

BUILDING COMMUNITIES GRANTS (BCG) PROGRAMS: REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

The Regional Economic Development Grants Program is administered by the Department of Buildings and General Services (BGS). The goal of the program is to provide competitive grants to Municipalities and to Non-Profit Organizations as defined in chapter 117 of Title 24 for capital costs associated with major maintenance, renovation, or planning related to the development of facilities reasonably expected to create or retain job opportunities in Vermont communities.

This is a competitive grant program and not all grant applicants will receive funding nor will awarded grant applicants necessarily receive the full amount of funds requested. This program provides last gap funding for shovel-ready projects and does not support ongoing fundraising initiatives. It is the intent of the legislature that grant applicants applying for any of the BCG programs shall not apply for more than one grant as defined in Chapter 137 of Title 24 for the same project in the current calendar year, in any of the categories of the BCG programs. This does not prohibit organizations from requesting funding for a different project in an alternate location under any of the BCG programs.

Grants will be awarded by the BCG selection committee on a competitive basis. Precedence will be given to grant applicants for new projects and proposals who have not previously received a Regional Economic Development Grant. The BCG committee gives priority consideration to grant applicants demonstrating they have strong community support through the success of local fundraising campaigns.

The deadline to submit BCG applications is September 10th each year. If September 10th falls on a weekend, the deadline will be extended to the following Monday. You may email the completed BCG application and all corresponding documentation to BGS.BuildingCommunitiesGrants@vermont.gov or you may mail one hard copy of the completed BCG application and all corresponding documentation to the address on the BCG application. If you mail the BCG application and all corresponding documentation, please do not staple, or use paperclips. BCG submission envelopes must be postmarked by the deadline date of September 10th.

Meetings with the BCG committees will be scheduled in the fall around mid-October. When the dates have been scheduled, these dates will be posted to the BCG website. Because the volume of grant applications is so extensive, the BCG website will be updated the same day following the meeting with the BCG committee members. For awareness of awarded/non-awarded applications, all applicants should check the BCG website: <http://www.bgs.vermont.gov/commissioner/building-communities-grants>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Grant Administrator at our office at (802) 828-3519 or at BGS.BuildingCommunitiesGrants@vermont.gov. For your convenience, we have made this and other grant application materials available online at the following location: <http://www.bgs.vermont.gov/commissioner/building-communities-grants>. Please check the BCG website for any new updates.

We look forward to working with everyone!



BUILDING COMMUNITIES GRANTS (BCG) PROGRAMS: REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

APPLICATION PROCESS

This BCG program is open to Municipalities and Non-Profit Organizations that provide regional economic development in an individual community or recognized community service area. The maximum grant amount awarded is \$25,000.00 per project. Requests of any amount up to the \$25,000.00 limit will be considered. You must be able to provide documentation of equal match or more for the amount you are requesting for the grant, and the funds must be committed in hand, and not pledged when the grant application is submitted. The committed funds cannot come from any State or Federal funds. Projects must be shovel- ready to begin or have already begun construction. Projects that are in the conceptual stage should not apply.

The grant application process is intended to be simple and handwritten grant applications are acceptable. We do not encourage having professionally prepared materials created for the grant application. Short, simple, and to the point grant applications are greatly appreciated and supported by the BCG committee members.

DEFINITIONS

Regional Economic Development Project: A facility-based project that demonstrates realistic job creation or retention of jobs.

Project Funding: Capital costs associated with major maintenance, renovation, or planning related to the development of facilities reasonably expected to create or retain job opportunities in Vermont communities.

Last-Gap Funding: The remaining balance to complete your proposed project.

Municipality: As defined in Chapter 117 of Title 24 V.S.A. § 4303(12).

Non-Profit Organizations: A group granted such status by the Internal Revenue Service.

1:1 Financial Funding Match Requirement: You cannot use any State or Federal funds as your 1:1 financial match requirement. You must be able to submit documented proof you have the committed funds in hand, and not pledged, for the amount of the grant you are requesting when the grant application is submitted. In-kind contributions of labor and/or materials or other types of in-kind services are not allowed to be used as your 1:1 financial match requirement.

Non-State or Federal Match: Financial support raised by the Municipality or Non-Profit Organization that comes from either private or public sources providing that no portion of the money claimed as the 1:1 match comes from:

- A State appropriation
- Any State or Federal funds funneled through a State Agency

Shovel-Ready: The project is ready to begin or has already begun construction. All required permits for the proposed project must be in hand before submitting the grant application. Otherwise, the grant application will be automatically denied.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Requests for funding will be evaluated on the following criteria. The Regional Economic Development Grants Advisory Committee will make the BCG award determinations. The decisions of the BCG committee members are final and are not subject to appeal.

Successful BCG applications will demonstrate the following criteria:

ATTACHMENTS CHECKLIST – ON THE BCG APPLICATION

- A. *Application*** – Answer all questions on the three-page grant application and the attachment checklist. The grant application must be signed and dated when the grant application is submitted. If a question does not pertain to your organization, simply indicate N/A in your response. The application needs to be completed by the Sponsoring Organization or Municipality, RDC/RPC as they are the Organization who will receive the check on behalf of the company applying for the BCG.
- B. *Please Describe Your Project in Three–Pages or Less*** – Each alphabetical letter statement under B. a) through e) C. D. and E. should be included when composing the narrative for the proposed project in three–pages or less. Short, simple, and to the point grant applications are greatly appreciated and supported by the BCG committee members. This should be completed by the company applying for the BCG.
- B.e) *What is the Lowest Amount Acceptable*** – If the request is not fully funded, what is the lowest amount acceptable for this project; you can enter a specific amount or enter “any amount” would be acceptable. Explain the effect this would have on your proposed project if the full grant request were not awarded or if the grant were not funded at all. This should be completed by the company applying for the BCG.
- C. *Project Breakdown*** – Breakdown each segment of the proposed project; equipment, materials, labor etc. Contractor estimates are good examples. This should be completed by the company applying for the BCG.
- D. *Financial Match*** – Documentation of the 1:1 financial match requirement. You cannot use any State or Federal funds as your 1:1 financial match. You must be able to submit documented proof you have the committed funds in hand, and not pledged, for the amount of the grant you are requesting when the grant application is submitted. In-kind contributions of labor and/or materials or other types of in-kind services are not allowed to be used as your 1:1 financial match requirement. **On page three of the grant application, under C. Existing Funding Sources, at least one “Yes” box must be checked to qualify for a grant.** Any of the examples listed below are acceptable documentation that can be used as your financial proof. This information needs to be provided by the company applying for the BCG.
- Bank statement – Provide a copy of an actual bank statement, not a screen shot
 - Successful bond vote
 - Town budget line item – Highlight the line item
 - Private grants (non–State or Federal grants) – Provide the award letter and a copy of the check
 - Donations/fundraising documents – Signed and dated by an authorized officer of your organization on company letterhead
 - Commitment letter – Signed and dated by an authorized officer of your organization on company letterhead
- E. *Funding Sources*** – Provide all funding sources for the proposed project; including loans, other grants etc. This needs to be provided by the company applying for the BCG.

- F. *Permits*** – All required permits must be in hand before submitting the grant application. Otherwise, the grant application will be automatically denied. This needs to be provided by the company applying for the BCG.
- G. *Business Plan*** – It is not required, but preference will be given to grant applicants who submit business plans along with their grant application. The Vermont Small Business Development Center (VtSBDC) is available to assist entrepreneurs and small business owners in the development of business plans at all stages. You can locate an advisor near you, as well as learn more about their no-cost, confidential, one-on-one advising services at www.VtSBDC.org. You can select “request advising” and a member of the VtSBDC team will respond to your request. In the meantime, you can find tools, templates and information on business plans and planning on their “resources” page. This should be provided by the company applying for the BCG.
- H. *Board of Directors*** – Provide a list of your Board of Directors and their terms of office on a separate sheet of paper, if applicable. This needs to be provided by the Sponsoring Organization or Municipality, RDC/RPC.
- I. *IRS Determination Letter*** – If a Non-Profit Organization, attach a copy of your IRS determination letter (example) 501 (c) (6) or that of your Fiscal Agent. This needs to be provided by the Sponsoring Organization or Municipality, RDC/RPC. (***This does not apply to Municipalities***)
- J. *Form 990/Form 990-EZ/Form 990-N (e-Postcard)*** – Please include the first two pages of the organization’s form 990 or form 990-EZ-Internal Revenue Service Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax or Form 990-N (e-Postcard) for gross receipts under \$50,000.00. This needs to be provided by the Sponsoring Organization or Municipality, RDC/RPC. (***Required for Non-Profit Organizations***)
- K. *Letters of Support*** – Attach a maximum of three letters of support that represent the community’s support from Selectboards, City Councils, Planning Commissions, Recreational Boards, Citizens at-Large and Schoolboards supporting this project. **Reminder** – This grant process is designed to be simple and represent a community’s desire; letters from local boards or citizens are preferred over letters from legislators or elected officials. This needs to be provided by the company applying for the BCG.
- L. *Colored Pictures and Sketches*** – Attach any other information that you feel would be helpful in assisting the BCG committee members in making an BCG award determination. Colored pictures and sketches are appreciated. This needs to be provided by the company applying for the BCG.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

1. The project must be shovel-ready to begin or has already begun construction.
2. This program provides last gap funding for shovel-ready projects to be completed. Concepts or ideas will not be funded. Grants will not be awarded as “seed” money and these grants do not support ongoing fund-raising initiatives.
3. Energy Efficiency Projects – Please provide documentation you have reached out to your local power provider, or Efficiency Vermont and they have signed off on your proposal.
4. Opportunities to engage a wide spectrum of the community. Emphasis will be given to projects that serve youth, adults, and communities at large. Creativity, necessity, or critical nature of this grant funding towards the project’s success. Demonstrate that the organization has strong community support. This can be illustrated

through the success of local fundraising campaigns in achieving the 1:1 financial match requirement.

5. Additional projects funded by any of the BCG programs for the same calendar year for the same property location will not be funded per Chapter 137 of Title 24 §5601-5605(b).

Grant forms for grant applicants that are awarded a BCG:

- **Grant Agreement Form – Other State Departments/Agencies also use these grant agreement forms – the only information required for a BCG is the following:** In Section IV – Contact Information – Box 42 – An authorized representative from the organization must complete the yellow highlighted lines at the bottom of page one. Retain pages two and three for your records. Grants are for two years from the Grant Award Date, Box 7, and the project must be completed, and all documentation submitted to the Grant Administrator by the Award End Date, Box 8.
- **Attachment C – Standard State Provisions for Contracts and Grants** – Retain for your records.
- **Payment Request Form** – To confirm we have the correct mailing address before issuing your check. The information on this form must match the information exactly for what is submitted on the W-9 form.
- **Certificate of Insurance/Liability (COI) Form** – Issued by your insurance company demonstrating you have met the insurance requirements listed in the enclosed Attachment C – Standard State Provisions for Contracts and Grants. The COI must have a current issue date within the last two months and BGS must be added as a certificate holder at this address: Department of Buildings and General Services, 133 State Street, 5th Floor, Montpelier, VT 05633-5801.
- **W-9 Form** – Must be dated within the last six months and have an original signature. No electronic signatures, strikeouts or whiteout will be accepted on this form. If you check the other box in section three on this form, please enter your IRS determination on the line. Example: 501 (c) (6)
- **Affirmation of Use of Funds (AUF) Form** – Attach the corresponding receipts/invoices, plus proof of payment(s) (check, credit card, bank statement, etc.) of the invoices/receipts for the allocated project being paid. Example: \$10,000.00 grant awarded, submit \$20,000.00 worth of corresponding receipts/invoices and proof of payment(s) of the \$20,000.00 receipts/invoices that were paid for the project. Please remember the deadline to submit applications is September 10th each year; and invoices/receipts cannot be dated prior to September 1st for the year you are applying for.

Please complete and submit all grant forms all together upon successful completion of the funded project. If possible, scan in color, all the completed forms to BGS.BuildingCommunitiesGrants@vermont.gov. Once we have received the documentation, we will audit the documents to confirm they were used for what you were awarded in the grant letter. Then a check/direct deposit will be issued, and the grant will automatically be closed.

It is the responsibility of the grant recipient to ensure that all requested documentation has been received by the Grant Administrator at the BGS. The deadline to submit grant applications is September 10th each year. If September 10th falls on a weekend, the deadline will be extended to the following Monday. You may email the completed grant application and all corresponding documentation to BGS.BuildingCommunitiesGrants@vermont.gov or you may mail one hard copy of the completed grant application and all corresponding documentation to the address below. If you mail the grant application and all corresponding documentation, please do not staple, or use paperclips. BCG submission envelopes must be postmarked by the deadline date of September 10th.

Department of Buildings and General Services
Attn: Grant Administrator
133 State Street, 5th Floor, Montpelier, VT 05633-5801
(802) 828-3519