Selectboard Approval Request Template

Municipal Energy Resilience Program

Passed on June 2nd, 2022, Act 172 authorized MERP $45 million to support dependable and sustainable connections to critical municipal services for all Vermonters. Buildings owned by cities, towns, fire districts, incorporated villages, and all other governmental incorporated units except for school districts are eligible for the program. No local match is required for this funding. The program includes three main components: 1) Community Capacity Grant, 2) Free Energy Assessments of municipal buildings, and 3) Implementation Funds.

We understand that a variety of community members may participate in the application process for the MERP grant opportunities. To ensure the success of these grant proposals we ask that approval for the application to these grants be included in regular selectboard and public meeting minutes.

Community Capacity Grant (OPEN)

Description
The Community Capacity Grants provide up to $4,000 to support energy resilience community capacity building. This is a non-competitive grant, all towns that apply with an applicable project can expect to receive this grant. Funds granted must be expended by December of 2024. Selectboard approval for proposed projects is required. Potential uses include:

- Energy education and outreach materials and mailers
- Hire a consultant or grant writer
- Host a community energy fair or similar public energy event
- Start an energy committee

Please ensure a statement similar to the template provided below is affirmed by the town's selectboard and included in the meeting minutes.

The [municipality] selectboard appoints [individual] as a municipal representative with the authority to apply for the Municipal Energy Resilience Program Community Capacity Grant, worth $4,000, for the purposes of [proposed eligible project].

Free Energy Assessments (COMING SOON)

Through this portion of MERP towns can apply for energy assessments of any municipally owned building except schools. These assessments will provide recommendations and cost estimates for HVAC and thermal envelope improvements, weatherization, renewable energy equipment, battery storage and EV charging equipment. Two levels of assessment are available:

- Level 1: Walk-through assessment. Takes ~1.5 hours and goes beyond Efficiency VT assessment qualifies the building for MERP Implementation Funds.
- Level 2: Investment grade audit. Takes ~4 hours and qualifies the building for MERP implementation funds and other Federal and State funding sources. Additional information on the building is required, including utility bills, past energy audits, and architectural drawings.

The town may apply for assessments of multiple buildings but is asked to limit the number of Level 2 assessments requested. The town should also call out specific interest in EV Charger infrastructure, battery storage, or renewable energy in the assessment application.

Please ensure a statement similar to the template provided below is affirmed by the town's selectboard and included in the meeting minutes.

The [municipality] selectboard appoints [individual/energy committee] as a municipal representative with the authority to apply for the Municipal Energy Resilience Program Free Energy Assessment. The town agrees to apply for a [level 1 or 2] assessment of [municipal building A], and a [level 1 or 2] assessment of [municipal building B].

Implementation Grant (IN DEVELOPMENT)

Each municipality can apply for a maximum of $500,000 for building renovation projects regarding weatherization, thermal efficiency, and supplementing or replacing fossil fuel heating systems with more efficient renewable or electric alternatives. Any municipal building that receives an energy assessment through the MERP program is eligible for this funding. These funds can be split across several eligible buildings under one project grant.

This application will not be available until early 2024 and details of this portion of the program are still in development. Template language will be developed as greater detail is available. The town is encouraged to discuss who will lead any effort to apply to the Implementation grant.