



ACRPC Monthly Newsletter

December 2024



[ACRPC Website](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

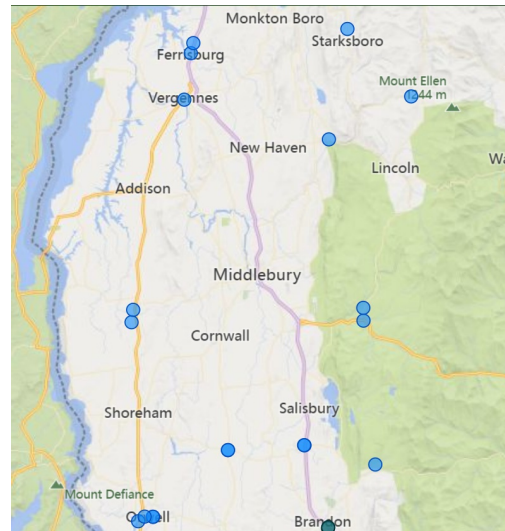
[Minutes & Agendas](#)

ACRPC UPDATE

Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) Grants Awarded- ACTION NEEDED!

More than \$3 million in MERP Implementation Grants have been awarded across 10 Addison County municipalities. These include:

- **Orwell:** Firehouse, Clerk's Office, Town Garage and Sewer Plant
- **Ripton:** Fire Station, Community House
- **Leicester:** Town Hall, Town Office
- **Starksboro:** Food Shelf
- **Goshen:** Town Hall
- **Ferrisburgh:** Town Hall and Offices
- **Vergennes:** Bixby Library
- **Bristol:** Holley Hall
- **Bridport:** Town office, Town Highway Garage
- **Whiting:** Town office and Town Hall



An Executed Grant Agreement AND Affirmation of Use of Funds document must be filled out and returned to BGS by Implementation Grant Awardees **BEFORE 12/16/2024** (OR BGS WILL RE-ALLOCATE

Grant Agreements and Award Letters have been sent to awardees.

Grantees are only required to complete the scope of work to the extent that their funding under this agreement allows. The Grantee is required to utilize awarded funds in the energy conservation measure priority order that is referenced in Act 172.

[Learn More](#)

THE FUNDS).

Municipalities should direct questions about the grant and process to Adam Lougee at ACRPC.

[Email Adam Lougee](#)

Additional Federal Funds for Energy Improvements

For municipalities 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 this 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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vergennes-Ferrisburgh Transportation Oriented Development Master Plan December 9-12 Design Charrette Events

The City of Vergennes and the Town of Ferrisburgh are working on the Vergennes-South Ferrisburgh Transit-Oriented Development Master Plan for the north-eastern portion of Vergennes and the southern portion of Ferrisburgh around the train station. As part of this effort, the design team from Toole Design is seeking input from residents, landowners, businesses, and area developers.

The Design Charrette (workshop) will be held from December 9-12, 2024, at the Vergennes City Hall. Here the design team will provide an overview of the effort to create a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Master Plan around the train station area located in south Ferrisburgh near Vergennes. We will also discuss challenges and opportunities to development in the regional market and how those might apply to the Vergennes-South Ferrisburgh study area. In the end, our goal is to provide a comprehensive Transit-Oriented Development Master Plan

supported with regulatory zoning recommendations for each community.

You are invited to participate in this process at one of 3 events being held at the **Vergennes City Hall, 120 Main Street, Vergennes**- please join us for:

- **Tuesday, December 10, from 12:00 - 1:00 pm:** a Visioning Session open to the public to outline desired outcomes.
- **Wednesday, December 11, between 2:00 - 4:00 pm:** drop by the Open Studio to see what the design team is doing and ask questions.
- **Thursday, December 12, 2024, at 6:00 pm:** a Public Open House where the design team will present draft concepts for community feedback.

We look forward to seeing you there and help us envision our future together!

Email Andrea Ostrodka, AICP, LEED AP,
Transit Practice Lead at Toole Design

Email Adam Lougee, ACRPC Executive
Director

Road Foremen & Crew Training: Rivers and Wetlands

10am-12pm, Wednesday January 15, 2025

**Addison County Regional Planning Commission:
14 Seminary St, Middlebury**

This training session will provide information to road crews and road foremen around regulations specifically for streams and wetlands. It will be led by District Wetland Ecologist Zapata Courage and River Management Engineer Josh Carvajal

Email Mike Winslow

Otter Creek Basin Clean Water Service Provider Call for Proposals

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC), in its role as the Clean Water Service (CWSP) Provider for Basin 3, the Otter Creek, Lewis Creek, and Little Otter Creek watersheds, is issuing a request for proposals for projects that improve water quality in Basin 3. Any proposed projects must be consistent with the Clean Water Initiative Program (CWIP) Funding Policy. Applicants must consult with DEC staff on potential project impacts on natural resources, like wetlands or river corridors and to give DEC 30 days to review project impacts. Projects

must be in keeping with the vision set forth by Act 76, the Clean Water Service Delivery Act, and policies and guidance set forth by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation to implement the Act.
Application Due Date is: **December 17, 2024**

For info contact Mike Winslow at mwinslow@acrpc.org or 802-578-9999

[Learn More](#)



VCDA Winter Conference 2025 **Navigating Funding in the Post-Pandemic World**

Wednesday, January 15th, 9:00am-3:45pm
St Albans City Hall in St Albans, Vermont

Over the last four years, new funding sources have emerged to support countless projects and communities around the state. In addition to those new funding sources, we have also seen complexities, like higher than expected costs and capacity constraints.

Come and learn about how communities are finding success and creative solutions to fund their projects. Hear from compliance and technical assistance experts on how to navigate requirements and unearth new ways and resources for you and your community to tap into.

Don't miss this opportunity to connect with fellow community champions, gain valuable insights, and contribute to the collective work of building a brighter future for Vermont.

[Check out the website](#) for agenda and presenter information!

[Conference Webpage](#)

[Register Here](#)

GRANT & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Municipal Planning Grants

Municipal Planning Grants help Vermont's cities, towns and villages adapt to change and prepare for the future. This flexible State funding for planning and resilience can pay for a variety of eligible projects, such as:

- [A new or updated municipal plan;](#)
- New or updated bylaws that that implement Act 47 of 2023 (HOME Act) and Act 181 of 2024 (Resilience, Biodiversity & Land Use Act), including **zoning & subdivision** bylaws;
- **Climate resilience and flood recovery projects;**
- Projects related to **housing** development;
- [New or updated capital programs and budgets for infrastructure maintenance and improvements;](#)
- [Physical improvement plans or other planning for a State Designation](#) in coordination with Department of Housing & Community Development program staff; and
- [Projects that support communities for all ages that align with Age Strong Vermont: A Roadmap for an Age-friendly State.](#)

Individual towns may apply for up to \$30,000, and multi-town applications (a consortium) may apply for up to \$45,000. A local cash match of 10% of the total project costs is required, except for zoning/subdivision bylaw projects in municipalities without zoning/subdivision bylaws.

Please review the [Program Description](#) for eligibility requirements and the [Application Guide](#) for application questions. A wide variety of municipalities access this funding, including the Vermont's [smallest towns](#).

Application Schedule for FY2025 Grants:

- Regional Planning Commission confirmation of municipal planning process (to be eligible to apply for projects other than a municipal plan): **December 31, 2024**
- Online application opens for use: **January 27, 2025**
- **Application Deadline: March 31 @ 6:00 p.m., 2025**
- Award Decisions: April 30, 2025
- Project completion: April 30, 2027 (2-year grant term to complete a project)

If you have any questions about the Municipal Planning Grants or wish to talk through project ideas, please contact ACRPC's Katie Raycroft-Meyer kraycroftmeyer@acrpc.org or 802-388-314

[Learn More](#)

Downtown Transportation Fund Grants

The Department of Housing and Community Development is pleased to announce the availability of the Downtown Transportation Fund (DTF) to

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

support revitalization efforts in Designated Downtowns and eligible Designated Village Centers.

Eligibility for Designated Village Centers

The Downtown Transportation Fund has expanded eligibility to Designated Village Centers that have participated in the **Better Connections Program** and Designated Village Centers within Chittenden County that have completed a comprehensive downtown/village center/community area planning process with public input, comparable to the Better Connections Program. See the program application for a full list of eligible municipalities.

Application Deadline: February 17, 2025 @ 5:00 pm

Please note that the application includes a preliminary project review by Historic Preservation, which **must be submitted at least 30 days in advance** of the application deadline.

See the **2025 Downtown Transportation Fund Guidance and Application** for complete details of the program. The maximum grant amount is \$200,000 with a 20% match requirement.

Please contact Natalie Elvidge at **Natalie.Elvidge@vermont.gov** if you have questions or need assistance. Applicants are strongly encouraged to set up a pre-application meeting to discuss project ideas.

[Learn More](#)

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.

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](#)

Better Roads Grant Program

The Vermont Better Roads Program promotes the use of erosion control and maintenance

techniques that save money while protecting and enhancing water quality around the State.

Applications for funding will be accepted until December 27th, 2024.

New Category A – Road Erosion Inventory Grants
(LOI's accepted, first come, first served until 12/31/24 OR UNTIL FUNDS ARE EXHAUSTED.)

[Learn More](#)

Energy

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

Natural Resources

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

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
- 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](#)

[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.)

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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