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**R.I. Infrastructure Bank Announces $1 Million**

**for Municipal Resilience Projects**

*Cities and towns will implement specific projects*

*to address the impacts of climate change*

**PROVIDENCE, R.I. –** Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank announced $1,000,000 in action grants for inaugural participants of the Municipal Resilience Program (MRP). Through the program, five communities developed climate resilience plans with prioritized local actions and will now use the grant funds for implementation.

“The Infrastructure Bank is committed to accelerating investment in sustainable infrastructure that better prepares Rhode Island communities for a changing climate” said Jeffrey R. Diehl, CEO of Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank. “We look forward to building on the success of the first round of the program and partnering with communities statewide to prepare and invest in critical infrastructure.”

To develop a prioritized list of actionable plans and projects, program participants completed Community Resilience Building workshops led by The Nature Conservancy. At the conclusion of the workshop process, the participating municipalities submitted action grant proposals for identified projects with a required 25% local match. After a competitive review process, the selection committee recommended the following projects to receive funding for implementation:

* Barrington – $201,000
  + Coastal restoration for flood mitigation at Walker Farm
  + Green infrastructure for water quality benefits at Bowden and Opechee Streets
* Portsmouth – $339,000
  + Rehabilitation and stabilization of the Melville Dam
  + Three flood mitigation projects to expand the capacity of existing infrastructure for increasing precipitation volumes
* Warren – $156,000
  + Three green infrastructure projects to reduce runoff and improve water quality at public access points to the Warren and Kickemuit Rivers
* Westerly – $304,000
  + Flood protection wall at the Old Canal St. Pump Station
  + Two green infrastructure projects to reduce flooding and improve water quality of the Pawcatuck River

The Infrastructure Bank and Nature Conservancy will be announcing the 2020 round of the Municipal Resilience Program participants at the Infrastructure Banks’s Legislative Day on February, 12th, from 3pm – 4pm at the Statehouse. Also being highlighted during the program will be the grant recipients from the 2019 Program Round.

“Better prepared municipalities lead to a better prepared Ocean State. Rising sea levels, increasing heat, and extreme storm events will have long-term effects on local infrastructure and residents,” said Shaun O’Rourke, Director of Stormwater and Resiliency at the Infrastructure Bank and the State’s Chief Resiliency Officer. “The Municipal Resilience Program is building a statewide pipeline of priority projects to more effectively and efficiently respond to the climate impacts we are already experiencing.”

“The Nature Conservancy is proud to be an implementation partner on the Municipal Resilience Program. Municipalities across the state are already confronted with the realities of climate change. The workshops empower communities to collaboratively figure out how to meet these challenges,” said Sue AnderBois, The Nature Conservancy’s Climate and Energy Program Manager. “These grants will help the initial Resilient Rhody Municipalities implement some of their priorities – and we are pleased to see that the Governor’s proposed Beach, Clean Water and Green Bond includes funding for an additional 20 municipalities.”

The program supports the goals outlined in the state’s Climate Resilience Action Strategy (*Resilient Rhody*) released by Governor Gina Raimondo in 2018. *Resilient Rhody* identified steps the state can take to protect against unexpected events, like severe weather, while addressing chronic environmental stresses, such as sea level rise and aging infrastructure. The MRP empowers cities and towns to evaluate each of their unique vulnerabilities to changing weather and severe weather events, while providing them with the funds necessary to take on specific resilience projects.

More information about the program can be found [**here**](https://www.riib.org/mrp)**.**

**About Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank**

*Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank is Rhode Island’s central hub for financing infrastructure improvements for municipalities, businesses, and homeowners. We leverage capital in a revolving fund to offer innovative financing for an array of infrastructure-based projects including water and wastewater, road and bridge, energy efficiency and renewable energy, and brownfield remediation. These quality of life projects improve the State’s infrastructure, create jobs, promote economic development and enhance the environment. For more information, please visit* [www.riib.org](http://www.riib.org).

**About The Nature Conservancy**

*The Nature Conservancy is a global conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions such as Community Resilience Building to our world’s toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together. We are tackling climate change, conserving lands, waters and oceans at an unprecedented scale, providing food and water sustainably and helping make cities more sustainable. Working in 72 countries, we use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. To learn more, visit* [www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org) *or follow @nature\_press on Twitter.*

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