

EC4 Spending Plan – Budget Year 2025 – Project Proposals

(Aug. 2024)

Agency	ID Code for Smart Comment	Funds	Project Title	Project Description
Division of Statewide Planning	Resilience TA	\$100,000	Municipal Resilience Technical Assistance	Funds would be used to continue the Municipal Resilience Technical Assistance Program. The next round would partner with a coastal municipality to incorporate standards into municipal regulations to increase resilience against coastal and other hazards.
RI Department of Education (RIDE)	School Solar	\$175,000	Solar on Schools	A new program within the School Building Authority will create a funding structure for renewable energy projects at schools. It will leverage IRA funding for municipalities. The program would develop and procure MPA agreement for renewable energy providers and develop a pilot project to track energy production and performance and develop a maintenance plan along with visual tools to report on progress.
RI Department of Transportation (RIDOT)	RIDOT Model	\$100,000	Further refinement of the GHG models in Carbon Reduction Plan	These funds would allow RIDOT to further investigate additional strategies in the Carbon Reduction Strategies Plan and the Decarbonization of Surface Transportation Framework. It will determine their impact on bridging the gap to achieve net zero by 2050 and meet requirements of the RI Act on Climate. RIDOT will continue to work with its consultant and RIEC4 to identify strategies for inclusion in the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the 2025 Climate Action Plan.
RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM) – Urban & Community Forestry	Forestry	\$60,000	Partnering with URI Landscape Architecture Program	The Urban & Community Forestry program will partner with URI to build on the 2024 pilot project with an application process to assist three RI communities or non-profits in the summer of 2025. The recipients would receive services from the URI Landscape Architecture program.
RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM) – Director’s Office	DEM LBE	\$100,000	Consulting support for Lead by Example energy management	DEM will improve its tracking/reporting on the generation of energy from the agency’s solar and wind installations and usage of EV chargers. Outside assistance will be brought on board to examine all renewable energy systems and identify options for better energy management. DEM will also begin the effort of benchmarking energy use in existing buildings and examining the expansion opportunities for renewable energy and EV charging agency wide.
RI Department of Environmental Management	DEM Lawn Equip	\$125,000	Purchase of trailer and electric lawn equipment	DEM will purchase an 18-foot trailer with an installed charging system for zero-emission battery-operated lawn equipment for use in state parks and management areas. The goal is to begin to phase out the use of gasoline-powered lawn

(DEM) – Natural Resources				equipment and to showcase/pilot the new equipment for municipalities and other agencies.
RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM) – Resilience	Resilient Rhody	\$250,000	Resilient Rhody 2.0	\$200,000 would provide consultant support to complete the 2025 Statewide Resilience Plan including compilation and visualization of gathered statewide resilience information, compilation of state resilience metrics, and modelling of climate impacts and risks. \$50,000 would be for DEM Operating Costs for both the 2024 Statewide Resilience Report & 2025 Statewide Resilience Plan.
RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM) – Resilience	DEM Design	\$150,000	Designing for Resilience	\$100,000 would support the hiring of a design and engineering consultant to complete an additional 4-5 resilience conceptual designs with select municipalities, and \$50,000 would support environmental organizations on the Designing for Resilience team to provide guidance on the development of sustainable and environmentally sound resilience designs. This initiative would benefit Rhode Island municipalities statewide, either as direct recipients of the design assistance or through access to the resilient conceptual designs to be shared as case studies.
Office of Energy Resources (OER)	Energy O&M	\$30,000	Direct Pay operations and maintenance plans	The RI Direct Pay Operations & Maintenance Program would fill the gap in estimated costs by providing contract services for an operations and maintenance vendor that would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor electricity production of the solar system. • Ensure battery operations and provide annual battery testing. • Monitor battery production if enrolled in a Demand Response program. • Physically inspect the system on a mutually agreed cadence (yearly, bi-yearly, etc.) • Replace any equipment under warranty. • Work with project owner to estimate costs of replacement of parts not under warranty.
RI Department of Health (RIDOH)	RIDOH AC	\$100,000	Purchase air conditioning units for vulnerable residents	This proposal seeks funding to purchase and distribute energy-efficient air conditioning units to vulnerable residents in Rhode Island’s core cities. In collaboration with community groups, non-profits and Health Equity Zones, the project aims to mitigate health risks associated with extreme heat, enhance community resilience, and promote health equity.
University of Rhode Island (URI)	Beach Data	\$150,000	Beach Profile Data	The proposal is to turn decades of beach profile data into products (charts, maps) so that the public and managers can access it online. A total of \$150,000 is estimated for two years (\$75,000 per year) to support the team in developing the web portal in concert with CRMC and external input. The majority of the budget will be used to support staff/students to obtain and process drone imagery, create the data products, develop the web portal and produce the web content.

RI Public Transit Authority (RIPTA)	Transit	\$125,000	Growing Transit Ridership	This funding would be used to grow transit ridership by reducing the cost of RIPTA transit passes purchased by employers, building owners, and social service providers on behalf of their employees, tenants, and clients.
RI Public Transit Authority (RIPTA)	RIPTA Outreach	\$75,000	Outreach and Engagement	RIPTA's Marketing and Commuter Resource RI teams will use these funds to support public outreach and engagement campaigns promoting carbon-free transportation options. Opportunities include America Walks' Week Without Driving (October 2024), National Bike Month (May 2025), and the upcoming launch of RIPTA's "Drive Less RI" app. These projects will encourage mode shift from private vehicles to public transit and other forms of clean, climate-friendly mobility.
Public Utilities Commission (PUC)	PUC Staff	\$150,000	Continue funding for Clean Energy and Climate Policy Analyst	Continue funding for Clean Energy and Climate Policy Analyst at the PUC. In the coming year, the contract employee will work on topics that include: Energy efficiency, Renewable Energy Growth Program, Electric time of use rates, Electric Grid Modernization, Leak prone gas pipeline replacement review, Gas system design and gas supply procurement, and Battery energy storage tariffs.
Division of Public Utilities & Carriers (DPUC)	DPUC Docket	\$100,000	Docket review	Funds will assist the DPUC with the review of specific dockets: Energy Efficiency – Electric and Gas Program Year 2025; Renewable Energy Growth – Program Year 2025; and System Reliability Procurement- Electric (Reporting review).
RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM) – Air Resources	DERA Match	\$18,000	DERA grant match	Each year DEM receives a Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) Grant from EPA to distribute the funds through a competitive process to companies and municipalities to replace dirty diesel vehicles or marine vessels with cleaner vehicles or engines. DEM receives a base amount from EPA and if they match the amount, EPA gives an additional bonus amount to DEM. Last year DEM was able to match the base amount and were able to award over \$1,000,000 in funds to replace dirty diesel trucks and marine engines. DEM will be able to offer over \$1,000,000 again this, however they are approximately \$18,000 short (for the necessary match).
University of Rhode Island (URI)	RI CHAMP	\$300,000	RI CHAMP	The Rhode Island Coastal Hazards, Analysis, Modeling, and Prediction (RI-CHAMP) system is an active statewide resource for emergency management and long-term resilience planning currently in operation at RIEMA. The partnership is facing a funding gap and will suspend operations at the end of the 2024 hurricane season. This funding would extend CHAMP to the end of the 2025 hurricane season.
Department of Labor & Training (DLT)	STEAM Grants	\$150,000	Small grants for youth career exploration in STEAM	To continue a small grant program that focuses on environmental education, professional development, and youth career exploration. The two currently funded programs are a STEAM-focused robotics program and Building Green Futures which is an apprenticeship readiness program. They may continue to fund these but will also take new applications for funding.
Total		\$2,258,000		