



2024

SMART MOVE PROGRAM

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
DIVISION OF DISASTER RECOVERY AND MITIGATION

Application Deadline: April 30, 2025

Program Contact: SmartMove@dca.nj.gov

1 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

In alignment with the State of New Jersey's comprehensive approach to housing recovery from Hurricane Ida, the Disaster Recovery and Mitigation Division (DRM) within the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is providing developers the opportunity to propose new housing projects to the Smart Move Program ("Program"). The Program will promote housing recovery while creating affordable homeownership opportunities that fosters long-term sustainability of communities by building resilient housing that is less susceptible to damage and destruction resulting from natural disasters. Smart Move will award funding to developers for projects located near an Ida impacted community where there are proposed buyout activities underway (see Appendix 2 for buyout property locations) and within the Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) counties. Smart Move is funded by Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds appropriated by Congress for recovery from Hurricane Ida. CDBG-DR grants are administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and are intended to address "unmet needs" not satisfied by other federal, state, and local recovery resources.

The purpose of this Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is to provide the overall objectives of the Program and the application process by which the Program will award CDBG-DR funds to eligible developers in Phase I. During Phase II of the Program, homes will be sold at an affordable rate and down payment assistance may be provided by the Program to eligible buyout participants or first-time homebuyers.

1.2 Program Description

Smart Move will subsidize the development of quality, energy-efficient, resilient, and affordable single-family housing within or near disaster-impacted communities that are participating in Blue Acres or other buyout programs. The Program will provide safe housing for relocating residents so they may stay in or near their communities after selling their high-risk properties and first-time homebuyer opportunities for eligible households. Buyout participants who sold their high-risk owner-occupied homes through a buyout program, will be prioritized.

The Program will competitively score proposed projects based on a variety of factors including those identified in Section 6.2 such as the inclusion of disaster resilient energy solutions, the size and mix of the housing units proposed, and the proximity to critical infrastructure.

The new developments will be built outside the 500-year floodplain and the inland or coastal climate adjusted floodplain, as defined by the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

The Program will be implemented under a developer led model with management and oversight provided by DCA. Developers are required to submit a letter of municipal support with their application. Developers will be responsible for all efforts necessary to carry out activities with the exception of those that are specific to DCA. The Program will select the qualified developers and proposed projects through a competitive application.

Once the proposed projects have been selected, the developer will enter into a development agreement with DCA. The developer will control the site and retain ownership of the development project through Phase I.

Eligible developers may submit housing development proposals for sites within the MID-identified counties. The Program reserves the right to limit the number of projects selected due to scoring results or funding available. The application process will aim to distribute projects to ensure a geographic distribution of housing and to avoid the concentration of low-income housing to a specific locale.

2 ELIGIBILITY

2.1 Eligible Applicants

The Program will award funding to developers directly for projects located within the designated MIDs. The developer and any organizations comprising the development team receiving federal funding will be subject to meeting federal debarment and suspension requirements. The developer will be required to be registered with System Award Management at www.sams.gov, possess a federal Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), and must not be included on the federal or state debarred and suspension list. Any entity listed in the debarment data is not eligible for federal funding.

2.2 MID Areas

To determine the areas eligible for financial assistance, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) designated Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas, in addition, the State was permitted to designate MID areas that may not have already been identified by HUD. The following counties are HUD or State-Identified MID areas and where recovery efforts will be targeted for use of this CDBG-DR funding:

- Bergen
- Essex
- Hudson
- Middlesex
- Passaic
- Somerset
- Union
- Gloucester
- Hunterdon
- Mercer
- Morris
- Warren

Although all locations within the MID counties are eligible to apply, the Program will only consider applications that are within or near disaster-impacted communities participating in buyout programs.

2.3 Eligible Costs

Eligible costs for this Program must comply with the eligibility requirements and be reasonable and necessary as determined by the Program. Activities must also meet the detailed eligibility requirements of § 570.201-206 of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

Program funds may be used for all reasonable and necessary aspects of funding the development and in disposition of the properties once complete. Funds may be reimbursed after the Authority to Use Grant Funds (AUGF) has been issued by HUD. Reimbursement is available for, but not limited to, the following items:

- Land acquisition costs
- Clearance/Demolition
- Soft Costs (no more than 28% of the total development cost)
 - Architecture
 - Engineering
 - Market Analyst
 - Marketing Specialist
 - Consultancy Services
 - Legal
- Hard Costs
 - Housing Development
 - Infrastructure
 - Resilient Infrastructure
- Construction Fees
 - Financing Fees
 - Developer Fees (no more than 10% of total development cost)
- Any costs that are eligible and reasonably necessary to develop and sell the housing units

Homeownership Assistance

In the efforts of promoting continued stabilization of the community and households, homeownership assistance via down payment assistance may be provided by the Program to eligible homebuyers in Phase II. The assistance will be used to bridge purchase gaps of affordability for households earning up to 120 percent (120%) area median income who are participating in buyout programs and/or first-time homebuyers who meet Program requirements.

Down payment assistance may be provided up to twenty percent (20%) of the affordable sales price for LMI households and up to five percent (5%) for UN households. Assistance will be strictly based on demonstrated need.

2.4 Eligible Project Models

This Program is designed to construct needed housing in disaster-impacted counties with a lack of available affordable housing. The Program will allow developers to select from one of these three project models:

- Preferred
 - New Construction: Single-Family Subdivisions
- Allowable
 - Infill and Scattered-Site Development
 - Rehabilitation/Reconstruction Adaptive Reuse Conversion

New Construction: Single-Family Subdivisions

The subdivision design must meet all applicable federal, state, and local requirements related to subdividing land for residential use. These projects will likely require the installation of public infrastructure such as roads, utilities, and other neighborhood improvements. These costs are eligible under the Program and must be clearly broken out from the housing costs in the application to ensure compliance with reporting requirements of HUD CDBG eligible activities.

Infill and Scatter-Site Development

The Program will allow for an infill and/or scattered-site strategy. This includes the construction of one or more housing units on an existing parcel of land within an existing neighborhood. For example, the redevelopment of a previously cleared site, the partitioning of oversized lot(s) to allow for greater housing density, or the development of a previously undeveloped parcel adjacent to existing public utilities. Building housing as infill on vacant lots expands housing opportunity within existing neighborhoods. This strategy may be beneficial in communities that have unused or underused parcels within its existing development patterns. Infill and scattered-site projects can be developed in close proximity to resources LMI households may not typically be able to access easily. These applications must be able to demonstrate the ability to construct all housing units on one or multiple non-adjacent (scattered) sites within the same jurisdiction.

Adaptive Reuse and Conversions

The Program will allow adaptive reuse and/or conversion projects to increase the affordable homeownership stock if opportunities arise to repurpose or convert an existing structure to build affordable ownership housing. Conversion includes the adaptive reuse of existing non-residential structures into housing units. For example: former school buildings, warehouses, office buildings, etc. are converted into housing units.

2.5 Unit Mix

The Program aims to create affordable homeownership opportunities for households impacted by the disaster or for first-time homebuyers. This will be achieved by providing funding to a mix of LMI and UN households. The approach is designed to prevent the concentration of low-income housing in specific locations while ensuring that the target populations are effectively served.

The Program is targeting 70% of homes to be sold to LMI income qualified homebuyers and 30% sold to eligible UN income qualified buyers. While some flexibility is allowed, the proportion of units sold to LMI homebuyers must not fall below 65%.

3 PROGRAM FUNDING SCHEDULE

Please note, the Program schedule below consists of anticipated dates and is subject to change:

Milestone	Date
NOFA Posted	September 16, 2024
Application Available	September 16, 2024
Question & Answer Period	September 16, 2024 – November 13, 2024
Developer Information Session	October 16, 2024
Application Due	April 30, 2025
Anticipated Awards Announced	July 16, 2025
Environmental Reviews Completed	Starting December 10, 2025
Anticipated Agreements Executed	Starting February 10, 2026
Projects Underway	February 17, 2026
Projects Complete	December 31, 2028

4 STATE AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

Any entity awarded under this NOFA must agree to comply with all applicable federal, state, and municipal laws, rules, and regulations, as applicable to the activities related to the performance under the CDBG-DR grant. These include not only the federal CDBG rules, as modified for CDBG-DR, but also, the following:

- Federal Office of Management and Budget rules
- New Jersey Department of the Treasury rules
- New Jersey Office of Management and Budget rules
- State Affirmative Action requirements outlined at:
 - N.J.A.C. 17:27, N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.,
 - PL 1975 c.127, and all implementing regulations.

Applicants under this NOFA also agree to comply with all applicable provisions of [New Jersey Circular No. 07-05 OMB](#) to the extent that these state rules are not superseded by more stringent federal rules.

5 APPLICATION ORGANIZATION

The application is organized in the following manner and should be submitted by the applicant as such.

Application Organization	
Section A: Developer Contact Information - <i>Fillable Form</i>	
Section B: Threshold Review	
1. Insurance and Coverages	File Attachment
2. Letter of Municipal Support	File Attachment
3. HUD and/or State-identified MID Counties	Fillable Form
4. National Objective Requirement	File Attachment
5. Demonstrated Site Control or Acquisition Plan	File Attachment & Fillable Form
6. Outside of Floodplain	File Attachment & Fillable Form
7. Minimum of 6 Units & Eligible Project Model	File Attachment & Fillable Form
8. Green Building Standards	Fillable Form
9. Disaster-Impacted Communities	Fillable Form
10. Project Schedule	File Attachment
Section C: Technical Scoring	
1. Project Site	File Attachment & Fillable Form
2. Demonstrated Experience	File Attachment & Fillable Form
3. Project Readiness	File Attachment & Fillable Form
4. Resilient Designs	Fillable Form
5. Innovative Designs	Fillable Form
6. Community Need	File Attachment
7. Value of CDBG-DR Investment	File Attachment
8. Proximity to Buyout Properties	File Attachment
9. Target Percentage	File Attachment
Section D: Acknowledgements - <i>Sign & Date</i>	
Section E: Attachment Checklist	

6 FACTORS FOR AWARD

6.1 Application Evaluation (Threshold criteria)

The Program will conduct an application evaluation (threshold criteria) which will determine whether the application is complete and potentially eligible for funding. The Program will further review only the applications that meet all threshold criteria. For this reason, the Program encourages applications to be delivered in advance of the deadline and request Technical Assistance throughout the application period.

Threshold Criteria includes:

- Application was submitted on time.
- Application and all required forms are signed and complete.
- Application includes insurance policies from the developer and their contractor(s).
- Application includes a letter of municipal support.
- Applicant's project benefits HUD and/or State-identified MID areas.
- Applicant meets National Objective Requirement(s).
 - The unit mix must reasonably align with the Program target of 70% LMI and 30% UN units.
- Application demonstrated site(s) control or a plan to acquire the site.
- Application indicates development will not occur in a floodplain.
- Application indicates the development will contain a minimum of 6 units.
- Application indicates commitment to minimum Green Building Standards.
- Application indicates the development is in an area within or near disaster-impacted communities that are participating in buyout programs.

6.2 Program Design Standards: Ensuring Ideal Development

To achieve the Program's objectives of creating resilient, energy-efficient, and affordable housing, the following design standards should be incorporated into all development projects. Adherence to these standards will align with the scoring criteria, ensuring that projects incorporating these elements are positioned to score the highest.

Disaster Resilient Home Energy Solutions

To enhance resilience in the event of an emergency or disaster, all developments should incorporate backup power solutions necessary to support the community power needs. Applications must indicate how long the system will function in the case of a power outage. These solutions may include, but are not limited to:

- Automation
 - Systems should be self-sufficient, automated, and require minimal maintenance.
- Power Generation
 - Natural Gas generators capable of maintaining critical systems (e.g., heating, refrigeration, and lighting).

- Renewable energy sources such as solar panels or hydrogen power.
- Power Storage
 - Sufficient energy storage and distribution.

These energy solutions are critical in ensuring that housing remains safe and habitable during and after a disaster, contributing to the overall resiliency of the community.

Green and Energy Efficiency Standards

All projects must comply with HUD’s green building standards as required by Federal Register Notices at 87 FR 31636 and as amended by later notice(s). The Program has adopted the ICC-700 National Green Building Standard and Energy Star as the basis to meet the Green and Resilient Building Standard. To ensure requirements are met, the Program will review each project and document the project file.

Square Footage Standards

The Program aims to build smaller homes which are affordable to the average NJ homeowner without excessive subsidy. To that end, the Program has incentivized housing developments which are more cost effective on a per bedroom basis which is typically achieved by building smaller homes.

All residential units must adhere to the maximum square footage requirements as follows:

- 2-bedroom units: Maximum of 1,200 square feet
- 3-bedroom units: Maximum of 1,400 square feet
- 4-bedroom units: Maximum of 1,600 square feet

These standards are designed to ensure that all units provide adequate living space for families, promoting long-term sustainability and comfort.

Heating and Cooling Systems

All units must include adequate heating and cooling systems to ensure safe and comfortable living conditions in accordance with applicable building codes and energy efficiency standards.

Unit Mix

The ideal development should include a diverse mix of unit sizes to accommodate various family structures. The ideal housing community should consist of a majority of three-bedroom units, with the remaining units being two-bedroom. Where the market analysis indicates the need, an exception may be considered for a limited number of four-bedroom units.

Handicap Accessibility

Developments must comply with the accessibility standards outlined in the State’s housing policy, including but not limited to:

- When applicable, designs must adhere to accessibility requirements, ensure access for persons with mobility, hearing, or vision impairments and ensure that 5% of project units are accessible for persons with mobility impairments and 2% accessible for persons with hearing or vision impairments.

- The Program will require that each development has at least one (1) unit that meets the combined Section 504 accessibility requirements, for mobility and hearing/visual impairments.

6.3 Technical Evaluation Criteria

Applications that meet the minimum threshold criteria will then be reviewed by a panel as part of a technical scoring process. The review panel will generate composite scores using the following score criteria.

Category	Available Points
Project Site	25
Demonstrated Experience	25
Value of CDBG-DR Investment	25
Project Readiness	20
Resilient Design	20
Innovative Design	20
Community Need	20
Proximity to Buyout Properties	15
Target Percentage	15
	Total Points: 185

6.4 Criteria Descriptions

Applications will be reviewed by a panel as part of a technical scoring process. The review panel will generate individual scores using the established scoring criteria. The panel will meet regularly during the scoring process to agree on a score for each application. Applications will be evaluated and scored on the following:

DESCRIPTION OF CRITERIA	AVAILABLE POINTS
<p>Project Site</p> <p>The application will be scored on how close the site is to services and amenities such as access to food, health and wellness services, education and cultural sites, transportation, retail, community, and civic facilities. Projects should demonstrate how walkable or accessible to transportation they are and illustrate walkability on a site plan or map of the area.</p>	Up to 25 points

DESCRIPTION OF CRITERIA	AVAILABLE POINTS
<p>Demonstrated Experience</p> <p>Applications will be scored on their development team’s ability to demonstrate experience with construction of new housing, housing developments similar in scale to what is proposed, federal funding programs such as CDBG-DR or HOME, federal labor standards, compliance and reporting requirements.</p>	Up to 25 points
<p>Value of CDBG-DR Investment</p> <p>While each project will have unique design and development characteristics, the Program will calculate the CDBG-DR investment based on the square footage of the development. Applications that produce the most square footage at the lowest CDBG-DR cost will score the highest.</p>	Up to 25 points
<p>Project Readiness</p> <p>Projects that demonstrate their ability to proceed immediately upon selection will receive the most points. Project readiness will be assessed on multiple factors including site control (is the property currently owned by the development team or will an acquisition be required), financial readiness, (are all assets needed for the project in place with letters of commitment from lenders or team assets), and project design development (how far along are architectural and engineering plans).</p>	Up to 20 points
<p>Resilient Design</p> <p>To receive the point allotment for this criterion, the application must describe how the project incorporates one or more resilient construction solutions, including those designed to harden and protect residential structures from hazards, leaving households and communities more resilient and prepared for future climate events. Resilient solutions use approaches that include, but are not limited to solar power generation and storage, green roofs, on-site stormwater management, durable and storm-resistant exterior building materials, resilient infrastructure, etc.</p>	Up to 20 points
<p>Innovative Design</p> <p>To receive the point allotment for this criterion, the application must describe how the project incorporates one or more innovative construction solutions designed to demonstrate new, innovative, creative solutions to complex problems of durable and affordable housing. Such innovative design examples include but are not limited to, structural 3-D printed homes, geothermal heating, electrochromic smart glass, net-zero housing, modular construction, adaptive reuse such as storage container housing, etc.</p>	Up to 20 points
<p>Community Need</p> <p>Applicants must demonstrate the local need for additional affordable housing units. This can be documented in the form of the required Market Analysis.</p>	Up to 20 points
<p>Proximity to Buyout Properties</p> <p>The Program will place a priority on developments located within or near buyout locations. Applications that are closer to buyout locations will receive additional points (see Appendix 2 for buyout property locations).</p>	Up to 15 points

DESCRIPTION OF CRITERIA	AVAILABLE POINTS
<p>Target Percentage</p> <p>Applicants will be required to submit a Sources and Uses Form and indicate the LMI or UN homes within the development. Applications that align more closely with 70% LMI, 30% UN ratio will receive higher scores.</p>	<p>Up to 15 points</p>

7 APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants will be able to access the application materials and additional resources on the [Smart Move Program website](#). All applications must be submitted by April 30, 2025, via email to SmartMove@dca.nj.gov.

If you have any questions or concerns during or after the application period, please email the Smart Move email inbox at: SmartMove@dca.nj.gov and the Smart Move Team will respond to all inquiries in a timely manner.

8 AWARD

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Division of Disaster Recovery and Mitigation, is responsible for implementing the Program, including key roles in the execution of awards, managing payments, communication with HUD, and monitoring and financial oversight.

8.1 Maximum Awards

No more than \$15,000,000 in assistance will be awarded per project. Award calculations will be based upon the Sources and Uses Form submitted with the application. Depending on overall demand, the awarded amount may be less than the requested amount in the application.

8.2 Developer Funding

In addition to the Program funding, the developer may need to obtain other construction financing, the Program will not fully fund the project. The Total Development Costs (TDC) minus developer sales equals the award amount. Payments will be made in accordance with the development agreement upon a milestone-based payment schedule. All non-program funding necessary for the development must be spent before any disbursement of Program funds. The Program will record an encumbrance as part of the development agreement. Once all documents are executed, and the Program has confirmed completion of federal cross-cutting requirements such as the environmental review, CDBG-DR funds will be eligible for reimbursement to the developer, as costs are incurred for the construction of single-family housing units. Developers may receive up to 10% of the TDC as a developer fee. The funds will be paid to the developer based on established milestones, with the final retainage payment issued when all homes are sold to the LMI or UN homebuyers.

8.3 Sales Price

As part of the application, the developer must indicate the affordable price the houses will be sold at. The Program will evaluate the proposed sale prices using the HUD income limits to ensure the

homes are affordable to LMI and UN homebuyers. The sales prices must be deemed reasonable and are subject to the Program's approval. The Program may require independent pricing assessments throughout the process.

9 APPEAL PROCESS

All appeal requests related to Program activities are processed and reviewed by DCA. Initial review of the appeal will be conducted by a three (3) person panel, made up of Legal and Regulatory Affairs staff. This staff is independent from the group that originally made the decision being appealed. Each appeal will be reviewed against Program policies and requirements. The panel will make a recommendation to the Deputy Commissioner of Disaster Recovery Mitigation (DRM), who will make the final appeal determination.

Appeal requests to DRM must be postmarked within sixty (60) calendar days of the date of service on the original correspondence communicating the agency's decision. Appeals must be submitted in writing to:

**Department of Community Affairs
Division of Disaster Recovery and Mitigation
P.O. Box 823
Trenton, NJ 08625-0800
Attention: Legal**

The applicant's written request should contain the following information:

- Applicant's name,
- Address/location of impact area or proposed site,
- Applicant's mailing address,
- Applicant's telephone number,
- Email address (if available),
- The reason(s) the decision or action is being appealed,
- Documentation that supports the request to overturn the decision, and
- Application number.

If appropriate, Legal and Regulatory Affairs may contact the applicant to allow the applicant to provide additional documents to address any deficiency or incomplete information, or to be interviewed to determine the merits of the applicant's appeal. If the action or decision is overturned, notification will specify the corrective action to be taken. The applicant shall be notified of the final determination in writing via certified mail.

APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION ATTACHMENT CHECKLIST

Attachment Checklist
This checklist is to ensure the following required documentation is attached:
Section A: Project Information
<p>Developer Information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> An organizational chart identifying key team members and their roles. <input type="checkbox"/> Current financial documents proving fiscal capacity (e.g. liquidity, and/or credit strength)
Section B: Threshold Review
<p>Insurance and Coverages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance policies documenting appropriate insurance coverages.
<p>Letter of Municipal Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A Letter of Municipal Support.
<p>National Objective Requirement(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Program Sources and Uses Form.
<p>Demonstrated Site Control or Acquisition Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Any of the following documentation to demonstrate site control: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deed or other proof of ownership. • Executed option to purchase. <input type="checkbox"/> All applicable documentation (any local zoning changes, lien releases, variances and waivers, or other such land use procedures). <input type="checkbox"/> All applicable acquisition documentation (i.e. lot line adjustments, survey irregularities and geotechnical deficiencies, preliminary and final tract maps, housing development sketches such as site plans or conceptual drawings). <input type="checkbox"/> Any applicable documentation regarding any required easements and/or right-of-way (ROW) dedications. <input type="checkbox"/> An independent, full appraisal of the property's market value if the developer will be seeking reimbursement.
<p>Outside of Floodplain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A map from NJ DEP's New Jersey Flood Indicator Tool.
<p>Project Schedule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A detailed project schedule that reflects all aspects of development from predevelopment, construction, and sale of the housing units.
Section C: Technical Scoring

Project Site:

Maps, photographs, and documentation about the existing site conditions, the surrounding land uses, and the availability or need for utilities and public infrastructure to support this proposed housing development.

Demonstrated Experience:

Photos for three representative projects that demonstrate your organization's experience.

Project Readiness:

Any supporting documentation as evidence of a shovel-ready project.

Community Need:

Required Market Analysis.

Proximity to Buyout Properties:

Maps and photographs to demonstrate the proximity of the project to buyout locations.

APPENDIX 2: BUYOUT PROPERTY LOCATIONS

Buyout Property Locations	
County/City	
Bergen	
	Hillsdale
	New Milford
Burlington	
	Pemberton Township
	Southampton
	Tabernacle Township
Cumberland	
	Cedarville
	Downe Township
	Lawrence Township
Essex	
	Newark
Hunterdon	
	Lambertville
	Stockton
Mercer	
	Pennington
Middlesex	
	Colonia
	East Brunswick
	Highland Park
	Middlesex
	Old Bridge
	Rahway
	Sayreville
	South Plainfield
	South River
	Woodbridge
Monmouth	
	Keansburg
	Manalapan
	Ocean Township
Morris	
	Lincoln Park
Passaic	
	Clifton
	Pompton Lakes
Somerset	
	Basking Ridge
	Belle Mead
	Dunellen
	Hillsborough
	Manville
	Raritan
	Skillman
	Somerville
Union	
	Linden
	Rahway