**State of Maine**

**Maine Coastal Program and Municipal Planning Assistance Program**

**FY 2025 Coastal Community Grant/Shore and Harbor Planning Grant Programs**

**Letter of Intent to Apply Instructions**

**LETTER OF INTENT DUE DATE: March 29, 2024**

In response to the significant impacts of recent storms experienced by Maine’s coastal communities, the Maine Department of Marine Resources and the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry are combining federal coastal management funds into a single grant for coastal municipalities, unorganized territories, tribal nations, and regional councils. Applicants may only apply once per proposed project. The FY 2025 Grant Program will fund local or regional planning projects that support [Maine Won’t Wait: A Four-Year Plan for Climate Action](https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/MaineWontWait_December2020.pdf) and enable communities to become more resilient to unprecedented coastal storm impacts.

Given expected time constraints for local officials, we have streamlined the application process for the FY 2025 Grant into a two-step process that includes a Letter of Intent, followed by a Final Application by invitation only. Applicants may only apply once per proposed project. The matching fund requirements have been eliminated. Letters of Intent are due on **March 29, 2024**, and the Letter of Intent requirements begin on page 3 of this document.

Successful applications must address one of the following Priority Categories:

* Conduct climate vulnerability assessments, including sea level rise, storm surge, and flooding at critical public facilities.
* Evaluate existing waterfront infrastructure resilience plans and design resilient infrastructure for vital waterfront facilities.
* Identify hazard-prone locations to integrate land conservation and public access planning, guiding development away from vulnerable areas.
* Develop a comprehensive inventory of public tidal access points and working waterfronts. Establish guidelines for responsible use and conservation.
* Review and recommend changes to municipal land use laws that address current and future coastal hazards.

We strongly encourage applicants who are interested in submitting a Letter of Intent to read the full [Program Statement](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/docs/FY25_CCG_SHG_program_statement.docx) before starting the Letter of Intent. The Program Statement includes details of what will be required of applicants if invited back for a Final Application.

Eligible applicants include municipalities, unorganized townships, and Tribal Governments in [Maine’s Coastal Zone](https://www.maine.gov/dmr/node/421#cz_towns), as well as coastal Regional Councils. Projects that include partnerships are strongly encouraged. Municipalities and townships in Maine’s coastal zone are listed on the [Coastal Program website](https://www.maine.gov/dmr/node/421#cz_towns). Note that plans, designs, and other activities must address primarily publicly owned properties and cannot be solely directed toward privately owned properties.

Municipal applicants are strongly encouraged to have a locally adopted [comprehensive plan](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/docs/comp_plan_status.xlsx) that is consistent with the Growth Management Law. However, under the extreme circumstances, it is not required in this program year.

The maximum award is $50,000 and the minimum award is $5,000; applicants may only submit one application per proposed project. There is no match requirement for the FY 2025 grant program; however, if the applicant determines that other sources of funds are needed to complete the project, the applicant must show their ability to raise these funds. The total amount awarded from this grant program is expected to be approximately $300,000. Eligible uses of funds include project personnel and fringe, contractual expenses, supplies, minor equipment, travel, indirect, and “other” (such as rental fees for meetings). **These funds may not be used for construction, computer equipment, permit fees, or to support ongoing staffing needs of the applicant organization.**

Letters of Intent must be submitted via email to: Ashley.Gamache@maine.gov by **5:00 pm on March 29, 2024**. Please enter **“CCG/SHG LOI”** in the subject line. Neither the Municipal Planning Assistance Program nor the Maine Coastal Program assumes any liability for assuring accurate, complete, or on-time email transmission and receipt.

All questions regarding the Program Statement and Letter of Intent must be submitted by email to Ashley.Gamache@maine.gov by 5:00 p.m. on March 1, 2024. Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the [Municipal Planning Assistance Program](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/index.shtml) and [Maine Coastal Program](https://www.maine.gov/dmr/programs/maine-coastal-program/grants-and-rfps/shore-and-harbor-planning-grants) websites by 5:00 p.m. on March 8, 2024. Only those answers issued in writing on these websites will be considered binding.

All eligible entities wishing to apply for an FY 2025 Grant must use this Letter of Intent to demonstrate the need for grant funding, what priority issues will be addressed, the project deliverables, and an estimated budget for the proposed project.

Letters of Intent received by the deadline will be reviewed by a team of qualified reviewers, including staff from the Maine Department of Marine Resources, the Maine Municipal Planning Assistance Program, the Maine Floodplain Management Plan, the Maine Geological Survey, the Maine Department of Transportation, and the Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future.

Criteria for Selection to Proceed to the Final Application Stage by invitation only are:

* Demonstrated project need
* Project suitability for improving resilience to storm impacts
* Extent to which the project addresses [Priority Categories](#PriorityCategories) (page 1 above)
* Level of public engagement proposed
* Importance to the region, the municipality, or the state
* Likelihood that the proposed project will result in a path for fundable future projects to reduce harm to people and property

Applicants will be notified by April 12 if they have been selected to submit a Final Application; unsuccessful applicants will also be notified of their status. An invitation to submit a Final Application does not imply project funding. Final Applications will be due on **May 31, 2024**, by invitation only. The Final Application requirements will be posted on the [MCP](https://www.maine.gov/dmr/programs/maine-coastal-program/grants-and-rfps/shore-and-harbor-planning-grants) and [MPAP](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/financial_assistance.shtml) websites. Funds will be available for selected projects after July 1, 2024.

**A. APPLICANT DETAILS**

**1. Applicant:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Priority Category: |  |
| Estimated grant request amount: | $ |
| Applicant Name: (municipality, county, tribal government, or regional council) |  |
| Physical Address: |  | City, Zip: |  |
| Contact Name: |  | Title: |  |
| Phone:  |  | Email: |  |

**2. Project Partner(s)** (copy and paste for each additional Project Partner)**:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Partner Name: |  |
| Partner Project Role: |  |
| Physical Address: |  | City, Zip: |  |
| Contact Name: |  | Title: |  |
| Phone:  |  | Email: |  |

**B. PROJECT INFORMATION**

**1. Project Overview:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Project Title: |  |
| Project Location\*: |  |
| Project Dates\*\*: |  |

 *\* A map clearly identifying the project area must be included as an Appendix to the Letter of*

 *Intent.*

*\*\*Funding will be available from July 1, 2024 – December 31, 2025.*

**2. Statement of Need:**

Provide a clear, concise description (approximately 500 words) of the need for the project. If applicable, explain the nature, extent, and type of damage experienced in the winter 2023/2024 storms that this funding will address, and future concerns that the proposed planning project will begin to address. Describe how the proposed project fills a gap in other funding assistance you may have applied for or received. (Photos may be included as an Appendix to the Letter of Intent.)

**C. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Provide a clear, concise description (approximately 500 words) of the proposed project using the space below. The description should identify how the grant funds will be used to meet one or more of the Priority Categories. Please state the project goals and how they will help achieve long-term resilience improvements.

**D. COST ESTIMATES AND PROJECT FUNDING**

**1. Expected Deliverables**

Please describe the expected deliverables that will be produced during the proposed project.

**2. Estimated grant request:**

Provide the estimated amount of grant funds to be requested and the estimated total project cost. If invited for submission, a full application will require additional details, including a budget by task, budget justification (such as a consultant’s cost estimate), and a project timeline. There is no match requirement for the FY2025 Grant; however, if the applicant determines that other sources of funds are needed to complete the project, the applicant must show their ability to raise these funds.

**Budget Reminder:** Grant funds CANNOT be used for construction, purchase of computer equipment, permit fees, or to support the ongoing staff needs of the applicant organization(s).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Total Estimated Project Cost: | **$** | Grant Request: | **$** |

**Grant funds cannot be used for construction, but planning efforts must consider local ordinances and potential permit needs.** Please see the message below from the [Maine Floodplain Management Program](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/flood/):

If a town participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, all development in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) requires a permit under a municipal Floodplain Management Ordinance, including repairs being made after a flood event. It is the community’s responsibility to make a determination whether or not a building has incurred Substantial Damage, which is damage equaling or exceeding 50% of the building value only (land is not included in the formula). To make this determination, you will need to have an accurate estimate of the repairs being made, including labor. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has developed a [Substantial Damage Estimator Tool](https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/risk-management/building-science/substantial-damage-estimator-tool) to assist in estimating substantial damage to structures caused by flood, wind, wildfire, seismic, and other events.

FEMA has a [Substantial Improvement/Substantial Damage Desk Reference](https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_nfip_substantial-improvement-substantial-damage-desk-reference.pdf) that provides additional guidance for permitting and enforcing these requirements.

Note that if construction takes place without the proper permits, the community risks losing their enrollment in the National Flood Insurance Program, which could have serious financial implications on property owners in other parts of the community.