

Public Infrastructure Q&A

Q: What is the purpose of the Rebuild Illinois Public Infrastructure grant program?

A: The objective of the Rebuild Illinois Public Infrastructure (RIPI) component of the Rebuild Illinois plan is to provide grants funding public infrastructure improvements that can provide an improved foundation for economic growth in Illinois communities.

Q: What types of projects qualify for this funding?

A RIPI grant funds can be used for a wide range of public infrastructure projects, including the following:

- Rail or air or water port improvements
- Gas and electric utility extensions
- Publicly owned industrial and commercial sites
- Waste Disposal Systems
- Water and Sewer line extensions
- Water distribution and purification facilities
- Flood and Drainage
- Dredging of waterways
- Other public infrastructure capital improvements

Projects that receive grants will address an identified economic development need in their community.

Q: Does the project have to be publicly owned to qualify?

A: Yes.

Q: How much funding is available?

A: \$50 million is available for RIPI. Individual grants may range from \$250K to \$5M.

Q: Who is eligible to apply?

Local governments (i.e. cities, villages, townships & counties). These units may submit applications on behalf of local entities that otherwise could not apply, such as water districts.

Q: What is the applications timeline?

A: Applications are due June 30, 2020.

Q: What expenditures are specifically disallowed?

A: The following activities are identified as ineligible for this grant opportunity:

- Administration or Activity Delivery costs associated with the management of grant activities. However, reasonable Administration costs may be included as leverage/match to the grant funds.
- Indirect costs, as this grant is funded through the Illinois Capital bill which excludes indirect costs
- Construction of buildings, or portions thereof, used predominantly for the general conduct of government (e.g., city halls, courthouses, jails, police stations).
- General government expenses.

- Costs of operating and maintaining public infrastructure and services (e.g., mowing parks, replacing streetlight bulbs).
- Servicing or refinancing of existing debt
- Lease payments for rental of equipment or facilities
- Costs of staff or resident labor and material outside of project construction
- Demolition only activities
- Planning only activities

Q: How will projects be evaluated and ranked?

A: The highest-scoring projects will be those that can clearly demonstrate that they address a clear need of the community, that they will result in more economic development opportunities, and that they have community support. Projects will be evaluated according to the following criteria (100 total points):

- Project Impact (27.5 pts)
- Job Creation (15 pts)
- Community Need (22.5 pts)
- Community Support (15 pts)
- Project Readiness (20 pts)

Q: Will vendors owned by minorities and women have an opportunity to participate?

A: The Business Enterprise Program, which applies to all grants of \$250K or more, establishes a goal for contracting with businesses owned by persons who are minority, female, or who have disabilities. In addition, the quality of each applicant's Minority Inclusion Plan contributes to the Project Impact score.

Q: My project meets eligibility requirements for multiple Rebuild Illinois grants. Can I apply to multiple grants for the same project?

A: Yes. You can use different state grants to pay for different components of the same project.

Q: What happens if most of the application is completed but a few minor details are not known by the application deadline? Can follow-up/clarifications be submitted?

A: Not generally. Failure to provide complete application information can result in a determination of "Do Not Fund." On a case-by-case basis, DCEO can determine to fulfill application requirements as special grant conditions to be completed prior to grant agreement.

Q: There are a few important public infrastructure projects in my community, but they are not far enough along in their planning/development for us to score well on this grant. What can we do?

A: Grants from the Rebuild Illinois capital plan will be deployed over the course of the next four to five years. If you move forward on economic development planning and project planning for impactful projects in your community over the next few years, you will have the opportunity to access other Rebuild Illinois grants in the future. Projects that are well-developed and tied to a local or regional economic plan are more likely to be competitive for future Rebuild Illinois grants.

Q: This looks complicated. Is there support for applying for this grant?

A: You can find detailed information about the grant and how to apply at <https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/CommunityServices/CommunityInfrastructure/Pages/default.aspx>. You may also e-mail us at CEO.OCD@Illinois.gov or call your regional representative at the Office of Community Development (phone numbers [here](#)) if you have any questions.

If you would like direct support in preparing an application, we recommend reaching out to your regional planning commission or a local or regional economic development organization for a referral. Local chambers of commerce may also be able to support your efforts.

Q: What state and federal mandates must applicants be aware of?

A: Applicants must commit to compliance with all applicable state and federal requirements. Key mandates to be mindful of include:

- 2 CFR 200 and the Grantee Accountability & Transparency Act (GATA)
- The Interagency Wetland Policy Act of 1989
- The Illinois Endangered Species Act and the Illinois Natural Area Preservation Act
- Illinois Prevailing Wage Act
- Illinois Works Jobs Program Act
- Business Enterprise Program
- Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act
- Equal Opportunity and Fair Housing Accessibility Laws
- The National Emission Standards for hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) of the U.S. Clean Air Act

Q: Are public hearings required?

A: A public hearing must be held prior to passage of a local council's commitment of funds for the application. If no unit of local government is committing funds, this requirement does not apply.

Q: How is this grant opportunity different from regular Community Development Block Grants?

A: As the funding source for Rebuild Illinois grants is state rather than federal for CDBG grants, there are some different requirements. For example, the Illinois Works Jobs Program Act and the Business Enterprise Program are included for Rebuild but not CDBG; however, Environmental reviews for CDBG projects include more detailed requirement than state-funded Rebuild Illinois projects.

Rebuild Illinois grants are available to eligible applicants throughout the state. CDBG grants administered by DCEO are generally only available in low- and moderate-income areas and outside so-called "Entitlement Areas."

Rebuild Illinois grant ceilings are \$5 million while CDBG is \$550,000. CDBG includes \$30,000 for grant administration while it is not an eligible grant expense for Rebuild Illinois.

Rebuild Illinois has a broader range of eligible activities while CDBG public infrastructure projects tend to be focused on sewer and water projects.