RHODE ISLAND INFRASTRUCTURE BANK

275 Promenade Street, Suite 301
Providence, Rhode Island 02908
riib.org

Request for Proposals (RFP)
Dated: May 28, 2024

RESILIENT RHODY: MUNICIPAL RESILIENCE PROGRAM (MRP)

Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank (Bank) Is Soliciting Proposals for

2024 MRP Action Grants

1. Opportunity Summary

A. PROPOSALS SOUGHT FOR: Financial assistance for municipalities who have received designation as a Resilient Rhody MRP municipality to implement priority adaptation actions identified through the MRP planning process.

B. OVERVIEW: The Municipal Resilience Program Action Grants support Resilient Rhody, Rhode Island's first comprehensive climate resilience action strategy, by providing direct funding to MRP cities and towns to implement key projects identified through the Community Resilience Building (CRB) workshops and Annual Resilience Updates.

C. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: MRP Action Grants are open to municipalities who have successfully completed their CRB processes and finalized their Summary of Findings report. See Section 2C for additional details on eligible applicants. Applications from regional partnerships of multiple municipalities are eligible, provided that all applicants are MRP designated municipalities.

D. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS: Funding is to advance priority climate adaptation projects identified by the municipality to address climate change impacts resulting from extreme weather, sea level rise, inland and coastal flooding, severe heat, wildfire, drought, and other climate impacts. Projects that propose nature-based solutions or strategies that rely on green infrastructure and the enhancement of natural systems to improve community resilience are encouraged.

E. APPLICATION DEADLINE: No later than **12PM, Friday, July 26, 2024.** See Section 3 for application submission requirements. Selections are expected to be announced in September 2024. Potential applicants who have questions or would like to request a meeting, may contact Anthony Hebert at ahebert@riib.org. Potential applicants may also contact Kimberly Korioth at Kimberly.korioth@dem.ri.gov to schedule an Annual Resilience Update with RIDEM.

F. FUNDING AVAILABILITY: The Bank may, at its discretion, award up to $5,000,000 in MRP grants pursuant to this RFP. (See further funding availability in Section 2). **Applicants may request up to $750,000** in project grant funding through MRP in this funding round. **Each**

eligible applicant may submit no more than one proposal.

Funding distributions for this program will be made upon execution of a grant agreement between the Bank and the municipality. A proposal may contain multiple projects if similar in scope. All proposals are subject to the match requirement (see below).

G. **MATCH REQUIREMENT: Applicants must provide a 25% match of the total grant award.** The 25% match may be a combination of cash and in-kind contributions, with the cash component required to consist of at least half (50%) of the match requirement. Sources of match are subject to the approval of the Bank (see Section 2E).

H. **TOTAL ANTICIPATED DURATION OF AGREEMENT(S):** The grant agreement period will commence on the date the parties execute the agreement or such other date set forth in the agreement specified therein. Funds awarded pursuant to grant agreements issued under this RFP must be fully expended for costs associated with the approved project on or before June 30, 2026, or as otherwise determined by the Bank. Applicants must establish, to the satisfaction of the Bank, a realistic project timeline that meets this end date and are encouraged to consider phasing complex projects to ensure on-time delivery. (See further detail on anticipated duration of contract(s) in Section 2F.)

I. **CONTACT INFORMATION**:

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2. Performance and Agreement Specifications

A. OVERVIEW: The MRP Action Grants will provide direct funding to municipalities who have successfully completed the CRB process and finalized their Summary of Findings report. The MRP Action Grants build on outcomes from the CRB workshops. The workshops identify priority adaptation actions from a community-driven, comprehensive assessment of climate hazards across multiple sectors of the municipality, including infrastructural, societal, environmental, and other sectors as chosen by the community. Grants are available for a range of climate change adaptation strategies to reduce risk from and build resilience to climate change impacts, including but not limited to temperature changes, extreme weather, sea level rise, coastal and inland flooding, and changes in precipitation.

B. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS: Successful projects must build upon outcomes of CRB processes and Annual Resilience Updates, further community-identified priority resilience action(s), and address climate change impacts. MRP Action Grant funds are not available for research-related activities such as studies and strategic plans. Eligible projects must fall under the Bank's broad portfolio of programs and include, but are not limited to, dam retrofits or removal, road elevation, floodproofing or elevation of pump stations, berms and levies, culvert resizing, green stormwater infrastructure, solar and battery back-up power, energy efficiency, watershed restoration, urban tree planting, and coastal and riparian resiliency.

Applicants should clearly demonstrate how the projects have been designed to better respond to changing climate conditions and to incorporate new climate change data. Projects must include full consideration and incorporation of climate change projections and data that aligns with the anticipated lifespan of the project and the risk tolerance of the asset. Eligible projects must improve the ability of the site or asset to respond to current or anticipated climate change impacts. All projects are encouraged to consider the utilization of nature-based strategies or relocation strategies to address climate change impacts, and projects that do so will receive higher scores on their applications.

C. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: This solicitation is open to **municipalities** who have successfully been designated as MRP Municipalities, have completed the CRB process; and finalized their Summary of Findings report. Applications from regional partnerships comprising multiple municipalities are eligible provided that all applicants are MRP participating communities. For regional applicants, municipalities should work to submit one application together and one municipality should be prepared to be the fiscal agent for the award.

D. **AVAILABLE FUNDING:** The Bank may, at its discretion, award up to $5,000,000 in MRP grants pursuant to this RFP. Eligible applicants may submit a **maximum of one (1) application** in this funding round. Applicants may submit a new application OR update a past application to the MRP which was not selected for funding in a previous funding round. Applicants may request up to

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$750,000 in MRP grant funding from the bank in this funding round. Applications with requests in excess of this figure will not be considered.

A proposal may contain multiple projects if similar in scope. All proposals are subject to the match requirements outlined within this RFP. Funding must be used to implement priority adaptation actions identified in the CRB Summary of Findings report or in an Annual Resilience Update. Funding distributions for this program will be made upon execution of the grant agreement between the Bank and the applicant.

E. **MATCH REQUIREMENT:** Applicants must provide at least **25% of the grant award amount as their match**. The 25% match may be a combination of cash and in-kind contributions provided by the Applicant and direct project partners. Any funding from an Applicant that is not currently being used to match other government supported programs can be included as match. All local match must be directly related to the proposed project and tasks and documentation will be necessary to substantiate this. Costs incurred prior to the grant agreement period will not be considered as part of the match requirement, except at the discretion of the Bank.

   Application preparation costs **will not** be considered as part of the match requirement. Cash match spending details must be provided. Cash contributions are those funds that will be used to purchase goods or services associated with the project. Cash matching funds can also be achieved through Bank loans. Subject to any federal or state restrictions, federal funds may be used to fund the match requirement. In-kind contributions represent the value of non-cash contributions provided by the Applicant and project partners. In-kind contributions **may not exceed 50% of the required match** and can be in the form of charges for real property and non-expendable personal property and the value of goods and services directly benefiting and specifically identifiable to the project. MRP grant funds **may not** be utilized to reimburse a municipality for the staff hours spent on grant administration (including but not limited to reporting and drawdown requests).

   Applicants must include a signed statement from the authorized signatory of the municipality acknowledging and accepting the following:

   - The municipal entity commits to matching 25% of the total grant request using cash contributions or a combination of cash in-kind contributions.

   - All matching funds provided by the Applicant or direct project partners have been approved and/or appropriated.

F. **PROJECT TERMS:** A final grant agreement is subject to negotiation of an approved scope of services. Please note that Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank does not guarantee that any grant agreements may result from this RFP. It is anticipated that projects could commence immediately upon execution of a grant agreement.

G. ANTICIPATED DURATION OF AGREEMENTS: Grant agreements and the availability of grant funding under the grant agreements are anticipated to terminate on June 30, 2026. Extension of the grant agreement is at the sole discretion of the Infrastructure Bank and must be requested by April 1, 2026. Funding may not be available for any extension. Requests for an extension are strongly discouraged and will be considered only under extraordinary circumstances. Any extensions granted will not necessarily change, or increase, the monetary value of the grant award.

H. REPORTING: If selected for an award, the Applicant will be required to submit semi-annual progress updates and a final project report, which includes a brief project summary communicating lessons learned and project photos. The Applicant will be required to maintain communication with a point of contact from the Bank throughout the course of the project. Other deliverables and timelines are project-specific and will be identified at the time of grant agreement and project scoping.

I. DELIVERABLES, OWNERSHIP, AND CREDIT DUE: All materials, software, maps, reports, and other products produced through the grant program shall be considered in the public domain. All materials created through this opportunity and as a result of this award should credit the Infrastructure Bank, as well as the MRP, RIDEM, and The Nature Conservancy. All projects which include the implementation of interpretive or informational signage must include language stating that the project was funded by the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank and the State Green Bond, and/or include the Bank's logo.

J. INVOICING AND PAYMENTS: Funding distributions for this program will be determined upon execution of the grant agreement.

3. Instructions for Application Submission

A. EVALUATION CRITERIA: A review committee consisting of five members, one from each of the following agencies, the Bank, Coastal Resource Management Council, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, and Rhode Island Department of Health, and the Rhode Island Division of Statewide Planning, will evaluate all proposals on a competitive basis and select projects provided that applications meet the criteria set forth in this RFP. The review committee reserves the right to reject any or all proposals that do not meet the goals and terms of this RFP. Projects recommended by the review committee are subject to final approval by the Bank. Each proposal will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

1. **Vulnerability to Hazards & Need for Climate Change Adaptation (10 points)** -- Description of climate change impact(s) or vulnerability(s) in the municipality, identified through the MRP planning process. Include an explanation of potential future vulnerability and risk to public safety, infrastructure, vulnerable populations, public health, and natural resources from extreme weather and other climate change impacts, as well as the primary drivers (e.g., economic, environmental, political, or other) for engaging in climate change adaptation and resilience activities. Proposals must

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include a brief description clearly demonstrating advancement of priority action(s) from MRP Summary of Findings report, rationale for why the project was selected for this proposal, and metrics for how success will be measured.

2. **Project Description and Rationale (10 points)** -- Detailed description of the proposed climate change adaptation project and rationale for project selection broken down by specific project tasks and subtasks (where appropriate), as well as the selected climate projections or scenarios if applicable. Each proposed task must describe work that will be completed, including details on methodology, deliverables, and project team members assigned to complete the task.

   Information about how climate change projections and data will be considered and incorporated into the project design must be provided. Projects must increase the site or assets' ability to respond to climate change driven impacts. Projects that will be sustainable in the long term and will not contribute to future hazards are strongly prioritized (in particular, those implementing nature-based solutions, green infrastructure, relocation, and/or clean energy approaches). The description must include information on how the proposed project supports implementation of priority actions to reduce key vulnerabilities identified through the MRP process. Project rationale should explain why this project was submitted (e.g., top ranked MRP action, highest benefit cost ratio, most feasible project given timeframe, etc.).

3. **Community Need & Public Benefits (10 points)** – Description of how the project will improve community resilience at, adjacent to, and beyond the project site, and how the outcomes will benefit the public and public interests. Description of any Environmental Justice communities; underserved, marginalized, or otherwise adversely affected groups; or other disadvantaged populations that may be particularly vulnerable to the climate change impacts and natural hazards addressed by the project that will specifically benefit from project implementation.

   Inclusion of the project address, block group, and census tract, so that the review team may further assess the community need and potential for benefit within the project area. Description of any other area, block group, or census tract beyond the project location that should also be considered in this evaluation of need and benefit, and if so, why (or, if the entire municipality should be considered). Projects with multiple co-benefits (ex. nature-based solutions or green infrastructure techniques that build resilience while also improving quality of life, ecosystems, etc.) will receive preference.

4. **Project Feasibility and Transferability (15 points)** – Likelihood of project success based on factors such as landowner, public, and partner support; technical feasibility; funding feasibility; technical, financial, and management capacity and qualifications of project team; and regulatory hurdles. Applicants must legally control the site or be partnering with the entity that legally controls the site with their written permission included as a part of the application. Description of transferability of the proposed project including how the project approach, techniques, and products can be used by or serve as models for other communities facing similar issues. The description should include any planned details of education and outreach efforts to communicate goals,

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progress, and lessons learned from the project. Efforts not only to develop transferable, feasible projects, but also to actively share results with other communities will be prioritized.

5. **Community Outreach, Education, and Engagement (10 points)** – Description of how the project will engage and educate communities and stakeholders in a creative and equitable way with a detailed approach to the community outreach, education, and engagement process. Description should also include specific stakeholder groups that will be engaged in the project, how feedback will be collected and synthesized to inform the project, the specific information that will be conveyed to the communities and how it will be shared, and the socially vulnerable communities that this project will directly impact. Projects that enhance outreach to and engagement of Environmental Justice communities; underserved, marginalized, or otherwise adversely affected groups; or other disadvantaged populations will be prioritized. A detailed description of how priority communities and populations will be fully engaged as participants in the process, project benefits to communities, and the number and variety of learning opportunities offered should be included.

6. **Incorporation of Nature-Based Solutions and Long-Term Approaches (10 points)** – Description of how the project will incorporate principles such as low impact design, green infrastructure, natural flood protection, relocation strategies, clean energy adaptation approaches (solar + battery backup), or increased awareness of these types of techniques should be included. Projects that harness the natural environment through a focus on soft infrastructure, combined relocation and restoration approaches, or other innovative solutions will receive priority. If hard infrastructure solutions are proposed, projects should build to enhanced standards using climate change projections, and should where possible, incorporate nature-based or green infrastructure techniques in combination with proposed hard infrastructure.

7. **Timeline (10 points)** – Detailed timeline with anticipated completion dates for the project, including deliverables by June 30, 2026. Timelines with anticipated completion dates beyond June 30, 2026, will be considered and evaluated in coordination with the scope of the proposed work. Preference will be given to projects that demonstrate readiness to proceed (for design/engineering applications, conceptual designs, and cost estimates in hand, and for construction applications, final designs and permits in hand) or demonstrate ability to be completed within the project period.

8. **Scope and Budget (10 points)** – Detailed budget, broken down by grant funds and matching funds, for the components of each project task and an explanation of how the funding and other support provided by project partners will ensure success of the project. The in-kind and cash match (at least 25% of total grant amount) that has not been used for other government-supported projects must be documented (please complete and submit Attachment B).

9. **Project Management and Partners (10 points)** – The name and qualifications (please include resume and summary of experience) of a municipal employee to serve as the local project manager and point of contact for the grant. Signed support letters from all relevant local boards, departments, commissions, and other partners, such as conservation groups, local businesses, or others, with a commitment for these entities to participate, as necessary, in the project. Projects that

involve multiple partners are preferred. For communities previously awarded MRP grants, the progress made to date on those projects and ability to close-out projects in a timely manner will be considered when scoring new applications. The applicant's ability to complete long-term maintenance of the project will also be considered.

10. **Project & Proposal Quality (5 points)** – The overall quality of the grant application as determined by staff reviewers. For reviewer reference, please include a list of resources you utilized to develop this proposal. Consider staff members, partners, and consultants who contributed to the planning and active writing of the document (excluding services provided by the Bank, RIDEM, and The Nature Conservancy through MRP workshops and Annual Resilience Update meetings).

B. APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: Submit proposals electronically via email to Anthony Hebert (see Contact Information below) prior to the RFP application deadline. Emails should include **two (2) attachments; one with the competed Attachment A including any maps, letters of match, letters of support, etc. in a single PDF or Word file; and Attachment B with both tabs in the spreadsheet completed as an Excel file**. Separate attachments in separate emails or attachments in the wrong file format **will not** be accepted.

The Bank is subject to the Access to Public Records Act ("APRA") (RI General Laws Chapter 38-2). Any documents, materials, maps, statements, or other information submitted to the Infrastructure Bank may be released in accordance with APRA. Please do not submit any information that the applicant may not wish to disclose publicly, such as home addresses or personal telephone numbers, social security numbers, or other similar information.

C. CONTACT INFORMATION:

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4. Deadlines and Procurement Calendar

A. RELEASE OF RFP: May 28, 2024

B. APPLICATION DEADLINE: Rolling acceptance, not later than **12PM on Friday, July 26, 2024.**

C. ESTIMATED AWARD DATE: Selections are expected to be announced in **September 2024**.

D. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:

A. MRP Application
B. Budget Template