

Flood Action Program



Background

Westchester communities have been subject to flooding for decades. As development occurred, floodplains were filled and opportunities for flood storage were lost. At the same time, additional stormwater runoff was being generated from the newly created impervious surfaces. There has been an increase in the intensity of storms, resulting in greater volumes of water in a shorter period of time. With more water and fewer places for it to go, we experience flooding. Westchester County is committed to working with our municipalities to address this serious problem.

Program Description

This program will enable Westchester County to partner with municipalities and other government agencies to provide funding for flood control or flood damage reduction projects. The funds will be used for the types of projects described below. A Flood Action Task Force, set up by County Executive Spano, will assist in the evaluation of projects and make recommendations to the County on funding allocations. The Task Force consists of community leaders and experts with specific knowledge of Westchester County flood issues. In addition to individual project review, the Task Force is working with County officials to develop a short and long term action plan to deal with flooding.

Program Goal

To reduce flooding problems and impacts on people and property throughout Westchester County.

Review Process

Municipalities will be required to submit a preliminary application and attend a pre-meeting to go over the scope of a proposed project and whether the project meets the County's criteria for participation. Upon review and initial approval, the municipality will be required to complete and submit a full application to the Commissioner of Planning for review with the Commissioner of Public Works. The municipality will be notified within thirty (30) days if additional information is needed. Upon acceptance of a completed application, the Flood Task Force will review the project details and assist in the evaluation of projects for possible funding. The application and information are available at www.westchestergov.com/flood.htm.



Eligibility Criteria

Successful municipal applicants will be required to do the following:

- Provide a clear description of the County benefit that will result from a proposed project with detailed information on the size of the area that will benefit and the number of people and properties protected in regard to improved health and life safety and a reduction in physical and economic impacts.

- Participate financially with significant local funds, grants, and/or in-kind services e.g. 50%
- Provide a certification from a qualified licensed professional that the project will not create or exacerbate an unacceptable flooding condition in the watershed.
- Clearly demonstrate how the municipality has addressed flooding as part of its comprehensive planning process.
- Adopt/amend and enforce ordinances to limit flood risk and flood damage and reduce the volume of stormwater runoff discharged from sites (zoning, overlay zones, floodplain regulations, stormwater regulations, stricter building and development standards, etc.).
- Prepare and submit a community hazard mitigation plan in accordance with FEMA guidelines that includes flooding (identifies flood prone areas, inventories historic flood damage, and describes recommended actions).
- Adopt a resolution that commits the municipality to work cooperatively with other municipalities and the County on watershed planning efforts.
- Identify other ways in which the municipality has or will attempt to reduce flooding and flood damage including studies, actual projects or otherwise.

Project Selection Criteria

Applications will be prioritized according to the following:

- The nature and extent of the flooding problem and extent of recorded or potential risk to individuals, properties and public health.
- The degree to which the project will reduce the identified problem(s).
- The expected timeline for the project (how long will it take to complete).
- The degree to which the municipality has taken steps to reduce flooding and flood impacts/risk on their own or in conjunction with other municipalities. (Refer to eligibility criteria above.)
- The extent of the local match or funding from other sources for the project.
- No other feasible alternative exists.



GrassPave pervious paving system.

Potential Projects

- Construction of new municipal flood control structures (dams, dikes, levees, storage basins).
- Improvement (not maintenance) of existing stormwater infrastructure and/or existing stormwater facilities.
- Participating in state or federally sponsored projects such as USACE or FEMA projects.
- Land acquisition/easements with a primary purpose of reducing flood damage. Criteria include:
 - Properties identified for flood damage reduction or flood control/reduction as documented in a hazard mitigation plan, watershed plan, comprehensive plan or other study.
 - Technical analysis that describes the benefits of the project, such as engineering and hydrologic studies.
 - Narrative evaluation of how the proposed project compares with other approaches such as controlling development through regulations or requiring better development techniques of developers.



Stormwater management facility with recreational amenities.