

Erie County At-Risk Bridge Program

2024 Guidance

Funded with Pennsylvania Act 13 Marcellus Shale Impact Fee

Administered by Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development



COUNTY OF ERIE
PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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I. ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Overview

Signed into Law on February 14, 2012, the Unconventional Gas Well Impact Fee – Act 13, established a drilling impact fee on producers that spud unconventional gas wells. The fees are collected on an annual basis and then distributed throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The County of Erie (County) has received a portion of this funding, dispersed from the Highway Bridge Improvement Restricted Account in the Motor License Fund, for the replacement or repair of locally owned at-risk bridges, under the Marcellus Shale Legacy Fund (Legacy).

The County has developed the Erie County At-Risk Bridge Program (ECBP) to assist our local municipalities with the costs of ensuring a structurally sound and safe transportation system, by providing funding for the repair or replacement of at-risk bridges.

PennDOT and the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) have defined ‘at-risk’ as any bridge or culvert that has been designated as ‘Poor’ or has been posted with a weight restriction. In order to determine whether a bridge warrants a Poor designation or weight restriction, State and Federal regulations require that a Safety Inspection and Load Rating Analysis be performed.

Currently, PennDOT District 1-0, performs Safety Inspections and Load Rating Analysis on behalf of the municipalities for all local bridges in Erie County over twenty (20) feet in length, per National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS).

Municipal bridges & culverts that span less than 20 feet in length could be eligible for this program, but since they are not inspected, their condition must be verified from PennDOT District 1 Bridge Unit before a contract will be issued.

II. ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible to apply?

- Municipalities located in Erie County, PA.

What structures are eligible?

- Any municipally-owned at-risk bridge that has not received funding from the ECBP in the past five years.
- Definitions:
At-Risk Bridge: Any bridge or culvert that has been determined to be structurally deficient or posted with a weight restriction.
Poor Bridge: Structural deficiency/Poor Condition is determined through a safety inspection per [PennDOT Publication 100A](#).
Weight Posted Bridge: Weight Restrictions are determined through load rating analysis and posting procedures per [PennDOT Publication 238](#).

What types of projects are eligible?

- Project proposals must fall into one of the following categories:

Replacement: Complete removal *and* replacement of a structure.

Rehabilitation: Structural repairs explicitly listed in a valid Safety Inspection Report (performed no more than three (3) years prior to the application submittal date) that will result in the removal of the *Poor* designation.*

*Note: Project scope may include any and all recommendations explicitly listed in the Safety Inspection Report for a single structure in the same project application, provided that the primary purpose of the project will result in the removal of the *Poor* designation.

What project activities are eligible?

- These funds may be used for the following project phases as necessary to deliver the project:
Preliminary Engineering
Environmental Clearance
Right of Way Clearance
Final Design including advertisement
Construction
- These funds may be used to purchase materials and hire consultant/contractor services.

*Note: Municipal staff/administrative costs are NOT ELIGIBLE for reimbursement.

III. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

General Requirements

- All projects must:

Be environmentally sound and consistent with current state, regional, county and local ordinances and plans.

Obtain applicable federal, state and local permits for all construction projects before any construction may commence.

Obtain concurrence of any municipal government whose approval is required for project implementation; via letter of support or resolution, if the project is to be sponsored by multiple municipalities.

Obtain PNDI clearance prior to commencing any construction.

Benefit the public at large and may not be for the purpose of private gain, benefit or profits.

Be made available and useful to all members of the general public; therefore cannot be for exclusive use of any particular group of persons.

Be accessible to disabled persons in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

*Note: The Act of August 15, 1961 (P.L. 987), as amended, and known as the Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act (43 P.S. 165-1 et seq.) may apply if the project includes public work construction (i.e. construction resulting in permanent improvement to real estate) and where the cost of the total project is greater than \$25,000. Applicants should contact the PA Department of Labor and Industry, Bureau of Labor Law Compliance at 1-800-932-0665.

Bridge Replacement Requirements

- All bridge replacement projects should adhere to PennDOT publications wherever possible:

Design Manual, Part 4 — Structures (DM-4) (Pub. 15M)

Bridge Design, BD-600M Series (Pub. 218M*)

Bridge Construction, BC-700M Series (Pub. 219M*)

Low-Cost Hardwood Glulam Timber Bridge Design, BLC-560M Series (Pub. 6M*)

More information can be found at <https://www.penndot.pa.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/Bridges/Pages/Plans,-Standards-and-Specifications.aspx>

IV. PROJECT FUNDING AND MATCH

Is this a grant?

- This is not a grant program. It is a cost reimbursement program. The project sponsor does not receive a funding award in advance once the project is approved. Once a project is authorized to advance, the project sponsor may begin incurring costs. The project sponsor reviews and approves incurred costs and submits a Reimbursement Request to the County for payment. The County will review the Reimbursement Request and pay the project sponsor upon County approval. The project sponsor will only be reimbursed for actual approved project expenses, up to the amount approved for the project.

What is the maximum award amount and required local match?

- Locally Owned Bridge and Culverts: Structures that are 8 feet or greater in length
 - Minimum Required Match: 30% (of total project costs)
 - Maximum Award: \$250,000 (for all applications received in 2024)

What are reimbursable expenses?

- Reimbursable expenses - items that are directly related to the project and may be reimbursed through the County. Types of allowable expenditures include:

Advertising and Permitting
Materials and supplies
Purchase or use of equipment
Consultant or Contractor fees

- Reimbursable expenses must be incurred after the date of the executed contract.
- No expenses will be reimbursed more than three (3) years past the date of the executed contract.

What are NOT reimbursable expenses?

- Non-Reimbursable expenses include:

Costs related to non-structural enhancements not directly related to condition (ex. widening)
Municipal labor costs
Municipal administrative costs

What are acceptable forms of local match?

- Eligible match can be both cash match and non-cash match. Non-cash match includes those services that are directly related to the project’s management and delivery and can be properly documented. If selected for funding, the County reserves the right to negotiate the values submitted for the non-cash match.

- Definitions:

Cash Match/Direct Costs: Actual cash contributed to the project by the municipality or another form of funding; e.g. – equipment purchased by your municipality for project activities or fees paid for consultant/contractor services.

In-Kind Services: Services and labor provided by municipal paid staff to perform all or part of the approved project scope of work. The allowable value of in-kind services provided as match for a grant may include personal fringe benefits such as employee insurance, vacation, holiday and sick leave time as expressed in an hourly rate.

Donated Services and Materials: Services or materials that will be provided at no-cost to the applicant to perform or complete part of the approved project scope of work and requires specialized or expert skills and knowledge. The allowable value of the service or material must be the organization’s or individual’s customary billing rate multiplied by the number of hours of service (or material quantities) provided.

***Note:** An applicant’s match is extremely important and the source of matching funds must be completely identified in the grant application. Care should be exercised when estimating non-cash match because the County requires complete documentation when submitting subsequent requests for reimbursement.

V. APPLICATION INFORMATION

When does the application period open and close?

- The Erie County At-Risk Bridge Program is open on a rolling basis.

What must be submitted?

- The following MUST be submitted for your application to be considered:
 1. Erie County At-Risk Bridge Program Application Form
 2. Matching fund source (if using Liquid Fuels funding for match, additional review will be required)
 3. Detailed project budget (including individual construction items, unit prices, quantities, and work hours)
 4. Photographs of existing conditions (taken within 30 days of application submittal date)

How is the application to be submitted?

One (1) copy by either email or mail

- Hard Copy Applications

Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development
Attn: Emily Aloiz
150 East Front Street, Suite 300
Erie, PA 16507

- Emailed Applications – Please submit to:

ealoiz@eriecountypa.gov

VI. PROJECT SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Review Process

- Step 1: Applications will be reviewed by the Erie County Department of Planning to determine eligibility, and reviewed by the PennDOT District 1-0 Bridge Unit to determine if the project scope will adequately remove the “at-risk” status of the structure.
- Step 2: The Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development will schedule a ‘Scoping Field View’ if needed.
- Step 3: If necessary, following the ‘Scoping Field View’ the project sponsor may revise the project and cost proposal to adequately fulfill the final scope, or withdraw the application.
- Step 4: If the final project scope is acceptable to the project sponsor (with all necessary local match funding secured) and approved by the Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development and the PennDOT D 1-0 Bridge Unit, the County will prepare a Reimbursement Agreement with the project sponsor.

Project Delivery Process

- Step 1: Upon full execution of the Reimbursement Agreement the project sponsor may begin incurring costs related to pre-construction activities.
- Step 2: Project sponsor will submit final plans to the Erie County Department of Planning and the PennDOT District 1 Bridge Unit for a ‘Structural Sufficiency’ review if needed.
- Step 3: Following approval of the construction plans. The project sponsor may proceed with construction of the project.
- Step 4: Once the project is complete, the project sponsor will submit a Request for Reimbursement Form along with a final invoice to the Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development.
- Step 5: Following the completion of the project, a new Bridge Inspection will be performed to determine whether the structure is no longer in Poor Condition if the bridge is over 20 feet in length.

Reimbursement Process

- Step 1: The municipality will inform the Erie County Department of Planning when the project is complete.
- Step 2: The municipality will fill out a Reimbursement Request form and provide documentation. This documentation includes copies of invoices and proof of payment through canceled checks or an equivalent. The municipality can request up to three separate reimbursements.
- Step 3: The County will process payment.

VII. PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

Applicants are encouraged to coordinate with the Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development staff in advance of submitting a project application. However, staff comments during preliminary discussions of prospective projects are not to be interpreted as guarantees of funding.

Program Contact:

Emily Aloiz | Planning Program Administrator
Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development
150 East Front Street - Suite 300 | Erie, PA 16507
Phone: 814.451.7325 |



ERIE COUNTY AT-RISK BRIDGE PROGRAM PROJECT APPLICATION

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Organization Name:	
Federal Employer ID No:	
Address:	
City/State/Zip Code:	
Contact Name/Title:	
Phone Number:	
Email Address:	

Project Type: (Select only one that best describes your project.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Rehabilitation	<input type="checkbox"/> Replacement

Facility Carried:	
Feature Intersected:	
PennDOT Bridge Key #:	

Brief Project Description:

Amount Requested:	\$
Match Amount:	\$
Total Project Cost:	\$

By signing this application, I certify that I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the applicant and that the information I have provided in the application is accurate to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Signature	Title	Date

PROJECT INFORMATION

Clearly and concisely describe the proposed project activities by listing the methods used to complete project tasks.
(Please attach additional pages if necessary.)

BUDGET INFORMATION

FUNDING SOURCES

ECBP Funding Request	\$
Cash Match (list funding sources)	\$
Non-Cash Match (list funding sources)	\$
Project Total	\$

Project Work Activities	ECBP Share	Local Share	Total
Project Totals	\$	\$	\$

If matching funds are pending, please describe how and when these funds will be secured. *Note: Please attach any letters of funding commitment or support.