

TRANSCRIPT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT- MITIGATION

Rebuild Florida CDBG-MIT Overview

Presented by: Caroline Pryor

Slide #0: INTRODUCTION SLIDE

Caroline: Good morning everyone. Welcome to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's Community Development Block Grant Mitigation webinar. My name is Caroline Pryor, and I'm on the Office of Disaster Recovery team here at the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. Today's webinar will provide an overview of the Mitigation program, the recent federal register, next steps and more. Please write down any questions in the question box and we will answer them as time permits.

As a matter of housekeeping, a recording of today's webinar and a transcript will be posted on the program's webpage.

SLIDE #1: AGENDA

Caroline: Today's webinar will provide information on and an overview of Florida's Community Development Block Grant Mitigation program. We will begin with a brief overview of the Mitigation program, communities eligible for the funding, and the Federal Register recently published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Following the explanation of those guidelines, I will discuss the process to develop the federally required state action plan, its main components and the types of projects that align with the program. We'll then talk about next steps, timelines and upcoming community meetings. After the presentation, I will take a few moments to answer any questions you may have. Let's get started.

SLIDE #2: MITIGATION DEFINITION

Caroline: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines Mitigation as, "those activities that increase resilience to disasters and reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of loss of life, injury, damage to and loss of property, and suffering and hardship, by lessening the impact of future disasters." Mitigation efforts recognize that disasters will occur in our future and seek to empower communities to withstand potential unforeseen disasters. Resilient communities are equipped with the plans and actions necessary to respond appropriately to various disaster scenarios.

SLIDE #3: CDBG-MIT OVERVIEW

Caroline:

In the Spring of 2018, HUD originally announced that Florida would receive more than \$633 million in Mitigation funding. These funds are available through the HUD's newly created Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation program formed in response to presidentially declared disasters from 2015-2017. Per federal guidelines, 51 Florida counties are currently eligible for the mitigation funding. For Florida, this eligibility is based on 2016 and 2017 presidentially declared disasters, which we'll address in more detail later in the presentation. Additionally, the state of Florida's State Action Plan, which must be approved by HUD to receive the committed funding, is due no later than February 3, 2020.

SLIDE #4: CDBG-MIT FEDERAL REGISTER

Caroline: The Mitigation Federal Register was published on August 30, 2019, by HUD and outlines in great detail how the program is to be administered. We've included the reference number for you in case you would like to take a look for yourself, or you can also find a link to the register on the program webpage at Rebuildflorida.gov.

SLIDE #5: CDBG-MIT FUNDING

Caroline: According to the guidelines set by the Federal Register, at least 50% of these funds must be spent in HUD-designated Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas, areas show in green on the map. The remaining funding can be spent in state-designated Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas. Additionally, as set in the Federal Register, 50% of the funding must benefit low-to-moderate income (LMI) communities, 50% of the grant must be expended in 6 years and 100% of these funds must be expended in 12 years.

SLIDE #6: HUD MOST IMPACTED AND DISTRESSED AREAS (MIDs)

Caroline: The HUD-designated MID communities that will receive at least 50% of the funds were determined by HUD's methodology as the most impacted and distressed areas from hurricane Hermine, Matthew and Irma. You can see all the counties and specific zip codes listed that fall within the HUD MID category in connection to these disasters.

SLIDE #7: STATE MOST IMPACTED AND DISTRESSED AREAS (MIDs)

The state-designated MID communities that are also eligible to receive funding are listed here and shown on the map. These counties reflect communities not already identified by HUD that received FEMA Individual Assistance *AND* Public Assistance as a result of hurricane Hermine, Matthew or Irma

SLIDE #8: CDBG-MIT ACTION PLAN

Caroline: The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) will lead the state's efforts in creating the State Action Plan that will provide a high-level strategy for how the funding will be used to address eligible communities' disaster mitigation needs. The State Action Plan will be developed in partnership with state agencies working on resiliency efforts, as well as with input from local communities and stakeholders to determine Florida's most critical disaster mitigation needs. Prior to submitting the Action Plan to HUD, DEO will post it for public comment for 45 days. DEO will then submit the State Action Plan to HUD for review by February 3, 2020.

The main requirements for State Action Plan include a Risk-Based Needs Assessment, a Citizen Participation Plan, and clearly outlining eligible and ineligible activities and programs.

SLIDE #9: RISK BASED MITIGATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Caroline: We will now discuss the Risk-Based Mitigation Needs Assessment portion of the State Action Plan. This will cover the Federal Register guidance and how you can plan for projects and programs in your community.

SLIDE #10: RISK BASED MITIGATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Caroline: According to the Federal Register, the guidance for funding determination is measured by current and potential risk for disasters. We are required to provide a quantitative, data supported assessment and consult with the State Hazard Mitigation Plan as a reference for our evaluation. This Needs Assessment will rely heavily on the existing State Hazard Mitigation

Plan as well as Local Mitigation Plans. We are also keeping in mind that this is a living document and as conditions change over time, the program's mitigation initiatives may shift and amendments to the assessment will be submitted as needed. A critical component of the risk assessment will be FEMA's Seven Community Lifelines and strengthening those mechanisms to ensure the resiliency of our state.

SLIDE #11: RISK BASED MITIGATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Caroline: As it relates to the State Action Plan, the risk assessment provides the factual basis for activities proposed in the mitigation strategy that will reduce losses from identified hazards. It makes a clear connection between the vulnerability and the proposed hazard mitigation actions. Listed are major hazards we have plan to include in the State Action Plan. As we move forward with proposed mitigation actions, we are also focusing in on enhancing Community Lifelines. Community Lifelines enable the continuous operation of government functions and critical business and is essential to human health and safety or economic security. We will to support programs that have a clear alignment with the data from the risk-based mitigation needs assessment. We would like to see projects that include interagency effort and increase the resilience of FEMA's Seven Community Lifelines of Risk Reduction. In the risk assessment, identifying gaps and vulnerabilities of these critical services will inform the mitigation strategy.

SLIDE #12: RISK-BASED MITIGATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT: HAZARDS

Caroline: This graphic shows the Seven Community Lifelines that are essential in reducing the impact of disasters. The assessment will address the risks, present and future, of each category. The categories are Safety and Security, Food Water and Shelter, Health and Medical, Energy, Communications, Transportation, and Hazardous Material. These lifelines are highly interdependent and cover a broad spectrum of societal needs. There are many options in our communities that can be fortified and supported through mitigation funding.

SLIDE #13: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Caroline: We know that Hazard Mitigation is a group effort. Therefore, it is imperative to collaborate with other entities for input and feedback. DEO will consult with other jurisdictions, the private sector and other government agencies, including state and local emergency management agencies that have primary responsibility for the administration of FEMA mitigation funds, including the State Hazard Mitigation Officer, for HMGP alignment. Disasters do not occur in a vacuum, so planning for them shouldn't either. We are committed to incorporating suggestions and critiques to enhance Florida's resilience to disasters.

The Citizen Participation requirement as outlined by the Federal Register will help us to increase transparency and is integral to the planning process. Here's how you can get involved.

SLIDE #14: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Caroline: Since the funding was announced in April 2018, DEO has coordinated with local, state and federal partners related to this funding. In May, DEO's Office of Disaster Recovery launched an online survey, which is still available at RebuildFlorida.gov, to generate feedback from Florida communities regarding their mitigation needs and priorities.

Now, with the required guidance from HUD, DEO will continue to coordinate with all community partners. In the coming days and weeks, we will be announcing upcoming regional workshops, additional webinars and more to educate and receive input from community partners on the program.

Once the State Action Plan is drafted, we will post it on the program webpage and provide an opportunity for public comment. This public comment period will last a total of 45 days. Additionally, we will ensure that those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have an opportunity to provide public comment as well. Every comment will be considered in the Action Plan and published on the program website. This includes any amendments made in response to the public comment period.

SLIDE #15: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Caroline: The Citizen Advisory Committee is another component of the Citizen Participation requirement from the Federal Register. We will have at least one body of representatives to increase transparency and give input on the state mitigation activities. We are currently developing where and how these committees will be formed as well as the application process to become a member. Once we have that information, we will post it on the program website and send out email reminders.

SLIDE #16: ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Caroline: Next, I will provide information on program and project eligibility for the mitigation funding.

SLIDE #17: ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES - INFRASTRUCTURE

Caroline: We are placing an emphasis on infrastructure that reduces the risks of hazards so that it can be disaster resistant. Improvements to water, transportation, and health and medical buildings fall within the parameters of the mitigation objectives. We are also looking to promote multi-use infrastructure and green or natural infrastructure development.

SLIDE #18: ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES – PLANNING

Caroline: In the Planning category, we want to modernize building codes and land use plans, integrate mitigation planning with local and regional development partners, and upgrade mapping to understand evolving disasters and risks. There are eligible plan examples listed to help you decide what is most important for your communities.

SLIDE #19: ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES – CDBG-MIT AS MATCH

Caroline: We can also use mitigation funding as match to help fund other projects and programs. This includes other CDBG grants and other federal programs. We want to help leverage funding to maximize the use of every mitigation dollar when fortifying our communities.

SLIDE #20: INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Caroline: Per the Federal Register, funding for buildings used for the general conduct of government is prohibited. However, funds can be used to enhance the resilience of facilities used for Emergency Response Services. In addition, funding cannot be used for forced mortgage payoff, enlargement of dams or levees, or to provide assistance to private utilities.

SLIDE #21: ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Caroline: As we evaluate the types of programs and projects to receive grants, we want to promote local and regional long-term planning, coordinating and leveraging of funds, and natural infrastructure. We also want to ensure construction standards by thorough descriptions for long-term operation and maintenance and reasonable construction costs.

SLIDE #22: ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Caroline: This is the timeline of events that shows the Action Plan development process from start to finish. From the day the Federal Register was published through the Action Plan submission date, we have set forth a collaborative process to make sure we provide funding to the most important Mitigation activities that directly increase the resilience of our communities.

SLIDE #23: QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Caroline: To recap our main points and differentiate this program from other types of CDBG or CDBG-DR grants, we would like to emphasize the following: there is no disaster “tie-back” requirement to receive funding. This means that you do not have to prove damage for a project from any specific disaster to receive funding for community mitigation activities. Only 50% of the funds must be expended in LMI areas which makes it lower than the traditional 70% and instead of urgent needs we are focused on current risks and future risks. There is no Slum/Blight Objective without HUD approval. The program’s goal is to minimize current and future disaster impacts based on demonstrated risks and hazards.

We will now answer some of the questions that we’ve received. If we do not get to your question, we will follow up with you via email after the webinar.

SLIDE #24: LEARN MORE

Caroline: If you would like to learn more or stay up to date with where we are in the process, all pertinent information can be found on the Rebuild Florida Website. You can also send us an email at cdbg-mit@deo.myflorida.com. Thank you.