

Climate Resiliency Planning for Communities
Program Administrator Subrecipient Open Call

Questions and Answers

Updated 5/1/2024

Questions and Answers from Informational Webinar:

1. Can you confirm that a maximum of four project examples can be included?

For the application form, there is a maximum of four work samples applicants can attach. There is also a narrative in the application form where applicants can list other projects, but there is a maximum of four attachments.

2. Is the County seeking applicants that are NGOs, or can consulting companies such as new start-ups apply?

All of the listed examples are eligible. The County is not seeking only NGOs. NGOs are eligible, as are private firms and for-profit firms.

3. Is there an interim deadline of when the prioritized implementation projects need to be identified?

In the application materials for the open call, there is not a firm deadline for when prioritization has to happen. The County foresees a period of overlap between the current planning phase and the implementation phase. Starting in the middle of this year, the County's partner for the planning phase will be doing initial identification and prioritizing of projects. The County hopes that in the first few months that the Subrecipient is working on implementation, that they will be coordinating with the planning processes and developing a prioritization scheme. The feasibility of completing the project by the end of 2026 is one piece for applicants to work into their own timelines.

4. Can the planning partner also be selected as the implementation partner?

No, the planning partners are not eligible to be the primary or part of a team that is applying for the implementation phase. Article 8(e) of the County's standard Contract which was attached to RFP No. 2323-03090 (the procurement for Phase I of the project) states:

(iv) "Without limiting the foregoing, if the Consulting Parties assist the County in determining the advisability or feasibility of a project or in recommending, researching, preparing, drafting or issuing a request for proposals or bid specifications for a project, the Consulting Parties must not participate, directly or indirectly, as a prime, Subcontractor or joint venturer in that project or in the preparation of a proposal or bid for that project during the term of this Agreement or afterwards. The Consulting Parties may, however, assist the County in reviewing the proposals or bids for the project if none of the Consulting Parties have a relationship with the persons or entities that submitted the proposals or bids for that project."

5. Are proponents able to apply as a team?

Yes, applications with multiple firms are eligible. The application should lay out how the joint arrangement would work and what the responsibilities of the team members would be.

The lead applicant will be responsible for coordinating any partners or subcontractors to submit application materials. Note that only one partner (the lead applicant) will be selected to sign an agreement with the County as a Subrecipient.

6. Do implementation activities and/or the implementation partner need to be located within the five partner communities? Are villages outside those five communities eligible?

The five listed municipalities are the County's partners for this project. These communities were selected after thorough assessment, including a competitive application and interview process (details on eligibility and selection can be found here: [Climate Resiliency Planning \(cookcountyil.gov\)](https://www.cookcountyil.gov/Climate-Resiliency-Planning)). The implementation projects will be located in the five partner communities. The applicants who are seeking to be the implementation phase partner do not have to be physically located in those communities. The project is developing individualized climate resiliency plans for each of the five partner communities and the implementation is meant to implement those plans, so projects will be tied directly to the communities.

7. Will the list of attendees to the open call informational webinar be shared out?

Yes, the list of attendees is included at the end of this document. The recording for the webinar is available [here](#).

8. If applying as a team, is the County anticipating the team conducts a procurement process for subconsultants or is it expected that subconsultants be part of the team?

Subconsultants do not have to be part of the team at the time of application. The County is looking for a description of what the applicant's process would be for identifying those potential subcontractors. If there is an entity who the applicant already knows they are partnering with and wants that to be part of the application, that's fine, but there's no expectation that subconsultants have to be identified at this time.

9. Can the County provide information on how community is being engaged for the phase one efforts?

There is a variety of community engagement happening right now. The consulting team has been conducting interviews, focus groups and workshops with municipal staff and officials, as well as with other key stakeholders, including residents, the business community, nonprofits and community-based organizations. The planning phase began in January 2024. To this point, it has been mostly workshops, interviews and focus groups. Over the summer, there will be more engagement of the general public. Some of that will be through meetings that are related to the project and a lot of it will be through pop-up engagement at other community events such as fairs and festivals. The consultants are doing a variety of in-person engagements and virtual workshops. They are also developing surveys, which will be some combination of print and online surveys to get input from community members. They are ramping up the outreach to the general public right now, but they have been doing engagement with key stakeholders for the past several months.

10. How many partners will be selected or will only one be selected?

The County anticipates selecting only one Subrecipient for this effort, although the application could involve multiple partners. Even if an application has a project team of multiple parties, the lead applicant will be the entity that will enter into a Subrecipient Agreement with the County to implement the program.

11. Does the County have a budget in mind for the implementation partner role?

As specified in the application materials, it will be an amount not to exceed \$14,055,440. That is the maximum amount of funding that is available for the implementation partner. The County expects that it will be a number at or near this amount, but could be slightly less than that because of the possibility of some of the implementation funding going to specific projects that have been identified. Knowing that the budget is for projects across five communities and the breadth of possibilities that may be suggested or recommended in the plans, the County does not expect this budget to cover every project and priority that is identified in each of the five plans. The prioritization and feasibility are major considerations because the County knows that this project is only going to be implementing small portions of each of the plans.

12. Will the one partner work with all five communities?

Yes, the partner (Subrecipient) will be expected to work with all five communities. The County is looking for one partner to oversee implementation for the project as a whole, including projects in each of the five communities. The County will provide contact information for all of the appropriate community contacts upon entering the Subrecipient Agreement.

13. Do the selected communities have their own budget/awards for their plans, or is the budget for this open call expected to cover the costs of the implementation plans? If included in the total award, will the expected budgets of each community be provided?

The project does not have a per-community budget. The County has not allocated the total budget to the individual communities. Doing so is something that relates to the prioritization plan that the County is asking the Subrecipient to develop. This allocation does not need to be determined prior to the application, as we expect factors including how the money ought to be allocated can be part of the prioritization process.

14. Does all of the project budget need be allocated or spent by Dec 31, 2026?

The budget must be spent by that date. The program is funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Per federal requirements for this funding, all portions of this Project must be complete and dollars spent by December 31, 2026.

15. Do you anticipate this will be selected as a design/build scenario? Or design/bid/build?

The open call does not include a preference for the method for subcontracting and procurement. Applicants may propose the approach that best fits the goals and deadlines of the project.

16. Is the approximately \$14 million budget inclusive of the cost of implementation for each community as well as the costs associated with program administration?

Yes. The budget template in the application allows applicants to sketch out how the different costs come together.

17. Is there an expectation that the only funds available to implement the community plans are associated with the ARPA funds or is additional leveraging or braiding of funds expected as part of the program administration?

The County is aware that there are other potential funding sources for similar or additional implementation efforts. The budget for this project is the amount provided through ARPA funds. Subrecipients and partners may explore ways to help communities leverage other

funding sources or identify additional funding sources to implement additional elements of their resiliency plans, but it is not required as part of this project. Complete spending of the project budget should not be contingent on securing additional funding from outside sources. If additional funding sources are utilized, all expenses and project costs will need to be clearly defined as part of financial tracking.

18. Can you describe the level of design that is expected to be completed during the planning phase?

Level of design will depend on the project and on what the needs are for the projects that are ranked as priorities through the implementation process. The planning phase consultants are working with partner communities to compile a list of projects in existing plans that could align with climate resiliency implementation goals. Some of these projects may have some level of design work completed, while others may require design work as part of implementation. The County does not have a target for a percentage design to be completed. The County is interested in seeing what applicants believe is feasible given the budget, the timeline and the types of projects that the communities are looking to implement.

19. Are any of the implementation projects already selected?

Projects have not been selected. The planning team is putting together lists of potential projects and there are project ideas that have been discussed in some of the communities. There are some project concepts that are further along than others, but they haven't been selected – they have just been identified. That is one of the things that will help jumpstart the implementation process, but nothing has been earmarked as a project to be completed.

Questions received via email

Scope of work

20. What level of detail/design is expected from the Phase 1 plans? Will the plans include specific project recommendations or simply recommended actions/resilience strategies?

The Phase I partner is not completing design work. The partner is working with partner communities to develop climate resiliency plans that include a list of potential projects that align with climate resiliency implementation goals. Some of these projects may have some level of design work completed, while others may require design work as part of implementation. The County does not have a target for a percentage design to be completed. The plans are likely to include a mix of specific project recommendations and more general strategies and actions.

21. Have the plans already identified priority areas for the projects? If so, how were they identified, and are there reports/summaries available for a review?

Specific community resilience projects, priority hazards, types of projects and project locations have not yet been identified, but the Phase I consulting team has been working with the partner communities and other stakeholders to identify hazards, locations and types of solutions. This process is based on a variety of factors, including review of past plans, analysis of spatial data about current conditions, future climate, heat exposure, stormwater and flood mapping, engagement with elected officials, staff and community members. Reports and summaries are not yet available for review, but will be shared with the Phase II subrecipient once Phase I is completed.

22. Does the Phase I work include vulnerability assessments and corresponding maps? How extensive were the assessments? Are there reports/summaries available for a review?

The Phase I consultants are developing assessments and maps as part of their resiliency planning. This work includes analysis of current hazards, future hazards, and changes to hazards in different future climate scenarios. The work is currently ongoing and will not be available for review during the current application process, but will be shared with the Phase II subrecipient once it is completed.

23. Is design work being completed as part of the planning process, or are we expected to develop the designs as part of the Phase II scope of work? If it is partially complete, are you able to share documents to review?

The planning phase consultants are working with partner communities to compile a list of projects in existing plans that could align with climate resiliency implementation goals. Some of these projects may have some level of design work completed, while others may require design work as part of implementation. The County does not have a target for a percentage design to be completed.

24. What types of projects are expected to emerge as priorities from Phase 1 planning?

Specific community resilience projects have not yet been identified. As described in the materials for the open call, project types may include a wide variety of tailored projects such as reducing flooding and damage from stormwater, enhancing green infrastructure, implementing resilient energy systems, protecting and increasing tree canopy, or improving bike and pedestrian access to community resources. Projects may also include community development and capacity building efforts that boost community resilience, such as training for community-based organizations, resilience hubs, and workforce training.

25. Can you explain the relationship between project prioritization in Phase 1 and Phase 2? Will both teams be expected to collaborate on the prioritization exercise or will there be two independent rounds of prioritization?

The Phase I and Phase II partners will be asked to collaborate to share information and knowledge, but will be responsible for their own prioritization that fits the needs of their phase of the project. The Phase I plans are likely to identify a large and varied set of projects, some of which may be longer term or more costly than can be implemented within the budget and timeline of Phase II. The Phase I partner may consider factors that the community partners can use to prioritize a larger number of activities over a longer period. The Phase II partner will be asked to focus on prioritization of the subset of projects in each community that will be implemented as part of Phase II.

26. Does the funding or construction budget need to be evenly split across all communities? Are there specific requirements with regards to the budgetary breakdown between the 5 communities?

The project does not have a per-community budget. The County has not allocated the total budget to the individual communities. Doing so is something that relates to the prioritization plan that the County is asking the Subrecipient to develop. This allocation does not need to be determined prior to the application, as we expect factors including how the money ought to be allocated can be part of the prioritization process.

27. Is there a minimum number of projects or project types, overall or for each community? Or is it possible that projects in 1 or 2 communities are prioritized first and then the other communities will be implemented at a later date?

There is no minimum number of projects or project types to be implemented. The implementation phase should include implementation activities in each of the five communities, but there is no minimum number of total projects. The community resilience plans will identify more projects than can be implemented within the budget and timeline of Phase II, so there will be projects in each community that will be implemented at a later date outside this project.

28. How do you anticipate the Phase 1 team will engage with the Phase 2 team? There are about 6 months of overlap between the two. Can you clarify how involved the Phase 2 team is expected to be in the wrap up of Phase 1 and the planning process? Will the Phase 2 team be permitted to work with them during the prioritization phase?

Cook County staff will work with the Phase I and Phase II partners to ensure productive collaboration during the overlap between the two phases. The Phase I and Phase II partners will be asked to share information and knowledge, data, and community contacts. The partners are encouraged to collaborate, but each will have their own clear responsibilities via their contract and subrecipient agreement. Please note that Phase II will extend beyond the conclusion of the Phase I contract, after which the Phase I partners may be less available.

29. What level of detail will the Phase 1 prioritization be developed to? Can you clarify how Phase 2 will need to build on/enhance that?

The Phase I consultants are working with partner communities to compile a list of projects and/or project locations where implementation projects would advance the goals and vision of the climate resiliency plans. The Phase I plans are likely to identify a large and varied set of projects, some of which may be longer term or more costly than can be implemented within the budget and timeline of Phase II. The Phase I partner may consider factors that the community partners can use to prioritize a larger number of activities over a longer period. The Phase II partner will be asked to focus on prioritization of the subset of projects in each community that will be implemented as part of Phase II. Factors such as feasibility, cost, and completion prior to December 31, 2026 will be of greater emphasis in the Phase II prioritization than in the Phase I plans.

30. Who would be the Phase 1 contacts from each community to ensure learning transfer between the two Phases? Would the liaisons be the Planning Partner(s) or Cook County Department of Environment and sustainability (CCDES) staff?

CCDES staff will be the main contact. During the overlap of Phase I and Phase II (from mid-2024 to early 2025), CCDES staff will work with both the Phase I and Phase II partners to ensure effective collaboration and transfer of information.

31. How is coordination on Phase 1 between the County and the Communities and the Phase 1 consultant anticipated to work? Is there a standing cadence of meetings that should be extended into Phase 2? And/or a specific way that the team is managing coordination, receiving comments, etc. to keep everyone informed and streamline coordination and feedback?

Though CCDES and Phase I partners meet bi-weekly, the Phase II partner will have its own cadence meetings with CCDES staff on a schedule that works best for both parties. Additionally, CCDES staff will coordinate with Phase I and Phase II partners to identify opportunities for collaboration and streamlining of communication.

32. How will refinement and prioritization of projects be divided between Phase I and Phase II consultants?

The Phase I and Phase II partners will be asked to collaborate to share information and knowledge, but will be responsible for their own prioritization that fits the needs of their phase of the project. The Phase I plans are likely to identify a large and varied set of projects, some of which may be longer term or more costly than can be implemented within the budget and timeline of Phase II. The Phase I partner may consider factors that the community partners can use to prioritize a larger number of activities over a longer period. The Phase II partner will be asked to focus on prioritization of the subset of projects in each community that will be implemented as part of Phase II.

33. Will the projects be primarily on private property or municipal/publicly owned land? If private, what is the status of any necessary property owner agreements?

Specific community resilience projects and/or the locations of projects have not yet been identified.

34. Can initial community resilience projects be shared to assist with this proposal phase?

Specific community resilience projects have not yet been identified. As described in the materials for the open call, project types may include a wide variety of tailored projects such as reducing flooding and damage from stormwater, enhancing green infrastructure, implementing resilient energy systems, protecting and increasing tree canopy, or improving bike and pedestrian access to community resources. Projects may also include community development and capacity building efforts that boost community resilience, such as training for community-based organizations, resilience hubs, and workforce training.

35. What is the role of municipalities in the implementation phase?

Municipalities will be key stakeholders in identifying and prioritizing projects for implementation as well as in working with the partner on engagement. For projects that would be located on municipal property, Cook County will work with municipal governments to secure any necessary intergovernmental agreements.

36. Is there a budget breakdown for the Phase II implementation partner and construction?

There is no recommended budget breakdown for the implementation partner. Applicants should use the [budget template](#) included in the application materials to propose a budget that supports their plan for meeting the program's objectives using the budget categories provided.

Engagement

37. To what extent is environmental justice meant to be a factor in project prioritization? Are there tools that are being used for prioritizing implementation?

Environmental justice is a priority for the overall project and was a factor in the selection of community partners. There are no specific environmental justice goals or tools required for implementation, but applicants are encouraged to address the topic in their proposals. Individual communities may highlight environmental justice to different degrees in their

visions and goals, so the Phase II partner should be prepared to incorporate environmental justice to the extent the community plans emphasize it in their respective plans.

38. Can you explain the level of public stakeholder engagement expected of the Program Administrator and/or procured contractors for implementation?

There are not specific requirements for stakeholder engagement. Applicants are invited to propose how they would seek to engage the five municipal partners, community members, and other stakeholders as part of their application. Phase I of the project includes significant community engagement activities that the Phase II Program Administrator will not be required to duplicate. Rather, their proposals should focus on the specific types of engagement activities they see as beneficial to project prioritization and implementation.

39. What is the engagement model expected by the awardee? The scope of services requires working closely with Cook County neighborhoods.

There are not specific requirements for stakeholder engagements. Applicants are invited to propose how they would seek to engage the five municipal partners, community members, and other stakeholders as part of their application. Phase I of the project includes significant community engagement activities that the Phase II Program Administrator will not be required to duplicate. Rather, their proposals should focus on the specific types of engagement activities they see as beneficial to project prioritization and implementation.

40. Do you have a list of stakeholders already identified that will need to be engaged, given the on-going Phase 1 work?

The County and the Phase I consultants have developed a list of key stakeholders who have been and will be engaged for the project. This list and contact information will be provided to the selected subrecipient and project staff will work to introduce the subrecipient to key local government and community stakeholders, building on the connections made through Phase I.

41. Phase I includes extensive community outreach and engagement. Is continued and ongoing engagement viewed as a priority for the county? How many meetings do you anticipate per project?

There are not specific requirements for stakeholder engagement or an anticipated number of meetings. Applicants are invited to propose how they would seek to engage the five municipal partners, community members, and other stakeholders as part of their application. Phase I of the project includes significant community engagement activities that the Phase II Program Administrator will not be required to duplicate. Rather, their proposals should focus on the specific types of engagement activities they see as beneficial to project prioritization and implementation.

42. Please clarify if the Phase I partner is completing any part of site assessments and designs. What level of design is expected to be completed in Phase I?

The Phase I partner is not completing design work. The partner is working with partner communities to develop climate resiliency plans that include a list of potential projects that align with climate resiliency implementation goals. Some of these projects may have some level of design work completed, while others may require design work as part of implementation. The County does not have a target for a percentage design to be completed.

43. Are biddable design packages considered a deliverable in this Phase II?

Implementation project deliverables are not limited to construction. They can include design and engineering work, including biddable design packages, as well as other types of services and programming that are consistent with the recommendations of the community resiliency plans.

Budget and contracting

44. Will design and implementation contractors contract and receive payment directly from the County, or is the expectation that the Program Administrator subcontracts the implementation work?

As a subrecipient, the Program Administrator will be expected to subcontract with any potential design and implementation contractors.

45. Does the budget in Section IV.a include grant funds available for sub-recipients or other expenses as well or is this the full amount available for the services requested in Section V.b of the RFP? If the former, what is the budget for the services specific in Section V.b please?

The budget in Section IV.a includes all funds that will be available to the subrecipient, including administrative costs and all costs outlined in the Scope of Services (V.b). There is no prescribed percentage of the budget for most types of cost, although no more than 10% of the total budget should be used for administrative costs. Applicants should use the budget template and application materials to provide their proposal for how they will allocate the budget among the different expected costs.

46. Can you provide a description of what is expected to be included in each of the categories on the budget form? There are several that are similar and it's unclear what should be included in each section.

The following table provides descriptions of the budget categories. It is not necessary to use every budget category in the template.

Budget Category	Description
Personnel	Personnel costs consist of gross wages, including all fringe benefits.
Administrative Costs	Administrative costs are personnel costs not associated with salary and benefits. These costs include seminars, trainings, professional development, and professional education as well as program-specific transportation and travel expenses.
Supplies and Materials	Supplies and Materials are expendable items that will be consumed in the duration of the grant program. Some examples are: office supplies (such as copy paper, ink, filing supplies), staff development and training materials, program materials (consumable items required to carry out program activities), food supplies (allowable provided at an activity where participants are in attendance), expendable equipment, etc.

<p>Direct Programming Costs</p>	<p>This represents direct payments to program recipients. Examples include client assistance such as beneficiary payments, gift cards for emergency food or clothing, transit cards, stipends, etc. Direct Programming Costs exclude subaward and contractor relationships, both of which should be included under Contractual Services.</p>
<p>Maintenance</p>	<p>This category consists of maintenance costs directly incurred for the program responsibilities/activities, not those purchased for other purposes. Examples of maintenance expenses include: maintenance of data processing equipment, automotive equipment, and maintenance of facilities.</p>
<p>Rental and Leasing</p>	<p>This category consists of rental and leasing costs incurred for program responsibilities/activities. Examples of rental and leasing costs include: Facility and Office Space Rent, Automotive Equipment Rental, and Institutional Equipment Rental, etc.</p>
<p>Contractual Services</p>	<p>This consists of the rendering of services by any external entities (including subawardees and contractors) that, under a formal agreement, will provide critical and essential services for a program. This includes third party costs for contracted services, and any fees, travel, or other expenses the contracted entity will incur should be itemized and included under this line item. Examples of contractual services include: vendor services including accounting services, communication services, external graphics and reproduction, printing and inside reproduction services, program management support, etc. Contractual Services exclude payments to beneficiaries, which should be included under Direct Programming Costs.</p>
<p>Capital Improvements and Construction</p>	<p>Equipment is defined as any item of nonexpendable, tangible property that has a useful life of more than one year and must have an acquisition cost that is equal to or greater than \$5,000. Examples of capital improvements and construction include: Institutional Equipment, Computer and Tech Equipment, Office Furniture, Vehicle Equipment, etc.</p>
<p>Other Costs</p>	<p>Any items that do not fall within the defined budget categories should be included as other costs. Some examples include Event/Field Trip costs (i.e. one-time, event-specific costs such as admission fees, etc.) and program-specific communications not otherwise procured through a contract.</p>
<p>Indirect Costs</p>	<p>Indirect costs are expenses that cannot be identified for a specific grant award, service, or activity of an organization, but are incurred as the result of multiple grant awards, services, or activities. Typical examples of indirect cost for many nonprofit organizations may include depreciation on buildings and equipment, the costs of operating and maintaining facilities, and general administration and expenses, such as the salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting. Indirect Costs can be calculated using a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with the federal</p>

government, or subrecipients may elect to use a 10% de minimis rate that is calculated based off of Modified Total Direct Costs, as defined by Uniform Guidance.

47. How should the applicant breakdown materials, etc. when projects for each community won't be identified until February 2025?

The County recognizes that detailed budgeting for materials will not be possible prior to the identification of specific projects. Applicants are encouraged to provide information that reflects the relative costs and budgets of the different categories, assuming a mix of project types, and to use the narrative and other parts of the application to describe how they will execute the necessary work. The County acknowledges that these are estimates. There will be opportunities to shift budgeted dollars between categories as projects are better defined.

48. In the proposal it states, “:iii. Award Budget: CCDES and Selected Partner shall jointly develop a detailed budget that is based upon and consistent with the funding source(s). Any revisions of a line item in the working budget shall be subject to approval by CCDES.” Based on this, what level of detail on the budget is required at RFP stage? And what will be determined after award / once Phase 1 plans are finalized?

The County recognizes that detailed budgeting will not be possible prior to the identification of specific projects. For the proposal, applicants should assume a mix of project types and illustrate the relative costs and budgets of the different categories under their proposed approach. There will be opportunities to shift budgeted dollars between categories as projects are better defined.

49. Do all firms need to submit audited financials? Or is that only required for certain entities, and if so, which types?

All applicants are asked to supply a recent financial statement or audit. Applicants should submit their A133 Single Audit, if applicable. Otherwise, applicants should submit their latest audited financials. If an applicant does not have audited financials, they may submit other financial documents for consideration.

50. Is the maximum budget noted inclusive of consultant fees?

Yes. The maximum budget includes any costs that the applicant and their partners and subcontractors will be seeking.

51. Will any of the budget be used to support administrative services for Cook County?

The administrative and staffing needs of Cook County are already accounted for. Proposals for this open call should not include any administrative needs or other costs for Cook County.

52. The RFP references that compliance with the "Uniform Guidance and County legal requirements will be required." Can these documents be provided for review?

The Uniform Guidance refers to 2 C.F.R. Part 200. County legal requirements refers generally to the Cook County Code, which may be accessed at [Code of Ordinances | Cook County, IL | Municode Library](#).

53. Can you confirm that the terms in the sample Professional Service Agreement shown here apply to this project? [PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT \(cookcountyiil.gov\)](#)

The linked document applies to a different type of agreement with Cook County and will not apply to this project. A subrecipient agreement for this project will be developed with the selected partner. Once a partner has been selected, a draft agreement will be shared for review. Please refer to the Summary of Contract Terms and Conditions (Section VII.b) of the open call overview for a summary.

54. Should the consultant team bill by time-and-materials hourly rates, or can we offer other creative options such as lump sum billing or pay-for-performance?

Applicants may propose the billing approach that best fits their overall proposal while meeting the requirements described in the open call application materials.

55. Do the preferences and credits shown here apply to the selection criteria for this project? [Doing Business with Cook County \(cookcountyiil.gov\)](#)

The subrecipient open call and identification process is separate from Cook County's procurement process. Though we follow guidelines for transparency and encourage partnership with MBE, WBE, Veteran-owned and Persons with Disabilities owned businesses, the preferences and credits system shown at this link do not apply to the open call subrecipient selection. For details on the evaluation process and criteria for this open call, please review Sections V.e. and V.f. of the open call overview.

56. Since Phase I has already included outreach and engagement with communities, and these firms have built trust with those communities, are we able to subcontract any of the outreach and engagement work to these firms? We understand these firms have been prohibited from submitting applications for Phase II, but does that also extend for lower tiers of subcontractors?

The Phase I partners are not eligible to be the primary, subcontractors, or part of a team that for the implementation phase, either as part of the team that submits an application or as a subcontractor selected later. Article 8(e) of the County's standard Contract which was attached to RFP No. 2323-03090 (the procurement for Phase I of the project) states:

(iv) "Without limiting the foregoing, if the Consulting Parties assist the County in determining the advisability or feasibility of a project or in recommending, researching, preparing, drafting or issuing a request for proposals or bid specifications for a project, the Consulting Parties must not participate, directly or indirectly, as a prime, Subcontractor or joint venturer in that project or in the preparation of a proposal or bid for that project during the term of this Agreement or afterwards. The Consulting Parties may, however, assist the County in reviewing the proposals or bids for the project if none of the Consulting Parties have a relationship with the persons or entities that submitted the proposals or bids for that project."

57. Are there specific WBE and/or MBE goals or targets for this project?

There are not specific goals, though support of WBE, MBE, Veteran-owned, and Persons with Disabilities owned business is always encouraged. Applications will be evaluated based in part on their commitment, proposed approaches and/or resources that address diversity, equity, and inclusion.

58. How would a target class business be counted if they are included as a second tier subconsultant?

Applications will be evaluated as a whole, including all subcontractors and partners presented in the application package. There are not specific goals, though support of WBE, MBE, Veteran-owned, and Persons with Disabilities owned business is always encouraged. Applications will be evaluated based in part on their commitment, proposed approaches and/or resources that address diversity, equity, and inclusion.

59. Do all subcontractors/partners need to be identified in this proposal or is an outline of the process to select partners appropriate?

Subcontractors do not have to be part of the team at the time of application. The County is looking for a description of what the applicant's process would be for identifying those potential subcontractors. If there is an entity who the applicant already knows they are partnering with and wants that to be part of the application, that partner can be included, but there is no expectation that subconsultants have to be identified at this time.

60. What is the contracting vehicle (Design/Build? Design/bid/build? Preferred contractor?) to implement projects?

The open call does not include a preference for the method for subcontracting and procurement. Applicants may propose the approach that best fits the goals and deadlines of the project.

61. Can you clarify the following bullet from page 7 of the RFP: *Line Item Budget with estimated costs for administration costs (no more than 10% of total budget) and anticipated spend per community*. Does this mean that the County expects the Program administrator budget under 10% of the total \$14M budget available, or is the 10% admin cap limited to the individual implementation initiatives, therefore allowing additional budget to administer the overall program.

The portion of the overall budget allocated to the subrecipient's administrative costs should be no more than 10% of the total budget. If the subrecipient procures contractual services for implementation activities, administrative costs for subcontractors may be included in those contracts.

Administration and reporting

62. What level of managing and monitoring is expected from the Program Administrator vs Cook County? Is the expectation that the County will have a construction manager onsite to document all physical work or would Program Administrator-supplied records at completion and regular status reports be sufficient?

The Program Administrator will be responsible for managing and monitoring their own work and the work of any subcontractors. The County will not have a construction manager on site. County staff will work with the Program Administrator to establish the records and reporting that will be required.

63. What is the scope of grant management required in this opportunity? For example, is the awardee responsible for redistributing the grant funds as a subrecipient?

The selected partner will become a subrecipient of ARPA funds and will be required to adhere to U.S. Treasury guidance in the same manner as Cook County. The subrecipient will be required to execute all compliance and monitoring activities, including undergoing a risk assessment, creating a workplan in partnership with Cook County staff, actively

participating in meetings with our team, and adhering to all Cook County fiscal and program management policies and timelines.

Cook County has developed numerous resources to help subrecipients meet their compliance and monitoring obligations, which will be shared with the selected partner. Throughout the project, the Program Administrator will collect data necessary for federal reporting guidelines and data for program metrics. Final metrics will be agreed upon after selection of Program Administrator but may include dollars spent in each community, number of projects identified and implemented, and/or anticipated resiliency impact of projects.

If an applicant intends to subcontract funds as part of their proposal, they will be expected to distribute, monitor, and report on these funds.

64. Is there any reporting and evaluation happening in Phase 1? Do you have a standard format or process for doing that reporting that should be followed in Phase 2?

County staff and the Phase I consultants are tracking the project's key performance indicators. As an ARPA-funded project, all phases of Climate Resiliency Planning for Communities adhere to [U.S. Treasury's Final Rule](#), including reporting requirements. As a subrecipient, the selected partner will need to adhere to uniform guidance in the same manner that Cook County Government does. Cook County staff will work with the subrecipient to develop appropriate metrics for Phase II and provide access and guidance on using the County's online platform for tracking and reporting.

Other

65. What is the importance of the location of the awardee in the evaluation process?

The awardee's location is not a factor in the evaluation process, provided that the applicant can satisfy the requirements and complete the work of the project.

66. Would it be possible to request an extension of the submission date?

We will be unable to extend the submission date past the current date of May 15, 2024.

67. Does Cook County expect there to be future phases of work?

The current funding for the program through ARPA is fully committed to the Phase I (Planning) and Phase II (Implementation) described in the open call materials. Cook County intends to continue supporting communities' climate resiliency efforts through other County programming where possible and by connecting these five municipalities and other communities with potential new funding should it become available, but there are no future phases of this project currently planned.

68. Can the responses to all questions posed at the 4/18/24 Information Session (e.g. "Can you provide information on how community is being engaged for the Phase I efforts?") be posted?

All questions received during the information session are included in this document (Questions #1-#19).

69. Is the County planning to publish the recording or slides of the webinar from April 18?

The recording for the webinar is available [here](#). Slides have not been posted, but can be seen in the video recording.

Information Session [April 18, 2024 (Virtual)] Attendee List

Name	Organization
Ally Mark	Lotus Sustainability
Elsa Mark-Ng	Agency Landscape + Planning
Ethan B. Guy	Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
Giulia Aliyeva	HSSE & Business Consulting
Inouye, Michelle	AECOM
Jim Sparber	Greenprint Partners
Julia Manion	Perkins & Will
Kristin Ihnchak	Greenprint Partners
Leah Sheppard	Arup
Maithilee Das Lappin	Greeley and Hansen, TY Lin
Maureen Wunderlich	GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.
Megan McDonald	WSP
Michael Houston	Jacobs
Michael J. Schwing	HGA
Michael Warner	Gewalt Hamilton Associates
Mike Ernst	Arup
Rabin Valluri	Buro Happold
Rajesh Sankat	3x3
Ramona Kywe	Arcadis
Sarah Dobie	CIS
Shelley Hazen	GEI
Somto Uyanna	Buro Happold
Tatiana Papakos	Michael Baker
Terri Herson	Jacobs
Travis Smith	RETF
Victoria Wilson	Naturally Urban Environmental