

State Historic Preservation Grants 2023 Selection Criteria *Advisory Council Scoring Guidelines*

All applicants/eligible buildings *must* meet Criteria 1 through 4. Criteria 5 through 11 are used to rate and rank each project, using a competitive numerical scoring system. The Vermont Advisory Council for Historic Preservation (Council) will evaluate each project by these criteria and assign points. Projects will be funded in rank-order until funding is exhausted. The criteria will be weighted as follows:

Criteria 1-4: All projects must meet these criteria.

Criterion 5: 0-5 Points Possible

Criterion 6: 0-5 Points Possible

Criterion 7: 0-2 Points Possible

Criterion 8: 0-5 Points Possible

Criterion 9: 0-2 Points Possible

Criterion 10: 1 Point Possible (completed by staff)

Criterion 11: 1 Point Possible (completed by staff)

Maximum Total Points = 21

A brief explanation follows for each criterion. Every project *must* meet the first four criteria.

Criterion 1: THE PROPERTY MUST BE OWNED BY A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION OR A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OF THE STATE

Non-profit organizations must provide proof that they are tax-exempt. Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) certification is preferred. State agencies are not eligible. Buildings owned by non-profit development corporations are ineligible if the property is being developed for a commercial, income-producing use. Work on income-producing sections of buildings owned by a non-profit organization is not eligible.

Criterion 2: THE PROPERTY MUST BE LISTED IN OR ELIGIBLE FOR LISTING IN THE STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Buildings can be listed either individually or as a contributing resource in a State or National Register Historic District. If the status of a property is unknown, applicants should contact the Division for Historic Preservation (VDHP). Properties not listed or determined eligible for listing in the National Register prior to submission of an application will be evaluated by the Council for eligibility during the scoring process.

Criterion 3: THE APPLICANT MUST MATCH THE GRANT WITH CASH ON NO LESS THAN A ONE-TO-ONE BASIS

Applicants may apply for no more than 50% of the total project cost, up to a maximum of \$20,000. The applicant's *matching share* must be in-hand/ available at the time of application. Projects may utilize donated labor and materials, but these cannot be counted

towards the match. State funds are not eligible for use as match, but Federal funds, private foundation grants, or donor pledges may be used.

Criterion 4: AWARDED PROJECTS MUST DEMONSTRATE COMPLIANCE WITH THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S *STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION*

It is expected that all work completed as part of a Preservation Grant-funded project will meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation*. Projects where work does not meet the *Standards* are not eligible for funding. If proposed work does not meet the *Standards* but could be brought into compliance, the Council may, at its discretion fund a project with conditions.

Criterion 5: PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO PROJECTS THAT BEST PRESERVE HISTORIC BUILDING FEATURES (0-5 points possible)

Applications will be scored on how well the project will contribute to preserving the features of the building that make it eligible for listing in the National Register. Applicants must demonstrate a wholistic approach with clear prioritization of work that will ensure long-term preservation of the building and its character-defining features. Grants may be awarded in any of the following three categories of preservation work. This list of project types is not ranked and projects in each category will be evaluated on an equal basis.

1. Stabilization and Immediate Need

Projects in this category involve work on a failed structural component, such as a frame, foundation, or roof. Work could also address extensive damage or deterioration over a large portion of the building. For example, a masonry building could require extensive repointing work. A project can also seek to rectify serious ongoing deterioration and damage to significant character-defining features of a building, such as structural repairs to a leaning bell tower, relaying of a slate roof, installation of a new metal roof, or sill replacement. Immediate need indicates that without repair of the feature, complete deterioration or failure will happen quickly.

2. Necessary Repairs and Corrective Measures

Projects in this category involve work to restore or repair damaged or deteriorated parts of a building before the deterioration becomes so advanced that the feature must be replaced entirely, or before repairs become extremely costly. This can include a single building component or a package of smaller items, which together make up a significant project. It can include corrective measures such as drainage work, or important capital projects such as window restoration, or carpentry repairs.

3. Restoration and Enhancement

This category consists of work that is not vital to the physical survival of the building, but instead preserves, restores, or enhances features critical to its architectural and/or historical significance. Examples include restoration of decorative plaster, murals, stenciling, tile work or woodwork. Projects that propose to replace missing architectural features such as towers, porches or trim details must be supported by photographs, architectural drawings, and/or on-site physical evidence that sufficiently document the missing element(s). This documentation must be submitted as a part of the grant application.

The grant program is for rehabilitation and restoration work and limited resources excludes funding any “improvements” even if they are important to the use of the building. The types of work described above are examples and do not preclude consideration of other projects that meet the intent of one of the three categories.

Projects that are primarily routine maintenance will **not** be given priority or score highly. For example, painting is generally considered to be routine maintenance. If a grant request includes painting, the applicant must explain any need for associated preparatory work prior to painting in the application. For example, preparatory work includes any necessary repair to wood damaged through paint failure.

Repair is preferable to replacement. If replacement is required, it is almost always best to use the same material. Only in extreme cases will projects utilizing non-historic materials be considered. Substitute materials may be considered if they are compatible with the historic materials in appearance and physical properties, and if they meet performance expectations over a long period of time.

Temporary repairs will be funded only under extraordinary circumstances. Applicants who propose temporary repairs must include a written outline that describes how and when permanent repairs will be undertaken, and how and when funding will be obtained.

Criterion 6: PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO PROJECTS THAT PROVIDE THE GREATEST BENEFIT TO THE PUBLIC AND PROMOTE THE BEST LONG-TERM USE OF THE PROPERTY (0-5 points possible)

One of the purposes of the Historic Preservation Grant program is to promote Vermont's architectural heritage. Public benefit can be demonstrated if:

- The building is regularly open to and used by the public,
- The property is accessible to the public and/or conserved to protect important historic, archaeological, and natural resources,
- It is easily visible to the public from public places,
- It is important in the history of the community, is an important community symbol or local landmark,
- The project will expand or improve use of an underutilized building for the public.

The preservation of a historic property is more likely to be ensured if buildings are in active use. The Council may also consider whether the adaptive re-use of a historic building is compatible and will not require substantial changes to a building's architectural design or historic character. Points may also be given to projects that expand or improve the use of an underutilized historic building, so long as any new use will not compromise those features of the building that make it eligible for listing in the National Register.

Criterion 7: PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO APPLICATIONS THAT ARTICULATE THE ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THEIR BUILDING (0-2 points possible)

Applications for rehabilitation of landmark buildings, exceptional historic resources, rare or unusual building types, or those that propose to repair or restore an unusual building feature will be given priority. To assist the Council in scoring this criterion, applicants

should reference documentation such as a National Register nomination which identifies the building and/or feature as exceptional. Applicants are also encouraged to contact VDHP staff for additional guidance in locating sources that document the special or unique features and attributes of a specific building.

Criterion 8: PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO APPLICANTS WHO PROVIDE A CLEARLY PRIORITIZED PLAN FOR PRESERVATION OF THEIR BUILDING, A WELL-PLANNED BUDGET FOR THE PROJECT, AND DEMONSTRATE A COMMITMENT TO LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE (0-5 points possible)

Applicants may be awarded points based on a clear and thoughtful long-term plan for their building, including:

- prioritization of work needed to put the building into good condition,
- descriptions of the proposed work and the estimated project costs indicating consideration of the full scope of the project, and a project budget that is well organized and based on solid cost projections, and
- a track record of long-term care of the building, or if a new owner, a solid maintenance plan, including plans for future sources of funding.

A detailed written estimate for the work proposed in the application from a qualified contractor is required. It is important that the contractor understands that the project must meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation*. If multiple methods for repair are suggested, an applicant should choose an option which meets the *Standards*. Applicants are also encouraged to have a well-defined plan for routine maintenance and long-term preservation of the building and include a description of those plans in the application.

Criterion 9: PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO APPLICATIONS THAT ARE CLEAR, CONCISE AND WELL-WRITTEN WITH ATTACHMENTS THAT MEET OR EXCEED THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS (0-2 points possible)

Applications should be clear, well-organized, and proofread. Photograph attachments should also be clearly labeled and meet all the documentation requirements. Applicants should include additional reports that are applicable to the project, such as building assessments, engineering reports, maintenance plans etc. Extraneous material not pertinent to the application should be avoided. Contact VDHP staff for additional guidance.

Criterion 10: PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO FACILITIES THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (1 point possible – scored by staff)

A point in this category will only be given to those buildings that are fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act at the time of application.

Criterion 11: PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO PROJECTS LOCATED IN A MUNICIPALITY WITH A DESIGNATED DOWNTOWN OR VILLAGE CENTER (1 point possible – scored by staff)

The State Designation program was established by the Downtown Development Act. To receive a point in this category, the downtown or village center must be officially designated prior to the date of a grant award.

BONUS: GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION MAY BE CONSIDERED AS A FACTOR IN PROJECT SELECTION (1 point possible)

To promote Vermont's heritage to as wide an audience as possible, the geographic distribution of applications may be considered. This will become a selection factor when applications compete equally in the first eleven criteria. A point may be given following initial scoring if needed to break a tie.