

4.4 PRIORITIZING LOCAL MITIGATION FUNDING ASSISTANCE

44 CFR 201.4 (c) (4) (iii) requires states to include criteria in their mitigation plans for prioritizing communities and local jurisdictions that would receive planning and project grants under available funding programs. The criteria should include consideration for communities with the highest risks, repetitive loss properties, and most intense development pressures. The plan also needs to include a principal criterion for non-planning grants based on the extent to which benefits are maximized according to a benefit-cost review.

Demand for hazard mitigation funds usually exceeds fund availability. In the last four flood-related Presidential Declarations, available Federal mitigation funds have only met 20% of the demand on average. (DR-1805 was not listed due to the hazard was a windstorm event and also, pre-applications were not required.)

Table 4.4.a

EVENT	HMGP FUNDS REQUESTED	HMGP FUNDS AVAILABLE (FED)	DIFFERENCE
DR-1651	\$15,191,356	\$1,798,019	(\$13,393,337) (-88%)
DR-1656	\$18,166,108	\$3,411,736	(\$14,754,372) (-81%)
DR-1720	\$44,888,432	\$6,630,799	(\$38,251,633) (-85%)
DR-4002	\$15,287,118	\$5,046,137	(\$10,240,981) (-67%)
DR-4077	\$16,723,428	\$3,353,199	(\$13,370,229) (-79%)
DR-4098	\$14,077,947	\$3,704,581	(\$10,373,366) (-73%)
DR-4360	\$48,072,625	\$6,939,178 (30-day estimate)	(\$41,133,447) (-85%)

Therefore, it is important that the State of Ohio prioritize local mitigation funding assistance. Section 3.4 explains how Ohio has established both eligibility and prioritization criteria. Appendix G includes the worksheets the SHMT uses to rank project applications for funding. The final project ranking by the SHMT is also the prioritization of eligible projects for funding. The exceptions to this are under HMGP where 5% and 7% projects are funded outside of the SHMT ranking process. Projects submitted under these categories are funded in accordance with the specific priority outlined in the Administrative Plan and Mitigation Strategy for that particular event.

In the event that there is not enough funding for an eligible, high-ranking mitigation project, Mitigation Branch staff will work with the sub-applicant to refine and submit the project for consideration under another grant funding cycle or program. The Ohio EMA Mitigation Branch website contains a list of potential funding sources for hazard mitigation projects.

Although Federal planning guidance indicates criteria for local mitigation funding assistance should include consideration for communities with the highest risks, repetitive loss properties, communities with the most intense development pressures, and maximizing benefits based on a benefit-cost analysis; Ohio only considers repetitive loss and benefit-cost. For the nationally competitive grant programs, state criteria match the national ranking and evaluation criteria exactly. Doing otherwise would put Ohio projects at a competitive disadvantage as compared to other projects that used the national criteria. For HMGP and FMA, repetitive loss is considered as is benefit-cost; however, communities with the highest

risks and high development pressures are not. The reason for this is that it is assumed that almost all Ohio communities have high risk from the most serious hazards and mitigation projects are used to remedy the “already built” environment, not the developing environment, which is much better handled through appropriate codes and land use measures.

Grant applications to update LHMPs are evaluated based on the local plan expiration date and the amount of funding available. Counties with expired or soon to expire plans are prioritized higher. Ohio has always set aside up to 7% of available HMGP funds to offset the cost to develop/update local mitigation plans. For the PDM program, Ohio has always provided technical assistance to local officials developing planning grant applications and submitted all eligible and complete applications for funding. Recently, due to FEMA caps on the number of PDM applications that can be submitted, Ohio compiled all of the planning grant applications into a single state application to submit to FEMA for funding.