



Grant Funding Opportunities For Green Infrastructure Retrofit Projects

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Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation Districts
www.lhccd.net

Stormwater runoff can play a role in altering stream flows, overloading combined sewers, polluting surface waters, and depleting groundwater resources. Retrofitting existing developed sites with green infrastructure practices disconnects stormwater from storm drains and streams, and can lead to reduction in these impacts.

The Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation Districts is a group of 11 County Soil & Water Conservation Districts in the Lower Hudson Region, covering the Hudson Valley from Albany to New York City. The Districts are leaders in identifying and implementing green infrastructure retrofits in their counties.

The goal of this report is to collect and summarize funding opportunities available to public and private entities in our region to implement green infrastructure retrofits. Because green infrastructure has so many benefits, it can fit into a wide variety of grant programs, including those focused on climate change, water quality, flooding, environmental justice, community development, and even transportation and biodiversity. This report focuses on grant programs most directly relevant to green infrastructure and also lists some additional programs where a project with GI components could fit.

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NYS CONSOLIDATED FUNDING APPLICATION PROGRAMS

The following programs accept applications through New York State's Consolidated Funding Application system:
<http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/>

GREEN INNOVATIONS GRANT PROGRAM

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|------------------------|---|
| Agency | NYS Environmental Facilities Corp. |
| Website | http://www.nysefc.org/Default.aspx?tabid=461 |
| Eligible Project Types | <p>The GIGP supports projects that incorporate unique ideas for stormwater management, innovative green infrastructure design, and cutting-edge green technologies. Eligible practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permeable pavement • Bioretention systems • Stormwater planters • Green roofs • Urban forestry • Riparian buffers, floodplain restoration, and/or constructed wetlands • Stream daylighting |
| Eligible Applicants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities • State Agencies • Public Benefit Corporations • Public Authorities • Not-for-profit Corporations • For-profit Corporations • Individuals • Firms • Partnerships • Associations • Soil and Water Conservation Districts |
| Program Goals | The Green Innovation Grant Program (GIGP) provides grants on a competitive basis to projects that improve water quality and demonstrate green stormwater infrastructure in New York. |
| Match Requirement | Funding will be provided to selected projects to the extent that funds are available. Recipients will receive a grant for up to 90% of their construction costs (including eligible planning and design costs). All recipients are responsible for providing a minimum local match of 10% from local or State (non-federal) funds. |
| Funding Source | GIGP is administered by NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and is funded through a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). |
| Maximum Grant | There is no minimum or maximum grant; however, EFC reserves the right to fund all, or a portion of, an eligible proposed project. |
| Applicability to GI | This program is specifically focused on the installation of innovative green infrastructure practices. |

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS – PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

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| Agency | Office of Community Renewal (OCR) under the direction of the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC). |
| Website | http://nysdhcr.gov/AboutUs/Offices/CommunityRenewal/FundingOpportunities.htm |
| Eligible Project Types | The NYS CDBG Public Infrastructure program consists of, but is not limited to, drinking water source development, storage, and distribution; sanitary sewage collection and treatment; associated water and sewer lateral connections; flood control and storm water drainage. Projects may include public works components such as sidewalks, streets, parking, open space, and publicly-owned utilities that are demonstrated to be directly related to the primary activity. Eligible projects may include the repair or replacement of existing systems, construction of new systems, or expansion of existing systems into areas previously unserved that are in compliance with the NYS Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Act (Chapter 433 of the Laws of 2010) and principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons. |
| Eligible Applicants | Eligible applicants are non-entitlement units of general local government (villages, cities, towns or counties), excluding metropolitan cities, urban counties and Indian Tribes that are designated entitlement communities. Non-entitlement areas are defined as cities, towns and villages with populations of less than 50,000, except those designated principal cities of Metropolitan Statistical Areas, and counties with populations of less than 200,000. Entitlement areas apply through a separate process. |
| Program Goals | The primary statutory objective of the CDBG program is to develop viable communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment by expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income. |
| Match Requirement | |
| Funding Source | Federal funds |
| Maximum Grant | Towns, cities or villages: \$600,000 Counties: \$750,000 |
| Applicability to GI | Stormwater retrofit projects are directly eligible. Must address a demonstrated need and improve conditions for a low income population. |

LOCAL WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

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| Agency | NYS Dept. of State |
| Website | http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/ |
| Eligible Project Types | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation or Implementation of a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program • Redeveloping Hamlets, Downtowns and Urban Waterfronts • Planning or Constructing Land and Water based Trails • Preparing or Implementing a Lakewide or Watershed Revitalization Plan <p>Note that implementation applications are contingent on the municipality having an approved LWRP.</p> |
| Eligible Applicants | Eligible applicants are villages, towns, cities, and counties with the consent and on behalf of one or more town, village, or city located along New York’s coasts or inland waterway designated pursuant to Executive Law, Article 42. A list of coastal water bodies and designated inland waterways is available at http://www.dos.ny.gov/funding/ |
| Program Goals | To revitalize communities and waterfronts |
| Match Requirement | State assistance awarded and paid shall not exceed 50% of the total eligible cost for the project. The total eligible cost of the project is the total of costs set forth in the grant application, less any federal assistance and other state assistance from the Environmental Protection Fund. |
| Funding Source | NYS Environmental Protection Fund |
| Maximum Grant | |
| Applicability to GI | Preparing and implementing a watershed management plan could focus on green infrastructure retrofit strategies. Additionally, waterfront revitalization could involve retrofit or restoration of riverside lands. |

OTHER POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

These programs are not a direct fit for green infrastructure stormwater retrofits but could offer an opportunity as part of a larger project.

Construction of green infrastructure as part of a large-scale energy reduction or climate resilience project:

- NYSERDA Cleaner Greener Communities: This program states that “All projects must be large-scale sustainability projects that support energy efficiency, renewable energy, or carbon mitigation.” Examples of eligible projects include: urban forestry, floodplain restoration, permeable pavement bike paths.

Construction of stormwater retrofits as part of downtown/streetscape revitalization:

- Empire State Development Grants – Infrastructure
- New York Main Street Program

Acquisition of parkland or restoration of land/water (eg aquatic buffers):

- Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation – Environmental Protection Fund Municipal Grant Program

NEW YORK STATE FUNDING SOURCES SEPARATE FROM CFA

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (WQIP) PROGRAM

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| Agency | NYS DEC |
| Website | http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4774.html |
| Eligible Project Types | <p>Non-agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater Retrofits • Green Infrastructure • Stream Stabilization/Restoration, and • Other Nonpoint Source Best Management Practices (BMPs) <p>Aquatic Habitat Restoration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade and replacement of road stream crossing structures (culverts and bridges) • Rehabilitation of road stream crossings • Installation of fish ladders • Removal or breach of stream barriers • Removal or alteration of impoundments in Hudson River Estuary • Stream daylighting <p>Other categories include: MS4 programmatic funding and Municipal Wastewater Treatment Improvement.</p> |
| Eligible Applicants | Municipalities, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Not-for-Profit Corporations |
| Program Goals | The Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) program is a competitive, statewide reimbursement grant program open to local governments and not-for-profit corporations for projects that directly address documented water quality impairments. |
| Match Requirement | 25% of total project costs for Non-agricultural Nonpoint Source and Aquatic Habitat Restoration |
| Funding Source | NYS Environmental Protection Fund |
| Maximum Grant | None |
| Applicability to GI | Green infrastructure retrofits are specifically identified as a priority for the Non-ag Nonpoint Source program. Stream corridor projects, including daylighting, could fit within the Aquatic Habitat Restoration program. |

URBAN & COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM

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| Agency | NYS DEC |
| Website | http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5285.html |
| Eligible Project Types | One eligible project type is Tree Planting: Tree planting projects must be located on public property, use only non-invasive species and give appropriate consideration to under-served urban neighborhoods (all potential neighborhoods whose demographic, geographic, or economic characteristics impede or prevent their access to adequate canopy cover and other benefits of trees). |
| Eligible Applicants | Municipalities and Not-For-Profit Corporations (NFP) acting on behalf of a public ownership interest in the property or acting on behalf of a public property owner may apply. |
| Program Goals | The DEC is dedicated to providing support and assistance to communities in comprehensive planning, management, and education to create healthy urban and community forests, and enhance the quality of life for urban residents. |
| Match Requirement | 50% match required |
| Funding Source | NYS EPF |
| Maximum Grant | Projects within the "Large City Grant" category (community population of 65,000 or more), may request between \$7,500 and \$50,000 in state assistance funding. Projects within the "Community Grant" category (school districts, small cities, towns, or villages) may request between \$2,500 and \$25,000 in state assistance funding. |
| Applicability to GI | Street tree planting may fit well with this program. |

HUDSON RIVER ESTUARY PROGRAM GRANTS

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| Agency | Hudson River Estuary Program |
| Website | http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5091.html |
| Eligible Project Types | The Hudson River Estuary Program periodically offers small grants for projects that implement items in their Action Agenda. RFPs for specific topics, such as green infrastructure, are also offered at times in coordination with New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission. |
| Eligible Applicants | Varies |
| Program Goals | The Estuary Grants were created to help fulfill those goals of the Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda that can be implemented most effectively by municipalities, not for profits, and other local partners. |
| Match Requirement | |
| Funding Source | Environmental Protection Fund, typically |
| Maximum Grant | |
| Applicability to GI | Green infrastructure practices of all kinds can contribute to the Estuary Program's goals regarding Streams and Tributaries, Climate Change, Water Quality and Contaminant Reduction |

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT PROGRAM

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| Agency | NYS Department of Environmental Conservation |
| Website | http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/31226.html |
| Eligible Project Types | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Impact Grant funding must address exposure of communities to multiple environmental harms and risks and must include research that will be used to expand the knowledge or understanding of the affected community. Projects vary based on local needs; past projects have included green infrastructure demonstration work. • The Green Gems Grant funding category provides funding for smaller scale projects. Green Gems Grant projects must include a research and educational component that will be used to expand the knowledge or understanding of the affected community. Eligible projects must involve education, stewardship, or monitoring activities related to parks, open space, community gardens or green infrastructure. |
| Eligible Applicants | Eligible applicants are typically community based nonprofit organizations – specific qualifications apply |
| Program Goals | To reduce exposure of communities to multiple environmental harms and risks |
| Match Requirement | Not required |
| Funding Source | State funds |
| Maximum Grant | Community Impact Grants: \$10,000 - \$50,000 Green Gems: \$2,500 - \$10,000 |
| Applicability to GI | For qualified nonprofits working in communities facing multiple environmental risks, these grants could offer an opportunity to construct, monitor, or deliver education around green infrastructure projects. |

GREENWAY COMMUNITIES GRANT PROGRAM

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| Agency | Hudson River Valley Greenway |
| Website | http://www.hudsongreenway.ny.gov/GrantFunding/CommunityGrants.aspx |
| Eligible Project Types | <p>The program provides small grants to Greenway communities for projects such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Planning (Comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision ordinances, site plans) • Economic Development (tourism, agriculture protection plans and techniques, main street and waterfront revitalization plans and implementation techniques) • Natural Resource Protection (Natural resource inventories and management plans, critical environmental area designations, natural resource protection ordinances) • Cultural Resource Protection (Cultural resource inventories, historic preservation plans/ordinances) • Scenic Resource Protection (Viewshed analysis, scenic impact review guidelines, scenic road protection, development of scenic easement programs) • Open Space Protection (Open space inventories, comprehensive open space, recreation and trails plans, development of conservation easement programs, transfer of development rights ordinances) |
| Eligible Applicants | To be eligible, municipalities must have adopted a resolution stating the community's agreement with the Greenway criteria. |
| Program Goals | Greenway Communities Grant Program provides grant funding to help communities develop and implement a vision for their future that balances Greenway criteria of |
| Match Requirement | Maximum State grant = 50% of the total project cost. |
| Funding Source | New York State |
| Maximum Grant | Generally \$10,000, though more is available for projects involving multiple municipalities. |
| Applicability to GI | Applications are considered and funding awarded on a quarterly basis, making this a convenient funding source for small projects. Site planning/design projects are eligible. |

OTHER FUNDING POSSIBILITIES

New York State Clean Water Revolving Loan Program

New York's CWSRF provides low-interest rate financing to construct water quality protection projects. These are not grants but loans. Municipally owned point sources of pollution are eligible, including Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Abatement and Stormwater Management Projects.

Hazard Mitigation Funding

In the wake of major storms, funding may become available for planning or implementing hazard mitigation projects. The "New York Rising" Community Reconstruction Program is currently available to parts of the region severely affected by Sandy, Irene and Lee (see <http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/community-reconstruction-program>). FEMA's Flood Mitigation Assistance program may provide ongoing assistance (see <http://www.dhSES.ny.gov/oem/mitigation/>). Communities are advised to have a Hazard Mitigation Plan in place that identifies specific needs.

EPA's Urban Waters Small Grants Program

This program changes from year to year and may fund different targeted areas. According to the website, "The goal of the Urban Waters Small Grants program is to fund research, investigations, experiments, training, surveys, studies, and demonstrations that will advance the restoration of urban waters by improving water quality through activities that also support community revitalization and other local priorities." The current RFP states that construction of green infrastructure retrofits is *not* an eligible activity. See <http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants>.