

Sarasota County

Resilient SRQ

Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Voluntary Home Buyout Program

NOFA Released
By 5:00 pm (EST)
February 27, 2025

Program Opens
February 28, 2025

Applications Open
By March 5, 2025

Applications Due
By 5:00 pm (EST)
April 30, 2025

Applications must be submitted using the online platform, Neighborly Software. Please visit [ResilientSRQ \(https://www.resilientsrq.net/\)](https://www.resilientsrq.net/) to access the application link.

Instructions for application completion are contained in this Notice of Funding Availability.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure application(s) are submitted prior to the due date and time. Applications received after 5:00 pm (EST) on April 30th will not be considered.

This Document can be made available in alternative accessible formats upon request.

The material in this NOFA does not represent all the particular priorities, program components, or funding sources currently/potentially available through local, state, or federal funders and may change upon the release of this NOFA for the various funding sources.

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Version History

Version Number	Change Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	02/27/2025	Original version published

Summary

Sarasota County announces this Notice of Funding Availability (“NOFA”) from the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Fund (the “Funds”) to be used within Sarasota County for Voluntary Home Buyout Program. The availability and use of these funds is subject to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (“HUD”) approval of the Action Plan, submitted to HUD by Sarasota County pursuant to the CDBG *Sarasota County’s Plan for Disaster Recovery* (“Action Plan”), Subpart I of the regulations at Title 24 Part 570 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Sarasota County’s CDBG DR Action Plan was approved on November 21, 2023.

The NOFA complies with the requirements as stated in the Action Plan and establishes the award process, the application acceptance period and eligibility criteria.

The purpose of the program is to acquire properties that were damaged in the September 2022 disaster event and to acquire properties in flood-prone areas as a mitigation activity. Sarasota County has the opportunity to utilize this funding to acquire properties, aiming to reduce risks for property owners and residents while promoting resilience against future impacts. The acquisition process follows a Voluntary Home Buyout Program (Buyout Program), which encourages residents to relocate to lower-risk areas outside of the repetitive loss area within the County. By targeting CDBG-DR resources toward LMI homeowners in the repetitive loss areas, Sarasota County ensures that residents with limited recovery resources receive support in their recovery process and are provided with an opportunity to move from flood-prone, high-risk areas to safer locations outside of the floodplain.

Properties acquired through HUD's Voluntary Buyout Program are purchased using public funds and become public lands. These buyout parcels undergo the removal of all structures and are placed under a conservation-based restrictive covenant. This covenant eliminates the right to build on the parcel and prevents any future development, except for specific uses outlined in the covenant, such as related restrooms or parking or storm water management infrastructure like pump stations, bio-swales, or retention ponds. As per HUD's CDBG-DR National Objectives, parcels acquired through the Voluntary Buyout Program are permanently designated as open green spaces. Additionally, these publicly owned, open-space parcels can be utilized by communities through collaborative agreements with neighboring residents, allowing for non-construction activities like community gardening or recreation. The acquired properties must also be “maintained in perpetuity for a use that is compatible with open space, recreational, floodplain, and wetlands management practices, or other disaster-risk reduction practices” as required by the restrictive covenant.

Applicants to the program will need to develop and submit an Open Space Management Plan specific to this activity and the properties involved. This plan will be developed to ensure that all properties are managed and maintained in compliance with CDBG-DR land use standards and local property maintenance codes. Additionally, the plan will describe the steps taken to support responsible floodplain and wetland management

Allocation of CDBG DR Funds

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced that Sarasota County will

receive \$201,535,000 in funding to support long-term recovery efforts following impacts from Hurricane Ian in 2022 through the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2023 (Pub. L. 117–180, Division A) approved September 30, 2022, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Act, 2023 (Pub. L. 117–328, Division L, Title II) approved December 29, 2022, for major disasters occurring in 2022. Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding is designed to address needs that remain after all other assistance has been exhausted. Of the \$201,535,000 in CDBG Disaster Recovery funds, \$6,458,250 is dedicated to fund Voluntary Home Buyout Program (“Program”) and are contained in the approved Action Plan solely for homes in the impacted areas. This program will allow for eligibility under the benefits to Low- to Moderate- Income (LMI) Persons, and the Urgent Need National Objective.

Eligible applicants can submit applications for proposed projects during the established application window as specified in this NOFA and updated as needed on [Resilient SRQ \(https://www.resilientsrq.net/\)](https://www.resilientsrq.net/). The County will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the proposals, carefully considering the feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of each project. The County will evaluate proposed projects submitted by applicants based on eligibility criteria (defined below). The Board of County Commissioners will review the project evaluations during a future public meeting and make the final project selections at that time. Throughout the process, transparency and accountability will be maintained by providing regular updates to the public through the [Resilient SRQ \(https://www.resilientsrq.net/\)](https://www.resilientsrq.net/). The maximum award per household will be the pre-storm fair market value of the property. Projects may exceed the maximum award, but must be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis

The application acceptance period for this NOFA will begin by March 5, 2025

Notice of Award

Sarasota County may fund all or a portion of the total requested funding. All applications and evaluation scores will be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners for their review and final selection of awarded projects. Once awards and awarded amounts are determined, Sarasota County will notify all applicants on final determination of their application. Projects selected for award to applicants by the County Commission will be required to execute a Subrecipient Agreement and a Land Use Restriction Agreement (LURA). The Land Use Restriction Agreement will ensure that the acquired properties are maintained in perpetuity for a use that is compatible with open space, recreational, floodplain, and wetlands management practices, or other disaster-risk reduction practices as mandated by the restrictive covenant. Following the execution of these agreements, the Subrecipient shall complete and receive approval to proceed with the project in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreements. This may include things like completion and approval of an Environmental Review.

Critical Dates and Timelines

The projected dates and timelines are subject to change. Sarasota County will publish all updates to the timeline at [Resilient SRQ \(https://www.resilientsrq.net/\)](https://www.resilientsrq.net/). All times specified in this NOFA are Eastern Standard time.

Date	Time	Action
February 27, 2025	Before 5:00 pm (EST)	Sarasota County Issues Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)
By March 5, 2025	By 12:00 pm (EST)	Launch applications
April 30, 2025	By 5:00 pm (EST)	Applications Due

Eligible Applicants

- (1) Public Entities

*Homeowners are eligible to participate but must apply through the participating jurisdiction where the home is located.

Minimum Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet **ALL** of the minimum eligibility criteria listed below to be considered for CDBG-DR funding.

1. Proposed project benefits low to moderate income (LMI) persons or urgent need in accordance with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) National Objectives.
2. The proposed project must be an eligible activity. Eligible activities include:
 - Acquisition following Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA);
 - Demolition of structures associated with acquisition;
 - Relocation assistance with buyout or acquisition (following URA)
3. The home must have been owner-occupied and the primary residence of the homeowner at the time of Hurricane Ian.
4. The project must have a direct or indirect tieback to Hurricane Ian.
5. The property must be in a designated disaster area (Myakkahatchee Creek and Hidden River) or be a repetitive loss property.
6. The property must be maintained in perpetuity for a use that is compatible with open space, recreational, floodplain, and wetlands management practices, or other disaster-risk reduction practices in compliance with HUD requirements.

Eligible Activities

Housing activities allowed under HCDA Section 105(a)(1), 105(a)(4), 105(a)(9), 105(a)(11), and 105(a)(14-15), including but not limited to:

- (1) Acquisition
- (2) Relocation assistance with buyout or acquisition activation (URA required)
- (3) Demolition of structures associated with acquisition

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Scoring Criteria

Minimum Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet all of the minimum eligibility criteria listed below to be considered for CDBG-DR funding.

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3. The home must have been owner-occupied and the primary residence of the homeowner at the time of Hurricane Ian.
4. The project must have a direct or indirect tieback to Hurricane Ian.
5. The property must be in a designated disaster area (Myakkahatchee Creek and Hidden River) or be a repetitive loss property.
6. Property must be maintained in perpetuity for a use that is compatible with open space, recreational, floodplain, and wetlands management practices, or other disaster-risk reduction practices in compliance with HUD requirements.

Scoring Criteria

Criteria Category	Description	Points Available
LMI National Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project does not meet LMI National Objective- 0 points OR • Project does meet LMI National Objective - 25 points 	0 or 25
Project Readiness	Level of planning that remains and demonstrated ability to complete the project within the following timeframes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under 1 year = 25 points • 1-2 years = 20 points • 2-3 years = 15 points • 3-4 years = 10 points • 4 + years = 0 points 	0-25
Project Impact	Project demonstrates the pre-storm value of the home, ensuring that the requested amount is proportionate. The project includes factors like contiguous properties, which help strengthen the overall impact and resilience of the community. 0 - 25 points	0-25
Maintenance Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant has not described steps to maintain the project in perpetuity - 0 points OR • Applicant has described steps to maintain the project in perpetuity – 25 points 	0 or 25
Total Maximum Points Available		100

Application Submission Requirements

Application Submission Requirements

All projects must have a completed application. Please refer to Sample Application for all required documentation. Eligible Applicants can submit applications for proposed projects during the established application window as specified in this NOFA and updated as needed on [Resilient SRQ](https://www.resilientsrq.net/) (<https://www.resilientsrq.net/>).

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Sample Application

PUBLIC ENTITY VOLUNTARY BUYOUT APPLICATION

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

1. Public Entity Name:
2. Mailing Address:
3. Primary Contact Person:
4. Title:
5. Phone Number:
6. Email Address:

PROJECT INFORMATION

7. Project Description:
8. Does the project include contiguous properties?
9. Homeowner Name(s):
10. Property Address:
11. Number of Household Members:
12. Total Household Income
13. Pre-Storm Property Value
14. Minimum Eligibility Criteria
 - Property was owner-occupied and served as the primary residence at the time of Hurricane Ian
 - Property has a direct or indirect tieback to Hurricane Ian (i.e. insurance claim, FEMA, etc.)
15. Select which HUD National Objective the project meets:
 - benefit to low-to-moderate income (LMI) persons
 - Meet a need having a particular urgency (referred to as an urgent need)
16. Select which CDBG-DR Eligible Activity the project qualifies for.
 - Acquisition following Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA)
 - Demolition of structures associated with acquisition
 - Relocation assistance (URA compliance required)
17. Has the homeowner received or anticipated receiving funds for property acquisition or relocation assistance?
18. What is the total project budget?
19. Amount of CDBG-DR funds requested for this project:
20. What is your anticipated project schedule? Indicate the estimated number of months following a conditional award by which all proposed activities will be completed.
21. Does the project benefit vulnerable populations as defined by HUD? Describe the steps taken to ensure that disadvantaged, underserved communities, and/or vulnerable populations are not negatively affected.

22. Are there any known or potential environmental/historic concerns associated with the project?
 - a. If there are any, describe approach to mitigate these concerns.
23. Have there been any environmental studies or assessments completed? If so, please describe.
24. Provide a cost benefit analysis that details the project costs and number of persons served. Please explain the data sources used to determine the number of beneficiaries.

MAINTENANCE PLAN

25. Describe how the property will be maintained in perpetuity in accordance with HUD open space, floodplain, and wetland management standards.
26. Has an Open Space Management Plan been developed?

PRE-AWARD ASSESSMENT

27. Has the organization previously been awarded funding from HUD? Yes No
 - a. If yes, describe the type of funding awarded and when.
 - b. Have you ever been on any corrective action plans? If yes, describe.
28. Has the organization ever undertaken the proposed activity before? Yes No
 - a. If yes, what was the result?
29. Briefly describe the qualifications/credentials and experience of key staff responsible for this project.
30. Briefly describe how and who will monitor progress in implementing the project including any data collection tools that will be used to verify achievement of project's goals and objectives.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Homeowner eligibility documentation (owner occupied, primary residence, income, Hurricane Ian tie-back)
Grant required forms (No Lobbying Form, Foreign Country of Concern Attestation)
Certifications
Other supplemental documentation

Public Records

By submitting an application, the applicant acknowledges that any material submitted in response to this NOFA is a public record pursuant to the Florida Public Records Law, Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, and may be subject to public inspection.

Ineligible Use of Funds

Ineligible activities are defined in 24 CFR 570.207, these include, but are not limited to, clearance, site assemblage, provision of site improvements and provision of certain housing pre-construction costs set forth in § 570.206(g); political activities; purchase of equipment (except as provided for in 24 CFR 570.201(c)); operating and maintenance expenses; and income payments.

Pre-Award Costs

No pre-award costs are eligible for reimbursement.

Duplication of Benefits (DOB) Review

Section 312 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act prohibits any person, business, or other entity from receiving duplicative financial assistance for the same disaster recovery purpose from multiple sources of federal and other support (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] 5155(a) and (c)). Duplication occurs when a beneficiary receives assistance from multiple sources for a cumulative amount that exceeds the total need for a particular disaster recovery purpose. The amount of the duplication is the amount of assistance provided in excess of need.

In accordance with CDBG-DR regulations, eligible applicants applying on behalf of homeowners must ensure that the homeowner discloses all other benefits (e.g., insurance proceeds, cash, in-kind, grants, loans) received, or which will be received for the property to ensure that federal funds do not duplicate funds received from other sources.

Homeowners must notify the eligible applicant in writing immediately upon receiving any additional benefits. Upon receipt of such notification, the eligible applicant must then notify the County in writing without delay. The County will determine whether the funds received are duplicative. If the funds received are deemed duplicative and after the CDBG-DR disbursement, the applicant is required to return the funds to the County. In the event DOB occurs, the subrecipient shall be required to return the funds to the County. Typical sources of duplicated benefits can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Individual Assistance
- FEMA National Flood Insurance Program
- Insurance or any proceeds (including cash) for acquisition or buyout of the property
- Philanthropic cash assistance
- Some subsidized loans

Participation in the program is voluntary, and the acquired parcel cannot be included in any planned development project that does not meet the Buyout Program requirements.

Site Restrictions

All properties must be located within Sarasota County.

Application Review Process

Review and Assessment of Applications.

Applications submitted for consideration for CDBG Disaster Recovery funding under this NOFA will be reviewed according to the process outlined below. An application, during any of these stages of review, may be determined to be ineligible. Applicants will be promptly notified in these instances.

Eligible applicants can submit applications for proposed projects during the established application window as specified in this NOFA and updated as needed on [Resilient SRQ \(https://www.resilientsrq.net/\)](https://www.resilientsrq.net/). The County will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the proposals, carefully considering the feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of each project. The County will evaluate proposed projects submitted by applicants based on threshold and scoring criteria outlined above in this document. The Board of County Commissioners will review the project evaluations during a public meeting and make the final project selections. Throughout the process, transparency and accountability will be maintained by providing regular updates to all applicants and the public through the [ResilientSRQ \(https://www.resilientsrq.net/\)](https://www.resilientsrq.net/).

Eligibility Criteria Review

All applications will first be reviewed as described above. Applications must meet minimum eligibility threshold criteria to proceed for further detailed review.

Documentation Submission Review

Applications will be reviewed for documentation. Applications that do not meet the documentation requirements will be notified of any administrative deficiencies. In each event, the applicant will be given an opportunity to correct such deficiencies. Applications not meeting documentation requirements after receipt and review of the administrative deficiency response will be considered incomplete and the applicant will be provided with written notice.

Clarifications

The County reserves the right to clarify or request additional information at any time from applicants. Applicants shall respond within the timeframe specified in the County's request to remain eligible for Resilient SRQ funding.

Financial Evaluation

Sarasota County shall evaluate the financial feasibility of the proposed project by reviewing areas including, but not limited to, the amount of CDBG-DR requested funds and the projects overall budget and other identified sources of funding.

Compliance Evaluation

After Sarasota County has determined that a project is financially feasible, it will be evaluated for compliance status by applicable Sarasota County staff.

Environmental Review

It will be the responsibility of Sarasota County to facilitate Environmental Reviews. The County has provided an allowance for the environmental review in the application budget. In the event an environmental review concludes site conditions are deemed unacceptable, the award will be rescinded.

“Unacceptable” sites include, without limitation, those containing an immitigable environmental factor that may adversely affect the health and safety of the residents.

NOTE: There can be no choice-limiting actions on the project until environmental clearance is received, and a Notice to Proceed is issued. The concept of prohibiting “choice-limiting” actions is to prevent the developer from investing in a project before all necessary environmental clearances are obtained. Market studies, environmental studies, plan development, engineering or design costs, inspections and tests are not considered “choice-limiting” actions.

“Choice-limiting actions” are defined as any activity that would have an adverse environmental impact or limit the choice of reasonable alternatives, such as acquisition, construction, demolition of buildings, or rehabilitation or reconstruction of buildings.

Per 24 CFR Part 58.22, failure to comply with the prohibition against committing funds or taking physical action (using either HUD funds or non-HUD funds) before the completion of the environmental review process could result in loss of HUD assistance, cancellation of the project, reimbursement by the applicant to HUD for the amount expended, or suspension of the disbursement of funds for the affected activity.

Submission and Review Process

The application acceptance period for this NOFA will begin by March 5, 2025. For questions regarding this NOFA please contact Program Staff by emailing ResilientSRQ@scgov.net

Applications must be submitted with required supporting documentation as described in this NOFA and associated application materials. Please visit [Resilient SRQ \(https://www.resilientsrq.net/\)](https://www.resilientsrq.net/) for link to the application.

Application materials including the NOFA, program guidelines, and all applicable CDBG-DR rules, will be available at [Resilient SRQ \(https://www.resilientsrq.net/\)](https://www.resilientsrq.net/).

Applications will be required to adhere to the CDBG-DR Rule and eligibility threshold requirements in effect at the time of the Application submission. Applications must be completed through Neighborly. Forms cannot be altered or modified and must be in final form before submitting them to the County.

Subrecipient Agreement Administration

Any activity funded under this NOFA will be governed by a written Subrecipient Agreement and LURA that identifies the terms and conditions related to the awarded funds. The Agreement will not be effective until executed by all parties. Any amendments must be made in writing. The Agreement will include provisions to ensure compliance with 2 CFR Part 200, 24 CFR Part 570 and the applicable Consolidated Notice published regarding this funding.

Sarasota County reserves the right to negotiate funding amounts and payment schedules with selected applicants. On a case-by-case basis, negotiations may be appropriate for, but not limited to, situations such as the demand exceeding the amount of funds available, the existence of project readiness issues, and discrete project components meeting program objectives or grant requirements, such as the LMI benefit.

State and Federal Administrative Requirements

Activities must meet all federal, state, and local requirements, including all applicable requirements outlined in the following regulations, statutes, memoranda, policy and guidance documents:

File Name	File Location/Link
Uniform Administrative Requirements (2 CFR 200)	eCFR :: 2 CFR Part 200 -- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200?toc=1
CDBG Program Regulations (24 CFR 570)	eCFR :: 24 CFR Part 570 -- Community Development Block Grants https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-24/subtitle-B/chapter-V/subchapter-C/part-570
CDBG Federal Crosscutting Requirements	Cross Cutting Requirements (hudexchange.info) https://sites.hudexchange.info/cdbg-dr-consolidated-notice/cross-cutting-requirements/
Federal Register, 88 FR 32046 (May 18,2023)	FR-6393-N-01-AAN.pdf (hud.gov) https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/FR-6393-N-01-AAN.pdf
Applicable additional Federal Register Notices and Memoranda	CDBG-DR Laws, Regulations, and Federal Register Notices HUD.gov / U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/cdbg-dr/regulations

(End of NOFA)