



ACRPC

Monthly Newsletter

November 2024



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ACRPC UPDATE

Farewell to Maddi and Deron!

This month, ACRPC bid farewell to two staff planners, Deron Rixon and Maddison Shropshire. Deron had worked with ACRPC for more than a year and has taken a new position with a geospatial-imagery company in St. Johnsbury. Maddi began working with ACRPC as an AmeriCorps member in 2020-2021 and was so great that we hired as a full-time Energy Planner. She is exploring new corners of the world and hopefully will bring her talents and lessons from those experiences back to Vermont!

We wish both Maddi and Deron good luck in their upcoming adventures, and we are in the process of hiring new talented folks to help with the many things they did for us, while taking the Region to new heights!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) Grant Update

The Department of Buildings and General Services has not announced its MERP grant recipients, They have told us they will release the results "soon", hopefully even before you receive this newsletter. We hope that is the case and will congratulate all the winners.

For those of you not lucky enough to get MERP grants, (Or possibly for MERP recipients that want to do more work). The Vermont Municipal Bond Bank has \$40,000,000 of federal funds available to it to loan to municipalities for energy improvements at very attractive interest rates (about 2%). We recognize it is not a grant. However, a lot of you have put a lot of work into evaluating the energy efficiency improvement possibilities for your municipal buildings. We expect some of you have identified projects with relatively short payback periods. We want to encourage you to look at this funding with those projects in mind. If they are good enough, it may be possible with these interest rates to create a project with a positive cash flow from day one (i.e. the monthly cost of paying principal and interest on the funds borrowed to implement the efficiency measure are less than the monthly savings from the measure). You have already done a lot of the work. If you are interested in exploring this alternative, please contact Adam Lougee at alougee@acrpc.org

Learn More

Email Adam

Vergennes' New Asset Management Program

The City of Vergennes utilized funding from the ACRPC Transportation Advisory Committee to develop an asset management program. They created a custom work order system for public works staff and quantified existing public investment in roads, sidewalks, and equipment. The work order system can guide future budgeting for capital outlays and routine maintenance. The Program was created in conjunction with consultant John Jackman. The Asset Management program is a "living" program that will receive ongoing updates by the Vergennes staff.

2024 Addison County Community Health Needs Assessment- New Data

The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is an assessment that hospitals complete in collaboration with community partners every three years to identify the top health needs of their community. The CHNA ultimately helps us to better understand the underlying challenges and opportunities for creating a healthier community. The 2024 Addison County CHNA identified access to healthcare, housing, and mental health & substance use services as the top health needs. During the November 13th ACRPC meeting, key findings from the 2024 CHNA will be shared by Amanda Froeschle (UVMHN-PMC, Senior Community Health Liaison) and Emma Tso (Middlebury Office of Local Health, Chronic Disease Prevention Specialist).

Learn More

FLOOD RECOVERY

Hazard Mitigation Funding

(DR-4720 HMGP funding for July 2023 Flooding)

Following the July 2023 and July 2024 flooding, an unprecedented amount of FEMA hazard mitigation funding is available to Vermont towns and other eligible applicants for projects that reduce the risk of flooding or other hazards.

Eligible project types for this DR-4720 (July 2023 Flooding) round of HMGP funding include:

- Voluntary Property Buyouts
- Structural Elevations & Mitigation Reconstruction
- Natural resource projects such as floodplain restorations or dam removals
- Infrastructure projects such as upsizing bridges or culverts
- Floodproofing of municipal or commercial buildings
- Road relocation, elevation, or soil stabilization

Towns and other eligible applicants seeking funding for hazard mitigation projects have already submitted a [Pre-Application Form](#) for future funding and VEM has identified funding priorities likely to get funded.

The application materials deadline has been **extended to April 30, 2025**. VEM encourages project application materials to be submitted as soon as possible to be able to receive additional state support.

[Learn More](#)

Mobile Home Infill Program

The Mobile Home Infill Program (MHIP) makes mobile homes available for sale at-cost to eligible low- and middle-income homebuyers by identifying vacant lots in established parks, investing in new concrete pads, purchasing energy-rated homes, and identifying income-eligible buyers. Resources are available to help buyers secure financing that may include down payment assistance, lower interest mortgage rates, and/or closing assistance.

Registration is open only to flood-impacted, income-eligible Vermonters until November 15. After that, MHIP is open to other income-eligible Vermonters.

[Learn More about MHIP](#)

EPA Sustainable Communities Accelerator Network Now accepting applications!

EPA's Office of Community Revitalization is launching the Sustainable Communities Accelerator Network, a national peer learning program to support local leaders in implementing plans to prioritize **sustainability** actions in their communities.

Communities often face challenges to implementing sustainability plans. To overcome barriers, community leaders and local government professionals may need support to maintain momentum. The Sustainable Communities Accelerator Network will expand the capacity of teams to move an idea from paper to action and enable participants to share experiences and learn from one another

[Learn More](#)

GRANT & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

SCRP Grants to small drinking water systems

The Vermont Bond Bank (VBB) is now accepting applications for Small System Capacity and Resiliency Program (SCRP) Tier II grants to small drinking water systems at risk of failure.

The Bond Bank anticipates awarding approximately \$5.7 million in Tier II grants over time, with \$1 million available in the first round. SCRCP was created with a State of Vermont American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant in collaboration with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). All public Vermont drinking water systems serving 10,000 or fewer (largely residential) customers are eligible.

Applications for the initial round of SCRCP Tier II grants are due December 2, 2024, by the end of the day.

Awards will be announced in late January. Funds will be immediately

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation Program (MHSMP) Grants

VTrans is now accepting grant applications for the SFY 2025 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and the Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation Program (MHSMP) grant opportunities concurrently.

This year over \$4.3 million of TAP grant funding is available for all eligible activities as described in the Vermont Transportation Alternatives Application Guide included in the link below. Approximately 50% of TAP grant program funds are reserved for pollution mitigation projects relating to stormwater and highways, including eligible salt and sand shed projects.

available for requisition.

[Learn More](#)



THE 1772 FOUNDATION

2025 Historic Preservation Matching Grants

The 1772 Foundation announces 2025 Vermont Historic **Preservation Matching Grants** for Private Non-Profit Organizations in cooperation with the Preservation Trust of Vermont. Grants in the form of 1:1 matching grants of up to \$10,000 will be made available for historic preservation projects in Vermont.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply, the building must be owned by a 501(c)(3) IRS designated non-profit. Organizations must have closed any previously awarded 1772 matching grants. Funding will NOT be provided for municipally owned buildings, schools or active churches.

TIMELINE

Letters of Inquiry will be accepted until 5 pm on December 19, 2024. Invited applications will be due February 28, 2025.

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions, please email Charlotte Barrett at charlotte@ptvermont.org and use "1772 Foundation" in the subject line.

[Learn More](#)

Approximately \$1.5 million of MHSMP grant funding is available for eligible stormwater pollution mitigation projects as described in the Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation Program Guide which can be found in the MHSMP link below.

Applications for this solicitation, which will utilize Survey Monkey, are now web-based and can be found at either website below:

Applications are due by e-mail by **December 31st, 2024**

[Learn More about TAP](#)

[Learn More about MHSMP](#)

Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides annual funding to municipalities, non-profits, and other government entities for development and restoration of public recreational trails.

Eligible applicants:

Municipalities, non-profit organizations, and other governmental entities

Grant amounts: \$50,000 maximum with 20% match required.
Recommended \$7,500 minimum

**Pre-applications due by
December 6th, 2024**

[Learn More](#)

Energy

Natural Resources

Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program (WRAP)

The Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program (WRAP) may be able to help you. WRAP is intended to assist both homeowners and renters in Vermont in pursuing home weatherization projects by allowing them to pay for the costs over time through a low-interest monthly charge on their utility bill.

WRAP assists with projects like insulation and air sealing as well as heat pumps, electric water heaters and advanced wood heating systems.

[Learn More](#)

Notice of intent for Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas

The Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas FY 2024 (ERA) will provide up to \$400 million to spur innovative, community-focused clean energy solutions in rural and remote areas across the United States. This is an incredible opportunity for small towns and rural communities in Vermont! The ERA program plans to support the demonstration of energy technologies that provide clean, resilient, reliable, affordable power, while also aiming to increase local energy independence and economic development.

Eligible projects must address at least one of the following:

- Improving overall cost-effectiveness of energy generation
- Transmission, or distribution systems
- Siting or upgrading transmission and distribution lines
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from energy generation in rural or remote areas
- Providing or modernizing electric generation facilities

Vermont Urban and Community Forest Program Grants

Over \$430,000 will be available through two separate categories to support local tree planting and enhancement of healthy urban tree canopy in priority areas statewide. Both grant categories are now open and accepting applications. The two grant categories have the same application **deadline of January 10th, 2025** and neither have a cost-share requirement. However, the categories have different award amounts, geographic eligibility criteria, and are administered and supported by different entities.

Tree Maintenance & Removal Grants:
Supports local efforts to maintain a healthy urban tree canopy and address dead and high-risk trees in disadvantaged communities. \$119k available, min. \$5k, max \$20k

Community Tree Planting Grants:
Supports tree planting projects in high priority areas across Vermont to increase urban tree canopy and improve water quality and public health by controlling stormwater. \$315k available, min. \$5k, max \$75k

[Learn More](#)

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Over \$3 million available to support the development of public outdoor recreation opportunities across Vermont, with a focus on creating parks and open spaces, enhancing recreation areas and facilities, and protecting wilderness areas and forests.

Eligible applicants: Municipal entities and state agencies only (e.g. towns, cities, school districts, water districts, park districts, etc.)

- Developing microgrids; or increasing energy efficiency

It is anticipated that there will be 16-69 projects, offering a range of funding from \$2-50 million each with a 5-50% minimum non-federal cost share per project.

Concept papers are due by February 27, 2025, and full applications are due by August 28, 2025.

[Learn More](#)

Grant amounts: Recommended request range \$25,000-\$1,000,000 – 50% match required

Pre-applications due December 13th, 2024

[Learn More](#)

Want to get in touch or ask us a question?

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Addison County Regional Planning Commission | 14 Seminary St | Middlebury, VT 05753 US

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