

BUILDING COMMUNITIES GRANTS 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 applicants will receive funding nor will awarded 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 applicants applying for any of the Building Communities Grants 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 Building Communities Grants Programs. This does not prohibit organizations from requesting funding for a different project in an alternate location under any of the Building Communities Grants.

Grants will be awarded by the selection committee on a competitive basis. Precedence will be given to applicants for new projects and proposals who have not previously received a Regional Economic Development Grant. The committee gives priority consideration to applicants demonstrating they have strong community support through the success of local fundraising campaigns. The deadline to submit applications is July 31st each year and grant submissions must be postmarked by the deadline date. If July 31st falls on a weekend, the deadline will be extended to the following Monday. Grant award recipients will be announced in the fall.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Judy Bruneau at our office at (802) 828-3519 or by email at: Judy.Bruneau@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>.

We look forward to working with everyone.



BUILDING COMMUNITIES GRANTS PROGRAMS: REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

APPLICATION PROCESS

This grant 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 in 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 it must be committed in hand, and not pledged. 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 applications are acceptable. We do not encourage having professionally prepared materials created for this application. Short, simple, and to the point applications are greatly appreciated and supported by the 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 reasonable 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 funding 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. 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 funding 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 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 application. Otherwise, the 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 award determinations. The decision of the Committee is final and is not subject to appeal.

Successful grant applications will demonstrate the following criteria:

1. Answer all questions on the three-page application and the attachment checklist. If a question does not pertain to your organization, simply indicate that in your response.
2. Development of facilities or opportunities for regional economic development programs. All projects must demonstrate realistic job creation and/or job retention and how the job numbers are determined.
3. 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 funding match requirement.
4. Describe the proposed project in three pages or less. Short, simple, and to the point applications are greatly appreciated and supported by the committee members.
5. Additional projects or tasks funded by grants for the same calendar year for the same property location will not be funded per Chapter 137 of Title 24 §5601-5605(b).
6. Documentation of the 1:1 financial funding match requirement. You cannot use any State or Federal funds as your 1:1 financial funding 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. 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 funding match requirement.
7. Acceptable documentation that can be provided as proof for your 1:1 financial match for the amount of the grant you are requesting:
 - Bank statement
 - Successful bond vote
 - Town budget line item
 - Non-State or Federal grants
 - Donations/fundraising documents
 - Commitment letter from an authorized officer of your organization
8. 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 affect this would have on your project if you were not awarded a grant for your project.
9. The project must be shovel-ready to begin or has already begun construction.
10. 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 fundraising initiatives.

11. Project Breakdown – breakdown each segment of the proposed project; equipment, materials, labor etc. Contractor estimates are good examples.
12. Provide a list of your Board of Directors and their terms of office on a separate sheet of paper, if applicable.
13. If a Non-Profit Organization, attach a copy of your 501(c) (?) IRS determination letter or that of your Fiscal Agent. ***This does not apply to Municipalities.***
14. Please include the first two pages of the organization’s form 990. ***This is required for Non-Profit Organizations.***
15. It is not required, but preference will be given to applicants who submit business plans along with their 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.
16. 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 represent a community’s desire; letters from local boards or citizens are preferred over letters from legislators or elected officials.
17. Attach any other information that you feel would be helpful in assisting the committee members in making an award determination. Colored pictures and sketches are appreciated.
18. **Grant forms for applicants that are awarded a grant:**
 - **Grant Agreement** – In Section IV – Contact Information – A representative from the organization must complete the highlighted lines at the bottom of page one. Retain page two and three for your records.
 - **Customary Grant Provisions Guide (Attachment C)** – Retain for your records.
 - **Payment Request Form** – To confirm we have the correct mailing address before issuing your check. Information on this form must match the information exactly submitted on your 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 Customary Grant Provisions Guide (Attachment C). The COI must be issued within the last two months and the Department of Buildings and General Services must be added as a certificate holder at this address: Department of Buildings and General Services, 2 Governor Aiken Avenue, Montpelier, VT 05633-5801.
 - **W-9 Form** – Must be dated within the last six months and have an original signature. No electronic signatures, no strikeovers or whiteout will be accepted on this form. If you check the other box in section three, please enter your IRS determination. Example: 501 (c) (3)
 - **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.

19. Please complete all grant forms upon successful completion of the funded project or once the total amount of the grant funding received including the 1:1 matching funding has been reached. Please scan in color all the completed forms to judy.bruneau@vermont.gov. Once we have received your documentation, your grant check will be mailed or direct deposited to your organization.

The deadline to submit applications is July 31st each year and grant submissions must be postmarked by the deadline date. If July 31st falls on a weekend, the deadline will be extended to the following Monday. Please mail one (1) hard copy of your completed application and all corresponding documentation to the following address:

**Department of Buildings and General Services
Attn: Judy Bruneau, Grants Administrator
2 Governor Aiken Avenue, Montpelier, VT 05633-5801**