

# CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES GRANTS



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

## Part of the NYS Environmental Protection Fund

The Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Grant Program is a competitive 50/50 matching grant program for municipalities to implement projects focused on climate change adaptation and greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation. Project types also include certain planning and assessment projects that are part of a strategy to achieve Climate Smart Communities Certification.

### Implementation Projects

**Up to \$7 million** is available in 2023 for implementation grants of between \$50,000 and \$2,000,000 for mitigation and adaptation projects such as those listed below. No more than 15% of an implementation grant may be used for design and engineering costs.

#### **Eligible GHG Mitigation Projects:**

- Reduce vehicle miles travelled through improvements to non-recreational, non-motorized transportation and/or to mass transit, or by reducing commuting distances through densification or smart growth strategies.
- Facilitate the diversion of edible food or food scraps recycling at municipal facilities (e.g., wastewater treatment plants, composting facilities).
- Reduce fluorinated GHG emissions from refrigeration, chillers, and A/C equipment through replacement or retrofit, establishment of community disposal programs, or adoption of measures enabling alternative refrigerant use.
- Establish and implement easily replicable renewable energy projects in low-income housing.

#### **Eligible Adaptation Projects:**

- Increase natural resiliency to future flood risks, e.g., through living shorelines and nature-based landscape features.
- Relocate or retrofit critical infrastructure to reduce future flood risks.
- Replace or right-size flow barriers to facilitate emergency response or protect people, infrastructure, and natural resources.
- Address anticipated future extreme heat conditions, e.g., through the creation of community cooling centers.
- Improve emergency preparedness and response systems (excluding radio communication systems) for anticipated future extreme climate conditions.

### Certification Projects

**Up to \$1 million** is available in 2023 for grants of between \$10,000 and \$200,000 to complete certain CSC certification actions. See the full request for applications (RFA) for the list of CSC certification actions eligible for funding.

- **GHG Mitigation:** GHG inventories, climate action plans, municipal refrigerant management plans
- **Fleet Management:** municipal fleet inventories and fleet efficiency policies, planning for bicycling and walking
- **Materials Management:** organics management plans, municipal refrigerant management plans, construction and demolition waste policies
- **Land Use:** comprehensive plans with sustainability elements, complete streets policies, planning for bicycling and walking, natural resources inventories
- **Adaptation actions:** vulnerability assessments, climate adaptation strategies, heat emergency plans, design flood elevation & flood maps, freeboard policies, national flood insurance program community rating system actions

Applicants for certification projects should consult the CSC Certification Portal at <https://climatesmart.ny.gov/actions-certification/actions/> for full details regarding the requirements for each CSC certification action.

## Climate Smart Communities Grant Program Details

**Eligible Applicants.** Any county, city, town, or village of the State of New York is eligible to apply. Registered and certified CSC's will receive points in the competitive scoring system, but applicants need not be registered or certified to apply.

**Partners.** Non-eligible entities (e.g., non-profits) or other municipalities may participate as part of a CSC grant project in partnership with an eligible lead applicant. In such cases, the grants application must include letters of partnership and/or partnership agreements.

**Match.** A local match equal to 50 percent of total eligible project costs is required. Other State grants and federal funds are NOT eligible as match for a CSC grant award. Previous land acquisition may be included as match for implementation projects only.

**Eligible Expenses.** Eligible costs include personal services (salary and fringe), contractual services, municipal project-related travel, municipal equipment, supplies and materials, and in-fee land acquisition (not including ROWs). See the full request for applications for complete details on eligible and ineligible costs.

**Ownership:** All infrastructure and project components funded through the CSC Grant program must be owned by the grantee and cannot be transferred to another entity for the duration of the service life of such infrastructure and/or project components.

**Climate Change Mitigation Easement (CCME).** If the applicant does not own the property upon which the proposed development, improvement, restoration, and/or rehabilitation project will be implemented a CCME must be executed between the applicant and the landowner and must ensure the property meets all the following conditions:

- It is accessible to the municipality to achieve the project purpose for the anticipated life of the project.
- It provides the identified public benefit for the anticipated life of the project.
- It is used to achieve the climate protection and mitigation goals of the CSC grant program for the anticipated life of the project.
- The property owner shall provide information and data, or access for the collection of data, to the municipality.
- The anticipated life of the project is no less than ten years.

**Contract Term.** Funded projects should be ready to begin in March 2024. All projects MUST be completed within a five-year contract term.

**Payment and Reporting.** This grant program is a reimbursement program. Grant recipients must submit regular progress reports, including project-appropriate metrics, as part of the reimbursement process.

**Request for Applications.** The complete RFA for the CSC Grant program is available online at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/109181.html#CSC> . All applicants should closely examine the RFA to obtain complete details on the program, including information on application evaluation and scoring.

## 2023 Consolidated Funding Application

Apply for the CSC Grant program through the NYS Consolidated Funding Application (CFA), available online at <https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/> . Hand-delivered, facsimile, mailed, or e-mailed applications will NOT be accepted.

In addition to the grant application, information on other NYS grant opportunities, instructions for applicants, and recorded webinars are available at the CFA website.

**Applications are due by 3:00 pm on July 28, 2023.** Applications will NOT be accepted after this date and time.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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