

NYS Department of State
Office of Planning, Development and Community Infrastructure
Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning (SGCP)
2021 – 2022 Request for Applications
RFA #21-OPDSG-18

The responses to questions included herein are official responses by the Department of State (DOS) to questions submitted by potential applicants and are hereby incorporated into the Request for Applications RFA #21-OPDSG-18 issued on May 10, 2021. In the event of any conflict between the Request for Applications and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

Questions & Answers

GENERAL

Q1. What is the final deadline for CFA [Consolidated Funding Application] questions?

A1: The final deadline for questions related to the Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant Program was June 18, 2021.

Q2: Where can we get more information about the Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan grant program?

A2: A full Request for Applications and other information about the Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant program are available on DOS's website, here: [2021-2022 Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant Program | Department of State \(ny.gov\)](#)

Q3. Can an award be transferred to another party? In a sense can an award be used as an incentive to solicit proposals for the demolition, remediation or redevelopment of a specific property?

A3: No, an award cannot be transferred to another party. In addition, implementation is not an eligible expense under the Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant Program.

ELIGIBILITY/SCOPE

Q4. I wanted to confirm that the Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant Program can be used to create new comprehensive plans as long as the new comp plans incorporate smart growth principles?

A4: Yes. The Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant Program is designed to develop new or updated municipal comprehensive plans that are consistent with Smart Growth Principles.

Q5. If a municipality already has an adopted comprehensive plan, can they apply to update their plan with Smart Growth Principles?

A5. Yes, communities with an adopted comprehensive plan are encouraged to regularly update their plan to reflect changes in local conditions and community goals and to integrate Smart Growth Principles. An update to the comprehensive plan will ensure the plan is current and well-connected to short and long-range community objectives and Smart Growth Principles.

Q6. Can a county apply for a grant to develop a county-wide comprehensive plan?

A6. No. The program does not fund county-wide or regional comprehensive plans. This grant opportunity is intended to support development of comprehensive plans for villages, towns and cities. A county may apply for a grant on behalf of any one of the county's villages, towns or cities (if any).

Q7. Can a county, regional planning entity, or not-for-profit submit an application for more than one municipal comprehensive plan?

A7. Applications to prepare or update a municipal comprehensive plan may only include one municipal plan per application. However, an eligible entity may submit multiple applications. Applications submitted by a county, regional planning entity or not-for-profit organizations must include a letter or resolution from each eligible municipality participating in the project which demonstrates the municipal consent and support for the application.

Q8. I have a question on the scope of area for this grant. Must it be applied to a full municipal level or if we have a specific sub-area (over 150 acres), would that be eligible?

A8: The comprehensive plan must apply to the full municipal jurisdictional boundary of each village, town and/or city for which the plan will be prepared/developed.

Q9. While we continue to work on the Comprehensive Plan Update, I'm wondering if there is an opportunity for the Town to apply to DOS through the CFA round for funding to assist with implementation of Comp Plan recommendations. However, the challenge will be in describing or outline the "project" we are pursuing (perhaps code changes or additional study... I don't know yet) by the July 30 deadline? Could I speak in generalities about implementing the Comp Plan, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2021?

A9: Implementation of comprehensive plan recommendations are not eligible through this source of funding. The Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant Program is

designed to develop or update municipal comprehensive plans that are consistent with Smart Growth Principles.

Q10. Can a project that combines development of a municipal Comprehensive Plan and the implementation of new Zoning and Subdivision Regulation in support of that plan be eligible for this funding?

A10. No. Applications may only be submitted for the development of new or updated municipal comprehensive plans.

Q11. What is the definition of “complete” comprehensive plan under “V. Eligible Activities” in the RFA #21? Can a town apply for funding to implement the recommendations of a Comprehensive Plan Update that is currently being worked on with the intent to finish by December 2021? The Town’s Comprehensive Plan Update work is following Smart Growth Principles as described in Section VI #1-15 of the RFA. It is the intent of the Town to include recommendations based on goals that include in part mixed land uses, future housing needs and affordable housing, directing growth together with increasing density to areas served by existing infrastructure, and maintaining and protecting the health of natural resource systems including resilience to climate change.

A11: In this context, the term “complete” means to finish or finalize a comprehensive plan that has not been adopted. In other words, Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning may assist in funding the preparation of a new comprehensive plan; completion of an existing comprehensive plan that has not yet been finished and adopted; or update an existing and/or outdated comprehensive plan. Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning grant funds may not be used to implement recommendations in an existing or updated plan.

Q12. Does an award for demolition and remediation of a property require the awardee already own the parcel, or maintain ownership?

A12: Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning grant funds may not be used to implement recommendations in an existing or updated plan. Demolition and remediation are not eligible activities.

Q13. Can a municipality apply to the Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant Program AND the LWRP Program in the 2021 CFA?

A13: Yes, an eligible municipality may submit one Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) to apply for funding to prepare both a Comprehensive Plan and a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. Please see Answer 14 below for additional information.

Q14. The Town of Black Brook is interested in pursuing funding to prepare a joint LWRP/Comprehensive Plan. Funding for the Comprehensive Plan component would be through the new NYSDOS Smart Growth funding program. The proposed approach will be to submit one application through the Grants Gateway for the joint project and individually address Smart Growth Comp. Plan and LWRP elements

We are in the process of sketching out the scope and how the different plan elements will work together, including public outreach and meetings. It is envisioned that the LWRP would be an appendix/addendum to the Comprehensive Plan.

Before the Town commits to this approach, we would like to clarify if NYSDOS would have any objections to the joint application being funded by two different programs and if there are any technical, legal, or contractual issues with the combined submission.

A14: Applicants may submit one application through the CFA to apply for funding from both the Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant and Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs. The application should separately identify the funding required to prepare each plan and should show a clear plan to complete each project independent of the other with a clear separation of tasks and outcomes. The CFA will be evaluated separately by each of the LWRP and Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning grant programs to determine if funding for each plan will be awarded. If funded by both grant programs, the Town would need to execute two separate contracts with DOS.

DOS would require the Town to develop two separate documents following the DOS work plans developed for each contract and fulfill NYS legislative requirements for each plan. One important difference between the plans is that the Comprehensive Plan must encompass the entire Town, where the LWRP must focus on the waterfront area of the town.

Q15. I logged into the CFA portal then used the wizard to determine program eligibility for the City's application to update its Comprehensive Development Plan.

ESD's Strategic Planning & Feasibility Studies program came up along with DOS's Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant Program. In my research, I've determined that the City would need \$100,000 to complete the project based on our needs and population size of the City, County, Region, etc. Would it be best to apply to ESD for \$50,000 and DOS for \$50,000 or can I simply apply to DOS for the maximum amount of \$100,000?

Also, we currently have a CDP 2005-2025; however, it is no longer useful and we are in dire need of a new plan especially since we have changing demographics and are losing our largest employer (Siemen's). I was part of helping with the creation and adoption of the 2005 plan and it makes sense to have the working document run for another 20 years. My question to you is can I have it be 2023-2043 based on a timeline of events after grant award and contract with the State then release of the RFP that I've written for consulting services? I believe in reality we could have it adopted in 2023 and simply abandon the old plan even though it has an end date of 2025.

A15: Applicants may submit one Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) to apply for funding from one or more programs. In the event that another NYS agency fully funds a high scoring project through the CFA process, the awardee will receive funding from only one state agency. The Department will work with other NYS agencies to ensure that duplication of funding does not occur. A current comprehensive plan may be updated to incorporate Smart Growth Principles and recommendations to cover a future timeframe. Once completed the previous comprehensive plan may be abandoned following appropriate protocols for abandonment.

BUDGET/MATCH

Q16. Is there a maximum or minimum State assistance request amount per application?

A16. See [Request for Applications](#), page 7, Section VII. Funding and Budget Guidance. The maximum State assistance request per grant application is \$100,000, or 90% of the total eligible project cost, whichever is less. Applications requesting over \$100,000 will be disqualified and will not be scored. There is no minimum State assistance request amount.

Q17. I had a question in regards to Section VII FUNDING AND BUDGET GUIDANCE. In the first sentence it states “grant recipients shall not exceed 90% of the total eligible project cost”, could the leftover 10% costs be in-kind services, for example our department is contracted by local municipalities for planning services or would it have to be a cash match?

A17: The Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant program reimburses 90% of all eligible costs incurred for the project up to the amount of a grant award. An eligible applicant receiving a grant award must demonstrate the ability to cover the remaining 10% of the project costs, and those costs must be eligible and essential to project completion. The remaining 10% of the project costs may be personal or non-personal services that are adequately justified and directly support the project. For additional information on what constitutes eligible and ineligible costs, see [Request for Applications](#) “Section VII Funding and Budget Guidance” page 7.

Partnering municipalities must be established through an intermunicipal agreement or other contractual agreement. In-kind services must be documented and an invoice submitted to the grantee reflecting all incurred costs, including match.

Q18. Which programs allow us to use in-kind services to satisfy the County’s match requirements?

A18: Eligible costs under the Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant program include both personal and non-personal services as described on page 7 of the RFA, Section VII. Funding and Budget Guidance. These eligible costs apply to both grant reimbursement and match.