the CCS web-based grants management service, Grants Online, at: <http://dnr.maryland.gov/ccs/grantsonline.asp>.

Solicitation Schedule

The anticipated schedule for the Community Resiliency Grants Program in FFY18 is as follows:

Solicitation Issued	December 2017
Information Session: Eastern Shore	January 16, 2018
Information Session: Western Shore	January 18, 2018
Letter of Intent Due	January 26, 2018
Proposals Due on CCS Grants Online	March 2, 2018 (11:59 pm)
Proposal Initial Screening	March 5-9, 2018
Proposal Review and Evaluation	March 12-30, 2018
Project Selection	April 13, 2018
Finalize Task Descriptions and Budget for Final Scope of Work	April 27, 2018
Project Funding to begin no earlier than	June-October 2018 depending on funding source

Cancellation of the RFP

The State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation at any time.