

## **New Jersey Economic Development Authority Government Restricted Municipality Planning Grants - Phase II**

### **Notice of Funding Availability**

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (“NJEDA” or “Authority”) will begin accepting applications for the Government Restricted Municipalities (GRM) Strategic Planning Grant - Phase II beginning May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 at 9:00 AM. **Applications will be accepted only from qualified, eligible GRMs of Phase I no later than July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5:00 PM.** Applicants should review the application resources posted to the Authority’s webpage at <https://www.njeda.gov/grmpgp/> for more information.

### **Overview**

This funding opportunity is issued by the Authority as part of Governor Murphy’s campaign to build a stronger and fairer New Jersey and to facilitate recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic with substantive investments in New Jersey’s people, communities, Main Streets, and businesses. Using funding from the New Jersey Economic Recovery Act of 2020, the Government Restricted Municipality Planning Grants Program - Phase II will provide grants to qualified GRM applicants to finance gaps in technical planning that restrain projects from moving forward. The grants will enable GRMs to complete technical planning necessary for projects identified in Phase I strategic action plans.

### **Purpose**

The technical planning funding is designed to bridge gaps in business analysis, civic engagement, engineering, architectural, environmental, scientific and media planning, research and analysis for projects identified in the Phase I strategic action plans that require technical planning work. Recipients of Phase II grants will be tasked with project selection through a project prioritization plan from actionable projects listed in the strategic action plan created using Phase I funding. The project prioritization plan will detail the catalytic projects and the technical planning gaps in the projects.

At the conclusion of the technical planning work, GRMs will have a pipeline of shovel ready or near shovel ready projects ready for financing.

### **Eligible Applicants**

The Authority is seeking applications directly **only** from Government Restricted Municipalities that had completed strategic action plans from **Phase I**. GRMs are defined in Sections 55 and 69 of the Economic Recovery Act.

### **Eligible Uses**

The use of grant funds must be focused on technical planning for projects listed in the strategic action plans completed during Phase I. The technical planning funding is designed to bridge gaps in business analysis, civic engagement, engineering, architectural, environmental, scientific and media

planning, research and analysis for projects identified in the strategic action plans that require technical planning work.

No awards will be made for construction hard costs, demolition, or property acquisition. No funding for project costs, other than technical planning, will be awarded or disbursed. No funding will be awarded for the administration or supervision of the grant and/or associated projects. Applicants must submit a prioritized project list with technical assistance gaps identified. The prioritized project list must include projects as listed in the strategic action plan. The applicant may choose the number, scope, type, and municipal prioritization of the projects.

### **Grant Amounts**

Phase II grants will be awarded **up to \$750,000 per GRM**.

The potential award amount is based upon current information about funding availability. NJEDA reserves the right to increase that amount and number of awards should additional funds become available.

### **Application Submission and Review Process (including Scoring)**

The projects included in Phase II must be evaluated and will be selected by the GRM in a competitive fashion based on municipal goals for equitable community focused economic development. After competitive municipal evaluation, projects will be prioritized in funding order by the GRM. Projects included in the prioritization plan must be originated from the strategic action plan of Phase I. The GRM will select the number, type, scope, and municipal priority of projects to be included in the project prioritization plan. The projects will be funded based on the project prioritization plan and continue in descending order until grant funds are exhausted.

The Applicant shall describe its approach to undertaking a series of technical planning efforts in order to catalyze community supported projects listed in the Phase I strategic action plan by clearly explaining how the planning project will work to accomplish the goals of the Government Restricted Municipality Planning Grants Program. The GRM will submit one application in which it has multiple project plans derived from the Phase I strategic action plan. The project plans will be compiled in the project prioritization list, which will include a project priority rank as well as a project summary.

In line with these goals, the application must contain, at a minimum, the required information identified below (as applicable):

- Completed Application Information Form and any additional information related to the Scope of Work that the applicant feels is relevant.
- Completed Budget Estimate that demonstrates how the full project budget is being utilized. The budget must detail costs, which include, but are not limited to, labor costs, contract/technical services and support costs, and material costs. The budget must project out that the final

deliverable will be met within six (6) months of grant execution. The budget will be outlined in a fee schedule.

- Completed municipal strategic action plan funded by Government Restricted Municipality planning grant, phase I
- Completed project prioritization list listing:
  - o projects as included from completed municipal strategic action plan and selected by the municipality in a competitive format
  - o technical planning gaps inherent in the projects
  - o projects must be listed in order of municipal funding priority
- Demonstration of an ability to contract for professional services for technical planning needs.
- Demonstration of a stakeholder engagement process and strategy in the selection of projects that will receive technical planning funding.
- Examples or information reflecting prior experience of applicant in oversight and monitoring of multiple technical planning projects of a similar size and scope.

Applications will be accepted until forty-five (45) calendar days after the Phase II opening. Applications will then be reviewed for completeness.

Applications deemed complete will be reviewed for eligibility and scored by an evaluation committee that is comprised of Authority staff and possibly other State agencies/Department Subject Matter Experts. At the sole discretion of the Authority, NJEDA staff may ask for any clarifications to the application, including but not limited to responses, documentation, and attachments.

Only applications with scores that **meet or exceed the minimum score of 50** will be recommended for review and approval to the NJEDA Board.

The evaluation scale is as follows:

- 0 points - Absence of ability to meet the criteria
- 1 – 7 points – Minimal ability to meet the criteria
- 8 – 11 points – Satisfactory ability to meet the criteria
- 12 – 17 points – Exceptional ability to meet the criteria
- 18 – 20 points - Unique ability to meet the criteria

### **Scoring Criteria**

- 1) Demonstration of the GRM's ability to achieve the goals of bridging technical planning gaps for catalytic projects listed in the strategic action plan developed under Phase I.
- 2) Demonstration of the ability to contract technical planning experts in a range of planning and economic development disciplines.

- 3) Demonstration of the ability to conduct oversight and project management for subcontractors.
- 4) Demonstration of an ability to design a technical planning deployment strategy for multiple catalytic municipal projects.
- 5) Demonstration of a defined collaborative stakeholder engagement process and strategy.

### **Funding Disbursements**

The grant recipient GRM will be awarded up to \$750,000 in tranches of up to \$250,000 per project that is identified in Phase 1. All tranches must be disbursed by the completion of the grant term.

Grant disbursements by the Authority will only be made to the applicant who shall be responsible for assuring the compliance of any sub-contractors with all terms and conditions of the program and who assumes the sole and absolute responsibility for any payments due to any sub-contractors pursuant to applicable laws.

**Each disbursement must be accompanied by supporting documentation. Disbursements will only be made after the submission and approval by the Authority of the supporting documentation.**

At a minimum, the supporting documentation referenced above should include:

- Summary of projects to be funded with this disbursement;
- Summary of funds to be expended;
- Summary of funds expended to date;
- Narrative detailing technical planning funding gap on each project proposed for funding
- Full and complete copies of any contracts for technical planning and
- Milestones achieved and overall progress toward completion of final plan.

### **Fees**

Due to financial hardship and similar to Phase I, no fees will be collected by the Authority for this program.

### **Additional Information**

Additional Information on the Government Restricted Municipalities Planning Grants Phase II may be found on the NJEDA website at <https://www.njeda.gov/grmpgp/>.

The Authority will electronically accept written questions and inquiries from all potential Applicant(s) via the web at [NJEDAGRM@njeda.com](mailto:NJEDAGRM@njeda.com).

The subject line of the e-mail should state: "Questions – GRM Phase II". All questions received, and answers given in response to this application will be answered in the form of a "Frequently Asked Questions" document to be posted and continually updated on the Authority's website, <https://www.njeda.gov/grmpgp/>, up until 20 days after publication of notice and release of

application (whichever is sooner). The Authority will also post any addenda on the same website. It is the responsibility of any potential applicants to review the website on a frequent basis to become aware of any answers and addenda.

**The NJEDA is subject to State and Federal statutes including, but not limited to, the following, which may impact affiliates:** N.J.S.A. 52:32-60.1, et seq., which prevents the New Jersey government entities from certain dealings with businesses engaged in prohibited activities in Belarus or Russia; Compliance with the list of “Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons” promulgated by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), <https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov>; N.J.S.A. 24:6I-49 which provides that the following are not eligible for most State or local economic incentives (a) a person or entity issued a license to operate as a cannabis cultivator, manufacturer, wholesaler, distributor, retailer, or delivery service, or that employs a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service; and (b) a property owner, developer, or operator of a project to be used, in whole or in part, by or to benefit a cannabis cultivator, manufacturer, wholesaler, distributor, retailer, or delivery service, or to employ a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service; and N.J.S.A. 52:13D-12, et seq., which prohibits a member of the Legislature or a State officer or employee or their partners or a corporation in which they owns or controls more than 1% of the stock to undertake or execute any contract, agreement, sale, or purchase of \$25.00 or more, made, entered into, awarded or granted by any State agency, with certain limited exceptions.