

Frequently Asked Questions

Please note that this is for the **Local Government Citizens Re-Organization Empowerment Grant** Program only. Questions for the Local Government Efficiency Grant program are available on the Department of State's website: <http://www.dos.ny.gov/communityprojects/funding.html>

COMPLETING AN APPLICATION

Application Process

Q: Is it a problem if we miss a grant application deadline?

A: Applications received after a deadline will be held for the next available monthly deadline. It does not matter when the application was shipped or postmarked, it must arrive on time at the address listed in the application. No fax or e-mail transmissions will be accepted. However, requests for expedited assistance, that have been properly labeled as such, will be reviewed immediately.

Q: When were the grants applications released?

A: Applications were posted on the Internet and mailed December 15, 2011.

Q: How much money may be applied for?

A: Funding levels are different depending on what the grant is to be used for:

- A Local Government Citizens Re-Organization Empowerment Grant for a re-organization **study and/or plan** shall not exceed \$50,000 per application, of which not more than 50% or \$25,000 of this grant may be used for Expedited Re-Organization Assistance.
- A Local Government Citizens Re-Organization Empowerment Grant for re-organization **implementation** shall not exceed \$50,000.

Q: How long should the applications be?

A: Applicants should provide enough information to adequately address Section G of the Part 2 application form.

Q: Are letters of support helpful?

A: While not required, letters of support from elected officials (federal, state and local), involved departments heads, community leaders, businesses on organization letterhead, are helpful to document support for your application.

Q: To whom should a letter of support be addressed?

A: Address correspondence to the Secretary of State. Any correspondence should clearly identify the project in the letter.

Q: Will the Department of State answer my grant application questions prior to application submission?

A: The Department of State will accept written application questions from potential applicants by mail and electronically. To the extent possible, each inquiry should cite the RFA section and paragraph to which it refers. Written questions will be accepted until the dates posted on the cover of this RFA. Responses will be posted as noted on the cover of the RFA.

Q: If my application is awarded a grant, what's the next step?

A: Developing a contract with the Department of State.

Applicant Eligibility

Q: May a municipality receive two grant awards?

A: The grant program does not prohibit the awarding of multiple grants to the same applicant.

Q: If an application is from a village and the town which contains it, is that two municipalities?

A: Yes. The town and the village are each separate municipalities.

Q: Is a School District or a BOCES considered a municipality?

A: No. Neither a School District nor a BOCES is an eligible applicant for the Local Government Citizens Re-Organization Empowerment Grant. Please refer to the application for eligibility limitations.

Q: Are water and wastewater districts eligible?

A: Yes, special improvement districts are eligible.

Q: May a Sewer Authority be a co-applicant in Local Government Citizens Re-Organization Empowerment Grant?

A: No.

Q: May a community college be an applicant?

A: No.

Q: Are private sector businesses eligible as applicants?

A: No.

Q: Is a county Agricultural Association an eligible entity to participate in an application with another municipality?

A: No.

Q: May a town and village apply to purchase a new piece of equipment?

A: Not with a Local Government Citizens Re-Organization Empowerment Grant.

Q: Is a feasibility study and a financial analysis for consolidation of the town and village police forces an eligible project?

A: Not with a Local Government Citizens Re-Organization Empowerment Grant.

Q: May two school districts apply for a grant to study consolidation?

A: Not with a Local Government Citizens Re-Organization Empowerment Grant.

Q: What are the differences between a consolidation and dissolution?

A: In a consolidation two municipalities combine to form a new entity. For example, two towns may consolidate to form one new town. Dissolutions refer to a situation where a town or village is dissolved into an adjoining town or village.

Q: Are Libraries an eligible applicant?

A: Libraries that are special districts are eligible applicants. For additional information please see:

<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/libs/pltypes.htm>.

Q: Can two cities study a joint police department with a Local Government Citizens Re-Organization Empowerment Grant?

A: No. Cities are not an eligible applicant and the study of department consolidation is not an eligible project.

Smart Growth

Q: What is Smart Growth?

A: Smart Growth encourages community planning and development in priority economic growth areas where water and sewer infrastructure is available; encourages redevelopment of existing community centers; and protects important natural and historic resources, including water quality.

Q: Why is Smart Growth considered in government efficiency?

A: The State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act has designated the Department of State as an "infrastructure agency" and a state infrastructure agency shall not approve, undertake, support or finance a public infrastructure project, including providing grants, awards, loans or assistance programs, unless it is consistent with the smart growth principles.

Intermunicipal Agreements (IMAs) and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)

Q: What is an intermunicipal agreement (IMA)?

A: An IMA is a cooperative or joint municipal venture authorized by General Municipal Law Article 5-G.

Q: Why do I need an Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA)?

A: An IMA is important because it formally outlines the responsibilities of each municipality in providing the service.

Q: What intermunicipal agreements (IMAs) must be submitted with the application?

A: IMAs relevant to the application, such as an existing agreement to share services.

Q: What is the difference between a Memorandum of Understanding and an Intermunicipal Agreement?

A: Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) are most commonly used between two state agencies, which cannot "contract" with one another. At least two parties are needed to form a contract and state agencies are considered to be one entity - the State. For this purpose, MOUs essentially take the place of contracts in order for state agencies to memorialize agreements with one another. State agencies may, however, contract with municipalities or decide to use an MOU with a municipality when appropriate. Intermunicipal agreements (IMA) are written agreements among two or more units of local government (which may also contract with one another). There is not really a difference between an IMA and an MOU. Both are written agreements between municipalities to jointly undertake an activity that each participating municipality has the power to undertake on its own.

Q: How is an IMA different from a Resolution?

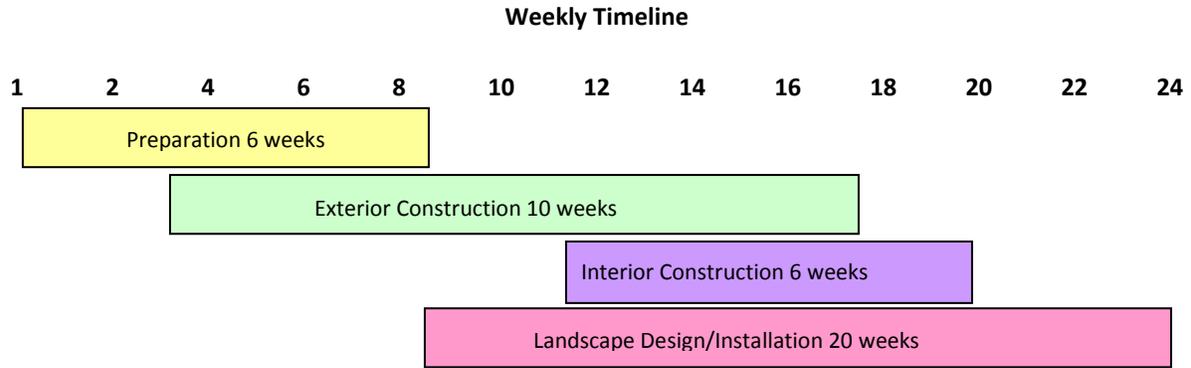
A: A Resolution sets forth the intent of the elected officials, and the vote is filed by the Clerk. In contrast, an IMA provides the tasks and details and assigns responsibility to various municipal departments to carry out the intent in the Resolution.

Work Plans

Q: When will proposed projects need to be completed?

A: The tasks should be completed within 36 months from the project start date. Under certain circumstances contracts may be extended. However when a petition is filed pursuant to General Municipal Law, Article 17-A, the timelines specified in the legislation must be followed.

Q: What are the differences between a work plan and a time line?
 A: A work plan documents major milestones to be achieved, the tasks between milestones and who is responsible for the work. A timeline is a graphic representation of tasks over time or a chart that shows the sequencing, coordination and overlap of tasks over time. A successful applicant will illustrate the ability to effectively manage the project tasks with a reasonable timeline.



Budget:

Q: When may we begin to incur costs that will be funded under the grant?
 A: Project expenses incurred after April 1, 2011 – if eligible – may be reimbursed.

Q: May an advance of grant funds be requested?
 A: Yes. Only when expedited assistance has been requested in response to the receipt of a valid citizen petition.

Q: What are the restrictions that apply to financing the "local match?"
 A: "Local Match" shall be money from the local municipalities.

Q: How is the 10 percent local share accounted for in the vouchers submitted for reimbursement?
 A: For every \$10 that is accounted for in a reimbursement request, the state will provide the municipality \$9, until the project is complete.

Q: May the 'local' share be of in-kind value?
 A: No. The 10% 'local' share must be in the form of cash contributed by the involved municipalities.

Q: May funds from other sources such as the Office for Community Renewal, the Department of Environmental Conservation, or other state or federal funds be used towards the 10% 'local' cash match?
 A: Yes.

Q: May the grant be used to retire the debt on a fire truck, in anticipation of district consolidation?
 A: No.

Q: May the grant money be used to pay the costs of the grant writer or contract management?
 A: No.

Q: Is new construction allowed under LGE?
 A: Yes, if a facility is being expanded to accommodate additional equipment and personnel in the implementation of a consolidation or dissolution. Grants may be used for capital improvements, transitional personnel costs or joint

equipment purchases **only** where such expenses are vital to the implementation of a local government re-organization.

Resolutions and Certification

Q: Must the resolutions in support of the application be submitted by the application deadline also?

A: Yes. Resolutions from all involved local government entities are required to be submitted for the application to be deemed complete and eligible for consideration for current deadline period. If the local government entity has been petitioned and is applying for Expedited Re-Organization Assistance, the resolution does not need to be provided with the application but will be required prior to contract execution.

Q: Who must pass the authorizing resolutions?

A: Resolutions must come from: a village board of trustees, town board, or special district governing body as the case may be.

Q: Is voter approval needed to apply for a grant?

A: No. Support in the form of resolutions by the Lead Applicant and all co-applicant municipalities is needed prior to application.

Q: Do I need to wait until the application is complete before my local board passes our resolution in support of the joint application?

A: No. The applicants and co-applicants do not need to wait until the application is complete. While you should ensure that you are clear of the prospective responsibilities of each applicant, the resolutions required for submission is just a statement of each applicant's support of the proposal and agreement to move forward with the project if you are successful in the application process.