



May 2021



Show Me the Money!

Vermont Agency of Transportation Grants – A guide for Municipalities



Top: In 1892 the Battell Bridge was constructed in downtown Middlebury after it was destroyed by a fire. Image courtesy of UVM Landscape Change Program

Middle- In 1958 clearing snow in VT, location unknown

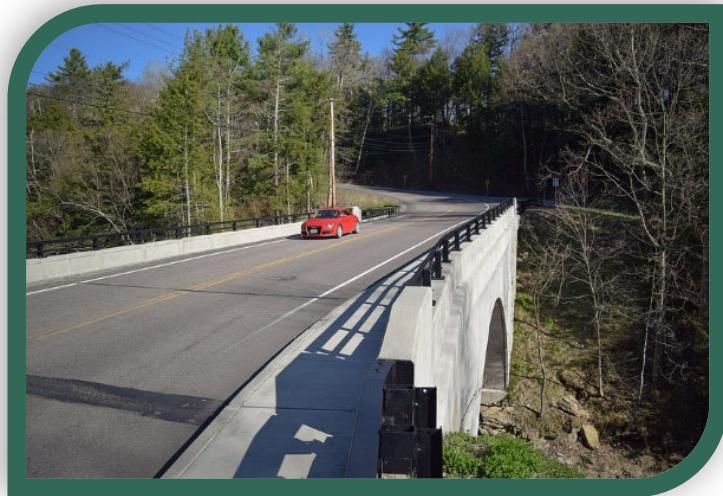
Bottom- In 1927 a pontoon bridge was erected across the Winooski River from Burlington to Winooski in 1927 after historic flooding took out the original bridge

Purpose and Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to familiarize municipalities with grant funding available at the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) to aid in addressing local transportation needs. With tight and competitive budgets, this guidebook will educate municipalities on available transportation money.

This guide contains short one- to two-page summaries of current grant programs at VTrans that are applicable to municipalities, and more specifically, local transportation networks. Each section contains information about each grant program, including contact information, funding, project eligibility/applicability, and any other pertinent supplemental information.

While every effort has been made to make this a cohesive and accurate listing of grant programs, deadlines, and funding splits; please contact each Program Manager to ensure that grant deadlines, categories, eligibility, and funding splits have not changed prior to submitting your application(s)!



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Better Roads Program

A grant program for municipalities that provides funds for planning and erosion control projects that improve water quality and reduce maintenance costs.

Ross Gouin
 (802) 595-2381
ross.gouin@vermont.gov

Alan May
 (802) 828-4585
alan.may@vermont.gov



Category A Grants

Category A grants are for planning and provide funding to conduct a road erosion inventory, prioritize identified projects and develop a budget plan to implement the projects over a period of time.

Maximum grant award: \$8,000

Category C Grants

Category C grants are for construction projects that correct a streambank, lake shore or other slope related erosion problem on town roads.

Maximum grant award: \$40,000

Category B Grants

Category B grants are for construction projects that correct an erosion problem and/or stormwater mitigation retrofit to the road drainage system that will result in improved water quality. Examples of eligible projects in this category are the installation of grass or stone lined ditches, rain gardens that treat road runoff, or drop inlet rehab/replacement.

Maximum grant award: \$20,000

Category D Grants

Category D grants are for structure/culvert upgrade projects. These grants can be used to replace multiple small culverts or a larger structure.

Maximum grant award: \$60,000



Grant Details:

- Program uses State funds and all grants require a 20% local match which can be covered by using municipal labor, equipment, and materials. *NOTE: Funding on Category A is federal at 80%, with 20% local match.*
- Applications are due annually, usually in the Fall. Grant information is posted to the Better Roads website at: <http://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/better-roads>
- Awards are made in June-July and work must be completed by June 30th of the following year.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Program

A grant program to provide safe and convenient facilities for those Vermonters who desire alternative transportation opportunities.

Ande Deforge
 (802) 595-6657
ande.deforge@vermont.gov



Scoping (feasibility) studies

Many projects that are funded for design and construction are the result of a formal Scoping or Feasibility Study. Studies are for projects that have not been evaluated yet to look at different alternatives, assess right of way and environmental impacts, and develop realistic cost estimate. Scoping Studies help define projects, generate public support, and provide more confidence that a project will be successfully completed. A Scoping Study may be used to apply for subsequent rounds of design and construction funding that are available.

Federally funded, 20% local cash match required.

Design/Construction projects

Project applied for under this category will be taking all of the necessary steps to move a concept through the design, permitting and right of way process to advance to construction... The Bike/Ped Program does not fund design only projects. All project (including scoping studies) must be completed or there is a pay-back provision. Eligible costs for design-construction projects include project management/administration, engineering/permitting, right of way acquisition, construction, and construction inspection.

Federally funded, 20% local cash match required.

Small Scale Projects

The intent of this category of eligible projects is to address simple, but critical improvements that will increase access and/or safety of people choosing to bike or walk. These projects will be funded with all State dollars, lessening the requirements to be met before construction can take place. This funding may not be used to provide match to a federally funded project or to add on to a federally funded project. These projects must be small stand-alone improvements. Awards will be for construction only. Applicants will be responsible for the cost of any design and administration that is needed. The general eligibility criteria stated above still applies and it is expected that these projects will likely include crosswalk enhancements, bicycle lane markings/signs, edge line markings, addressing ADA compliance issues, and critical small gaps in sidewalk networks.

State funded, 50% local cash match.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Program (continued)

Grant Details:

- Typical grant award of around \$300,000 with a 20% match.
- Applications are due annually around June.
- Projects take on average 3-5 years to complete from date of application to end of construction.

Other Program Requirements:

- Eligible applicants include the following:
 - Local government
 - Regional transportation authority
 - Transit agency
 - Natural resource or public lands agency
 - School district or school
 - Tribal government
 - Regional planning commission
- Reimbursement program, invoices must be paid by the municipality before VTrans reimburses for eligible grant expenses.
- Program Requirements:
 - Successful applicants are expected to develop projects expeditiously.
 - Applicants are expected to follow FHWA and Agency requirements.
 - Applicants are required to have a Local Project Manager (LPM). LPM's are responsible for the day-to-day management and administrative duties involved with advancing the project to completion. Applicants can either utilize a qualified staff member to carry out project management, or contract with a private consultant or their Regional Planning Commission. The cost of local project management is an eligible project cost and should be included in the project budget.
 - For projects within the State Highway ROW, municipalities are required to coordinate with the local VTrans District Transportation Administrator (and District Project Manager) to ensure that State operations are considered in the project design.
 - Projects must be planned and designed in accordance with the standards and guidance provided by: AASHTO, MUTCD, NACTO, ADA, the VTrans Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities Planning and Design Manual, and all other applicable State and Federal statutes, standards, specifications, and guidelines.
 - All personal services (i.e., consultants) and construction contractors must be procured properly according to State and Federal guidelines. Sole sourcing of consultants or contractors is not allowed.

<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/bike-ped>

Grants in Aid Program

A grant program that provides funding for municipalities to implement best management practices (BMPs) in compliance with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP).¹

NEW to VTrans in FY22! Previously administered by your Regional Planning Commission.

Ross Gouin
 (802) 595-2381
ross.gouin@vermont.gov



VTrans will offer funding to participating municipalities to implement BMPs on hydrologically connected road segments that currently do not meet standards.² A municipality's funding award depends upon:

- Awards are contingent upon Municipalities being compliant with MRGP requirements at the time of award.
- The number of hydrologically connected roads, sorted into five-mile increments.
- The number of participating municipalities.

Additional funds may become available should some municipalities decide not to participate. Base offers are posted on the VTrans Grants in Aid website at:

<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/Municipal-Grant-in-aid-Program>

Grants-in-Aid awards will be made available through VTrans. Municipalities will submit reimbursement requests for work completed directly to VTrans and VTrans will reimburse up to 80% of the municipality's documented construction expenses, including in-kind support, for BMPs on hydrologically connected roads.

¹ MRGP available at:

<http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/stormwater/permit-information-applications-fees/municipal-roads-program>.

² Hydrologically connected roads are those that drain directly into surface waters (streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, and wetlands) as defined by the MRGP.

Grants in Aid Program (continued)

Eligible BMPS according to the MRGP standards:

- grass and stone-lined drainage ditches and stone check-dams;
- turnouts, cross culverts, and other disconnection and infiltration practices;
- lowering of high road shoulders;
- installation or replacement of drainage culverts and driveway culverts on non-perennial streams within right of way and installation of culvert headwalls and outlet stabilization;
- stabilizing conveyance zones;
- addressing gully erosion on Class 4 roads; and
- stabilizing catch basin outlets.

Grant Details:

- Program uses State funds and all grants require a 20% local match which can be covered by using municipal labor, equipment, and materials.
- Letter of Intent is required to participate. Formula funding is shared among Municipalities that submit a letter of intent to VTrans, usually due by June 25th. Grant information and Letter of Intent is posted to the VTrans Grants in Aid website at:
<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/Municipal-Grant-in-aid-Program>
- Awards are made in July and work must be completed by June 30th of the following year.
- Municipalities are required to a complete preconstruction site visit with VTrans or a designated agent that includes an assessment of the road segment and data entry to the MRGP portal.
- Municipalities are required to submit a single invoice to VTrans at project completion along with a certification that the road segments repaired using these funds are fully compliant with the MRGP at conclusion of project.
- Invoicing format can also be found at our website:
<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/Municipal-Grant-in-aid-Program>

Transportation Alternatives Program

A grant program that encompasses a variety of smaller scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, Safe Routes to School projects, community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management, and environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity.

Scott Robertson
scott.robertson@vermont.gov

The following are activities that are eligible for the Transportation Alternatives Program:

A.

Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

B.

Construction, planning, and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs.

C.

Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users.

D.

Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas.

E.

Community improvement activities, including:

- Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities.
- Vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control.
- Archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under this title.

Transportation Alternatives Program (continued)

F.

Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to:

- Address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in section 133(b)(11), 328(a), and 329.
- Reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.
- Construction of salt sheds is eligible under the environmental mitigation category. Eligibility for salt sheds will be considered on a case-by-case basis based on proximity of the existing storage location to a major water body (generally within 50 ft). We recommend reviewing eligibility with VTrans prior to application submittal.

Grant Details:

- Maximum grant award of \$300,000 with a 20% match.
- Applications are due annually around September.
- Projects take on average 3-5 years to complete from date of application to end of construction.

Other Program Requirements:

- Eligible applicants include the following:
 - Local government
 - Regional transportation authority
 - Transit agency
 - Natural resource or public lands agency
 - School district or school
 - Tribal government
 - Regional planning commission
- Reimbursement program, invoices must be paid by the municipality before VTrans reimburses for eligible grant expenses.

Transportation Alternatives Program (continued)

- Program Requirements:
 - Successful applicants are expected to develop projects expeditiously.
 - Applicants are expected to follow FHWA and Agency requirements.
 - Applicants are required to have a Local Project Manager (LPM). LPM's are responsible for the day-to-day management and administrative duties involved with advancing the project to completion. Applicants can either utilize a qualified staff member to carry out project management, or contract with a private consultant or their Regional Planning Commission. The cost of local project management is an eligible project cost and should be included in the project budget.
 - For projects within the State Highway ROW, municipalities are required to coordinate with the local VTrans District Transportation Administrator (and District Project Manager) to ensure that State operations are considered in the project design.
 - Projects must be planned and designed in accordance with the standards and guidance provided by: AASHTO, MUTCD, NACTO, ADA, the VTrans Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities Planning and Design Manual, and all other applicable State and Federal statutes, standards, specifications, and guidelines.
 - All personal services (i.e., consultants) and construction contractors must be procured properly according to State and Federal guidelines. Sole sourcing of consultants or contractors is not allowed.

<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/transport-alt>

Municipal Highway & Stormwater Mitigation Program

Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff.

Ross Gouin
(802) 595-2381
ross.gouin@vermont.gov



The following are activities that are eligible for the Municipal Highway & Stormwater Mitigation Program:

- Planning Studies
- Stormwater Inventories
- Flow Restoration Plans
- Phosphorus Control Planning
- Salt/Sand Sheds
- Bank Stabilization
- Culvert Replacement/Re-sizing
- Stream Bank Stabilization
- Detention Ponds
- Check Dams
- Swirl Separators
- Permeable Pavers
- Infiltration Basins
- Gravel Wetlands
- Subsurface Detention Systems
- Bio Filters
- Bio Retention Systems

Grant Details:

- Federal grant at 80% of project cost with a 20% local match.
- As this is federally funded, efficiency is gained on projects with costs of \$200,000 and up generally.
- Applications are due annually around September.
- Projects take on average 3-5 years to complete from date of application to end of construction.

Municipal Highway & Stormwater Mitigation Program (continued)

Other Program Requirements:

- Eligible applicants include the following:
 - Local government
 - Regional transportation authority
 - Transit agency
 - Natural resource or public lands agency
 - School district or school
 - Tribal government
 - Regional planning commission
- Reimbursement program, invoices must be paid by the municipality before VTrans reimburses for eligible grant expenses.
- Program Requirements:
 - Successful applicants are expected to develop projects expeditiously.
 - Applicants are expected to follow FHWA and Agency requirements.
 - Applicants are required to have a Local Project Manager (LPM). LPM's are responsible for the day-to-day management and administrative duties involved with advancing the project to completion. Applicants can either utilize a qualified staff member to carry out project management, or contract with a private consultant or their Regional Planning Commission. Project management is an eligible project cost and should be included in the project budget.
 - For projects within the State Highway ROW, municipalities are required to coordinate with the local VTrans District Transportation Administrator (and District Project Manager) to ensure that State operations are considered in the project design.
 - Projects must be planned and designed in accordance with the standards and guidance provided by: AASHTO, MUTCD, NACTO, ADA, the VTrans Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities Planning and Design Manual, and all other applicable State and Federal statutes, standards, specifications, and guidelines.
 - All personal services (i.e., consultants) and construction contractors must be procured properly according to State and Federal guidelines. Sole sourcing of consultants or contractors is not allowed.

<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/Municipal-Highway-and-Stormwater-Mitigation-Program>

Municipal Park & Ride Program

A grant program for municipalities that provides safe and convenient parking facilities to encourage the consolidation of travelers and the reduction of single occupancy vehicles on the roads.

Tina Bohl
tina.bohl@vermont.gov

Derek Kenison
derek.kenison@vermont.gov



Grants are awarded for preliminary engineering and construction activities of park-and-ride facilities in municipalities.

Projects may include any of the following features:

- Shared-use or Stand-alone
- Existing or New facilities
- Gravel or Paved surfaces
- Shelters
- Lighting
- Bike Racks
- Guardrail
- Signs and Pavement Markings
- Handicapped Accessibility
- Transit Connections
- Other Amenities

Grant Details:

- State funds. Please see program announcement to determine local match percentage.
- No maximum grant amount, awards vary based on annual appropriation.
- Applications are due annually around August.

Other Program Requirements:

- Land used must currently be owned by the Municipality. Land can be owned by State of Vermont with a State Highway Access Permit or privately with a minimum 20-year lease. Note that grant funds cannot be used for Right-of-Way or lease expenses.
- Lot location must be on or near a State Highway.
- Lot must be available for commuters' use year-round.
- Lot size must provide parking spaces for greater than 10 vehicles.
- Lot must be maintained by municipality.
- Municipality will collaborate with Public Transit providers when an existing or planned transit route is present.

Town Highway Bridge Program

A grant program for municipalities that provides funds for major rehabilitation projects to extend the life of an existing structure, or projects to reconstruct/replace/eliminate bridges on Class 1, 2, or 3 town highways. Bridges must span 6 feet of greater.

Contact your local Regional Planning Commission



Bridges may become part of the program in the following ways:

VTrans inspects all bridges with spans of 20 feet or greater. If critical defects are detected a special letter is sent to the municipality advising of the deficiency.

Municipalities are responsible for inspecting all bridge with spans of less than 20 feet.

A list of tentative new projects is drafted by VTrans, based on statewide bridge data, priority, and/or Regional Planning Commission recommendations. “Long structure” selections are based on VTrans’ priority system that includes the structural condition, load restrictions, width restrictions, approach alignment, average daily traffic, waterway adequacy, detour length, and RPC priority. These factors are combined into a ranking for each bridge and establish its priority in relation to all of the other “long structures” on town highways. “Short structure” selections are based on similar criteria but are not currently ranked by VTrans. VTrans’ Structures Program Manager notifies municipalities that their bridge is eligible as a candidate for design funding. Municipalities have the option of participating or may decline to do so. Municipalities wishing to proceed with a project must respond, in writing, to VTrans.

Grant Details:

- Funds may be a mix of Federal and State funding. Match varies based on the scope of the project. At a minimum there is a 10% match. Total project cost is not capped.
- There is no application deadline for projects. Please inquire with the Structures Manager if you would like to discuss the possibility of your bridge becoming a project.
- Most projects take around 5 years; some may be longer.

Other Program Requirements:

- Municipalities must complete a finance and maintenance agreement before any work is done on the project.

Town Highway Structures Program

A grant program for municipalities that provides funds for short bridges, culverts, retaining walls, and other town highway related structures on Class 1, 2, or 3 town highways.

Contact your local VTrans District Office



Projects may address the maintenance (including actions to extend the life expectancy) and construction of bridges, culverts, and other structures including causeways and retaining walls. In general, the improvement must materially preserve the integrity of the eligible structure of Class 1, 2, or 3 town highways.

Grant Details:

- State funds, maximum grant award of \$175,000 with a 20% match.
- Match may be reduced to 10% if a municipality meets the following requirements:
 - Adopted town highway codes and standards that meet or exceed the minimum requirements of the VTrans January 23, 2013 template, and
 - Conducted a highway infrastructure study (not less than three years old) which identifies all town culverts, bridges, and identified road problems. The inventory would include location, size, deficiency/condition, and estimated cost of repair- where the condition is less than acceptable.
- Applications are due annually, usually in April.
- Projects must be completed 2 years from the date of the grant award.

Other Program Requirements:

- Administration work associated with these projects are not eligible costs, however, engineering or design costs incurred by a municipality are eligible.
- Culvert replacement equal to or greater than 36 inches in diameter shall be part of this program, culverts less than 36 inches in diameter shall be part of the Town Highway Class 2 Roadway Program.
- Municipalities are responsible for all aspects of preparing plans, securing permits, and inspection of the work and all eligible project costs.
- Municipalities are responsible for all signage and traffic control, which must in in conformance with MUTCD guidelines.
- Grant is a reimbursement program and municipalities are responsible for funding of the work until the work is completed. In certain circumstances a partial claim may be accepted.
- Municipalities should seek bids from at least 3 vendors when projects are funded by State Grants unless performing work themselves.



Town Highway Class 2 Program

A grant program for municipalities that provides funds for the preservation of any Class 2 highways for resurfacing or reconstruction.

Contact your local VTrans District Office



Projects shall include detailed work for the preservation of any Class 2 town highway for resurfacing (to include both paving and gravel surfacing or re-surfacing) and re-construction based on identified needs. Eligible activities include preliminary engineering, construction, and construction inspection/management.

Grant Details:

- State funds, maximum grant award of \$175,000 with a 30% match.
- Match may be reduced to 20% if a municipality meets the following requirements:
 - Adopted town highway codes and standards that meet or exceed the minimum requirements of the VTrans January 23, 2013 template.
 - Conducted a highway infrastructure study (not less than three years old) which identifies all town culverts, bridges, and identified road problems. The inventory would include location, size, deficiency/condition, and estimated cost of repair- where the condition is less than acceptable.
- Applications are due annually, usually in April.
- Projects must be completed 2 years from the date of the grant award.

Other Program Requirements:

- Administration work associated with these projects are not eligible costs, however, engineering or design costs incurred by a municipality are eligible.
- Culvert replacement less than 36 inches in diameter shall be part of this program, culverts equal to or greater than 36 inches in diameter shall be part of the Town Highway Structures Program.
- Municipalities are responsible for all aspects of preparing plans, securing permits, and inspection of the work and all eligible project costs.
- Municipalities are responsible for all signage and traffic control, which must in in conformance with MUTCD guidelines.
- Bicycle and pedestrian use should be considered when choosing shoulder widths and materials. In general, any existing shoulder should not be reduced in width.
- Grant is a reimbursement program and municipalities are responsible for funding of the work until the work is completed. In certain circumstances a partial claim may be accepted.
- Municipalities should seek bids from at least 3 vendors when projects are funded by State Grants unless performing work themselves.

Town Highway Emergency Grants

A grant program for municipalities that provides funds for emergency storm damage repairs.

Contact your local VTrans District Office



State funding assistance is available for repair, reconstruction or replacement of highways and bridges on Class 1, 2, or 3 town highways, which are damaged by natural or man-made events.

Grant Details:

- State funded.
- Funds provided are up to 90% of the eligible repair or replacement costs, OR, the eligible repair or replacement cost, minus an amount equal to 10% of the overall total highway budget minus the municipality's winter maintenance budget, whichever is greater.
- Projects must be completed 2 years from the date of the grant award.

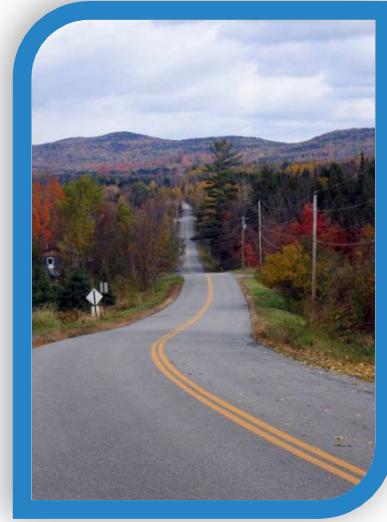
Other Program Requirements:

- Administration associated with the projects is not an eligible cost
- Funding is allocated if there is money left in the program, and if the following criteria are met:
 - That the disaster is of such magnitude that state aid is both reasonable and necessary to preserve the public good.
 - That the disaster does not qualify for major disaster assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency or the Federal Highway Administration.
 - If the project cost is 10% or more of the non-winter highway budget it is determined that the disaster is of a magnitude to warrant assistance from the fund.
- For municipalities that have adopted road and bridge standards, eligibility for reimbursement for repair or replacement of infrastructure shall be to those standards. For municipalities that have not adopted these standards, eligibility for reimbursement for repair or replacement of infrastructure shall be limited to the specifications of the infrastructure that pre-existed the emergency event.
- Municipalities must document all costs associated with the project and request payment within 45 days of completion of the project. Any payment of funds must also be made within the period of the grant (2 years) unless the municipality requests and is granted an extension to the original grant period.

Systemic Local Road Safety Program

A statewide program that addresses rural and urban roads that are locally maintained by a municipality and have less than 5,000 vehicles per day and focuses on risk factors rather than primarily crash history to identify sites for improvements.

Contact your local Regional Planning Commission



Identification and Prioritization of Locations

Utilizing the latest 5-year crash data, VTrans will conduct the systemic network screening of roads maintained by municipalities that have less than 5,000 vehicles per day. Based on this initial screening, VTrans will suggest the type and number of projects to be prioritized (a project could be a group of 5 or 6 curves on the same road or different roads within the same municipality, a short corridor segment, or an intersection). VTrans will provide the screening results to the RPC by the end of January.

RPCs will then supplement the analysis results with input from local stakeholders (i.e., TAC members, police, sheriff, emergency response providers, field reviews of the sites, and anecdotal data). Based on the network screening data and local input, RPCs will then identify and prioritize the required number of projects as indicated by VTrans. At least one HRRR project should be included if an RPC has non-state-maintained roads classified as HRRRs. The RPCs will report their selections to VTrans – inclusive of a signed municipal Program Participation Form (signed by a representative of the municipality) by the last business day of April.

Project Development and Implementation

For each project, VTrans determines systemic remedial actions for deployment in close consultation with each RPC and participating municipality to address the major crash types. VTrans will then develop, and the RPC will review, a summary that documents the municipally approved recommendation(s) for implementation (including location; type and size of signs; markings and other specifications necessary to define the improvements) by the last business day of November.

VTrans will design, develop plans, administer the projects, and hire a contractor to implement the recommendations. VTrans will coordinate with municipalities, as necessary.

Systemic Local Road Safety Program (continued)

Evaluation

VTrans will provide the RPCs with an evaluation table identifying before and after crash data for locations where HRRR and SLRS projects have been completed and for which three-year of after data is available, by the last business day of September. The RPCs will share this list with the TAC, road foremen, police, sheriffs, and emergency response providers for comments as to the occurrences and severity of crashes at these locations. RPCs will provide a summary of those comments to VTrans by the last business day of December.

Deliverables

- RPCs will submit a list of the selected projects along with a signed municipal Program Participation Form (signed by a representative of the municipality) for each project by the last business day of April.
- Following the site review by VTrans, RPC, municipality (May to September), VTrans will provide a summary of recommended improvements for review and comment by the RPC and municipality. Final comments will be provided to VTrans by the last business day of November.
- VTrans will provide an evaluation table with before and after crash data for HRRR and SLRS locations that improvements have been completed for at least three years by the last business day of September.
- RPCs will work with the municipality to provide an updated evaluation table with summarized local comments to VTrans by the last business day of December.

FEMA Public Assistance Program

FEMA's Public Assistance grant program provides federal assistance government organizations and certain private nonprofit organizations following a Presidential disaster declaration.

Kim Canarecci
(802) 585-4209
kim.canarecci@vermont.gov



Public Assistance provides grants to state, tribal and local governments, and certain types of private nonprofit organizations so that communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies.

Through the program, FEMA provides supplemental federal disaster grant assistance for debris removal, life-saving emergency protective measures, and the repair, replacement, or restoration of disaster-damaged publicly owned facilities, and the facilities of certain private non-profit organizations. The PA program also encourages protection of these damaged facilities from future events by providing assistance for hazard mitigation measures during the recovery process.

The federal share of assistance is not less than 75 percent of the eligible cost. The State determines how the non-federal share (up to 25 percent) is split with the eligible applicants based on their Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) percentage. A town can find out the status of their ERAF by going to the Flood ready website. <http://floodready.vermont.gov/>

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

Following a federally declared disaster, 15% of a State's Public Assistance (PA) award is identified for HMGP. Unlike other FEMA-funded grant programs, the HMGP can be used anywhere in the State (i.e., does not need to be awarded solely to a town impacted by the event causing the federal declaration). This funding is particularly useful, as it aims to achieve long-term, sustained solutions to reduce or eliminate loss of life or property.

Stephanie A. Smith
 (802) 989-6793
stephanie.a.smith@vermont.gov

HMGP can be used for a variety of infrastructure projects, including culvert upsizing, road relocation, bank stabilization/rip rap, and a variety of other projects that help to mitigate against a potential natural hazard. Eligibility requirements of the grant program include: 1. Town must have an approved Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) in place or in development; 2. Town must have a FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) in place, or a commitment to generate one within 12 months of applying; 3. Town must be in good standing with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP); 4. Does the proposal conform to No Adverse Impact Standards, when relevant; and 5. The project must be for mitigation (i.e. cannot be a deferred maintenance project or something that does not address a hazard vulnerability).

Please note that there is no available funding under HMGP at this time, as Vermont has not received a federally declared disaster in the past calendar year.

FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant Program

Very similar to HMGP, BRIC funding is used to eliminate or reduce the risk of loss of life or property through sustained, long-term actions. BRIC funds can also be used throughout a state, regardless of affected areas, but does not require a federally declared disaster. BRIC is an annual, nationally competitive grant program.

Stephanie A. Smith
 (802) 989-6793
stephanie.a.smith@vermont.gov

Eligibility requirements are similar under BRIC and HMGP.

The notice of funding for the next round of BRIC is anticipated over the summer of 2021 with a State grant deadline anticipated in December 2021.



FHWA Emergency Relief Program

FHWA's Emergency Relief Program provides federal assistance to government organizations following a Presidential disaster declaration.

Municipal Assistance provides grants to local governments so that communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. When damages are identified, contact the State to properly document the damages for eligibility.

Shane Morin
shane.morin@vermont.gov



Grant Details:

Congress authorized in Title 23, United States Code, Section 125, a special program from the Highway Trust Fund for the repair or reconstruction of Federal-aid highways and roads on Federal lands which have suffered serious damage as a result of (1) natural disasters or (2) catastrophic failures from an external cause. This program, commonly referred to as the emergency relief or ER program, supplements the commitment of resources by States, their political subdivisions, or other Federal agencies to help pay for unusually heavy expenses resulting from extraordinary conditions.

Applicability of ER to a catastrophic failure due to an external cause is based on the criteria that the failure was not the result of an inherent flaw in the facility but was sudden, caused a disastrous impact on transportation services, and resulted in unusually high expenses to the highway agency.

Federal Share:

Approved ER funds are available at the pro-rata share that would normally apply to the Federal-aid facility damaged. For Interstate highways, the Federal share is 90 percent. For all other highways, the Federal share is 80 percent. The Federal share for permanent ER repairs may amount to 90 percent if the combined eligible ER expenses incurred by the State in a Federal fiscal year exceeds the annual apportionment of the State under 23 U.S.C. section 104 for the fiscal year in which the disasters or failures occurred.

Emergency repair work to restore essential travel, minimize the extent of damage, or protect the remaining facilities, accomplished in the first 180 days after the disaster occurs, may be reimbursed at 100 percent Federal share. The 180-day time period for 100 percent eligibility of emergency repairs may be extended if a State cannot access a site to evaluate damages and the cost of repair.

Better Connections Grant Program

Better Connections is an integrated grant program that funds municipal planning efforts to increase multi-modal transportation options and to improve land use, water quality, public health, and economic vitality. The interagency program provides targeted assistance to help communities identify and prioritize their goals and projects, develop an action-oriented plan to achieve the goals and move projects directly to implementation, and link the communities to a growing network of public and philanthropic partners to help them implement their priority projects.

Jackie Cassino
 (802) 272-2368
jackie.cassino@vermont.gov

Richard Amore
 (802) 585-0061
richard.amore@vermont.gov



The Program is open to new applications biennially. Municipalities compete for approximately \$200,000 in projects funds. A 10% local cash match is required. The Program funds physical master plans focusing on:

- Improved multimodal connectivity,
- Active transportation and complete streets,
- Access management,
- Traffic calming,
- Parking,
- Wayfinding,
- Rehabilitation of buildings,
- Redevelopment of sites and housing,
- Land use planning,
- Stormwater management, and
- Zoning by-law and form-based code development.

In addition to the development of the master plan, the program can fund corresponding economic and marketing plans to ensure the market viability of the proposed improvements and inform the municipality's capital planning. Applicants have the opportunity to apply for additional funds to support projects that improve water quality and public health.

The program is primarily funded by the Agency of Transportation, with additional staff support and funding provided by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Agency of Natural Resources, and Department of Health.

More information can be found at:

<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/projects-programs/better-connections>
<https://secure.accd.vermont.gov/betterconnections>

Go! Vermont Transportation Committee Grants

A grant program for municipalities to create or support efficient modes of transportation best suited for each community.

Dan Currier
 (802) 279-5236
dan.j.currier@vermont.gov



Grant Details:

- The VTrans Public Transit Section is offering grants to municipalities to assist in building a statewide outreach and advocacy network for the Go Vermont Program: www.connectingcommuters.org
- Local Selectboards and Energy Committees are a logical partner in this effort as you can bring local credibility, energy, and innovation to the ongoing effort to expand the reach of the Go! Vermont Program.
- Through a partnership with your local Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs), VTrans will provide a \$500 grant to participating municipal energy committees.

Other Program Requirements:

Go! Vermont is a web-based clearinghouse for all transportation modes in Vermont, featuring an automated carpool, vanpool and public transit matching service, a vanpool program, information for State Park and Ride locations, and a link to "511" traffic conditions. In effect, the framework and services have been established for Go! Vermont, and the focus has now shifted toward building program participation to achieve the necessary critical mass for rideshare matches, and toward facilitating efficient transportation options versus continued operation of single occupancy vehicles. To this end, the project objectives are as follows:

- Broaden Go! Vermont outreach efforts.
- Build relationships with local committees and advocates.
- Identify local and regional transportation priorities and activities.
- Build local and regional program capacities and awareness.
- Increase the number of registrants in the Go Vermont database.
- Increase traffic to the Go Vermont website (www.connectingcommuters.org).
- Focus regional and local initiatives and advocacy efforts.

The ultimate goal of this program is to increase program awareness, carpool registrations, numbers of vanpools and general activity on the Go Vermont website.

State Highway Safety Office Highway Safety Grant & Work Zone Safety

The State Highway Safety Office (SHSO), through funding from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), is responsible for reducing injuries, deaths, and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes, and its mission is to save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce traffic-related health care and other economic costs.

Contact your local municipal police department or sheriff's office, or

Allison Laflamme, Administrator

(802) 498-8079

allison.laflamme@vermont.gov



Work Zone Safety grants are given to all recipients who apply for and receive a Highway Safety grant. These agencies then use this money to patrol work zones to improve their safety.

Grant Details:

- Contact your Sheriff's Office or your local municipal police if you have a work zone that is a safety concern, and you would like them to patrol as part of their grant. If they an agency in your area has applied for this grant and has money left, they may be able to provide this service to your municipality.
- Federal funds.

Other Program Requirements:

- The SHSO also has a variety of other programs that your local police department may use to combat issues you see while you are working on the roads such as drunk and impaired driving, distracted driving, occupant protection (restraint use), community traffic safety problems, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and motorcycle safety.

For more information visit our website at <https://shso.vermont.gov/>

Vermont State Infrastructure Bank (SIB)

The State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) program, operated by the Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA) in conjunction with the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, is available to assist in the construction or reconstruction of highways, roads and bridges, as well as certain facilities related to rail transit. Also, in certain cases, electric vehicle charging stations, and natural gas refueling stations available for public use are eligible for SIB financing.

Contact your local VEDA office or

(802) 828-5627

Info@veda.org

Eligibility

- Municipalities, regional development corporations or political subdivisions of the state.
- Private sector companies that have entered into a contract with a public authority to carry out a qualified project.

Use of Proceeds

Projects eligible under Title 23 or Title 49 of the United States Code of Regulations, such as:

- Construction or reconstruction of highways, roads and bridges, and pedestrian facilities;
- Construction of certain rail transit or public transit facilities; and
- Construction and/or installation of electric vehicle charging stations and natural gas refueling stations available for public use.

Loan Rates and Terms

- 3% fixed for loans to private sector borrowers;
- 1% fixed for loans to municipal-type borrowers and for electric vehicle charging stations;
- Loan term may not exceed 30 years with repayment commencing no later than five years after completion of project; loan terms for electric vehicle charging stations will depend on available cash flow; and
- Required borrower equity contribution to project is 10-20%.

Fees

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2% commitment fee • \$50 credit report fee (if applicable) • \$18 flood insurance certificate (if applicable) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraisal reimbursement (if applicable) • Document recording/discharge fees • No application fee |
|---|--|

Vermont State Infrastructure Bank (continued)

Application Process

- All loan decisions are made by the SIB Board of Directors.
- All federal and state environmental permits and other approvals must be obtained for SIB projects.
- Applicants are advised to discuss their proposed project with SIB Staff prior to submitting the application.
- Vermont State Infrastructure Bank applications may be obtained from the VEDA office.
- Please contact VEDA to begin the SIB application process.

Other Notes

Sometimes, in the case of a project on a roadway classified as part of the federal aid system (FAS), Municipalities can usually borrow from the SIB to cover either 80% of a local project or to cover any local-share that has been required for a VAOT-directed project.

Related Resources

VT Agency of Transportation

U.S. Federal Highway Administration

Vermont Energy Investment Corporation:

<https://www.veic.org/services/transportation-electrification>

VEDA:

<https://www.veda.org/financing-options/vermont-commercial-financing/electric-vehicle-charging-station-loan-program/>

Resources

VTrans District Offices

District 1 - Bennington

359 Bowen Road
Bennington, Vermont 05201
Phone: (802) 447-2790
Fax: (802) 447-2793

District 2 - Brattleboro

870 US Route 5
Dummerston, Vermont 05301
Phone: (802) 254-5011
Fax: (802) 251-2000

District 3 - Rutland

61 Valley View Suite #2
Mendon, Vermont 05701
Phone: (802) 786-5826
Fax: (802) 786-5894

District 4 - White River Junction

221 Beswick Drive
White River Junction, Vermont 05001
Phone: (802) 295-8888
Fax: (802) 295-8882

District 5 - Colchester

189 Troy Avenue
Colchester, Vermont 05446
Mailing address:
P.O. Box 168
Essex Junction, Vermont 05453
Phone: (802) 655-1580
Fax: (802) 655-6642

District 7 - St. Johnsbury

1068 US Route 5, Suite 2
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819
Phone: (802) 748-6670
Fax: (802) 748-6671

District 8 - St. Albans

680 Lower Newton Road
St. Albans, Vermont 05478
Telephone: 802-524-5926
Fax: 802-524-7940

District 9 - Derby

4611 US Route 5
Newport, Vermont 05855
Phone: (802) 334-7934
Fax: (802) 334-3337

Resources (continued)

Regional Planning Commissions (RPC)

Addison County RPC

14 Seminary Street
Middlebury, VT 05753
Phone: (802) 388-3141
Fax: (802) 388-0038

Bennington County RC

111 South Street, Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201
Phone: (802) 442-0713
Fax: (802) 442-0439

Central Vermont RPC

29 Main Street, Suite 4
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone: (802) 229-0389
Fax: (802) 223-1977

Chittenden County RPC

110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404
Phone: (802) 846-4490 x21
Fax: (802) 846-4494

Lamoille County PC

PO Box 1637
Morrisville, VT 05661
Phone: (802) 888-4548
Fax: (802) 888-6938

Northeastern VT Development Association

36 Eastern Avenue, Suite 1
PO Box 630
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
Phone: (802) 748-5181
Fax: (802) 748-1223

Northwest RPC

75 Fairfield Street,
Saint Albans, VT 05478
Phone: (802) 524-5958
Fax: (802) 527-2948

Rutland RPC

PO Box 965
Rutland, VT 05702
Phone: (802) 775-0871
Fax: (802) 775-1766