



Rebuild Florida Mitigation General Infrastructure Program (GIP) Frequently Asked Questions

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Rebuild Florida Mitigation General Infrastructure Program (GIP) Frequently Asked Questions

I. Application

Q: When does the application cycle for Round I of the GIP open and close?

A: The GIP application opened on Monday, June 15, 2020 and **closes on Monday, September 14, 2020 at 5pm.**

Q: How many projects should be included in one application?

A: Applicants may only propose one project per application. Depending on the nature of the project, some projects may have multiple sites or phases. These should be outlined in the application.

Q: Are entities required to have a co-applicant?

A: No, entities are not required to have a co-applicant, however, the goals of the GIP are to promote multi-jurisdictional, large-scale, regional and transformative projects. Partnerships are encouraged.

Q: How can I determine if my application will be competitive?

A: We recommend that all applicants complete a self-assessment and score proposed projects utilizing the scoring criteria outlined in the GIP guidelines. This, along with considerations about the main goals of GIP, will assist applicants with prioritizing projects for submittal. Consider what risks are being mitigated and which community lifelines will be made more resilient as a result of project completion.

Q: How many applications can one entity submit?

A: Eligible entities may submit as many applications as they wish. If entities are submitting more than one application, they must make sure to **name all attached files using this format: EntityNamePD_GIP1, EntityNamePD_GIP2, EntityNamePD_GIP3 etc.** Failing to properly name your documents may result in difficulties with processing your application.

Q: How do I submit an application?

A: An application may be submitted multiple ways:

- 1) Web Application
 - a. Click [here](#) to register for a unique link. An application will be emailed to you after registration.
 - b. Please note that all projects will require **separate link requests**.
- 2) Email a PDF of your application and supporting documentation to cdbg-mit@deo.myflorida.com
 - a. Ensure that you follow all instructions regarding naming conventions and attachments.
- 3) Mail in three hard copies to:

Attention: Rebuild Florida Mitigation Team Florida
Department of Economic Opportunity
107 East Madison Street Caldwell Building, MSC 400
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2100

DEO recommends applicants to submit their applications online via the online application portal.

Q: How do I submit a PDF application via email?

A: Select “Submit Application” on the PDF application to have your application emailed directly to the Rebuild Florida Mitigation team at: CDBG-MIT@deo.myflorida.com. A dialog box will appear that will allow you to email the application **and to attach all required files**. This redundancy will ensure that all proper documentation reaches the Mitigation Team.

Q: What is the maximum and minimum allocation an entity can be awarded?

A: An **entity** may be awarded a maximum of \$150,000,000 and a minimum of \$500,000 for allocation across all of their GIP project applications.

Q: How do I make a zip file?

A: Create a folder that contains the Word document and .jpeg files. Name the file your EntityNameCV_GIP. Next, right click the folder. Select “Send to”, then select “Compressed zipped folder”. Additional instructions for making a zip file can be found [here](#).

Q: Do I have to make a zip file for the Community Value question?

A: A zip file for this section is preferred. However, you can attach photos to a Word document or PowerPoint presentation. Only a single document will be accepted in any

of the attachment questions. This means that you **cannot** upload both a Word document and a PowerPoint. Therefore, if you upload a Word document or PowerPoint instead of a zip file, you must make sure both the community value questions and images are included in the single document.

Q: I accidentally uploaded the wrong document, what do I do?

A: Click on the name of the document that you uploaded. A dialog box will pop up to allow you to replace the current document with the correct one. Only a single document can be attached per section. Double check that the correct document is submitted under its designated section.

Q: I accidentally did not attach a document that is required, what do I do?

A: If you are still in the application, navigate back to the question by using the green arrows located on the bottom pane of the application. Proceed to upload the document for this section. If you have already submitted the application to DEO, then you will need to email: CDBG-MIT@deo.myflorida.com with the missing documents attached. Explain the situation clearly in your email and describe which documents were missing. Make sure the documents you attach to the email are titled appropriately. All portions of the application are due on **September 14, 2020 at 5pm EST**, including any documents that you need to email.

Q: The templates included in the application will not open for me, what do I do?

A: The Implementation Plan and Budget Templates are included at the very beginning of the application and are attached under their designated questions. Additionally, these templates can be found in the GIP Guidelines in Appendices D and E and on the [DEO website](#). If you are unable to open or find these templates, [contact](#) the CDBG-MIT team.

Q: I am having trouble finding my Census Tract and Block Group numbers for my area of benefit, what do I do?

A: Before contacting DEO, make sure you have read the detailed instructions on how to find these numbers in the GIP Guidelines and instructions. Additionally, view the material on HUD's website on how to find your Census Tract and Block Group numbers. A link to HUD's webinar and instructions can be found [here](#).

Q: Do I have to include all the Census Tract and Block Group numbers?

A: Yes, this is mandatory. Including every number allows DEO to accurately calculate the overall percentage of Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) benefit.

Q: I started the application but when I tried to access the link again, I could not get into my application.

A: In order to have unlimited access to your application, you must complete the DEO registration process. You can find the DEO registration process on our website or by clicking [here](#).

Q: I started the application but when I tried to access the link again, my answers were not saved.

A: First, make sure you have a strong internet connection when accessing this application. Second, do not delete your “cookies” while completing this application. Additionally, in order to have unlimited access to your application, you must complete the DEO registration process. You can find the link to the registration process on our website [here](#). Last, do not click the “back” button in the top left-hand corner of your browser. To navigate through the application, click the green arrow buttons on the bottom pane of the application.

Q: Who can sign the application for submission?

A: The application can be signed with a digital signature by the person who has signature authority for the applying entity.

II. Eligibility

Q: Can you define units of general local government (UGLG)?

A: For the purposes of GIP units of general local government (UGLG) include counties and municipalities.

Q: Can you elaborate about what types of new construction buildings are eligible for this program?

A: A variety of new construction buildings may be eligible for the GIP, provided that they are connected to an infrastructure project. To have a competitive application, we advise that applicants do not apply to build only one building that has no larger infrastructure component.

Q: Can I build a new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) or City Hall building?

A: No. An Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is not eligible for new construction with this Mitigation program, however, an EOC can be hardened to make it more resilient. Mitigation funds are also ineligible to support buildings if its primary purpose is the general conduct of government, and thus a City Hall would also be ineligible.

Q: Can an organization that is a non-state agency or non-government entity with a project apply to this program?

A: The primary applicant must be a state agency or unit of general local government (UGLG), such as a county or municipality. Non-state and non-government entities can participate as co-applicants for the GIP as long as a UGLG is the primary applicant.

Q: Is a public housing authority, school board or fire district an eligible applicant entity?

A: Organizations and entities that are not counties or municipalities may apply in partnership with their county, municipality or a state agency as a co-applicant.

Q: Is land acquisition an eligible activity?

A: Yes, land acquisition as a component of an infrastructure project is an eligible activity.

Q: My county is located within a HUD or state-designated most impacted and distressed (MID) area. Does the project also have to fall in one of the designated zip codes to be eligible?

A: No. Eligible applicants for the GIP include HUD and state-designated MID counties *and* zip codes. If your county is located within a HUD or state-designated county *or* zip code, then your project is eligible for this program.

Q: My county is not a HUD or state-designated MID county. Will I still be able to apply for this grant?

A: No. Eligible areas for the CDBG-MIT program include HUD and state-designated MID areas and/or zip codes only.

Q: Can you describe supplanting/duplication of benefits?

A: GIP funds may only be utilized after all other funds available to provide benefits to the applicant for the same purpose have been expended. Projects that have been budgeted cannot be supported through GIP funding because that would be considered supplanting of funds. Any supplanting of funds will be treated as a duplication of benefits or fraud, waste and abuse. More information can be found on this in the GIP Guidelines on the [program webpage](#).

III. Requirements

Q: Is there a public notice requirement for this program?

A: Yes. Per recent guidance by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and HUD, due to the impacts of COVID-19, all applicants must receive public input on their application by either posting information about their project to their public website for 14 days or by holding a virtual public meeting. Details about the specific requirements are available in the GIP Guidelines on the website [here](#). **Failure to complete this requirement before the September 14th deadline for the GIP application will render the applicant ineligible.**

Q: Do projects need to be “shovel ready” to be funded (i.e., blueprints, engineering)?

A: No. Proposed projects do not need to be “shovel ready” to receive Mitigation funds. Shovel ready projects will not receive additional points.

Q: Will we be required to go out for a request for qualifications (RFQ) for an administration consultant to administer the grant for us?

A: No, you are not required to procure a consultant. However, if you choose to do so, you must follow all HUD and DEO procurement guidelines. Evidence that guidelines were followed will be included in subrecipient agreement forms.

Q: My county has a Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) approved by our county commission. Are we required to use elements from the LMS as project priorities for this grant?

A: No, applicants are not required to use elements from the LMS as project priorities for the GIP and there are no additional points awarded for LMS-approved projects.

IV. Budget

Q: Are engineering and administration costs for a new project covered under the grant?

A: Engineering and administrative costs may be eligible under covered costs if they are directly tied to project activities. Administrative costs must be directly tied to program activities. Indirect costs are ineligible for reimbursement.

Q: How does Leveraged Dollars Scoring work?

A: Within the application, applicants will describe how they plan to maximize the outcomes of investments and the degree to which CDBG-MIT funds will be leveraged to generate more effective and comprehensive mitigation outcomes. An applicant will be scored based on the percentage of leveraged dollars utilized. The scoring will be as follows: less than 15%: 2pts, 16-30%: 4pts, 31-45%: 6pts, 46-60%: 8pts, 61% or more: 10pts.

Q: Can CDBG-MIT funds be used to match FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for Irma-related projects?

A: Yes, CDBG-MIT funds can be used to meet a matching share for other federal programs. This includes FEMA HMGP. The GIP does not require any local match. However, all use of leveraged or matched funds must be clearly outlined in the GIP application and comply with all HUD and DEO regulations. Leveraged projects can earn up to 10 points for scoring.

Q: If we have been awarded a grant for which a project is already underway, can match still be applied?

A: It is possible. However, you must have followed all HUD and CDBG-MIT regulations from the very beginning of the project. These requirements are in addition to other federal requirements. You should contact DEO to provide additional information before applying.

Q: When will CDBG-MIT funds be available to subrecipients?

A: The general process for subrecipients is as follows: At the end of the application process, the Mitigation team will begin scoring all applications received. The top-scoring application locations will be scheduled for a site visit from DEO. Next, DEO will proceed to award subrecipient agreements to successful applicants. DEO expects award notices

to be issued in the beginning of 2021 for the GIP. However, COVID-19-related mandates may interrupt this timeline.

Q: Does hiring staff and/or consultants for CDBG-MIT programs fall under eligible costs for reimbursement?

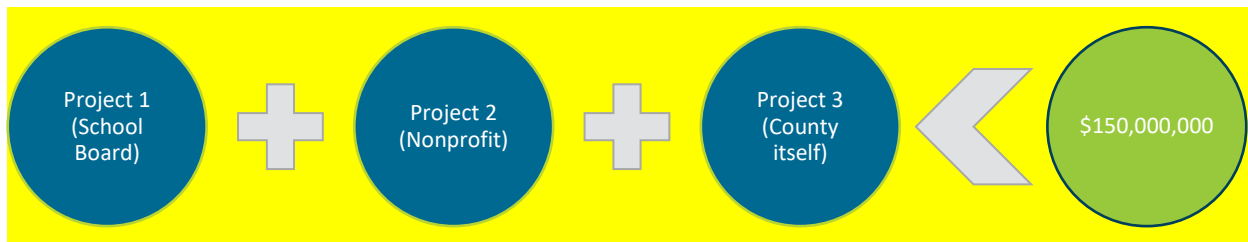
A: Some of these costs may be eligible if they can be directly and exclusively applied to the infrastructure project. Note that all eligible expenditures will be outlined in subrecipient agreements for successful applicants before the funds are awarded.

Q: Describe how the maximum amount of funds permitted for applications works?

A: Each eligible entity can be awarded within the range of the max/min thresholds of each of DEO's three CDBG-MIT programs. If an entity meets the maximum application amount for one program, that does not preclude it from applying for another program.

There may be separate entities within the same region that can be awarded **independently** for the maximum amounts.

If just Leon County is applying for multiple projects, they will be limited by the maximum threshold of the given program because they are one entity responsible for multiple projects. For example, Leon County may have three separate projects for the GIP. One of the three might be a school board applying in partnership with the County (because school boards are not UGLGs). The second might be a nonprofit partnership. The third might be the County itself. The County would be the applicant for three separate projects and combined, the three cannot exceed the maximum award threshold of \$150 million.



V. Miscellaneous

Q: We have a project with a service area that encompasses both a State-designated MID and HUD-designated MID. Which area will be considered when scoring the application?

A: If the service area of your project crosses into both a State and HUD-designated MID area, then DEO will give you the full points for having a service area in a HUD MID area.

Q: When will awards be announced?

A: DEO expects notices to award to be issued in the beginning of 2021 for GIP.

Q: What will reporting schedules look like fo successful applicants?

A: DEO operates on a monthly basis and HUD operates on a quarterly basis. All reporting details will be outlined for successful applicants in their subrecipient agreements.