

Better Places

Empowering Vermonters to Create Vibrant Public Places



Accessibility and Language Translation



Application accommodations are available for people with disabilities and/or limited English proficiency. Possibilities include: an interpreter, document translation, or alternative formats.

To arrange these services or make an alternate request, contact Richard Amore with the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development by email at richard.amore@vermont.gov or at 802.585.0061. Voice and relay calls are welcome.

Land Acknowledgement

As Vermont placemakers, we acknowledge the places we live, play, and create occupy the unceded traditional land of N'dakinna, the ancestral homeland of the Abenaki people. Our village greens, parks, community centers, main streets, murals, art installations, and other community projects sit on Abenaki land.

We recognize the indigenous culture and people that existed in N'dakinna long before Europeans arrived in North America, and those here today. We acknowledge and honor with deep gratitude, the Abenaki people, the traditional placemakers and caretakers of these Vermont lands and waters.



Presentation Agenda

1

Welcome and Introductions

Overview of agenda, acknowledgements, and partner introductions

2

Program Overview

Better Places partnership and basics

3

What is Placemaking?

An overview of placemaking and how Vermont communities use placemaking to build inclusive, vibrant, and loveable places

4

Crowdfunding & Patronicity's Team

Overview of crowdfunding and the crowdgranting process

5

How to Apply?

An overview of eligibility, award amounts, process and timeline, and requirements

6

Wrap up and Q&A

Share resources and questions and answer session

Inclusion and Equity as a CORE VALUE

The Better Places partners believe that all Vermonters deserve access to vibrant and welcoming public places in their lives and communities. We are **committed to lifting up placemaking projects, policies, and practices which contribute to social and racial equity for a more just, inclusive, and equitable Vermont.**



Co-Created and Collective Action



The Better Places program was **co-developed and co-created** by the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development in partnership with:

- The Vermont Legislature
- The Vermont Community Foundation
- Vermont Department of Health
- Patronicity

Better Places relies on the expertise and **generous support** of the Better Places Partners which include:

- Vermont Arts Council
- AARP Vermont
- Local Motion
- Preservation Trust of Vermont
- National Life Group Foundation
- Vermont Agency of Transportation
- Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets.

Special thanks to all the local placemakers across the state doing this important work and for the Vermont Legislature and Governor Phil Scott for supporting the Better Places program.

Better Places Legislation

Act 74 enacted in June 2021 and appropriated \$1.5M

The General Assembly finds:

- Public spaces are **essential for supporting economic activity and health and well-being**..... throughout the pandemic and for building **engaged, equitable, and resilient communities** in the future.
- Placemaking projects **intentionally leverage the power of the arts and cultural assets** to strengthen the economic and social fabric of communities.....

It is the intent of the General Assembly to:

- Help local leaders identify, develop, and implement placemaking projects by creating the Better Places Program **to advance local recovery efforts, rebuild local economies, boost local capacity, and reconnect Vermonters to one another**.....

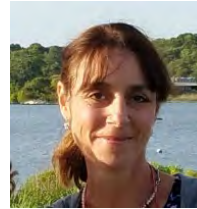
Core Program Partners

Vermont Department of
Housing and Community Development



Richard Amore | Claire Tebbs | Gary Holloway | Jenni Lavoie

Vermont
Department of
Health



Suzanne Kelley

Vermont
Community
Foundation



Kate McCarthy

Patronicity



Jonathan Berk | Camryn Greer | Ebrahim Varachia





Place-based
People-focused

A photograph of a community event in a park. In the background, several white and grey pop-up tents are set up on a grassy area, with people walking around. Large, leafy green trees are scattered throughout the scene. On the left, a black lamppost holds a green banner that reads "SAINT ALBANS MEET LEAVERTON". In the foreground, there is a concrete sidewalk and a planter bed with tall grasses. The text "A new grant program that's about building community, not just implementing projects." is overlaid in the center. The words "building community," are in yellow, while the rest of the text is in white. The entire image has a semi-transparent dark grey overlay.

**A new grant program
that's about building
community, not just
implementing projects.**

Program Overview



Better Places is a community matching grant program empowering Vermonters to **create inclusive and vibrant public places** serving Vermont's [designated downtowns, village centers, new town centers, or neighborhood development areas.](#)

The Better Places program provides one-on-one project coaching, local fundraising support, and two to one (2:1) matching **grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$40,000** to make your community-led placemaking ideas happen.

Placemaking Overview



An aerial photograph of a bustling town square. The square is filled with a large crowd of people, many of whom are walking or standing near several white and yellow pop-up tents. The square is bordered by historic, multi-story brick and stone buildings. On the left, a red brick building has a sign that reads "MUSIC FOOD WINE BREWS". In the background, a large, steep hill covered in dense green forest rises above the town. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The text "Placemaking is..." is overlaid in large white letters across the upper portion of the image.

Placemaking is...

- creating great public places, together
- people-focused, community-driven
- inclusive and collaborative
- experimental and adaptable
- Co-created and co-owned



credit: Downtown Rutland Partnership

50% outcome, 50% process



credit: Rebecca Stone

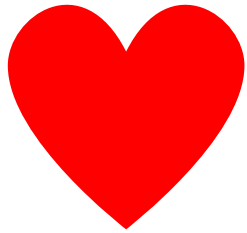
...providing an opportunity for people to build a relationship with, fall in love with, and care about the places they spend time in.



...providing an opportunity for people to build a relationship with, fall in love with, and care about the places they spend time in.

Why invest in placemaking?





More heart

**Social connection, sense of belonging,
welcoming places, joyful experiences**



More local investment

**Attracts business, visitors, donors big and small,
community participation, local stewards**



More resilience

**Improves health of people, local businesses,
the creative economy, and the environment**

3 Pillars of Placemaking



PEOPLE: Empower people to create places they love

Why? Places that are loved, thrive.



PLACE: Use what you have and try something new

Why? It's quicker, more affordable, and uncovers a wealth of resources and opportunities



PROCESS: Build and lift each other up

Why? Sharing leadership strengthens the whole community.



What does placemaking look like?





Community gardens, farmers markets, little free pantry cupboards

ALL are welcome!
this is a public space!

Please:

• No smoking

• Carry out your trash

• No trespassing on private property
• No pets, except for service animals

Do Good CUPBOARD

This cupboard is a gift
to the community from
Humboldt County
in partnership with
the City of Eureka
and the
Humboldt County Food Bank

Do good. Be good. Make good.

Take what you need
Leave what you can



Community events that celebrate the arts and cultural traditions



Photo credit: Dana Harris



Recreation and physical activity...



Photo Credit: Kyle

...even in the winter!



Local markets and skill sharing events






Public art, collaborative art, theater, music



credit: Lee Krohn



“I've driven by this parking lot hundreds of times and never even noticed it was here. Now I'll never drive by it again without remembering **this energy, this night.”**

Crowdfunding Overview

Better Places Crowdfunding Partner, Patronicity



[Learn More](#) [Projects](#)

Search for...



Powered By
Patronicity

Better Places

Empowering Vermonters to Create Vibrant Public Places



\$0



Funded

0



Patrons

0



Projects

\$0



Matched by Sponsor



Patronicity

Where it all Began

Patronicity was founded in 2013 in Detroit, Michigan. Our founders, Chris Blauvelt and Ebrahim Varachia, saw the opportunity crowdfunding offered as a catalyst for placemaking and community development in their city.



OUR MISSION

We use crowdfunding as a catalyst for **placemaking** and **community development**, connecting granting organizations, sponsors, and donors with hyper-local changemakers in order to build more vibrant, sustainable communities.

OUR VISION



TO REVOLUTIONIZE
placemaking by
democratizing the funding
and implementation process.



TO TRANSFORM
communities by harnessing
the power of crowdfunding
and sponsored grants.



TO EMPOWER
changemakers to create more
sustainable, healthier, and
equitable communities.

Our Team

Our team is passionate about building vibrant communities. With team members located across the United States as part of our fully remote team, we bring diverse interests, experiences, and passion to help other communities thrive.



Our Current Programs

Since 2013, Patronicity has partnered with numerous private and public sector partners to distribute matching grants to small businesses, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations across the United States.



What is Crowdfunding?

Crowdfunding is the process of gathering a community to provide financial support for a project within a set period of time.

What is Crowdgranting?

This powerful model combines the power of a grant with the power of crowdfunding!



We Believe in this Model

Crowdfunding democratizes access to capital, empowers communities to champion their own sustainable development, and allows residents to support projects that mattered most to them.



IT IS
ACCESSIBLE



IT IS
DECENTRALIZED



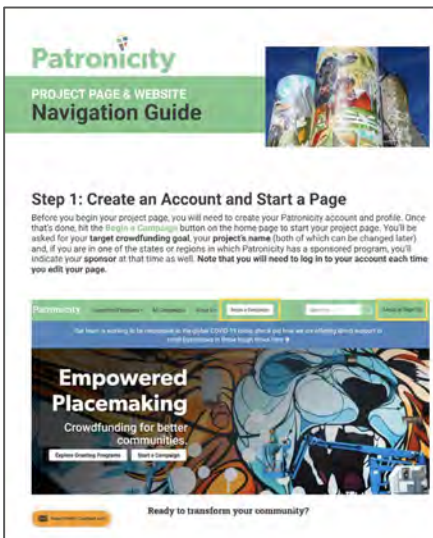
IT'S A GREAT
STORYTELLING
TOOL



IT FACILITATES
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

Crowdfunding Process and Support

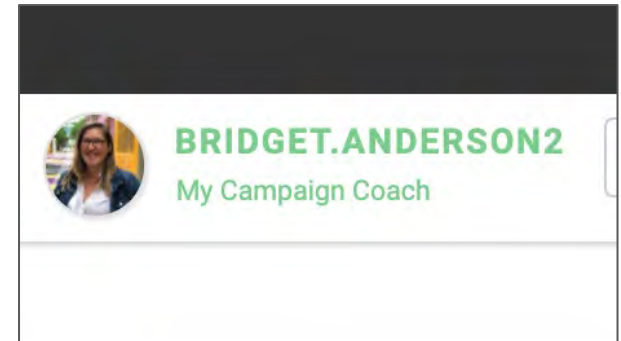
Running your own crowdfunding campaign may seem daunting, but we will be there to support you every step of the way! We provide:



Technical
Support



Crowdfunding
Strategy



One-on-One
Project Coaching

Title & Tagline

The Corner Spot

Where Ashland Comes Together and Business Thrives



Pitch

- Video
- Images
- Headers
- Text



MASSDEVELOPMENT

Will Contribute **\$25,000**
If We Meet our Goal!
Support Today!

Energizing Downtown Ashland

Ashland is often referred to as a bedroom community. As residents, we know it has fabulous schools, great accessibility to Boston, wonderful neighborhoods and neighbors. But our downtown is strangely quiet despite the trains running through the center. Many people often talk about what Ashland used to be. It had a bustling downtown with a coffee shop where you would go for all your town news. You could find a good job there and work close to home. When you walked out for lunch, you would always see someone you knew and stop for a chat.



Ashland, MA Community Placemaking

\$35,505

funded of \$25,000 goal

257

patrons

23

days left

Support

All donations are tax-deductible!
Town of Ashland is a registered 501(c)(3),
Tax ID 04-6001074.

All-or-Nothing: This campaign launched on Oct 18, 2016 and will only receive funds if it reaches its goal by Dec 8, 2016 10:45 PM.

project by:

Beth Reynolds



*email*profile*website*facebook



Give \$10 or more

17 claimed

Giving Corner

The Corner Spot Magnet

Give \$25 or more

19 claimed

Community Corner

The Corner Spot Magnet

Give \$50 or more

Goal

- Financial
- Deadline

Giving Levels

- Rewards
- Impact

THE CORNER SPOT | Ashland, Massachusetts

\$37,255

funded of \$25,000 goal

292

patrons

+\$25,000



=\$62,255



EAGLE STREET INITIATIVE | North Adams, MA

\$35,871

funded of \$25,000 goal

225

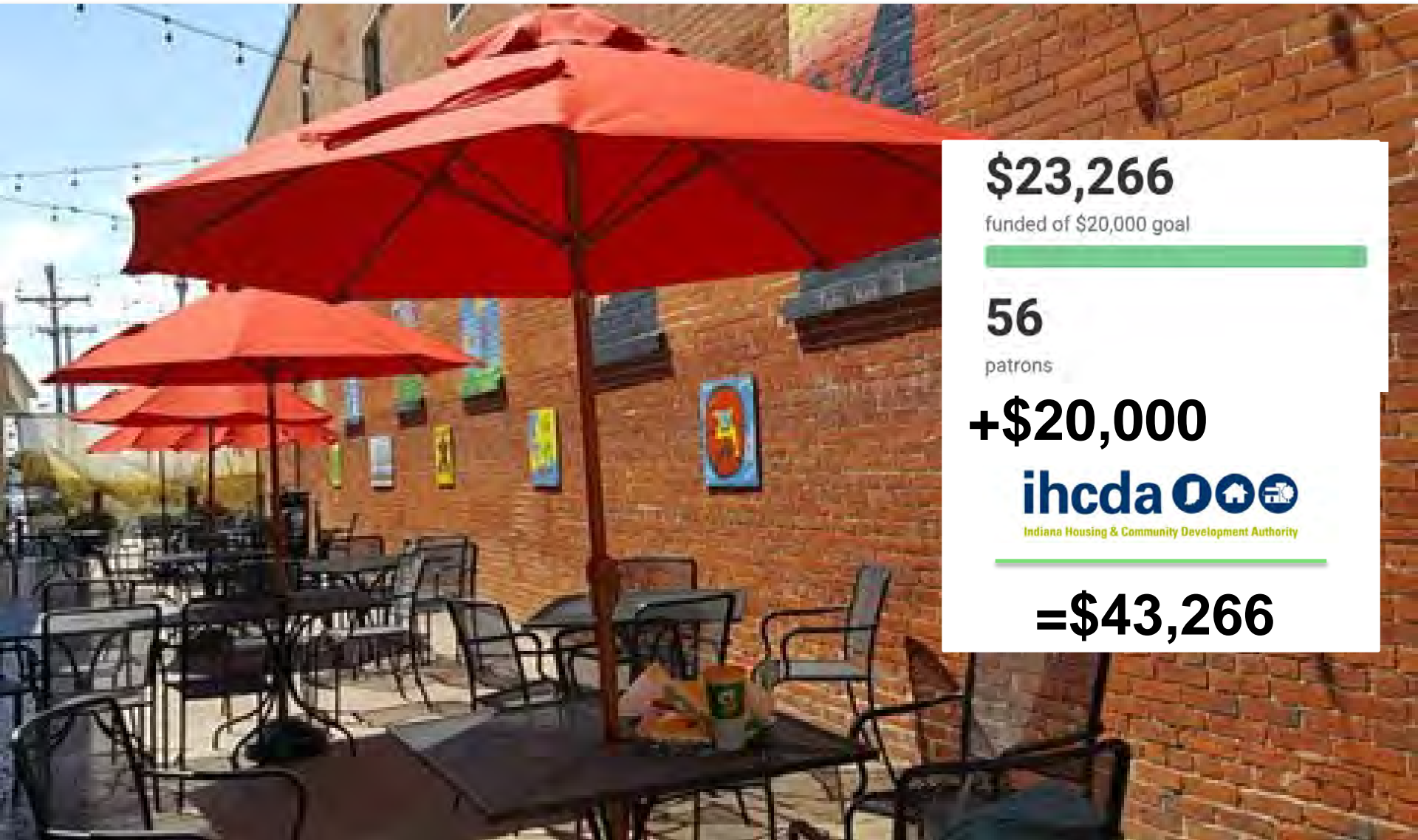
+\$25,000

 **MassDevelopment**

=\$60,871



TIPTON ALLEY | Tipton, Indiana



\$23,266

funded of \$20,000 goal

56

patrons

+\$20,000

ihcda 

Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority

=\$43,266

Better Places Program Details



Program Details

What?

Better Places grants support **community-led projects that create, revitalize, or activate public spaces**, that bring people together to build welcoming and thriving communities across Vermont. All projects must be open to and accessible to all people, with no charge of admission.



Program Details

Who?

Municipalities, local community groups, and nonprofit entities with municipal support may apply. Only one grant will be awarded per a municipality per a calendar year. Nonprofits and community-based organizations must have permission from the property owners (municipality or private owner) where the project is proposed. Community groups must use a fiscal sponsor and abide by Vermont Community Foundation's **fiscal sponsor agreement.**



Program Details

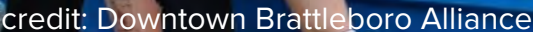
Where?

Projects must be located in, connected to, or in direct safe walking distance to a state **designated downtowns, village centers, new town centers, or neighborhood development areas**. Projects must have proper site control secured prior to applying to ensure permission to use (or improve) the space. To determine if your community has a state designation, visit the [Vermont Planning Atlas](#).



How?

through a two-to-one (2:1) match, providing grants from \$5,000 to \$40,000.



Program Details

When?

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis while funding is available **starting on February 10, 2022**. There is no application deadline. DHCD anticipates offering two rounds of Better Places funding in 2022. Projects must be completed within one year of executed grant agreement.



How it Works?

Better Places uses a method of grantmaking called “crowdgranting”. Crowdgranting combines crowdfunding – the practice of funding a project with small donations from a large number of people – paired with a matching grant from DHCD.

Better Places participants will:

- 1** Complete Pre-flight check, Apply and Receive Project Approval from DHCD [on a rolling basis]
- 2** Work with a Patronicity project coach to launch crowdfunding campaign and raise 33% local match
- 3** Receive Better Places 2:1 matching grant and work with Vermont Community Foundation on grant agreement
- 4** Implement Project and Celebrate Success



How to Get Started?

1

Have an Idea? Read the Better Places Program Guide and then Go to <https://www.patronicity.com/BetterPlacesVT> and click “Step 1” to fill out the Pre-flight Form.

IDEA





When ready,
please fill out Get
Started Preflight
Form and DHCD
staff will contact
you within a few
days to discuss
your project idea.

How to Get Started?

English (United States) ▼

Better Places Preflight Form and Consultation

Thank you for your interest in Vermont's Better Places program. This Pre-flight form is the first part of a two-step process for participating in the Better Places program. The first step provides an opportunity for you to tell us about your project, gauge eligibility and readiness, and share resources with you. The second step is to work with a project coach to build your crowdfunding page and initiate your campaign.

For step one, please share the basic details of your project so that the Better Places team can best support you in creating a successful community-led, placemaking project.

For more information, please visit our website, <https://www.accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/better-places>, or please contact Richard Amore, richard.amore@vermont.gov.

* Required

1. Are you ready to share some details about your project idea?

*We're happy to answer questions about the program, talk through ideas you have, or share other Vermont projects that might be relevant to your community. We're here to help any way we can. **

☒ Yes

☐ Not yet, I'd rather just talk through it on the phone

2. Thank you for inquiring about a Better Places grant. Please provide the following information about your project and the Better Places team will reach out to you to discuss your project.

Project Name: *

Enter your answer

3. Name of Project Lead: *

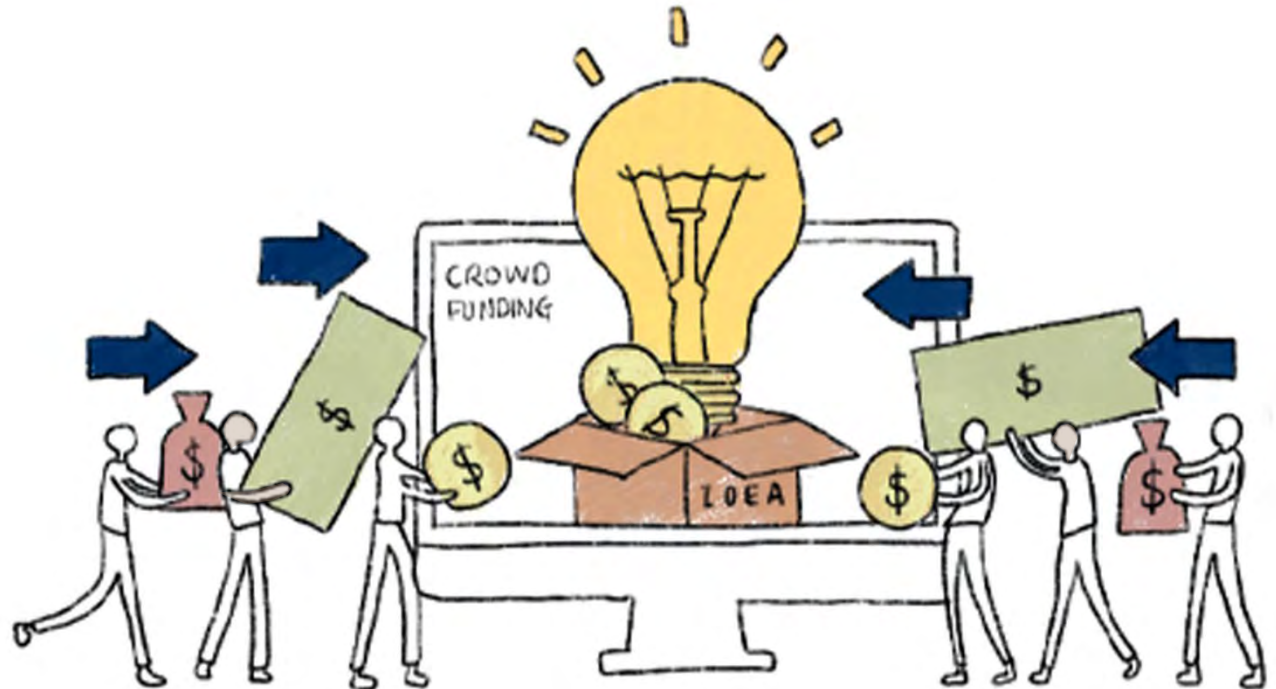
Enter your answer

Launch Crowdfunding Campaign

3

DHCD grants project approval and then applicant works with Patronicity's project coach to initiate crowdfunding campaign and raise 33% matching funds.

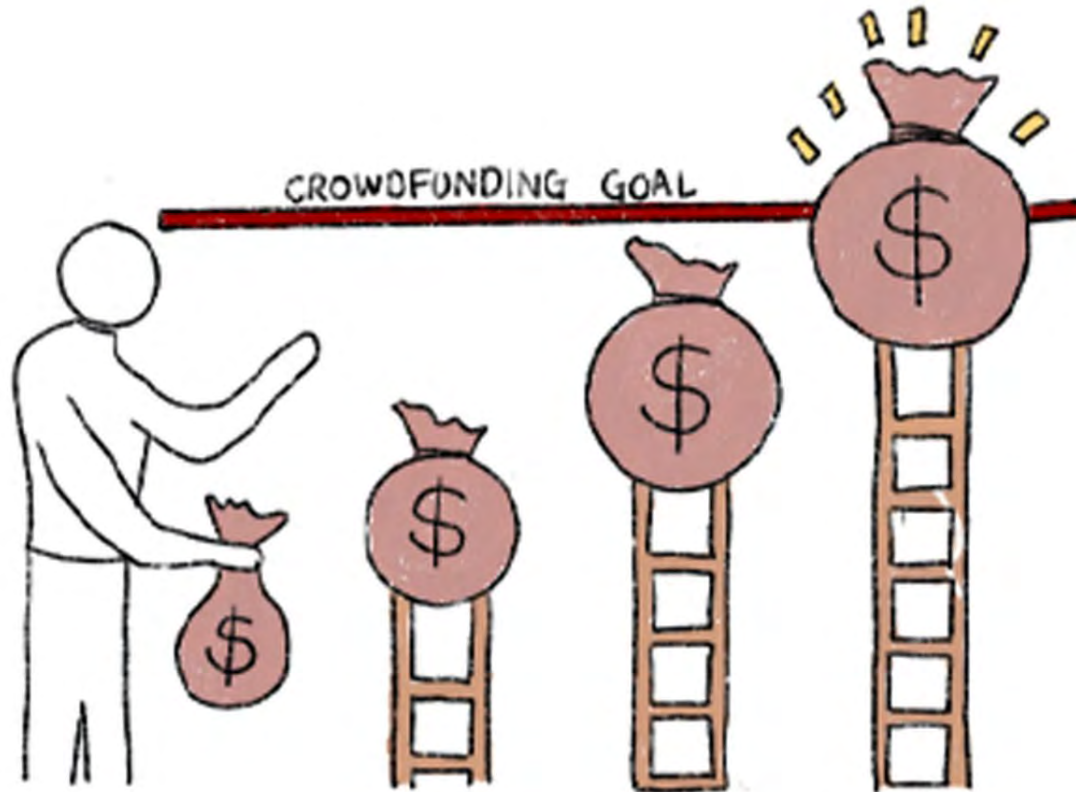
APPROVED
PROJECT



Crowdfunding Campaign is Successful

4

Once the 33% of project funds are successfully raised, participants work with the Better Places team to receive the 2:1 matching grant and execute the grant agreement.



Initiate Project

5

Make your project happen! Project team works within a 12-month period to complete their project and celebrate success!



Waitsfield, VT
Photo credit: MRVPD

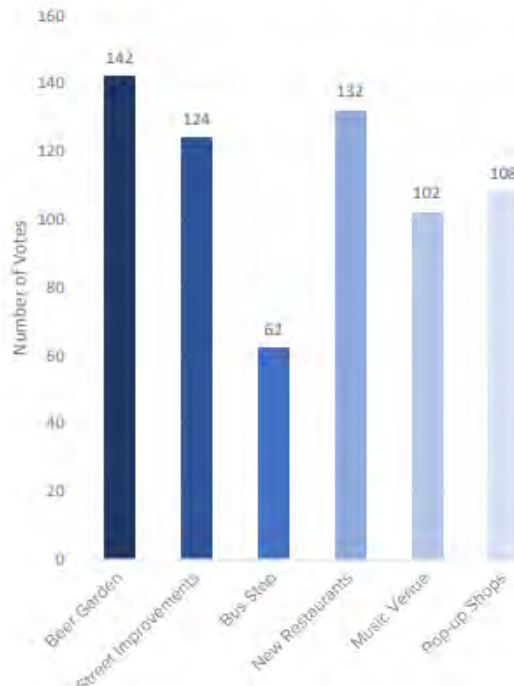
Measure Progress and Impact

6

Build in ways to evaluate, ask for community feedback, record results ('what we learned') and mentor each other, to bring a depth of understanding and meaning to current and future initiatives. Complete Better Places close-out report to share progress and impact.

Bethel, VT
Example

Favorite Improvements from Better Block



Direct Outcomes of Better Block



\$4,881

Dollars earned by pop-up businesses



12

Number of temporary businesses during Better Block



27

Average traffic speed before Better Block



15

Average traffic speed with experimental traffic calming



Alarm Clock

Average decibel level (80) of traffic before Better Block



Quiet Library

Average decibel level (60) of traffic with traffic calming

Project Examples

Scenario 1: Single-Source Funded Project [permanent project]

- Total project cost: \$60,000
- Crowdfunding campaign goal: \$20,000
- Better Places match, if crowdfunding campaign goal is achieved: \$40,000



Project Examples

Scenario 2: Leveraged Funded Project [permanent project]

- Total project cost: \$100,000
- Prior Committed Funding: \$40,000
- Financial Gap: \$60,000
- Crowdfunding Campaign Goal: \$20,000
- Better Places Match, if Crowdfunding Campaign Goal is achieved: \$40,000



Project Examples

Scenario 3: Temporary Project [event, programming, or demonstration]

- Total project cost for temporary project: \$15,000
- Crowdfunding Campaign Goal: \$5,000
- Better Places Match, if Crowdfunding Campaign Goal is achieved: \$10,000



Grant Awards and Eligible Uses

The Better Places grants can support capacity building and soft cost up to 25% of the grant funds and crowdfunding match totals. The Better Places program encourages use of these funds for community engagement, capacity building, marketing, artist or design fees and other technical assistance needed to help execute a successful placemaking project.

75%

Support construction, implementation, design/build, and programming, etc. project costs

25%

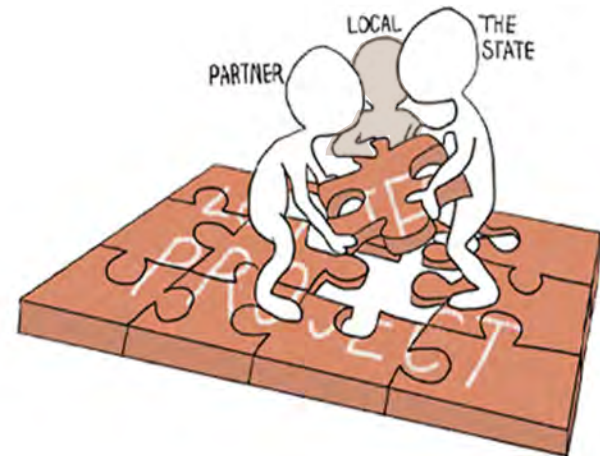
Support capacity building, design services, project management, community engagement, translation services, etc. project costs

Recap

Better Places participants will:

- 1 Apply and **Receive Project Approval** [on a rolling basis]
- 2 Work with a Patronicity project coach to launch crowdfunding campaign and **raise 33% local match**
- 3 Receive Better Places 2:1 matching **grant (from \$5k to \$40k)** and execute grant agreement
- 4 Implement Project, **Celebrate Success**, Measure Impact

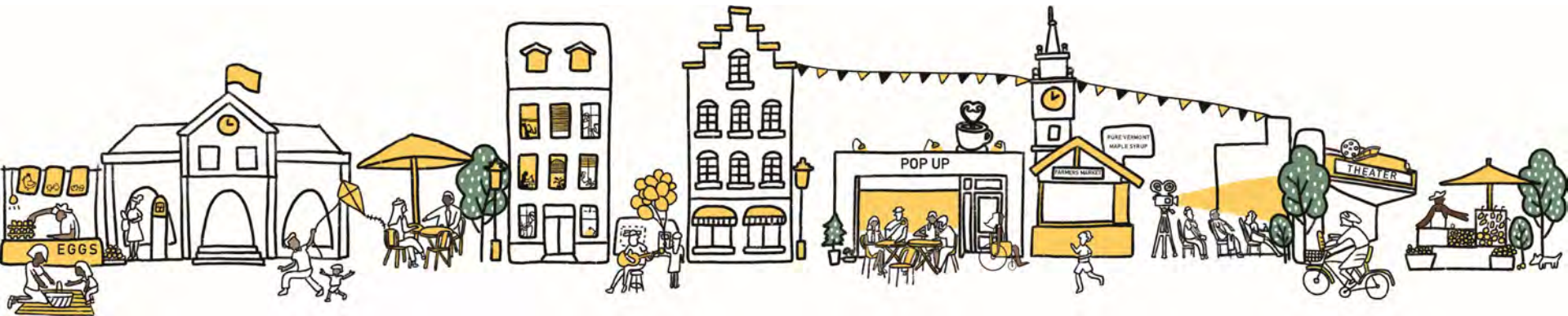
SUPPORT
THE PROJECT



Q&A Session

Better Places

Empowering Vermonters to Create Vibrant Public Places



Richard Amore

Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development
Division of Community Planning and Revitalization

(802) 585.0061

richard.amore@vermont.gov

<https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/better-places>

<https://www.patronicity.com/BetterPlacesVT>