Agenda

Part 1: Program Overview – Jacob Hemmerick
Part 2: Online Application Overview – Jenni Lavoie
State of Vermont
Agency of Commerce & Community Development
Department of Housing & Community Development
Division of Community Planning + Revitalization

We provide tools, training, grants, and incentives for local leaders to plan and implement projects that support thriving and prosperous communities.

Subscribe to Strong Communities Quarterly for CP+R Opportunities
MPGs Make It Happen

- Define shared priorities
- Plan for wise investments
- Prepare for future development
- Strengthen assets
- Build partnerships and community
- Make great places.

Empowering local leaders
By The Numbers

99% of survey respondents say MPG are important to achieve planning goals.

“Excellent program for small rural towns, who don’t have the resources to investigate or research solutions to community needs. My experience is that needs far outpace resources.”

2019 MPG Survey Respondent
MPG. Quick 5
One. The Basics

✓ Competitive State grant program

FY2022 Municipal Planning Grant Program Description
One. The Basics

☑ Competitive State grant program
☑ Flexible funding, do-able administration
One. The Basics

- Competitive State grant program
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- $450,000 to award
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Last Year (2021)
45 applications
$690,000 requested
32 awards
Two. Who can apply?

Single Municipality
Two. Who can apply?

Municipal Consortium
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- Single Municipality
- Municipal Consortium

*one application per municipality*
Three. What can you do?

Municipal Plan
Three. What can you do?

Municipal Plan

Municipal Plan Implementation

and with an RPC-confirmed planning process by September 30.
Three. What can you do?

✓ A COVID-19 recovery economic development strategy
✓ Development of a capital program (plan & budget) for municipal investments
✓ Strategic housing action plan to develop housing in the village center
✓ Regional initiative to explore the feasibility of shared services, such as health officer inspections or emergency services
✓ A bylaw project that prepares a community for a neighborhood development area or downtown designation
✓ An innovative placemaking/community arts project
Three. What can you do?

**Fair Haven Downtown Streetscape Improvement Plan**
Project Year: 2018  Grant Award: $16,000

With the goal of increasing economic activity in the downtown, Fair Haven is taking steps large and small to implement the vision of making the downtown more walkable and vibrant for businesses and visitors.

Final Plan: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MuulHgdknJFTmuJXhGuOYkOF0r5Inq2/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MuulHgdknJFTmuJXhGuOYkOF0r5Inq2/view)

**St. Johnsbury Riverfront Conceptual Access Study**
Project Year: 2016  Grant Award: $8,000

With strong community interest in redeveloping the downtown Passumpsic riverfront for recreational uses, St. Johnsbury discovered opportunities to gain public access to the river from the downtown and developed an action plan for future projects, now underway incrementally.


**Vernon Village Center Master Plan**
Project Year: 2018  Grant Award: $20,000

[Designated Village Center](image)
Audience Poll

What types of municipal planning projects are you considering?

• Municipal Plan
• Bylaw Updates (Zoning/Subdivision/Unified)
• Planning for Designated Area
• Infrastructure or Capital Improvement Planning
• Economic Development / COVID Recovery Plans
• Natural Resources Planning
• Specific-Site or Building Planning
Four. Are there funding limits?

✓ **Min.** grant: $2,500
✓ **Max.** grant: $22,000 (single)
✓ **Max.** grant: $35,000 (consortium)
✓ 10% cash match; no in-kind; any source eligible
Four. Are there funding limits?

- **Min.** grant: $2,500
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Four. Are there funding limits?

- **Min.** grant: $2,500
- **Max.** grant: $22,000 (single)
- **Max.** grant: $35,000 (consortium)
- **10% cash** match; no in-kind; any source eligible
  
  ex.: $10,000 grant w/$1,000 match = $11,000 project
Five. When do you apply?

- November 1, 2021 application deadline
- December awards
- 18-month implementation, no extensions
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### ABCs of Competitive Applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competitive Criteria Scoring Summary</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Readiness &amp; Need</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue &amp; Urgency</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding Need</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Readiness</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Public Outreach &amp; Project Partnership</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Outreach</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Partnership &amp; Support</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statewide Priorities</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Outcomes &amp; Goal Consistency</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Priority Projects</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Designated Area Projects</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Project Approach</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Work Plan</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget &amp; Cost Estimates</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Application Quality &amp; Past Performance</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong> 120</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
A. Use the Application Guide

APPLICANT GUIDANCE

All Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) applications must be submitted through the online Grant Electronic Application and Reporting System (GEARS). (Online application available NOW.) Grants are available to municipalities with a confirmed local planning process. Municipalities without a confirmed local planning process may only apply for funding to prepare a municipal plan (necessary to obtain confirmation). The work documents below should be used to prepare the content of your application before you begin the online application process.

Before Applying

- **2021 Program Description** - provides an overview of the grant program including the purpose, available funding, competitive criteria, and this year's grant priorities. Review to determine the eligibility of your town and project. Pay special attention to the competitive criteria and statewide priorities to determine if your project is a good candidate for funding through this program. (PDF Document)
- **Application Guide** - Presents the application questions, guidance on preparing a competitive application, and provides space for writing draft responses. (Word Document)
- **2021 Application Training Webinar** - Register [HERE](#) for assistance preparing a competitive application, and using the online system to submit your application, Wednesday, August 19 @2pm.
A. Use the Application Guide

### Questions

6.1 Project Outcomes & Goals. **Beyond the project itself, what long-term outcomes would demonstrate the success of the project and further statewide planning goals?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guidance to Applicants</th>
<th>DHCD Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Scoring</th>
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<tr>
<td>▪ You have explained the issues you are working to solve above, and you will explain what you are going to do below in the work plan, explain the long-term value you hope the project will deliver here. ▪ Emphasize outcomes consistent with any relevant provision of the Regional Plan, Vermont’s planning goals (24 V.S.A. 4302), smart growth principles (24 V.S.A 2791(13)), and other statute.</td>
<td>□ Does the response communicate a clear policy direction long-term result? □ Will the outcomes resolve the community needs identified in a way that is consistent with the regional plan(s), Vermont planning goals, smart growth principles and other relevant law?</td>
<td>5 points</td>
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**Response:** [enter draft response here] (2,000 space character limit)

**Sample Response:** Long-term outcomes that would demonstrate the success of Pond Village’s “empowering small-scale makers project” include infill and redevelopment of a vacant brownfield site for multi-tenant and low-impact production, processing, and repair uses. These project outcomes are consistent with the regional plan and Vermont’s statewide emphasis on development and re-development in and around centers.
### A. Use the Application Guide

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### Evaluation Criteria

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#### Scoring 5 points

### Points

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#### Applicant Guidance

- [Image of applicant guidance]

#### Evaluation Criteria

- [Image of evaluation criteria]

#### Points

- [Image of points]

#### Draft Response Box

- [Image of draft response box]

#### Sample Response

- [Image of sample response]
B. Communicate Need & Readiness

✓ Explain the problem you want to solve.
B. Communicate Need & Readiness

☑ Explain the problem you want to solve.
☑ Determine if MPG is the best-fit funding source.
B. Communicate Need & Readiness

✓ Explain the problem you want to solve.
✓ Determine if MPG is the best-fit funding source.
✓ Municipal plan projects are ready if they focus on well-documented needs and shifts (go beyond housekeeping).
✓ Implementation projects are ready if well-defined by the plan.
✓ Other relevant background info is helpful.
B. Communicate Need & Readiness

✓ Explain the problem you want to solve.
✓ Determine if MPG is the best-fit funding source.
✓ Municipal plan projects are ready if they focus on well-documented needs and shifts (go beyond housekeeping).
✓ Implementation projects are ready if well-defined by the plan.
✓ Other relevant background info is helpful.
✓ Think through and explain project management.
C. Public Outreach & Project Partnership

✓ Include creative ways to include the public in your project.
C. Public Outreach & Project Partnership

✓ Include creative ways to include the public in your project.
✓ Showcase how your projects have community support from the outset.
D. Statewide Priorities

✓ Clear long-term outcomes consistent with planning goals
D. Statewide Priorities

✓ Clear long-term outcomes consistent with planning goals

✓ Priority Project Types

- COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plans and/or Investment
- Fair & Affordable Housing Plans and/or Regulations that Implement *Enabling Better Places: A Zoning Guide for Vermont Neighborhoods*
- Plans for a **NEW** Designated Area² or Specific-Area Visual/Physical Master Planning for a Designated Area
- Innovative Statewide Model Projects
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- Innovative Statewide Model Projects

✓ Projects Related to State Designated Areas: Downtowns, Villages, Neighborhood Development Areas, New Town Centers & Growth Centers
E. Project Approach

- Feasible scope of work
- Realistic budget based on estimates
E. Project Approach

- Competitive Procurement
- RPC Agent Status

<table>
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<th>&gt;$10K Project</th>
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<td>Rural Town (&lt;2,500 pop.)</td>
<td>AGENT EXCEPTION</td>
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**Takeaways**

- Focus planning efforts on what matters most to the community.
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✓ MPG are flexible – they can be used for a wide range of municipal activities.

✓ Projects that implement a clearly defined municipal need or vision and have strong community support are most competitive.

✓ MPG open additional funding and regulatory incentives and opportunities to support revitalization.
Deadline Reminder

✓ November 1, 2021 application deadline
Summary

- Flexible planning & implementation funding for 30+ years
- $450,000 to award
- Deadline to apply is Nov. 1
- Regionally allocated
- Max. grant amounts:
  - $22,000 for one town
  - $35,000 for multi-town
- 10% local cash match
- 18 months to complete
- More information available online, here.
EXTRA FY22 FUNDING: Bylaw Modernization Grants

• Act 74 of 2021 makes special, one-time funding for bylaw updates that expand choice and opportunity for homes in pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods

• $500,000 to award

EXTRA FUNDING: Bylaw Modernization Grants

• Deadline to apply: November 15 (2 weeks after MPG deadline); awards in January

• Max. grant amounts: up to $25,000 for one town; up to $60,000 for multi-town (based on participating no. of towns)

• 10% local cash match, forgivable upon successful adoption prior to closeout
EXTRA FUNDING: Bylaw Modernization Grants

• 24 months to complete project (6 more months than MPG)

• You may apply for Bylaw Modernization Funds and MPG funds in the same year if there is capacity to complete both projects.

• BMP project eligibility is linked to companion policy bill, S.101

• Program announcements and more information posted [here](#).
Questions on Segment #1
Next up . . .

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Grants Specialist  
jennifer.lavoie@vermont.gov  
802.828.1948

**Jacob Hemmerick**
Planning & Policy Manager  
jacob.hemmerick@vermont.gov  
802.828.5249
MPG – Online Application Training

Jenni Lavoie
VT Department of Housing and Community Development

MPG Online Application Training
August 18, 2021
Online Applications
Accessing the Online System

New Users:
- Registration
- New Account Approval
- Assigning a Role

- A user only has to register once to gain access to any of the available grant programs.
- Municipalities have established accounts – individual users are attached to the municipality or municipalities.
- If you’ve tried logging in unsuccessfully a few times you may get a message saying that you have been locked out of system. Just wait 15 minutes for the account to unlock and contact me to verify the username that your trying to get into the system with.

Troubleshooting for Returning Users:
- Forgot Username?
- Forgot Password?
- Locked Out?

Online System Web Address:
https://egrants.vermont.gov/Login2.aspx?APPTHEME=VTACCD
### Online Applications
#### System Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System role</th>
<th>Assigned to</th>
<th>Designated by</th>
<th>Create an application</th>
<th>View</th>
<th>Edit</th>
<th>Submit</th>
<th>Approve accounts</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal/Authorizing</td>
<td>Selectboard member, Town or City Manager, or Town</td>
<td>Municipal Resolution</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official (M/AO)</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Town staff, planning commissioner or RPC staff</td>
<td>Municipal Resolution</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writer</td>
<td>RPC or town staff, or consultant</td>
<td>Email from M/AO or</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Administrator</td>
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Municipal Planning Grant Training

**FY22 Municipal Resolution for Municipal Planning Grant**

WHEREAS, the Municipality of ________________ is applying for funding as provided for in the FY22 Budget Act and may receive an award of funds under said provisions; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Housing and Community Development may offer a Grant Agreement to this Municipality for said funding; and

WHEREAS, the municipality is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes or that the municipality has voted at an annual or special meeting to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes.

Now, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

1. That the Legislative Body of this Municipality enters into and agrees to the requirements and obligations of this grant program including a commitment to match funds.

2. That the Municipal Planning Commission recommends applying for said Grant.

(Name of Planning Commission Chair) _____________________________
(Signature) _____________________________

3a. That (Name) _____________________________ Title _____________________________
who is either the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as defined by 10 VSA §683(8), or is a Select Board Member, the Town Manager, the City Manager, or the Town Administrator, is hereby designated to serve as the Municipal/Authorizing Official (M/AO) for the Grant Electronic Application and Reporting System (GEARS), and to execute the Grant Agreement and other such Documents as may be necessary to secure these funds.

3b. (Alternate Authorizing Official for redundancy)
That (Name) _____________________________ Title _____________________________
who is either the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as defined by 10 VSA §683(8), or a Select Board Member, is the Town Manager, the City Manager, or the Town Administrator, is hereby designated to serve as the Municipal/Authorizing Official (M/AO) for the Grant Electronic Application and Reporting System (GEARS), and to execute the Grant Agreement and other such Documents as may be necessary to secure these funds.

3c. That (Name) _____________________________ Title _____________________________
is hereby designated as the Grant Administrator, the person with the overall Administrative responsibility for the Municipal Planning Grant program activities related to the application, and any subsequent Grant Agreement provisions.

Passed this _________ day of ___________, ______.

**Municipal Resolution Form**

- The primary responsibilities of the M/AO are:
  - Signing the grant agreement
  - Submitting requests for grant funds

- When possible, please try to select a Municipal / Authorizing Official (M/AO) whose term WILL NOT expire prior to the end of the grant term.

- Program staff are the ONLY people that can add a Municipal / Authorizing Official to the grant application.

- One way to avoid having program staff add an M/AO, is to have the M/AO initiate the application. This way they are already attached to the application.
Online Applications
Tips for Success

- Save often
- Spell check in a word processing program first
- No special formatting
- Do not use the browser back button
Online Applications

If you’re ever stuck, please don’t hesitate to contact me. The online system isn’t quite intuitive, and I’m always happy to help folks navigate through.
For the next part of our training, we’re going to go live to the GEARS online application system to walk through completing the online application.