The National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC) is a federal competition being run by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Nationally, HUD designated 67 eligible applicants of which the State of Connecticut (“the State”) is one. Using a phased approach HUD will award funding on a competitive basis to areas impacted by a federally declared disaster in 2011, 2012 or 2013. The funding will be awarded to applicants that demonstrate remaining unmet need from that disaster and that propose innovative, forward-looking projects or programs to recover in a more resilient way.

HUD has identified New Haven and Fairfield counties as the areas most impacted and distressed by Superstorm Sandy and qualified housing as the unmet need. After reviewing federally declared disasters Sandy was chosen as the qualifying disaster for this competition due to the specific threshold requirements of HUD’s NDRC. Connecticut submitted its Phase 1 application on March 27, 2015 and the State is optimistic that HUD will invite the State to submit a Phase 2 application for projects consistent with the resiliency vision as defined in our Phase 1 application. The State of Connecticut is interested in identifying a pilot geography which will be the focus of the Phase 2 application. Individual municipalities are not eligible applicants for this grant. As such the State is inviting municipalities in New Haven and Fairfield counties to submit ideas, concepts and priorities that are consistent with the Phase 1 application’s vision of resilience for potential inclusion in the State’s Phase 2 application. To be considered for participation in Phase 2, interested parties are asked to submit a Letter Of Interest (LOI) in line with the following deadlines and submission requirements.

Taking part in the State of Connecticut’s NDRC application represents a unique opportunity to pilot more innovative and holistic approaches to reducing our State’s vulnerabilities while also enhancing economic resiliency and community development. To address Connecticut’s vulnerabilities, this proposal outlines a long-term vision for establishing more resilient coastal communities where structures and critical infrastructure in the flood zone are adapted to withstand occasional flooding and protected by healthy buffering ecosystems, where critical services, infrastructure and transport hubs are located on safer, higher ground, and where strong connections exist between the two. Increasing investment in identified resilience zones provides an opportunity to increase economic resilience by strongly tying back to the regional transportation network and regional economic opportunities.

**Interested Parties**

The State of Connecticut is soliciting Letters of Interest (LOI) from local or regional councils of governments within New Haven and Fairfield counties which are interested in becoming a part of the Phase 2 application.

Interested parties must be able to demonstrate they have remaining unmet needs as a result of Superstorm Sandy and are strongly encouraged to work across municipal boundaries with other units of local government. Interested parties must be able to demonstrate they have the capacity and willingness to work closely with regional partners such as the councils of government, other municipalities, and with non-governmental partners such as environmental, community organizations and the private sector. Most importantly they must be able to coordinate very closely with the State throughout the entire NDRC process.

**Requirements**

The NDRC is a phased competition. During the first phase the State formed an interagency committee, State Agencies Fostering Resilience (SAFR), to develop the State of Connecticut’s Phase 1 proposal. This proposal included a comprehensive review of the remaining unmet need from Superstorm Sandy, the vulnerability of the State’s inland and coastal communities to flooding, and most importantly a conceptual approach to addressing these vulnerabilities and promoting greater physical and economic resilience.
SAFR is now seeking regional collaborations and local governments interested in participating in the State of Connecticut’s Phase 2 application in the event that Connecticut is selected to move ahead in this competitive grant process. During the second phase of the competition, SAFR and external experts will work extensively in the selected pilot communities to help develop a geographic or site-specific proposal aligned with the conceptual approach detailed in the Phase 1 proposal.

This second phase of the competition will require full commitment to the Phase 2 process which will involve significant engagement of the community, organizations and the private sector to refine, improve and modify a final project proposal for submission to HUD. Interested local governments will be required to be heavily involved in the planning and public engagement process; however, the State and external experts will be preparing the final grant application and the required benefit cost analysis. Interested local governments will need to demonstrate their ability to work on a tight timeline to support the State’s process, but will not be responsible for drafting the State’s final proposal.

Submission procedure

Parties interested in being considered as a pilot project geography, should submit the requested information (detailed below) to SAFR no later than June 1, 2015. Letters of Interest should be submitted to April Capone, Manager of Intergovernmental Affairs at the Office of Policy and Management (April.Capone@ct.gov). All submissions should include “Solicitation of Interest – National Disaster Resilience Competition” in the subject line.

Submissions should be no more than five (5) pages of single-spaced text. Additional maps and graphics may be linked to or attached and will not count in the page limit.

CIRCA staff is available to discuss elements of the State’s application and HUD’s criteria, in order to provide guidance to help interested parties prepare and submit the information requested in this notice. If you are interested in speaking with the CIRCA staff please contact Rebecca French at Circa@uconn.edu.

Content of the Letter of Interest

The State of Connecticut is seeking a pilot location(s) which are closely aligned with the priorities (and scoring) outlined by HUD in the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC). The State has adapted HUD’s scoring methodology and will evaluate all submissions received using the scoring method included in Attachment 1.

As indicated by the scoring methodology, it is most important to demonstrate that the area has unmet needs following Superstorm Sandy, that the potential project will benefit the low- and moderate-income families, and that potential projects will align with the conceptual vision outlined in Connecticut’s Phase 1 proposal. Interested parties are strongly encouraged to review both the Phase 1 proposal and the Notice of Funding Availability for the NDRC and demonstrate how their area would be a suitable pilot area for the State of Connecticut’s Phase 2 application.

Interested parties will be evaluated by the following criteria: (1) capacity, (2) need, (3) approach/vision, (4) leverage and (5) long-term commitment to resiliency. All interested parties are asked to describe or demonstrate how their geography is well aligned with these criteria which are detailed below.

(1) Capacity
**SOLICITATION OF INTEREST - NATIONAL DISASTER RESILIENCE COMPETITION**

- The interested party has the capacity to assist with the planning & public outreach process within the project timeline.
  - *The State and external experts will provide extensive logistical and organizational support; however, the most successful submissions will demonstrate they have the capacity to assist with the planning and outreach process. For example, interested parties could demonstrate this by detailing the individual and/or number of full-time staff members who would be available over the project timeframe, elaborating on past outreach and community planning processes, or elaborating on other resources or connections the interested party could bring to the table.*

- The interested party has the technical capacity to assist SAFR with the project selection & design process within the timeline
  - *The State and external experts will provide extensive technical support; however, the most successful submissions will demonstrate they have additional technical capacity to assist. For example this could be demonstrated by detailing in-house engineering capacity, planning capacity, GIS capacity, or similar qualifications.* [adding language about the past projects]

- Applicant has potential projects that are aligned with the Phase 1 vision that could reach the level of specificity needed for the State’s NDRC application deadline
  - *Interested parties are asked to indicate any potential or planned project ideas that could be further refined or developed during the NDRC process.*

- The interested party has, or can secure, relevant partnerships to support the planning & project development process
  - *External partners from the public and private sector have already committed to support Connecticut’s NDRC application and will be extensively involved in the planning process. Successful submissions will demonstrate they have the capacity to work closely with external partners. For example, listing past partnerships, or on-going working agreements, that could support the NDRC planning process would be beneficial.* [adding language on past partnerships]

- Submission includes at least one Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement community
  - *Submissions will receive an additional consideration if at least one municipality on the application team is a CDBG entitlement community.*

(2) Need

- Benefits low and moderate-income individuals
  - *The National Disaster Resilience Competition is focused on benefiting the most vulnerable communities. The State is therefore seeking a pilot location that would allow resources to be focused on these communities.*

- Benefits areas impacted by Superstorm Sandy
  - *Interested parties are asked to describe the extent of initial damage following Superstorm Sandy.*

- Benefits an area with demonstrated unmet need from Superstorm Sandy
SOLICITATION OF INTEREST - NATIONAL DISASTER RESILIENCE COMPETITION

• Interested parties are asked to describe the extent of remaining unmet need following Superstorm Sandy, i.e. that has not already been addressed with previous funding. Maps of the unmet need by town are available in the Phase 1 application.

• Benefits an area with needs that cannot be addressed with other programs or funding sources

• Interested parties are asked to describe any unmet funding needs that cannot be addressed with other funding streams and would ideally be addressed through the NDRC process.

• Benefits an area that is likely to be affected by future disasters and conditions impacted by climate change

• Interested parties are asked to describe their community’s vulnerability to future disasters and climate change or activities that could enhance the future resilience of areas impacted by Sandy that were repaired but not made more resilient (in particular, increased risks of flooding). Maps of these risks are publicly available and are also included in the Phase 1 NDRC application. If there are neighborhoods that are particularly vulnerable and not protected by adequate flood defense or drainage networks, please describe them.

• Benefits a distressed municipality

• Interested parties are asked to list any units of local government on the application team that are classified as distressed in accordance with Section 32-9p of the Connecticut General Statutes.

(3) Approach / Vision

• Interested party proposes a community-based resilience approach that is aligned with the approach and vision of CT’s Phase 1 NDRC proposal.

• Interested parties are asked to demonstrate how the conceptual approach outlined in the Phase 1 proposal could be applied and adapted to their particular geography and development priorities.

• Projects that have been implemented or planned in the target area that are aligned with the phase 1 NDRC proposal

  • Interested parties are asked to detail any completed or planned projects within their geography that could be well aligned with the Phase 1 NDRC proposal. For example, submissions could list planned road raising projects that could serve as resilience corridors, TOD planning or housing developments that fall within a resilience zone outside of the floodplain, or flood-proofing projects in the most vulnerable coastal communities. Please include a short summary of the most relevant. Links can be provided to other project documents or renderings.

• The interested party has successfully implemented public outreach and consultation processes similar to those required for NDRC

  • Public outreach and engagement is a centerpiece of the NDRC process. Please briefly describe past experience with successful public outreach and consultation processes.

• The interested parties will work across municipal boundaries where possible

  • HUD has provided clear guidance that the most successful applications involve regional collaboration or approaches. The State is seeking applications that will bridge municipal boundaries. Interested parties are
strongly encouraged to submit in partnership with neighboring municipalities. To the extent possible, please describe past collaborations or the potential to collaborate with your municipal partners moving forward.

**Leverage**

- The interested party can potentially leverage other funding sources or projects to support the NDRC effort
  
  - The NDRC process encourages local governments to integrate other on-going efforts into the final application. This includes projects that may not be eligible for CDBG funding. Interested parties are encouraged to mention any on-going initiatives that could be potential sources of leverage. For example, submissions could list on-going resilience, coastal defense, TOD, complete streets, or other remediation or development projects that are consistent with the Phase 1 conceptual approach.

- The interested party’s approach is consistent with the relevant Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) and hazard mitigation plans
  
  - Interested parties are asked to reference any particularly innovative or relevant components of the POCD or hazard mitigation plans.

**Long-term commitment**

- The interested party has taken steps to reduce their vulnerability to future disasters
  
  - A full list of relevant commitments is included in the [NDRC NOFA](#). Examples of commitments local governments can list include the following:
    
    - Legislative actions or ordinances adopted to enhance the resilience of your community(ies)
    
    - Significant updates to local zoning that reduces an identified vulnerability,
    
    - Adopted above-established-guidelines-or-minimums standards that are measurably increasing resilience now, and will continue to do so into the foreseeable future.
    
    - Requiring freeboard above the minimum National Flood Insurance Program requirements
    
    - Raising standards for permeable surfaces or including green infrastructure requirements for new construction or substantial reconstruction in the floodplain
    
    - Implemented enhanced wetlands preservation mechanisms or requirements, including a compensatory mitigation plan, statute or ordinance
    
    - Guarantee that wetlands within the 500 and 100 year floodplains will be preserved
    
    - Taken actions to increase the percentage of appropriately and fully-insured private and public buildings, homes, and businesses
    
    - Other long-term commitments not listed here or in the NDRC NOFA.
SOLICITATION OF INTEREST - NATIONAL DISASTER RESILIENCE COMPETITION

Project timeline

The National Disaster Resilience Competition requires applicants to work on a very rapid timeline. Interested units of local government must demonstrate they have the ability to work very closely with the State and outside experts to develop a proposal within 120 days of the announcement of Phase 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 29, 2015</td>
<td>Solicitation of Interest released</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 8, 2015</td>
<td>Informational webinar on the solicitation of interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 1, 2015</td>
<td>Letters of Interest due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week of June 7</td>
<td>Anticipated announcement from HUD of Phase 2 participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td>Work begins on Phase 2 application, if CT is selected to move forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>June-August 2015</td>
<td>Planning &amp; engagement process to design and outline NDRC pilot project</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2015</td>
<td>30 day public comment period on draft NDRC proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early October 2015</td>
<td>Final NDRC application due (120 days after the Phase 2 announcement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2015</td>
<td>HUD’s announcement of Phase 2 winners anticipated</td>
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