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## Christie Administration Announces Post-Sandy Planning Grant to Berkeley Township, Ocean County

Friday, August 29, 2014

Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)

**Trenton, NJ** – New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Richard E. Constable, III today announced the award of \$277,000 in Post-Sandy Planning Assistance Grants to Berkeley Township, Ocean County, to put into effect comprehensive long-range plans designed to enable the Township to become resilient in the event of future severe weather events.

These are the second Post-Sandy Planning Assistance Grants funds that Berkeley has received. The Township was awarded its first planning grant in October 2013, and used the \$26,000 grant to complete a Strategic Recovery Planning Report, which serves as the Township's comprehensive guide for planning strategies it takes moving forward to recover from Sandy and to reduce its vulnerability to future disasters. The second round of planning grants now enables the Township to proceed with planning initiatives based on the strategies detailed in its Strategic Recovery Planning Report.

"As New Jersey continues to recover from Sandy, the planning that Berkeley is undertaking will identify opportunities to build local resilience and promote growth that is sustainable even in hazardous conditions such as those experienced during and after the storm," said Commissioner Constable, whose Department is administering many of the Sandy recovery programs for the State. "We applaud the Township for pursuing these worthwhile projects."

The Township's Strategic Recovery Planning Report evaluated the impact of Superstorm Sandy on Berkeley's residents, businesses, infrastructure, public safety and open space/recreation sectors. That information is useful in informing economic recovery initiatives, enhancing public safety and identifying other steps to make the community more resilient to future severe weather events.

The eight planning projects that are being funded in Berkeley Township will:

- Update its Berkeley's Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) to identify and assess the various flooding hazards within the Township, as well as the associated vulnerabilities to those hazards. The HMP will also identify alternative mitigation actions that can be implemented to reduce the Township's risks resulting from exposure to flooding hazards.

- Increase the efficiency and quality of permit and application processes by undertaking a detailed review of workflow and automating processes.

- Prepare a Capital Improvement Plan to focus municipal capital investments on public facilities, vehicle fleets and equipment to build community resiliency in plants and equipment, such as raising generators above flood hazard elevations and developing contingency plans for storing and moving rolling stock.

- Develop a Geographic Information System to enable it the Township to better prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.

- Amend key elements of its Master Plan to address post-Sandy strategies and policies related to hazard mitigation and community resiliency with up-to-date mapping of current land uses, new FEMA floodplain and wetland mapping, critical community facilities, and important natural resources areas.

- Prepare an update to the Emergency Operations Plan to focus on any special planning needs generated by a hurricane or severe flooding event that will contain unique and regulatory responses associated with extreme flooding.

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Prepare a Floodplain Management Plan to identify and assess flood hazards, establish the goals and objectives for floodplain management, and present a series of actions designed to minimize flooding and mitigate the impacts from flooding in the future.

Create a Debris Management Plan including such components as allocating debris removal sites, collection strategies, and debris reduction methods that will help to increase the efficiency of existing stormwater management facilities.

The Post-Sandy Planning Assistance Grants are funded through Community Development Block Grant -- Disaster Recovery monies provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The \$5 million initially allocated to the program is currently available to each of the nine counties most impacted by Sandy as determined by HUD (Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Union) and all of the municipalities within those counties that have experienced a ratable loss of at least 1% or \$1 million due to the storm.

The program provides funding in two phases. The first phase is producing a Strategic Recovery Planning Report as described above. To date, the DCA has awarded 44 Post-Sandy Planning Assistance Grants to assist local governments in completing this planning report. When their planning reports are done, local governments are then eligible to apply for Phase 2 Post-Sandy Planning Assistance Grants, which assist them with implementing the planning priorities identified in their Strategic Recovery Planning Report. For example, Phase 2 planning grants can help local governments fund initiatives to determine infrastructure needs to protect business districts on the waterfront from future storms; design standards to protect and increase resiliency in storm-affected neighborhoods; conduct topographic surveys and preliminary engineering studies to gauge future infrastructure needs; and develop capital improvement plans that prioritize need based on the safety of residents.

The DCA has so far approved \$5 million in Post-Sandy Planning Assistance Grants, including the award of Phase 2 grants to 15 local governments. Applications for grants are still being accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis by the DCA's Office of Local Planning Services, which is administering the program, until all funds are exhausted.

For more information on Post-Sandy Planning Assistance Grants, go to <http://www.nj.gov/dca/services/lps/pspag.html>.

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